

17/00807/FUL**CASTLE POINT AND ROCHFORD ADULT COMMUNITY COLLEGE,
ROCHEWAY, ROCHFORD****PROVIDE CAR PARK AND AREA FOR DEMOUNTABLE BUILDINGS
FOR USE AS CHANGING ROOMS TO SERVE PLAYING FIELD****APPLICANT: ESSEX HOUSING, ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL****ZONING: OPEN SPACE / METROPOLITAN GREEN BELT****PARISH: ROCHFORD PARISH COUNCIL****WARD: ROCHE SOUTH****1 PLANNING APPLICATION DETAILS**

- 1.1 This application has been submitted in order to address the parking mitigation considered required as a consequence of the residential development proposed under planning reference 17/00102/FUL, which relates to the re-development of the former adult community learning centre at Rocheway.
- 1.2 This application is therefore submitted to address the fundamental issue of ensuring the provision of a sustainable parking solution in connection with the ongoing use of the sports pitches and designated open space in the light of the residential development proposed.
- 1.3 This application, although a separate planning application, is nevertheless closely affiliated to planning application 17/00102/FUL on the basis that the valid concern relating to parking mitigation associated with that proposal cannot be addressed, other than by the means proposed by this application.
- 1.4 The planning application is submitted on the basis that the car parking currently available on the car park area to the frontage of the college building will be displaced once phase 2 of the proposed residential development commences.
- 1.5 The submitted particulars indicate the proposed use of a rectangular area of land immediately south of the site, which is the subject of the 17/00102/FUL application, and constituting an area of 95 metres in length by 20 metres in width (0.1931 hectares in site area), the majority of which will be constructed of grasscrete, which will cover an area of 1400 square metres.
- 1.6 The submitted plan indicates the provision of 50 parking bays arranged in parallel configuration and each being 5.5 metres in length by 2.9 metres in

width with 6 m spacing between to comply with the required Essex Parking Standards adopted by the District Council.

- 1.7 Although not part of the application site the plans also show the configuration of the football pitches to demonstrate that there is no residual net loss of open space/pitches and indicate a Football Association compliant layout with 4 football pitches of differing sizes, which are suitable for a range of age groups and which the applicant considers to represent a more efficient layout to the existing arrangements.
- 1.8 The application also seeks principled consent for the siting of 2 demountable buildings to serve the playing field, which are shown by the site plan to be located at the south west corner of the proposed parking area. The purpose of such demountable buildings would be to provide changing and toilet facilities for users of the sports pitches.
- 1.9 The application particulars provide an outline specification of the proposed facilities which have been considered in conjunction with Sport England. It is indicated that a minimum of 16 square metres of changing room space will be provided, which will be heated and connected to electricity; the provision would also include 4 WC's, which would be separated to provide a boys/girls WC and an adult WC facility.
- 1.10 The outline specification, in conjunction with the advice received from Sport England, provides an indication of the phasing of the provision of such facilities where the car park would be available for beneficial use prior to the commencement of phase 2 of the residential development proposed under 17/00102/FUL. It is indicated that the demountable changing facilities will be provided and fully operational on the site prior to the beneficial use of the car park, which would be prior to the commencement of phase 2 of the residential development.
- 1.11 Access to the car parking area would be provided via the central spine road, which will serve the proposed residential development. However, it is acknowledged that its consideration and its principled acceptance is fundamental prior to the determination of this residential development.
- 1.12 The submitted particulars also show a section through the site relative to the land levels of the proposed residential site to the north and the sports pitches located to the south; the section drawing indicating a gentle gradient between the site and the proposed residential site.
- 1.13 The application submission also includes a letter of support for the proposed development from Hambro Colts YFC, which indicates it has no objection to the displaced parking arrangements.

