

38/2006/408

TAUNTON SCHOOL

**CONSTRUCTION OF TWO ALL WEATHER SPORTS PITCHES, ERECTION OF FLOODLIGHTING TO ONE PITCH, FENCING, SPORTS PAVILION AND FORMATION OF PARKING AT LAND AT TAUNTON SCHOOL NORTH OF GREENWAY ROAD, TAUNTON**

321835/126218

FULL

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**PROPOSAL**

The proposal is for the formation of two Astro turf pitches intended largely for school use as well as potential community use, together with associated security and safety fencing, a sports pavilion and parking. In addition the proposal includes the floodlighting of one of the sports pitches via eight 15 m high columns. The pitches are located so that existing boundary trees and hedges remain and allow for new planting between Gypsy Lane and the pitches. Access to the site will be via the existing entrance off Stanway Close with a new drive suitable for two vehicles to pass to serve the new car park area.

**CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS**

COUNTY HIGHWAY AUTHORITY this is a resubmission of application 38/2006/200 and I do not believe the highway issues are any different. No objection on transport grounds subject to details of access, visibility and parking as shown on the drawings accompanying the application being conditioned to be constructed prior to the use commencing. LIGHTING CONSULTANT there is no evidence of lighting to the new access drive from Stanway Close and the new car park. Lighting will be essential when floodlighting of pitch 'B' is in operation. Deleted floodlight column positions for pitch 'A' are still shown on the drawings for the pavilion. Columns M5 to M8 for floodlighting of pitch 'B' should be installed to allow for future lighting of pitch 'A' at a later date if approved. The developer will be responsible for the erection and future maintenance of shields to reduce the light source glare visible to drivers on the adopted and non-adopted sections of Gypsy Lane. How does the developer intend to reduce to a minimum the light impact on the north aspect of 10 Gypsy Lane.

LANDSCAPE OFFICER subject to the protection of the existing tree planting during construction and details of the new tree planting it should be possible to integrate the proposals into the local landscape. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER external lighting shall be so located, installed and permanently maintained that inconvenience from glare, whether direct or reflected, shall not be caused at any other premises. LEISURE DEVELOPMENT MANAGER the plans appear to provide suitable facilities for school use. I note community use is envisaged in the evenings and this provision is welcomed.

8 LETTERS OF OBJECTION have been received raising the following issues:- fence erected which blocks private right of way to lane and turning area; proposal will increase noise with parking and access and lighting will affect bedroom windows; loss of privacy; more noise and light pollution; the pavilion and lighting will spoil views; sign posts required to prevent parking of vehicles on track to private garages; traffic will increase; access should be via Cresswell Avenue as safer; pitches should be championship size; query over flooding and concern over car park drainage; concern over future lighting; extent of use proposed; height of lighting columns should be reduced; use should be limited to 9 p.m.; impact of noise and light on neighbouring properties will have a massive impact; the fencing and light columns will put 10 Gypsy Lane affectively in industrial area.

## **POLICY CONTEXT**

Taunton Deane Local Plan Policies S1 – General Requirements, S2 – Design, C5 – Sports Facilities, EN34 – Control of External Lighting.

## **ASSESSMENT**

The proposal consists of a number of separate elements to provide improved sports facilities that are intended largely for school use. The issues here are whether the proposals have an acceptable impact on the amenity of the area and residential properties in particular.

The application proposes a new pavilion on site to replace a previous structure (that was burnt down) to provide changing facilities, a social area, small kitchen and a maintenance store. The building would be single storey and constructed of brick and render. It would be up to 4.5 m high and sited 5 m off the southern boundary and 13 m away from the property to the west. Parking would be provided to the east of the building and would consist of 18 car spaces and 4 minibus spaces. The design and impact of the pavilion on the nearby properties is considered to be acceptable and a condition can be imposed to prevent or limit the use of amplified music.

The existing access to the site is off Stanway Close and this is intended to remain the same with improvements to form a drive to allow two vehicles to pass. The Highway Authority has raised no objection on highway grounds subject to conditioning of the submitted details prior to the development being brought into use.

The proposed sports pitches require a certain level of security and safety fencing and this is illustrated on the submitted drawings. The closest residential property at 10 Gypsy Lane lies adjacent to the sports pitches and the closest fencing in front of the dwelling is a 2.1 m high security fence that runs from the residential boundary away at right angles. A further 3 m high mesh safety fence runs 3 m inside that. This fencing will be visible from the adjacent property and while this will have an impact, this is not considered so severe an impact on amenity to warrant refusal of the proposal on these grounds.

The major impact of the scheme is the amenity impact on the area from the noise and floodlighting proposed. The lighting is intended for school use up to 5 p.m. year round and possibly up to 10 p.m. for community use in the winter. The potential

community use would be throughout the week and not Saturdays. A condition over the floodlighting times is proposed to limit use to 9 p.m. as per the site in the south of Greenway Road to lessen evening impact on amenity. The submitted lighting scheme has been revised so that now only 1 pitch furthest away from the nearest Gypsy Lane property is proposed to be floodlit. This has been designed to significantly limit the impact on the nearby residential property. The scheme utilises 8 x 15 m high masts which according to the applicant meets lighting levels for all sporting activities despite neighbour concerns.

The revised scheme is considered to satisfactorily address the previous concerns raised over the amenity impact of floodlighting both pitches. The current proposal provides adequate access, parking and turning and the amenity impact of the new pavilion, sports pitches, fencing and lighting is considered an acceptable one and is recommended for approval.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Permission be GRANTED subject to conditions of time limit, materials, landscaping, protection of trees during construction, restricted lighting hours to 9 p.m., installation as submitted design, access, parking and turning consolidated, surfaced and laid out as agreed prior to use commencing, no amplified music, services underground and details of new external lighting.

**REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION:-** The proposal is considered to comply with Taunton Deane Local Plan Policies S1, S2 and EN34 and material considerations do not indicate otherwise.

**In preparing this report the Planning Officer has considered fully the implications and requirements of the Human Rights Act 1998.**

**CONTACT OFFICER: 356398 MR G CLIFFORD**

NOTES: