

COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 11th December 2019

Ward: Mapledurham

App No.: 191677

Address: Mapledurham Playing Fields, Upper Woodcote Road, Caversham, Reading

Proposal: Refurbishment and single storey front rear and side extensions to the pavilion building

Applicant: Reading Borough Council

Target Decision Date: 13th December 2019

RECOMMENDATION:

GRANT full planning permission subject to the following conditions:

Conditions

1. Standard time limit for planning permission - 3 years.
2. Development to be carried out in accordance with approved plans
3. Pre-commencement submission and approval of materials details
4. Pre-commencement implementation of protection measures for hedgerow
5. Pre-occupation implementation of replacement tree planting
6. Landscaping maintenance (replacement planting within 5 years)
7. Pre-commencement submission and approval of endoscope bat survey
8. No installation of additional plant unless details submitted and agreed with the LPA
9. Standard Construction Hours

Informatives

1. Positive and proactive requirement
2. Terms and conditions
3. Pre-commencement conditions
4. Fee for conditions discharge
5. CIL
6. Building Regulations approval required

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application site comprises the existing pavilion building at Mapledurham Playing Fields. The pavilion contains a central hall with a raised pitched roof over with adjoining flat roof elements on either end which provide changing rooms, a kitchen, toilets and storage facilities.
- 1.2 The building is located at the northern end of the playing fields, close to the access driveway from Upper Woodcote Road. In front (north) of the building is an area of car parking, to the east are tennis courts, and to the south and west are areas of grass playing field and the site of the recently permitted new primary school (ref. 182200/VARIAT).
- 1.3 The closest neighbouring residential properties are houses on Hewett Close, Little Woodcote Close and Knowle Close that back onto the playing fields.

- 1.5 The application has been referred to the Committee for a decision because the applicant is Reading Borough Council.



Site Location Plan

2. PROPOSAL

2.1 The application seeks full planning permission for refurbishment of the pavilion building and single storey front rear and side extensions to the existing single storey pavilion building. Permission was given in 2013 for extensions to the pavilion (ref. 130613), which were part implemented in that extensions to the east of the building for the tennis club were undertaken. That permission is not proposed to be completed, as the changes now required to upgrade the pavilion differ significantly from the 2013 approval and hence the requirement for this fresh planning application.

2.2 The proposed extensions and refurbishment works include:

- A 28m² single storey front extension to the north elevation of the building, adjacent to the existing car park area, to provide a new main entrance lobby and office area for the pavilion.
- A 10m² single storey front extension to the north elevation of the building, adjacent to the proposed new entrance, to form two referee changing rooms and disabled accessible toilet.
- The existing main entrance lobby area is to be re-built to the same footprint to provide a store area.
- Two existing changing rooms in the north east corner of the building are proposed to be converted to two meeting rooms. Four new front windows are proposed to provide daylighting.
- An existing meeting room, two store rooms and a WC are to be converted to form two football changing rooms. A 22m² side extension

is also proposed to the west flank elevation of the building to provide dedicated shower and toilet facilities for the changing rooms.

- An 18m² single storey rear extension to the rear south west corner of the building to provide two store rooms.
- A 25m² single storey rear extension to the existing kitchen to the south east corner of the building.
- Conversion of the existing referee changing facilities in the eastern part of the building to provide enlarged female toilet facilities.
- Replacement of the existing low-pitch pavilion roof with a trussed gabled pitched roof, overlaid with goosewing grey cladding with wood grain feature to gable ends.
- Replacement doors to hall area to the rear (south) elevation of the building.

2.3 It is intended that the works would be carried out in two phases with the first phase to include the proposed internal refurbishments and reconfiguration together with the 10m² front extension to provide referee changing rooms and 22m² side extension to the west side of the pavilion to provide the toilet and shower facilities for the relocation changing rooms. The second phase of the works would entail the remaining extensions to the building. This application seeks planning permission for all the proposed works. A DAS, tree report and bat survey accompany this application.

2.4 Community Infrastructure levy (CIL):

The applicant has completed a CIL liability form with the submission. In this instance the development would not be chargeable for CIL due to the pavilion being under a D1 (non-residential institutions) use class.

3. PLANNING HISTORY

Ref	Description	Decision
890904	Single storey flat roof extension to the pavilion's changing rooms	Granted
930614	Creation of a tennis court	Granted
940439	Erection of floodlighting to two tennis courts	Refused
981046	Provision of floodlighting to two tennis courts	Refused - allowed on appeal
130613	Replacement and extension of roof, installation of new roof lights and construction of a veranda on east elevation / permitted	Granted. Partially implemented
171023	The Heights Primary School construction	Granted
182200	A minor material amendment to planning permission ref. 171023	Granted
190240	Landscaping works to Mapledurham playing fields	Granted
182140	New floodlights to the existing tennis courts	Granted

4. CONSULTATIONS

4.1 Statutory

Sport England - No objection.

4.2 Non-statutory

RBC Natural Environment - No objections, subject to conditions to secure the replacement tree planting and measures to protect existing vegetation.

RBC Ecology - No objection, subject to a condition to require an endoscope bat survey to be submitted and approved by the LPA prior to the commencement of works.

RBC Transport - Comments to be provided in an update report.

RBC Leisure - No objection.

4.3 Public

No.s 1-7 Little Woodcote Close, 28-29 Hewett Avenue, 3-9 Hewett Close and 2-4 Knowle Close were notified of the application by letter. Two site notices were also displayed at the application site (one outside the pavilion building and one at the entrance to the playing fields from Upper Woodcote Road) on 12th November 2019.

At the time of writing this report no letters of representation have been received. The closing date for comments is 3rd December 2019 and details of any representations received will be provided in an update report.

5. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which states at Paragraph 11 “Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development”.

5.2 For this Local Planning Authority the development plan is now in one document - the Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019), which fully replaces the Core Strategy, the Sites and Detailed Policies Document and the Reading Central Area Action Plan. The relevant policies are:

- CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction
- CC3: Adaptation to Climate Change
- CC6: Accessibility and the Intensity of Development
- CC7: Design and the Public Realm
- CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
- EN7: Local Green Space and Public Open Space
- EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network
- EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodland
- EN16: Pollution and Water Resources
- TR1: Achieving the Transport Strategy
- TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters
- TR4: Cycle Routes and Facilities
- TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging

6. APPRAISAL

The main matters to be considered are:

Principle of development

- 6.1 Mapledurham playing fields is a designated area of public open space under Policy EN7Nn (Local Green Space and Public Open Space). This policy protects designated open space from development that would result in loss of the open space, which would erode the quality of the open space through insensitive adjacent development or which would jeopardise the use or enjoyment of the open space by the public. Policy OU1 (New and Existing Community Facilities) supports proposals for the improvement of existing community facilities.
- 6.2 The proposed extensions are minor in scale and predominantly 'infill' in nature. There would be loss of a narrow 2m wide strip of playing field land to the west side of the pavilion to accommodate the extension to provide the toilet and shower facilities for the relocated changing rooms. This area currently forms part of an informal access to the playing fields from the community car parking to the north of the pavilion and a new more formal vehicle and pedestrian access route is being provided in this location as part of the planning permission for the new primary school in the north west corner of the playing fields. The proposed extension would not intrude upon this access.
- 6.3 To the south elevation of the building, small kitchen and store room extensions would utilise land that currently forms the patio area to the pavilion and is hard surfaced. The car park area to the north of the pavilion does not form part of the designated open space such that the front entrance and reference changing room extensions would have no impact in this respect. In the context of the site as a whole the proposals would result in loss of only a very small area of playing fields which would be confined to the areas immediately adjacent to the existing pavilion building. The small areas of land to be lost would not impact on sports pitch provision within the playing fields nor do officers consider would result in loss of any land that would jeopardise the use or enjoyment of the Mapledurham playing field open space by the public.
- 6.4 Sport England is a statutory consultee for any planning application impacting on playing fields. Having assessed the proposals Sport England raises no objection to the application and states that, *'the proposed development is for ancillary facilities supporting the principal use of the site as a playing field, and does not affect the quantity or quality of playing pitches or otherwise adversely affect their use.'*
- 6.5 The proposed works are not sought to expand the facilities on offer at the pavilion or an intensification of its use, rather they seek to refurbish and improve the current facilities and level of provision. There would be no material loss of playing field or open space and the extensions are considered to have been sensitively designed in terms of their location and modest scale. It is considered that the improved facilities at the pavilion would enhance the use and enjoyment of the playing fields by the public and would therefore comply with Policies EN7Nn and OU1.