2 THE SITE

- 2.1 The site in its wider context is located immediately south to and adjoining the site of the former Adult Community Learning Centre in Rocheway, a large building and its immediate grounds constructed in 1937, which was in education use until it was vacated in 2013 when it became surplus to requirements.
- 2.2 The site constitutes the north eastern periphery of the designated open space currently accessed via a partly hard surfaced and partly grassed area located to the eastern aspect of the former community college site.
- 2.3 Vehicle access is gained via an entry/exit point on Rocheway adjacent to its eastern boundary.
- 2.4 The site is located in the Metropolitan Green Belt, but forms the outer edge of the physically defined confines of the Rochford urban area, which is excluded from the Green Belt.
- 2.5 The site is located within easy walking distance of Rochford town centre's many services, facilities and retail offer via safe, convenient and well-lit pedestrian routes. Rochford town centre also offers regular bus routes to Southend-on-Sea and Rayleigh and mainline railway links to London Liverpool Street and London Southend Airport. The site is considered to be sustainably located

3 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 Application No. 17/00102/FUL
- 3.2 Proposed demolition of vacant adult community learning centre and re-development of the site to accommodate a 60 unit Independent Living Residential Home (Class C2) with associated infrastructure and car park and 14 dwelling houses (class C3), vehicle access and hard and soft landscaping.
- 3.3 Application pending and the subject of a separate report to this Committee.

4 CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

4.1 Sport England

Initial Response

Thank you for consulting Sport England on the above planning application. The site is considered to constitute playing field, or land last used as playing field, as defined in The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (Statutory Instrument 2015 No. 595). As such Sport England is a statutory consultee.

Sport England has sought to consider the application in light of the National Planning Policy Framework (particularly Paragraph 74) and Sport England's Playing Fields Policy, 'A Sporting Future for the Playing Fields of England.' Unfortunately there is insufficient information to enable Sport England to adequately assess the proposal or to make a substantive response. Please therefore could the following information be provided as soon as possible:-

1. Changing Facilities: Clarity about whether the proposed changing facilities in the demountable building will be provided as part of the planning application or whether just a hardstanding will be provided to allow such a building to be provided at a later date (that would need to be subject to a separate planning application). The application description refers to an area for demountable buildings while the application documents imply that the changing facilities will be provided as part of the proposals. It is also unclear whether the proposals will include the provision of electricity/gas and water services to the site of the demountable building. If the changing facilities are to be provided as part of the planning application, details of the demountable buildings will be required, including the floor plans and elevations, together with details of energy/water services. This information is requested to allow an informed assessment to be made of the proposals in relation to whether the car parking and changing facility proposals would acceptably mitigate the loss of part of the playing field and to allow an assessment to be made of the acceptability in planning terms of the proposed demountable building. This information is also required to assess whether the proposals would acceptably mitigate the proposed loss of car parking that supports the playing field in the related planning application (17/00102/FUL) for the re-development of the former college buildings.
2. Phasing: Details of how the delivery of the proposed car parking and (if applicable) changing facilities will be phased in relation to the proposed re-development of the adjoining college buildings and car parking in the related planning application (17/00102/FUL) in order to provide continuity of car parking provision for users of the playing field. This information is requested to assess whether the proposed phasing of the development would be acceptable

Sport England's interim position on this proposal is to submit a holding objection. However, we will happily review our position following the receipt of all the further information requested above. As I am currently unable to make a substantive response, in accordance with the Order referred to above, the 21 days for formally responding to the consultation will not commence until I have received all the information requested above. I would also advise that responses to the above queries are required to allow Sport England to consider reviewing its formal position on the related planning application (17/00102/FUL).

Should the local planning authority be minded to grant planning permission for the proposal, contrary to Sport England's holding objection, then in

accordance with The Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2009, the application should be referred to the Secretary of State, via the National Planning Casework Unit.

Latest updated response received from Sports England (received 28/09/2017)

Thank you for providing me with this information. I am broadly happy with the draft specification as it is based on meeting the club's needs and provides the level of detail required for assessing a future submission of a detailed proposal. Can I request a few minor amendments: In relation to toilets, can it be confirmed that the toilets for the players (boys or girls) will be segregated from the toilets for the parents, as this will be required for child protection reasons;

- Can the specification confirm that the detailed specification will be prepared in consultation with Sport England and Hambro Colts FC (or the current users of the playing field if Hambro Colts are no longer using the site when the detailed specification is prepared).

