

OFFICER REPORT FOR COMMITTEE

DATE: 16/02/2022

**P/21/1777/VC
WARSASH WASPS SPORTS &
FOOTBALL CLUB**

WARSASH

VARIATION OF CONDITION 5 OF P/09/0063/FP (TO ENABLE USE OF FLOODLIGHTING FOR ADDITIONAL HOUR UNTIL 10PM)

WARSASH FC, NEW ROAD, WARSASH, SOUTHAMPTON, SO31 7SB

Report By

Susannah Emery – direct dial 01329 824526

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This application has been presented to the Planning Committee due to the number of third-party representations received.

2.0 Site Description

2.1 The Warsash Wasps Sports and Football Club (WWSFC) Grounds is located on New Road which lies to the east of Church Road opposite the junction with Osborne Road. The site is owned by the Council and the WWSFC have a lease.

2.2 The grounds consist of a 3G all-weather Football pitch with six floodlighting columns, an unlit grass football pitch, an educational training facility with changing rooms, a large Sports Hall and a smaller hall which is used as the Sea Scouts HQ.

2.3 The site has two neighbouring residential properties along the western boundary (New House, New Road and the Vicarage, Church Road). In addition, the properties on Oakwood Close lie approximately 85m to the north of the 3G pitch. The site is well enclosed by the surrounding woodland to the east and south which forms part of the Warsash Common Public Open Space and is also designated as a SINC (Hook Lake Woods) and Local Nature Reserve.

3.0 Description of Proposal

3.1 Planning permission is sought for a variation of Condition 5 of planning permission reference P/09/0063/FP which states;

The floodlights hereby permitted shall not be switched on before 0800 hours nor remain switched on after 2100 hours on any day.

REASON: In order to preserve the amenities of the occupiers of nearby residential properties; In the interests of nature conservation ; in accordance with Policies DG1 and C18 of the Fareham Borough Local Plan Review.

It is proposed that the planning condition be varied to enable use of the floodlights to continue until 2200 hours (10pm) on any given night.

4.0 Policies

4.1 The following policies apply to this application:

Approved Fareham Borough Core Strategy

CS17 – High Quality Design

Adopted Development Sites and Policies

DSP2 – Environmental Impact

DSP3 – Impact on living conditions

5.0 Relevant Planning History

5.1 The following planning applications are of relevance to this application proposal:

P/09/0063/FP INSTALLATION OF AN ALL-WEATHER FOOTBALL PITCH; NEW GROUNDSMAN BUILDING; NEW EXTERNAL CHANGING ROOM FACILITIES WITH TUCK SHOP; INTERNAL ALTERATIONS, CAR PARK ENHANCEMENTS WITH LANDSCAPING; AND ACCESS ROAD IMPROVEMENTS
Permission 24 March 2009

P/13/1023/FP TWO STOREY DETACHED STRUCTURE TO FORM CHANGING ROOMS & EDUCATION ROOM
Permission 2 January 2014

6.0 Representations

6.1 One representation has been received raising the following concerns;

- The use of the floodlighting until 10pm is intrusive
- The light shines through to the rear of properties on Oakwood Close
- Adults have not played at the site prior to the installation of the 3G pitch and should play elsewhere
- Noise from football games and traffic
- Groups gather on New Road outside the site
- The gates clang shut when closed

- Purely a way for the club to make money
- The wasps are not currently adhering to their planning consent
- Lack of regard to the community who do not use the facility

One hundred and two letters of support have also been received.

7.0 Consultations

INTERNAL

Environmental Health

- 7.1 A site visit has been undertaken to the Football Grounds and Oakwood Close whilst the floodlights were in use during the evening. It is not considered that the use of the floodlights would constitute a statutory nuisance. No objection is raised to the proposal.