Design considerations and effect on character

- 6.6 Policy CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) aims to preserve or enhance the character of the area in which a development is located.
- 6.7 It is considered the proposed alterations and extensions would enhance the appearance of the building, notably through the addition of pitched roofs over existing flat roof sections to give the building a more cohesive appearance. The proposed extensions are considered to be sensitively designed and located and their modest scale is such that they integrate well with the existing pavilion building. The proposed pitched roof sections are to be finished with goosewing grey coloured cladding with a wood grain feature to the gable ends. Submission and approval of samples/exact specifications of the all external finishes to the roof, and facing brick/cladding for the walls as well as window and doors is recommended to be secured by condition.
- 6.8 The proposals are considered to accord with Policy CC7.

Impact on residential amenity

- 6.9 Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity) seeks that development proposals safeguard the amenity of surrounding occupiers. Policy EN16 (Pollution and Water Resources) seeks that new development does not have any adverse impacts in terms of pollution.
- 6.10 The proposals are for relatively minor extensions to the existing building. The proposed works would enhance the existing facilities and are not considered to facilitate any significant intensification of the use of the pavilion.
- 6.11 The nearest residential dwellings to the pavilion are located 30m to the north beyond the existing car park area at Little Woodcote Close and 40m to the east beyond the existing tennis courts at Knowle Close. It is not considered that the proposals would be detrimental to the residential amenity or outlook of these surrounding occupiers. An existing flue to the roof of the building is to be increased in height to reflect the proposed new pitched roof but no additional plant equipment is proposed. A condition is recommended to require that details of any additional plant equipment are submitted to and agreed with the Local Planning Authority prior to installation, in order to control noise effects of any air-conditioning or similar equipment.
- 6.12 The proposals are considered to accord with Policies CC8 and EN16.

Natural Environment

- 6.13 Policy CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) requires that development maintains and enhances the character of the area in which it is located including landscaping. Policy EN12 (Biodiversity and the Green Network) seeks that development should retain, protect and incorporate feature of biodiversity. Policy EN14 (Trees, Hedges and Woodlands) states that development should protect existing vegetation and make provision for new planting.
- 6.14 The only existing trees affected upon by the proposals are two Norway Maples adjacent to the front (north) elevation of the building. The trees have been surveyed and found to be in poor condition and as part of the

application it is proposed to replace both trees with two Scots Pines. The replacement trees are to be in same location as existing. The Natural Environment Officer is satisfied with the proposed replacement planting and planting methodologies proposed, implementation of which is recommended to be secured by condition.

- 6.15, There is also potential that construction works to the rear (south) of the pavilion could impact on a hedgerow located along the western boundary of the adjacent tennis courts. Details of protection measures in the form of Heras fencing have been submitted. Subject to a condition to secure implementation of the protection measures, the Natural Environment Officer is satisfied that the hedgerow would be adequately protected.
- 6.16 The proposals involve works to the roof of the existing building which given its location, on a playing field with trees nearby, has the potential to host bats. A bat survey has been submitted as part of the application which identified that the building does have potential for roosting bats, however no evidence of the presence of bats was found. Given the proposed extensions could affect the areas of the roof with potential to host bats, the submitted survey recommends that an endoscope survey of the relevant areas of the building is undertaken prior to starting works and that if bats are found, then no construction works shall commence until a qualified ecologist has advised further as to how/when works can proceed. Details of this are recommended to be secured by way of condition.
- 6.17 Subject to the conditions indicated, the proposal are considered to accord with policies CC7, EN12, and EN14.

Transport

- 6.18 Policies TR3 (Access, Traffic and Highway Related Matters), TR1 (Achieving the Transport Strategy) and TR5 (Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging) seek to address access, traffic, highway and parking-related matters relating to development.
- 6.19 The proposed refurbishment works will re-provide the existing facilities within the pavilion. It is not proposed to provide significant additional facilities or capacity that would result in an intensification of the use of the building. The pavilion is accessible by pedestrians and cyclists from Upper Woodcote Road and surrounding local roads by footpaths into and through the playing fields. There is an existing community car park to the north of the pavilion which caters for its use.
- 6.20 The existing car park is being improved as part of the works for the new primary school in the north west corner of the site and this works will also re-provide the existing cycle stands at the front of the pavilion.
- 6.21 Comments from RBC Transport and any recommended conditions will be provided in an update report.

Sustainability

- 6.22 Policies CC2 (Sustainable Design and Construction) and CC3 (Adaption to Climate Change) seek that the design of buildings uses energy, water, materials and other resources efficiently and takes into account the effects

of climate change. Applications for this level of this development are required to meet the BREEAM 'Very Good' standard under Policy CC2. It is clear from the proposals that despite a significant upgrade to the building fabric, this level will not be reached. Your officers are seeking a full explanation of the improvements and expect to be able to recommend in an update report why achievement of this policy aim is not appropriate in this instance.

Equalities Impact and Accessibility

- 6.25 In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to the particular planning application. Therefore, In terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development. The extension and refurbishment of the pavilion will improve the current arrangements by providing two disabled-accessible WC facilities, one with a wet room and the other to include a baby changing facilities. The existing outside areas/approaches are maintained as accessible and there would continue to be no step changes within the extended building. The proposals are therefore considered to accord with the principles of Policy CC6.

7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 This proposal has been carefully considered in the context of the Reading Borough Local Plan and the recommendation is to grant full planning permission subject to the conditions set out in the recommendation box at the top of this report.

Case Officer: Matt Burns

Plans and documents submitted:

Drawing ref.3042/307 Rev B - Site Location Plan

Drawing ref.3042/300 Rev A - Existing Ground Floor Plan with Vehicular Access Zone

Drawing ref.3042/303 Rev E - Proposed Ground Floor plan

Planning and Design Statement - Mapledurham Playing Fields Pavilion Works

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 21st October 2019

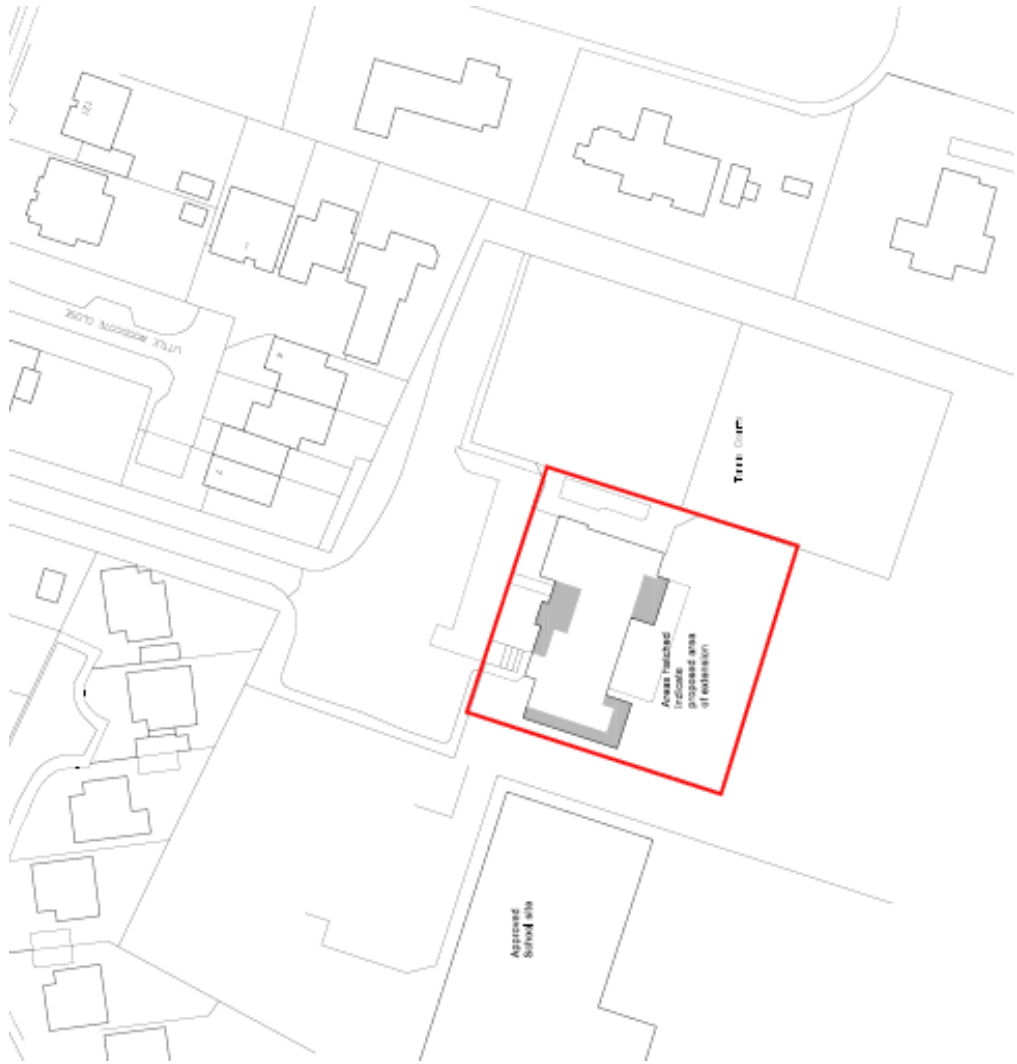
Drawing ref.3042/306 Rev D - Proposed Elevations