In terms of the submission to Rochford DC, can I advise you to submit the following:-

- A stand alone document with the draft specification for the buildings, as this can then form part of the approved plans/documents and be referenced in a planning condition;
- Details confirming when the parking and changing facilities will be phased in relation to the residential development. We agreed that they should be provided before phase 2 of the residential development commences (can you include the drawing which shows the phasing so that we can refer to it). Also, can you confirm when the changing facilities will be provided in relation to the proposed car parking – I would be satisfied with the changing being completed and operational prior to beneficial use of the car park.

On the basis of the above being satisfactory, I would then expect to remove our holding objection to the car park application and submit a formal response which raises no objection, subject to conditions re the details of the buildings being submitted and approved and the phasing of the buildings. I could then review our position on the residential development.

4.2 Essex County Council Highways

The proposal is not proposing any changes to the existing vehicular access.

From a highway and transportation perspective the impact of the proposal is acceptable to the Highway Authority, subject to the following conditions:-

1. Each parking space shall be 2.9m x 5.5m in accordance with current parking standards.

Reason: To ensure adequate space for parking off the highway is provided in the interest of highway safety, in accordance with policy DM1.

2. The vehicle parking area indicated on planning drawing 6400/1122, including any parking spaces for the mobility impaired, shall be hard surfaced, sealed and marked out in parking bays. The vehicle parking area and associated turning area shall be retained in this form at all times. The vehicle parking shall not be used for any purpose other than the parking of vehicles that are related to the use of the development, unless otherwise agreed with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that on street parking of vehicles in the adjoining streets does not occur in the interests of highway safety and that appropriate parking is provided, in accordance with Policy DM8.

3. Prior to commencement of the development, the areas within the curtilage of the site for the purpose of loading/unloading/reception and storage of building materials and manoeuvring of all vehicles, including construction traffic, shall be provided clear of the highway.

Reason: To ensure that appropriate loading/unloading facilities are available to ensure that the highway is not obstructed during the construction period in the interest of highway safety, in accordance with policy DM1.

The above conditions are to ensure that the proposal conforms to the relevant policies contained within the County Highway Authority's Development Management policies, adopted as County Council Supplementary Guidance in February 2011.

Informative:

All works affecting the highway to be carried out by prior arrangement with, and to the requirements and satisfaction of, the Highway Authority and application for the necessary works should be addressed for the attention of the Development Management Team at SMO2, Essex Highways, Springfield Highways Depot, Colchester Road, Chelmsford CM2 5PU.

5 MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Principle of Development

- 5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 places a statutory responsibility on planning authorities to determine planning applications, in accordance with the provisions of the development plan unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise.

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- 5.2 This application is submitted as a proposed feasible solution to address the ongoing need for car parking to serve the sports pitch use, which is designated open space in the light of residential development on an adjoining site. This parking area, although accessed via the central spine road which will serve and which will form part of the physical infrastructure of the residential development site, will exist and operate entirely separately from the residential development.
- 5.3 The main planning policy consideration in this instance is that of the appropriateness of this development within the Green Belt and whether any demonstrable residual harm would arise as a consequence of the car parking provision and the siting of demountable buildings at its south west extremity.
- 5.4 Consistent with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012 Rochford District Council's Core Strategy adopted version 2011 indicates that development will be directed away from the Green Belt as far as practicable and will prioritise the protection of the Green Belt land based on how well the land helps achieve the purposes of the Green Belt.
- 5.5 The National Planning Policy Framework explains that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; and that the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence. One of the main purposes of including land within Green Belts is to safeguard the countryside from encroachment.
- 5.6 Given the nature and scale of the proposed development, the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012) and Planning Practice Guidance have to be taken into account in the consideration and determination of this planning application.
- 5.7 The adopted Development Plan is the Rochford District Core Strategy adopted in December 2011, the Allocations Plan adopted in February 2014 and the Development Management Plan adopted in December 2014.
- 5.8 The Allocations Plan (2014) forms part of the Development Plan for the Rochford District. The Allocations Plan allocates specific sites and sets out detailed policies for a range of uses, including residential, employment, education and open spaces, and has been prepared in accordance with the general locations and policies set out in the adopted Rochford Core Strategy to accommodate the current housing and other development needs in the District.
- 5.9 Given the underlying principles of Green Belt policy, which is to safeguard the character and openness of the Green Belt, the key principal issue to address is that of whether the underlying objectives of the Green Belt policy, as set out by Chapter 9 of the NPPF, would be undermined.
- 5.10 It is noted that the Green Belt serves five principal purposes, including checking unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas and to assist in