8.0 Planning Considerations

- 8.1 The principal consideration in the determination of this planning application is the impact of the proposal on the living conditions of neighbouring residential properties in respect of noise, disturbance and light pollution.
- 8.2 The Warsash Wasps Sports and Football Club (WWSFC) is a non-profit voluntary organisation which has been based at the New Road site since 1986. The football grounds are primarily reserved for use by the club providing sporting and leisure opportunities for the local community. The club has over 300 members consisting of 25 squads of boys, girls, men and women. Due to the historic use of the site as a recreational facility there are currently no time restrictions on its use, except in relation to the current floodlights which were imposed in 2009. The Sea Scouts also benefit from unrestricted use of the site for all their activities, meetings and storage purposes. The WWSFC club have confirmed that the only use of the 3G pitch other than by WWSFC is for a 5-a-side league on a Sunday between 5-8pm for which payment is taken.
- 8.3 Planning permission was granted in 2009 for the all-weather 3G pitch to replace a grass training pitch which had outdated and uncontrolled floodlighting. The six floodlighting columns are of modern standard ensuring minimal light spillage to the surrounding area. Details of the floodlights were previously sought and approved to ensure that there would not be a negative impact to neighbouring properties or to adjacent woodland in terms of light pollution. Recent light meter readings have been submitted with the application which confirm that the floodlighting does not result in significant light spill beyond the grounds or beyond the pitch itself. The extent of tree screening around the football grounds restricts views in the direction of the lit pitch from neighbouring properties.

- 8.4 WWSFC advises that in the last 10 years the 3G pitch and floodlighting has been used until 10pm on a regular basis. This has not resulted in any complaints to the Council until the end of 2021 when a single complaint was received resulting in the submission of this planning application. The WWSFC has not received any direct complaints in relation to the use of the site. It is advised that the chairman and committee can be contacted at any time by various means to respond to any problems perceived to be connected to WWSFC. A complaints log is maintained, and an investigation process is enacted where necessary. Unacceptable language by players or spectators is not tolerated by the club in any circumstances. The club adheres to a stringent FA maintenance schedule that ensures the surface, the floodlights and the fencing are in optimum condition for FA accreditation to be maintained. Weekly/monthly maintenance schedules are followed with an annual inspection undertaken by the FA.
- 8.5 It is not intended that the use of the floodlights would continue to occur until 10pm on an everyday basis, however the club have requested flexibility to enable this to continue as and when required as training patterns often need to be changed. The pitch is not typically used during the evenings on weekends or over a three month summer closure period (June-August).
- 8.6 In addition to considering the direct impacts arising from the use of the floodlighting and the pitch until 10pm, Officers have considered whether the proposal would be likely to have an unacceptable impact on the living conditions of neighbouring properties in terms of increased vehicle movements on New Road later into the evening. At the time planning permission was granted for the 3G pitch a tarmac surface was installed to New Road which is subject to a 10mph speed limit with a number of speed bumps which manages the flow of traffic along the lane. The entrance to the site is gated for security purposes and these gates are locked when the football grounds is not in use but remain open until all vehicles have departed. The Council currently has no control over the use of the access road, car park or the sports hall during the evenings by the Football Club or the Sea Scouts. It is therefore not considered that it would be reasonable to resist the application on the grounds of increased vehicle movements on New Road at night, nor is it considered that these movements would have a significant impact on the living conditions of neighbouring properties.
- 8.7 The application has generated a significant level of support, including from the occupants of one of the two nearest residential properties (The Garden House, New Road) which is located adjacent to the site entrance gates. The occupant of this property states that the floodlights cause no issues and that users of the site are considerate and leave at night with the minimum amount of noise which appears contrary to the comments of the objector.

8.8 Officers are of the view that in light of the authorised and unrestricted nature of the use of the site by both the Football Club and the Sea Scouts and the evident use of the floodlights until 10pm within the preceding 10 year period, without complaint, the proposal to regularise this usage would not have an unacceptable impact on the living conditions of neighbouring properties by virtue of noise, disturbance or light pollution and consider the proposal acceptable.

9.0 Recommendation

9.1 GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION, subject to the following conditions:

1. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved documents:

a) Site Location Plan

REASON: To avoid any doubt over what is permitted.

