

Application: 2022/1191
Location: Grange Meadow Playing Field, High Street, Bletchingley, Surrey, RH1 4PE
Proposal: Change temporary permission granted under pp 2019/843 to permanent, for a storage container on sports field located behind the pavilion & shielded by new planting
Ward: Bletchingley and Nutfield

Constraints – area of great landscape value, areas of special advertising consent, ancient woodland(s) within 500m, bigginhill safeguarding, conservation area(s), gatwick bird strike zone, Gatwick safeguarding 45m, green belt area, source_protection_zones 3, tpo 240/tan

RECOMMENDATION:

PERMIT

1. This application is reported to Committee because the site is Council-owned land.

Summary

2. Planning permission is sought for the permanent stationing of a storage container on a sports field located behind the existing pavilion. The proposal follows application 2019/843 that saw planning permission being granted for the storage container subject to a condition granting temporary use for three years.
3. The application would not result in inappropriate development within the Green Belt, as it would provide appropriate facilities for outdoor sport and recreation. The design and appearance of the development are considered acceptable and would not have a significant harmful impact to the character of the area. The proposal would not have a harmful impact on neighbouring amenity or on nearby trees. It is therefore recommended that planning permission be approved.

Site Description

4. The application site forms part of the Grange Meadow Playing field, which has an existing Pavilion, club house and playground, with the remainder of the site playing fields. The site is located within the Green Belt, where the defined village boundaries lie to the east and west side of the site. The area within the defined village boundaries are residential and built up in character.

Relevant History

5. GOR/296/71 – Pavilion - Approved
2019/843 - Installation of temporary storage container - Approved
23/08/2019

Key Issues

6. The site lies within the Green Belt. The key issue is whether the proposal constitutes appropriate development and, if not, whether there are any very special circumstances to justify permission. Also, whether the development is acceptable on character, appearance, and residential amenities grounds

Proposal

7. The application seeks full planning permission for the siting of a storage container on the land following the expiration of a temporary planning permission granted under 2019/843. The structure is located to the south of the pavilion building, along the boundary of the bowls area. The proposed structure measures 12.5 metres in length with a height of 2.8 metres and a width of 2.7 metres. Landscaping is proposed within this submission.

Development Plan Policy

8. Tandridge District Core Strategy 2008 – Policies CSP1, CSP18, CSP21
Tandridge Local Plan Part 2 – Detailed Policies 2014 – Policies DP1, DP5, DP7, DP10, DP13, DP18
Woldingham Neighbourhood Plan (2016) – Not applicable
Limpsfield Neighbourhood Plan (2019) – Not applicable
Caterham, Chaldon and Whyteleafe Neighbourhood Plan – Not applicable
Emerging Tandridge Local Plan 2033 - TLP01, TLP03, TLP18, TLP32

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPGs) and non-statutory guidance

9. Tandridge Parking Standards SPD (2012)
Tandridge Trees and Soft Landscaping SPD (2017)
Bletchingley Conservation Area Appraisal (SPG) (2002)
Surrey Design Guide (2002)

National Advice

10. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021)
Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
National Design Guide (2019)

Statutory Consultation Responses

11. County Highway Authority – As it is not considered that the likely net additional traffic generation, access arrangements and parking would have a material impact on the safety and operation of the public highway, the highway authority were not consulted on this application.

Bletchingley Parish Council – “No objection, We acknowledge that all members of the Parish Council have an interest in this application. The ‘No objection’ resolution was agreed unanimously at the Parish Council meeting of the 13th of March.”

Non-statutory Advice Received

12. Gatwick Airport (safeguarding) – “The proposed development has been examined from an aerodrome safeguarding perspective and does not conflict with safeguarding criteria. We, therefore, have no objection to this proposal.”

Sport England – “Sports England does not wish to raise an objection”

Other Representations

13. Third Party Comments

Assessment

Procedural note

14. The Tandridge District Core Strategy and Detailed Local Plan Policies predate the NPPF as published in 2021. However, paragraph 219 of the NPPF (Annex 1) sets out that existing policies should not be considered out-of-date simply because they were adopted prior to the publication of the Framework document. Instead, due weight should be given to them in accordance to the degree of consistency with the current Framework.

