

QUEENS COLLEGE

CHANGE OF USE OF LAND AND BUILDINGS AT CIVIL SERVICE SPORTS CLUB, TRULL ROAD, TAUNTON, FROM ASSEMBLY AND LEISURE USE (CLASS D2) TO NON RESIDENTIAL INSTITUTION (CLASS D1) IN ORDER TO INCORPORATE IT INTO THE ADJACENT QUEENS COLLEGE CAMPUS

321546.123357

Full Planning Permission

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PROPOSAL

Permission is sought for the change of use of the Civil Service Sports Club buildings from Use Class D2 (Assembly and Leisure) to Use Class D1 (Non-residential Institution) to be incorporated into the adjacent Queen's College campus. The College have long term aspirations for the development of a swimming pool and/or a new sports hall within the wider campus but there are no new buildings or material alterations to the existing buildings as part of this application.

The existing Sport Club would be refurbished and utilised as a changing facility for sports teams and provide meeting/exam space for conference/social functions and educational purposes (for internal and external use). The Indoor Bowls Green, whilst the structure would be retained, would be utilised for meetings, storage or continuation of the bowls facility. The football pitch would be retained. The parking area would primarily be used by Queen's College staff thus freeing up parking spaces within the main site for use by visitors. The agent states that 20 of those spaces are already leased by Queen's College. The existing bar will be retained and a new license will be sought subject to planning permission.

The proposed change of use is inextricably linked with the proposal for a new CSSC facility on the adjacent site, reference 52/2008/019, which would replace the existing facility on the application site.

SITE DESCRIPTION AND HISTORY

The application site relates to an area of land (circa 0.77 ha) which is sited directly to the west of the Queens College campus. It consists of a sports club, an indoor bowls green, a five side or multi use all weather court, parking areas and open space between buildings.

The site is bounded by the CSSC to the west, Queens College playing fields to the south, the main Queen's College camps to the east and a residential area to the north.

The primary access to the site is from Trull Road via Civil Service Lane. There are three car parking areas on the site.

CONSULTATION AND REPRESENTATION RESPONSES

PARISH COUNCIL –

1. Further detailed information is required on the proposed footpath/cycleway link, including: -
 - how it merges with the access road from Trull Road into the car park and how it will deal with the interaction with cars/cyclists/pedestrians
 - whether or not there will be proper segregation for cyclists/pedestrians from the entrance to the car park and the present sports club building?
2. Would the main club building have a bar and, if so, will Queens College be applying for a new license?
3. The Council note that the hard court lit area has now come out of application 52/2008/019 and has been included in the Queens College application above. The Parish Council would wish to see this facility included in the legal agreement for shared use with Queens College and TDBC. This hard court is presently well used by outside groups and organisations and should still be available for the wider community use.
4. Will there be a time restriction in the evenings on the use of the facilities?

SPORT ENGLAND – We note from the planning statement accompanying this application that, as part of the proposals for a new sports facility on the CSSC site, an agreement has been reached whereby Queen's College would purchase the land and buildings, which comprise:

1. The existing CSSC building;
2. A building used for indoor bowls;
3. A floodlit multi-use games area.

Our comments are made in the context of the following policy documents:

1. Planning Policy Guidance Note 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation.

Paragraph 10 states:

'Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land should not be built on unless an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space or the buildings and land to be surplus to requirement...In the absence of a robust and up-to-date assessment by a local authority, an applicant for planning permission may seek to demonstrate through an independent assessment that the land or buildings are surplus to requirements. Developers will need to consult the local community and demonstrate that their proposals are widely supported by them'.

2. Planning for Sport and Active Recreation: Objectives and Opportunities – Sport England (2005).

Planning Policy Objective 2: To prevent the loss of facilities or access to natural resources which are important in terms of sports development. Should redevelopment be unavoidable, an equivalent (or better) replacement facility should be provided in a suitable location.

We note that para 3.2 of the Planning Statement states that:

'The proposed change of use is inextricably linked with the proposal for a new CSSC facility on the adjacent site, which would replace the existing facility on the application site. The two proposals are entirely co-dependant, as one cannot go ahead without the other receiving planning approval as well'.

Sport England's view on this application is that, whilst we accept that the existing clubhouse building will be replaced once the new CSSC facility is built, this would not be case in relation to the indoor bowls and multi-use games area.

We note from the Planning Statement (para 4.1) that the indoor bowls building may or may not be retained in such use. The multi-use games area would be retained as existing. Sport England would oppose the change of use of these sports facilities, unless one of the following requirements is met:

1. In the case of the existing clubhouse building, a condition is attached to any approval that is granted ensuring that the change of use is not implemented until the new CSSC building is operational;
2. In the case of both the indoor bowls building and the multi-use games area, either an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown these facilities are surplus to requirement or an equivalent (or better) replacement facility is provided in a suitable location. Alternatively, it might be that a planning condition could be attached to any planning approval that is granted, requiring these facilities to continue to be made available to the community for sports use.

In light of the above comments, Sports England wishes to OBJECT to this planning application as it currently stands. We shall be pleased to comment further should any amendments be made which would address our concerns regarding the loss of these existing sports facilities.

Revised comments (15/12/08) I have spoken to the Council's leisure department and I have undertaken an analysis of indoor bowls provision in Taunton Deane using Sport England's national database of sports facilities (Active Places Power). The conclusion from this is:

- England has an overall supply of about 4 indoor bowls rinks per 100,000 population;
- The South West Region figure is about 6 rinks per 100,000;
 - Taunton Deane currently has approx 10 rinks per 100,000 population, without counting the facility at the CSSC.