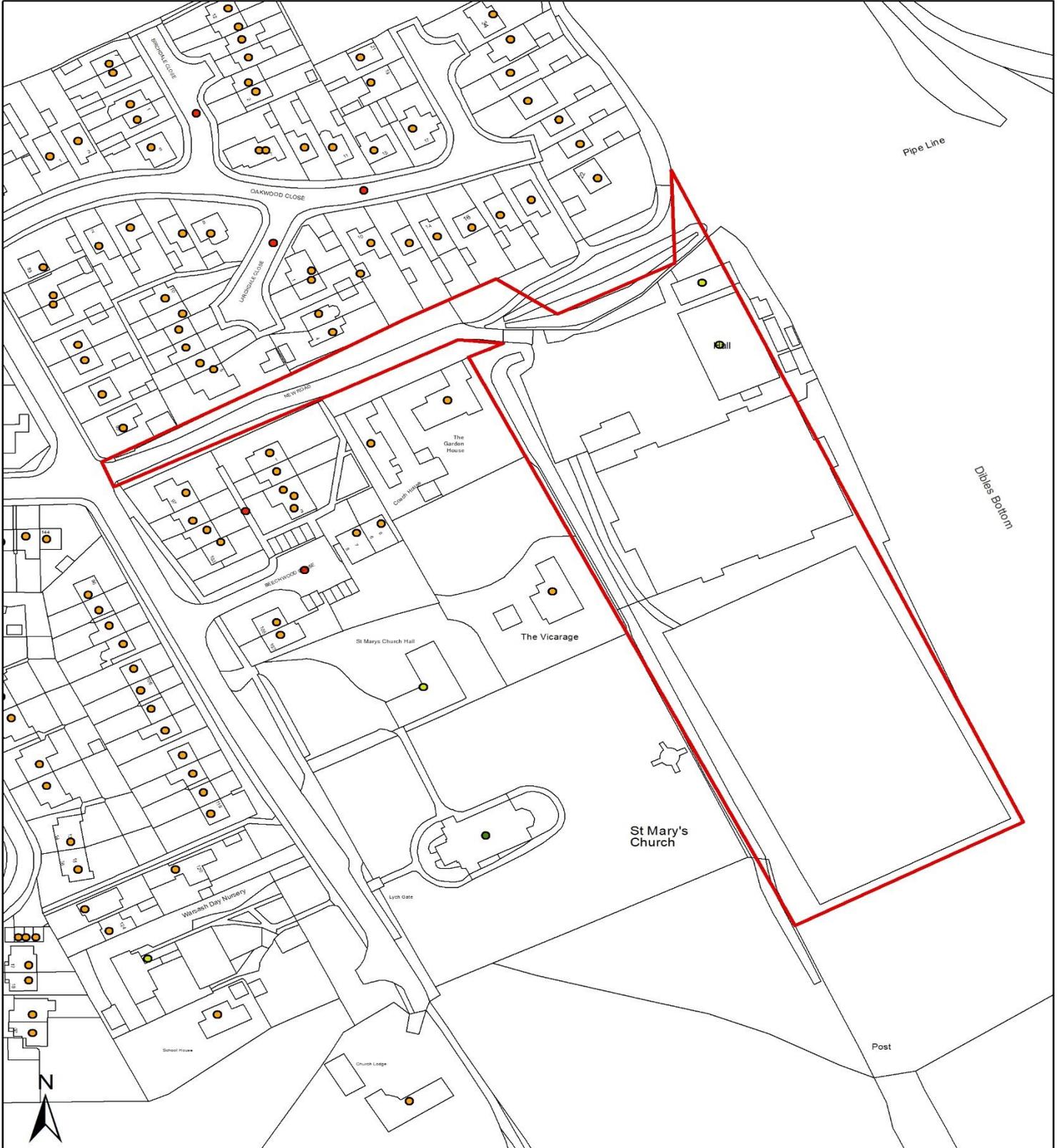
2. The floodlights hereby permitted shall not be switched on before 0800 hours nor remain switched on after 2200 hours on any day.

REASON: In order to preserve the amenities of the occupiers of nearby residential properties; In the interests of nature conservation.

10.0 Background Papers

P/21/1777/VC

FAREHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL



Warsash Wasps Football Ground
New Road
Scale 1:1,500

© Crown copyright and database rights 2021 OS 100019110. You are permitted to use this data solely to enable you to respond to, or interact with, the organisation that provided you with the data. You are not permitted to copy, sub-licence, distribute or sell any of this data to third parties in any form.