Green Belt

15. Paragraph 147 of the NPPF states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Paragraph 148 states that when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. ‘Very special circumstances’ will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations. Paragraph 149 states that local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. One of the exceptions to this is the provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation. A further exception is limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use, which would: not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development.
16. Policy DP10 of the Local Plan states that within the Green Belt, planning permission for any inappropriate development which is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt, will normally be refused. Proposals involving inappropriate development in the Green Belt will only be permitted where very special circumstances exist, to the extent that other considerations clearly outweigh any potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm.
17. Policy DP13 of the Local Plan states that unless very special circumstances can be clearly demonstrated, the Council will regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. The policy makes exceptions, one of which is the provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport and recreation.

18. The application proposes the permanent siting of an existing storage contained which is regarded as a 'building' for Green Belt purposes. The building provides storage for sports related equipment for use of the community facility. In this case, the size of the container is considered appropriate to its location and use. With regards to the impact upon the openness, the container is located close to existing built form with a maximum height of 2.5 metres. The applicant intends to soften the appearance of the building from the northwest side with soft landscaping which in the event of an approval, would be appropriately conditioned. As such, given the scale, location and landscaping proposed the building is not considered to significantly impact the openness of the Green Belt in this case.
19. The proposed storage structure, while being new development in the Green Belt, would provide appropriate facilities for outdoor sport and recreation. The massing and scale of the structure would result in the building preserving the openness of the Green Belt. Therefore, the building would not result in inappropriate development within the Green Belt and considered to accord with the provisions of the NPPF and of the Local Plan.

Character and appearance

20. Policy CSP18 of the Core Strategy requires that new development should be of a high standard of design that must reflect and respect the character, setting and local context, including those features that contribute to local distinctiveness. Development must also have regard to the topography of the site, important trees or groups of trees and other important features that need to be retained.
21. Policy DP7 of the Local Plan Part 2: Detailed Policies requires development to, integrate effectively with its surroundings, respect and contribute to the distinctive character, appearance and amenity of the area in which it is located, have a complementary building design and not result in overdevelopment or unacceptable intensification by reason of scale, form, bulk, height, spacing, density and design.
22. Policy CSP21 of the Tandridge District Core Strategy 2008 advises that the character and distinctiveness of the District's landscapes and countryside will be protected for their own sake and that new development will be required to conserve and enhance landscape character.
23. The proposed structure measures 12.5 metres in length with a height of 2.8 metres and a width of 2.7 metres. The proposal would be seen within the context of the existing buildings and a fence line to the east, where proposed soft landscaping is also proposed to the northwest side.
24. It is considered that the design, siting and appearance of the building would not a significant impact on the setting of the landscape of the character of the area. The application therefore accords with policies CSP 18 and CSP21 of the Core Strategy and policy DP7 of the Local Plan.

Residential amenities

25. Policy CSP 18 of the TDC Core Strategy states that development must not significantly harm the amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring properties by reason of overlooking, overshadowing, visual intrusion, noise, traffic and any other adverse effect.

26. Policy DP7 of the TDC Local Plan states that proposals should not significantly harm the amenity of neighbouring properties by reason of pollution (noise, air or light), traffic, or other general disturbance. Furthermore, development should not significantly harm the amenities and privacy of occupiers of neighbouring properties (including their private amenity space) by reason of overlooking or its overshadowing or overbearing effect. The policy also states that all new development should provide satisfactory environment for the occupiers of both the existing and new development.
27. Given the distance to neighbouring properties, it is considered the proposal would not give rise to harm in this respect. As such, given the existing use of the site, scale and form of the development it is not considered the proposal would result in significant harm to neighbouring amenity.

