

OFFICER REPORT FOR COMMITTEE

DATE: 9th October 2024

**P/24/0752/VC
COGNITA SCHOOLS LTD**

**STUBBINGTON WARD
AGENT: MACDONALD PLANNING
CONSULTANCY**

VARIATION OF CONDITION 8 OF P/14/1238/FP TO ALLOW THE USE OF THE PITCH BY STUBBINGTON YOUTH FOOTBALL CLUB (IN ADDITION TO MEONCROSS SCHOOL) ON SATURDAY MORNINGS

LAND NORTH OF MEONCROSS SCHOOL, BURNT HOUSE LANE,
STUBBINGTON

Report By

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 The application is being brought before planning committee due to the number of third-party representations received.

2.0 Site Description

2.1 The site measures 2.4 hectares and is located to the east of Burnt House Lane, Stubbington. The site is located outside of, but adjacent to the urban area.

2.2 The site is currently used as playing pitches by Meoncross School and visiting teams playing against the school.

2.3 The land to the north and east of the site consists of agricultural land of an open character. There is also agricultural land to the immediate south of the site, with Meoncross School located approximately 140 metres to the south. The land to the west of the site is of an urban character and contains residential properties and allotments.

2.4 The site is accessed via Burnt House Lane. The section of road to the south of the site has a gravelled surface. As a result, it does not experience a high volume of traffic.

3.0 Description of Proposal

3.1 Planning permission was granted in 2015 for change of use of the site from agricultural land to grass sports pitches for use by Meoncross School.

3.2 Condition 8 of the planning permission states:

The site shall be used only as a sports pitch by Meoncross School and associated visiting teams and for no other purpose whatsoever. Should the use of the site as a sports pitch by Meoncross School cease, the use of the site shall revert back to agricultural land.

REASON: To protect the amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring residential properties; in accordance with emerging policy DSP4 of the Local Plan Part 2: Development Sites and Policies.

- 3.3 This application has been submitted seeking a variation to Condition 8.
- 3.4 The school no longer uses the pitches on Saturday mornings. Stubbington Youth Football Club would like to use the pitches on Saturday mornings for matches and training purposes. Car parking will be provided within the school grounds to accommodate the youth football for 6 to 17 year olds. The hours of use would remain the same as previously approved: 0900 – 1300 Saturday mornings.

4.0 Policies

- 4.1 The following policies apply to this application:

Adopted Fareham Local Plan 2037

D2: Ensuring Good Environmental Conditions

NE1: Protection of Nature Conservation, Biodiversity and the Local Ecological Network.

TIN2: Highway Safety and Road Network

Other Documents:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023

5.0 Relevant Planning History

- 5.1 The following planning history is relevant:

P/14/1238/FP	CHANGE OF USE OF AGRICULTURAL LAND TO CREATE GRASS PLAYING PITCHES FOR MEON CROSS SCHOOL, PROVISION OF TOILET BLOCK AND 2 METRE HIGH WELD MESH PERIMTRER FENCING
APPROVE	10 June 2015

6.0 Representations

- 6.1 Six objections have been received raising the following concerns:

- All away teams should be advised there is no parking on the northern end of Burnt House Lane as this would cause disruption to residents, allotment users and emergency vehicle access;
- The proposal will generate increased traffic in this single track road which has no parking or turning facilities;
- The school have been allowing other teams to use the pitch on Saturday mornings for the past two years;
- Bollards have been removed, the lane which was improved has not been maintained, the potholes are more prominent and flooding is appalling, all of which have been a direct result of the increased traffic using the sports field;
- The previous conditions haven't been adhered to or enforced;

6.2 One comment of no objection has been received.

7.0 Consultations

7.1 No consultations were undertaken as part of this application.

8.0 Planning Considerations

8.1 The main issue to be considered when determining this application is the demand for drop off and parking generated by members of the football club and visiting teams; how they access the sports field; where they park their cars and how this may be harmful to the residential amenities of the occupiers of the neighbouring residential properties.

8.2 Burnt House Lane runs north to south, from Mays Lane to the village centre. The northern part of Burnt House Lane is narrow with a gravelled surface. It provides access to several residential properties in addition to the adjacent allotments and its small associated car park. It is not possible to park on the road without causing an obstruction. At the point where the lane runs southwards, it narrows until it reaches the school entrance further south. This part of the lane is an unadopted right of way.

8.3 There is no onsite parking within the sports field and there is limited space in front of the field gate for vehicles to turn. There is however ample parking available within the school grounds accessed from Windermere Avenue or the southern arm of Burnt House Lane.

8.4 The principle of the sports playing pitches use on the site was established in 2015 when the original planning application was approved.

8.5 When the previous application was considered, measures were put in place to secure all parking associated with the sports pitch use should be

within the school grounds and users would walk along the lane to the sports field.