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 18th November 2019

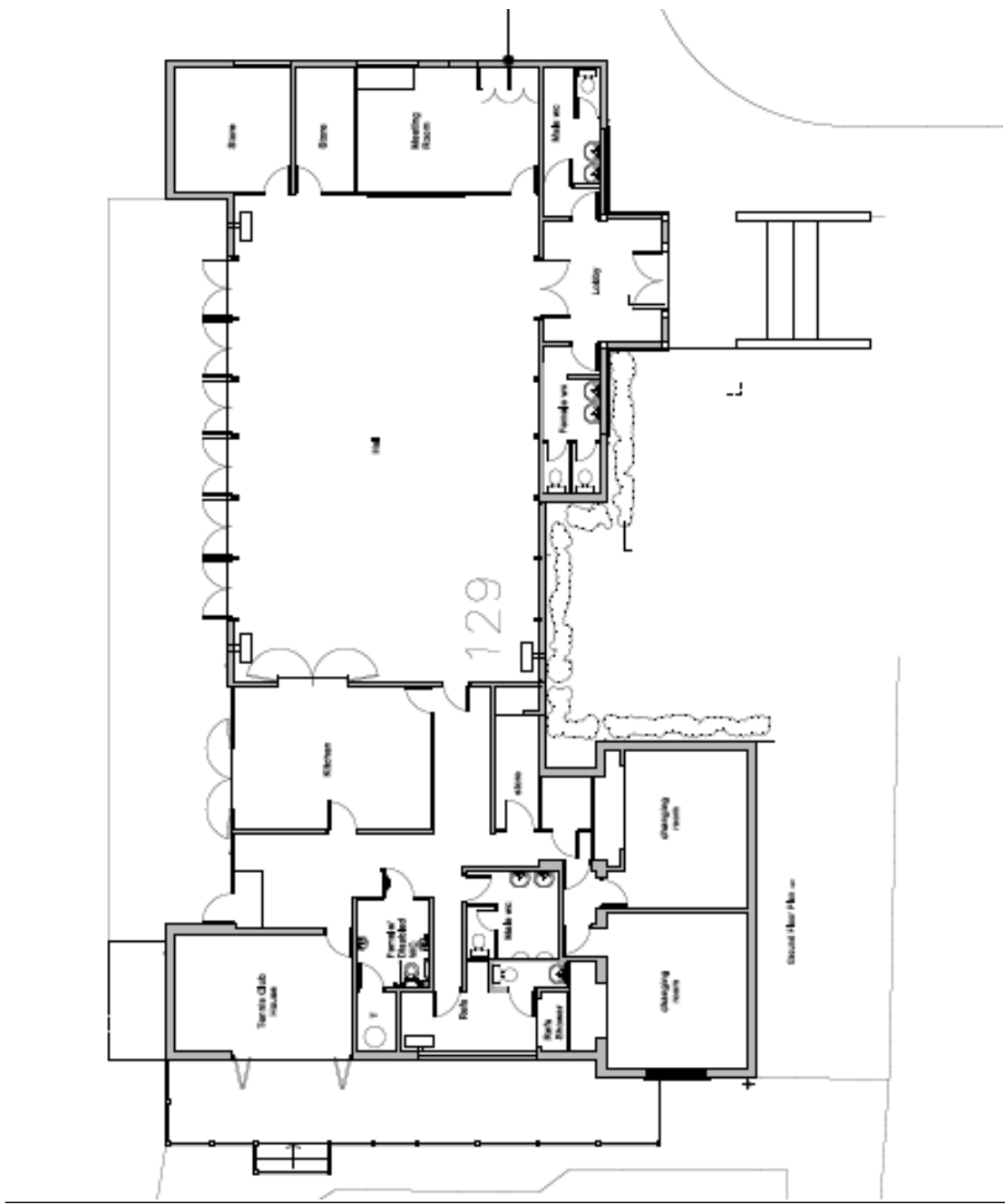
Arboricultural Statement - Mapledurham Playing Fields Pavilion Works

John Wenman Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment ref. R2416/a

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 26th November 2019



Proposed Site Plan



Existing floor plan