In light of this, I can confirm that I would agree with the Council's leisure services officer that there should be sufficient capacity at the Blackbrook and Vivary indoor bowls facilities to provide for those players displaced as a result of the loss of this facility.

LEISURE SERVICES – No objection to the proposal but solely on the condition of the CSSC receiving permission for a new sports centre on the western part of the site adjacent to College Way. We would wish to see the existing multi use games area retained. Should the application for the new CSSC be rejected then we would wish to object to this application on the grounds that it will lead to the loss of facilities on the application site.

Updated comments (27/11/08) Given the fact that the existing facility is a single rink complex and is infrequently used, I am satisfied that sufficient capacity exists at the Blackbrook Way and Vivary facilities to provide for those players displaced as a result of the loss of this facility.

LANDSCAPE OFFICER – No anticipated landscape impact.

REPRESENTATIONS

2 letters of OBJECTION have been received. One letter is objecting as the proposed is linked to the new CSSC building, the second expresses concern to the loss of the poplar trees edging College Way – proposed they should be served with a TPO.

Planning Officer Comment - It should be noted that the trees are outside of the application site, but relate to the proposed CSSC building.

2 letters raising NO OBJECTION to the proposal as the proposal would not be any different to the use it is now; no objection subject to existing facilities are maintained for football, cricket etc for teams who have used those facilities for many years.

PLANNING POLICIES

PPS1 - Delivering Sustainable Development,
PPG17 - Sport and Recreation,
RPG10 - Regional Planning Guidance for the South West,
TCS2 - RPG 10 TCS2 - Culture, Leisure and Sport,
TRAN1 - RPG 10 TRAN 1 - Reducing the need to Travel,
TRAN10 - RPG 10 TRAN 10 - Walking, Cycling & Public Transport,
STR1 - Sustainable Development,
STR4 - Development in Towns,
S&ENPP37 - S&ENP - Facilities for Sport and Recreation,
S&ENPP21 - S&ENP - Town Centre Uses,
S&ENPP44 - S&ENP - Cycling,
S&ENPP48 - S&ENP - Access and Parking,
S&ENPP49 - S&ENP - Transport Requirements of New Development,
S1 - TDBCLP - General Requirements,
S2 - TDBCLP - Design,
M1 - TDBCLP - Non-residential Developments,
M2 - TDBCLP - Non-residential Car Parking Outside Taun & Well,
M3 - TDBCLP - Non-residential Development & Transport Provision,
M5 - TDBCLP - Cycling,
C3 - TDBCLP - Protection of Recreational Open Space,
C5 - TDBCLP - Sports Centres,
EN6 - TDBCLP - Protection of Trees, Woodlands, Orchards & Hedgerows,
EN23 - TDBCLP - Areas of High Archaeological Potential,
EN24 - TDBCLP - Urban Open Space,

DETERMINING ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS

The application site forms part of the wider re-development of the CSSC land. It is considered that subject to the granting of planning consent for the proposed CSSC

building, reference 52/08/0019, that the proposed change of use is acceptable. The Highway Authority has previously indicated, during meetings, that they would be supportive of the existing buildings being incorporated into the Queen College campus, as they have raised concerns to a separate use due to the poor access into the site. The proposed cycle route, also connected to the CSSC application, would help achieve an important link and it is expected would reduce vehicular traffic to the application site. However, the formal response of the Highway Authority is awaited.

It is considered that the proposed change of use would not have any adverse impact on open space or recreational opportunities. The loss of the indoor bowls facility is regrettable. However, both Sport England and the Council's leisure services officer are satisfied that Taunton Deane currently has surplus provision of this type of facility. The existing sports club building would still be utilised for recreational use, but it is noted that the proposed CSSC building would, subject to consent, provide enhanced and alternative sports facilities. The incorporation of the site into the wider Queen's College campus would allow for a more efficient utilisation of their existing facilities and would allow for the potential future development of additional educational and sports related facilities.

It is therefore considered the proposed change of use is acceptable subject to the imposition of conditions detailed below.

RECOMMENDATION AND REASON(S)

Subject to the views of the Highway Authority and those of the Council's solicitor, with regards to ensuring the existing sports facilities are retained for community use if the CSSC building is not commenced, PERMISSION be GRANTED subject to the following conditions: - time limit, highways, cycle track, change of use shall not be implemented until development has commenced on the CSSC building (unless covered within S106 agreement attached to the CSSC application 52/2008/019). Use restricted to non residential education and training centres and no other use within Class D2 (Assembly and Leisure).

The proposed development would meet the requirements of Taunton Deane Local Policies C3, C5 and EN24 in so far as the applicant has demonstrated that the loss of the bowling facility would not be detrimental - as sufficient capacity is available elsewhere within Taunton Deane Borough. The change of use forms part of a wider redevelopment of the CSSC site and the incorporation of the application site and change of use in connection with Queens College is considered acceptable and there would be no significant loss of amenity to neighbouring properties or residential uses.

Recommended Decision: Approval

RECOMMENDED CONDITION(S) (if applicable)

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun within three years of the date of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with the provisions of Section 91 Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51(1) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

2. The premises shall be used for non-residential education and training, except for the provision of sports facilities and changing rooms as set out within the accompanying application, and for no other purpose (including any other purpose in Class D1 of the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification) unless agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: The Local Planning Authority wish to retain control over the use of the site in accordance with Taunton Deane Local Plan Policies S1, S2, C3 and EN24.

Notes for compliance

In preparing this report the Planning Officer has considered fully the implications and requirements of the Human Rights Act 1988.

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