safeguarding the countryside from encroachment in order to keep land permanently open, which is recognised as the essential characteristics of Green Belts (their openness and permanence).

- 5.11 Fundamentally, the key issue in this instance is that of whether the proposed development is considered to be inappropriate development which, by definition, would be harmful to the Green Belt and which should only be permitted in exceptional circumstances.
- 5.12 It is not considered that this proposed development is inappropriate by its definition as the physical operations on land which it is considered will have no demonstrable detrimental impact on openness and its use thereafter will support an existing community facility that requires the playing field and public open space to remain open. The use is consistent with the recognised use, which is that of designated open space.
- 5.13 Given the material importance of safeguarding the use of the open space and sports pitches in perpetuity, it is considered that this development will provide certainty in terms of parking provision, which adequately mitigates the loss of parking when phase 2 of the adjacent residential application commences, should planning permission be granted.
- 5.14 Although point 5.124 of the 20 July 2017 Committee report relating to planning reference 17/00102/FUL queries the appropriateness of parking at this location, should it be put forward as a proposed solution, (which in hindsight pre-judged the merits of any proposals which were at that time not known) on the basis of the application put forward, it is considered that the proposal is acceptable in planning terms.

6 OTHER MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 Surface Water Run Off

The only other material planning consideration is that of the potential run off of water from the site onto the adjacent sports pitches which, however, in this case is not considered to be the case as the grasscrete is permeable, which will allow seepage and percolation of rain water into the ground such that the existing conditions will not alter.

6.2 Parking Layout

The conditions as recommended by Essex Highways are noted. Condition 2 is prescriptive in that it requires the parking bays to be hard surfaced and physically marked out, which it is not considered is absolutely necessary in this case whilst the condition stipulates that the parking should be in connection with the sports field use only, which takes into account the potential for parking encroachment from the residential development site.

7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 It is concluded that the development in terms of its perceived impact is acceptable in planning policy terms as there will be no direct residual impact on the openness of the Green Belt, whilst the development will provide certainty in the provision of parking long term in connection with the ongoing use of the designated open space.
- 7.2 It is recommended that conditional planning permission be granted and that conditions be attached as per the recommendation below.

8 RECOMMENDATION

- 8.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**

That planning permission be approved, subject to the following heads of conditions:-

- 1) Commence in three years.
- (2) That the car park is complete and operational prior to the commencement of phase 2 of the adjoining residential development if granted planning permission.
- (3) That the changing room facilities and WC facilities are established and fully operational on the first use of the car park, in accordance with the details to be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority (in conjunction with Sports England) .
- (4) That certainty be gained regarding the height and material finish of any demountable structures to be located on site and their maintenance in terms of their external appearance over the lifetime of their siting.
- (5) Each parking space shall be 2.9m x 5.5m, in accordance with current parking standards.
- (6) The vehicle parking area indicated on planning drawing 6400/1122, including any parking spaces for the mobility impaired, shall be surfaced and marked out in parking bays. The vehicle parking area and associated turning area shall be retained in this form at all times. The vehicle parking shall not be used for any purpose other than the parking of vehicles that are related to the use of the adjoining public open space and playing areas, unless otherwise agreed with the Local Planning Authority.



Matthew Thomas

Assistant Director, Planning & Regeneration Services

Relevant Development Plan Policies and Proposals

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (par 89)

Parking Standards Design and Good Practice (September 2009)

Policies CLT5 (Open Spaces) and CLT 10 (Playing Pitches) of

Rochford District Council Local Development Framework Core Strategy Adopted Version (December 2011)

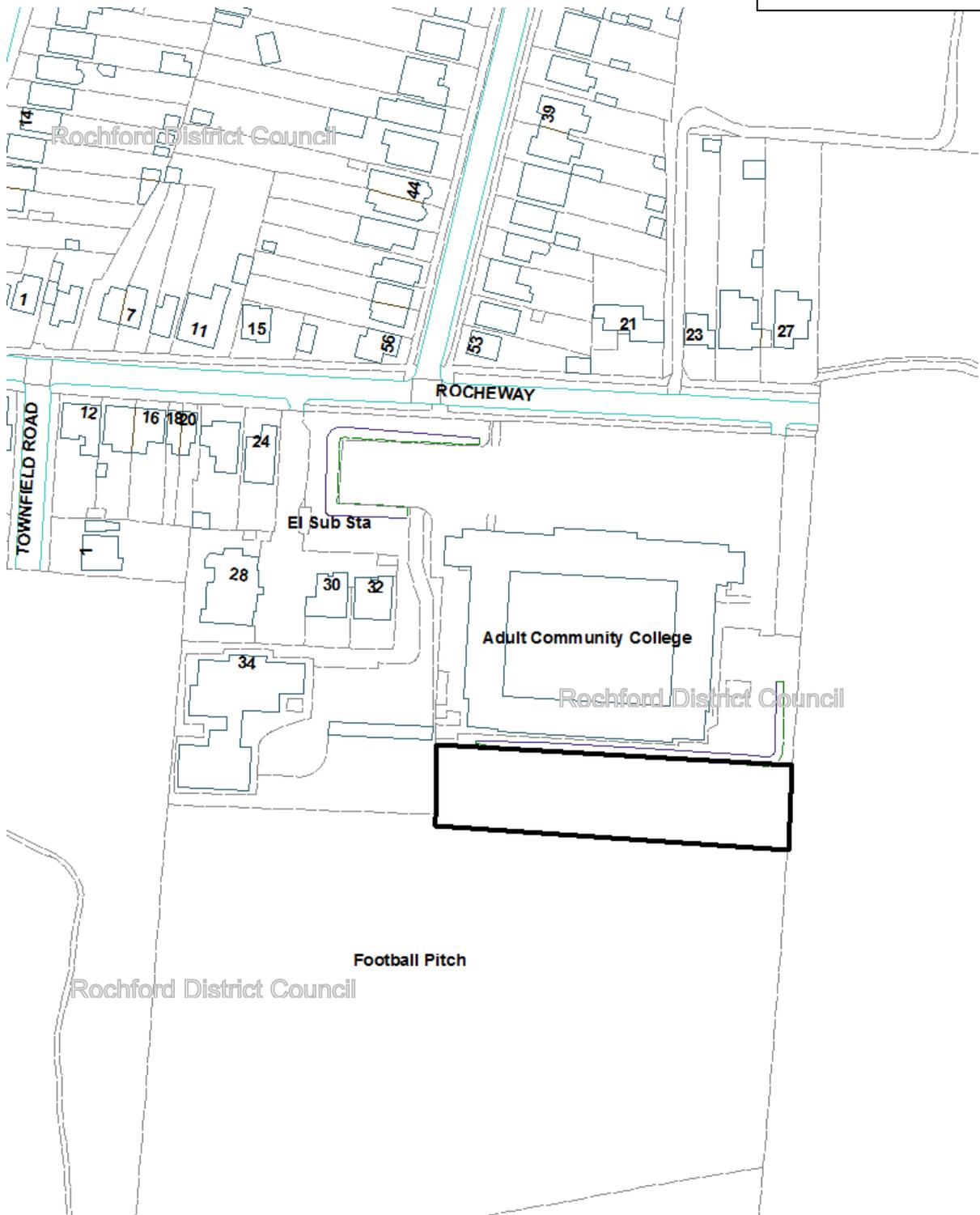
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