Landscaping and Trees

28. Policy DP7 of the Local Plan Part 2: Detailed Policies relate to safeguarding landscaping and trees and the policy states landscaping should be an integral element in layout design and where trees are present, provision should be made for the retention of those that are important by virtue of their significance within the local landscape, either as a result of their size, form and maturity or because they are rare or unusual.
29. The applicant has proposed additional soft landscaping to the northwest side of the container to soften the appearance of the built form.
30. Tree officer: "Screening and planting specifications: No development shall start until full details of screening and soft landscape works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and these works shall be carried out as approved.
31. Details shall include specifications for screening of the container hereby approved and details of all proposed trees, hedges and shrubs; ground preparation, planting specifications and ongoing maintenance, together with details of areas to be grass seeded or turfed. Planting schedules shall include details of species, plant sizes and proposed numbers/densities.
32. All new planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding season following the completion or occupation of any part of the development (whichever is the sooner) or otherwise in accordance with a programme to be agreed. Any trees or plants (including those retained as part of the development) which either during development or within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed, or, in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation."

Other Matter

33. It is acknowledged that the previous planning application allowed a temporary permission for this welfare cabin for a period of 3 years which has not expired. The PPG states the following:

34. "Circumstances where a temporary permission may be appropriate include where a trial run is needed in order to assess the effect of the development on the area or where it is expected that the planning circumstances will change in a particular way at the end of that period.
35. It will rarely be justifiable to grant a second temporary permission (except in cases where changing circumstances provide a clear rationale, such as temporary classrooms and other school facilities). Further permissions can normally be granted permanently or refused if there is clear justification for doing so. There is no presumption that a temporary grant of planning permission will then be granted permanently."
36. As such, a further temporary permission would not be supported in this case; however, the applicant has provided sufficient justification for the intended purpose and therefore it is recommended to approve this permanently, subject to the removal should the use cease for a continued period of time.

Conclusion

37. In conclusion, the application would not result in inappropriate development within the Green Belt, as they would provide appropriate facilities for outdoor sport and recreation. The design and appearance of the development are considered acceptable and would not have a significant harmful impact to the character of the area. The proposal would not have a harmful impact on neighbouring amenity or on nearby trees.
38. The recommendation is made in light of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Government's Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). It is considered that in respect of the assessment of this application significant weight has been given to policies within the Council's Core Strategy 2008 and the Tandridge Local Plan: Part 2 – Detailed Policies 2014 in accordance with paragraph 218 and 219 of the NPPF. Due regard as a material consideration has been given to the NPPF and PPG in reaching this recommendation.
39. All other material considerations, including third party comments, have been considered but none are considered sufficient to change the recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION: PERMIT subject to the following conditions

1. This decision refers to drawings numbered 122/101A received on 5th September 2022, 122/102A, 122/103A 5th May 2023 122/100B received on 17th May 2023. The development shall be carried out in accordance with these approved drawings. There shall be no variations from these approved drawings.

Reason: To ensure that the scheme proceeds as set out in the planning application and therefore remains in accordance with the Development Plan.

2. Within the first 3 months of this planning permission, full details of screening and soft landscape works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and these works shall be carried out as approved.

Details shall include specifications for screening of the container hereby approved and details of all proposed trees, hedges and shrubs; ground

preparation, planting specifications and ongoing maintenance, together with details of areas to be grass seeded or turfed. Planting schedules shall include details of species, plant sizes and proposed numbers/densities.

All new planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding season following the completion or occupation of any part of the development (whichever is the sooner) or otherwise in accordance with a programme to be agreed. Any trees or plants (including those retained as part of the development) which either during development or within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed, or, in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: To maintain and enhance the visual amenities of the development in accordance with Policy CSP18 of the Tandridge District Core Strategy 2008 and Policy DP7, DP9, DP10 of the Tandridge Local Plan: Part 2 – Detailed Policies 2014.

3. If the use in relation to outdoor sport and recreation and the need for the container ceases for more than 3 consecutive years, then, unless otherwise agreed beforehand in writing by the Local Planning Authority, the land should be reinstated to its original condition and a scheme of restoration of the site shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for its written approval. The approved scheme of restoration shall be fully implemented within 6 months of the written approval of the scheme by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the landscape impact of the development exists only for the lifetime of the development.