- 8.6 A number of planning conditions were imposed on the original planning application in order to safeguard the residential amenities of the neighbouring residents. These conditions included:
1. Details of a parking management plan;
 2. Details of lockable bollards to be installed each end of the lane;
 3. Details of improvements to the section of Burnt House Lane that links the school site to the playing pitches site;
 4. Details of signage to be erected informing visitors about parking and access onto Burnt House Lane.
- 8.7 The above details were submitted and approved by the Council, however comments from local residents suggest that some of the conditions were not implemented/adhered to. The planning agent has explained that the parking management plan was not implemented as the member of staff responsible left the school shortly after planning permission was granted and their replacement was unaware of the obligation. The head of the school and business manager also moved on and their replacements were also unaware of the requirement.
- 8.8 Comments have been submitted regarding the condition of this section of the road. Officers can confirm that the surface of the road has been improved as required by the planning permission, however the school is not responsible for upgrading the road beyond what was agreed within the previous application.
- 8.9 Officers can confirm that the lockable bollards were installed but were subsequently removed by vandals. The purpose of the bollards was to prevent through traffic from using the road after the surface was improved to avoid noise disturbance to residents. The surface of the road was improved (in line the application requirements) however the road remains informal in nature and is therefore unlikely to result in an increased volume of traffic. Officers do not therefore consider replacement bollards to be necessary.
- 8.10 Officers have considered at great length what controls can be put in place to overcome the potential harm to local residents resulting from additional cars using the upper part of Burnt House Lane, use of the unadopted lane and indiscriminate parking in the area.
- 8.11 The applicant is aware of the concerns raised by local residents in relation to indiscriminate parking and use of the northern part of Burnt House Lane. In order to prevent this happening, they are suggesting a member of the football club is present in the car park at Meoncross School to actively manage the

parking of cars and to direct pedestrians along the lane to the sports field, with a second member of the football club stationed at the gate at the field entrance to the sports field to directing cars/persons back to the school via Mays Lane, as required. Drop off and parking information can also be shared via email and social media to ensure wide coverage before visitors reach the school.

- 8.12 Officers are aware that the parking management plan previously required by condition was not fully implemented due to the change in staff at the school. The use of a parking plan is essential to ensure visitors park in the appropriate area within the school. Officers have explained the importance of the parking plan to representatives of the school and Stubbington Youth Football Club and both parties understand that its use is required to make the use of the pitches acceptable. It would be the responsibility of representatives of the Football Club to ensure any visiting teams access the site via the School and do not use the northern arm of Burnt House Lane. Officers therefore recommend that a temporary permission is granted for a period of 1 year to allow the school to demonstrate that the parking plan is a practical solution to address residents' concerns. If the parking management plan is successful another application for the permanent use of the pitch on Saturday mornings by Stubbington Youth Football Club could be submitted.
- 8.13 The NPPF (paragraph 96) states that planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which enable and support healthy lifestyles for example through the provision of safe and accessible sports facilities. Paragraph 97 of the NPPF also states that Planning decisions should plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as sports venues) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments.
- 8.14 The proposed use of the school pitches by the Stubbington Youth Football Club for matches and training purposes would enable the members of the Stubbington Youth Football Club to take part in a hobby which contributes to a healthy lifestyle in line with paragraph 96 of the NPPF. The shared use of the school's pitch with the Stubbington Youth Football Club would also be aligned with paragraph 97 of the NPPF. In recognition of the community benefits associated with this proposal, and the measures proposed by the applicant and the Stubbington Youth Football Club to address the concerns raised, Officers suggest a temporary permission for one year to give the school the chance to demonstrate that the use of the site can be effectively managed in a way that minimises disturbance to neighbouring residents.

9.0 Recommendation

- 9.1 **GRANT TEMPORARY PLANNING PERMISSION FOR A PERIOD OF 1 YEAR**, subject to the following Conditions:

1. The use of the pitches by Stubbington Youth Football Club for matches and training purposes on Saturday mornings hereby permitted is granted for a limited period only expiring on 11 October 2025. On or before this date, the use by Stubbington Youth Football Club shall cease and the land restored to its former use by Meoncross School and visiting teams only.
REASON: To retain planning control over the use hereby permitted and to enable the circumstances leading to the grant of permission to be reviewed
2. The site shall be used only as a sports pitch by Meoncross School and associated visiting teams as well as by Stubbington Youth Football Club and associated visiting teams on Saturday mornings and for no other purpose whatsoever. Should the use of the site as a sports pitch by Meoncross School cease, the use of the site shall revert back to agricultural land.
REASON: To protect the amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring residential properties.
3. The use of the sports pitch hereby approved shall be between 09:00 and 18:00 hours Monday to Friday, between the hours of 09:00 and 13:00 on Saturdays and not at all on Sundays or Bank or Public Holidays.
REASON: To protect the amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring residential properties.
4. No megaphones or other sound amplifying equipment to be used within the site.
REASON: To protect to amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring residential properties.
5. No external lighting shall be installed on the site.
REASON: To protect the rural character of the area and to avoid any disturbance to bats.

THEN

DELEGATE authority to the Head of Planning to make any necessary modifications, deletion or addition to the proposed conditions.

10.0 Background Papers

- 10.1 Application documents and all consultation responses and representations received as listed on the Council's website under the application reference

number, together with all relevant national and local policies, guidance and standards and relevant legislation.

Land North of Meon Cross School Burnt House Lane, Stubbington

