

ITEM NO.

2

COMMITTEE DATE:

16/06/2014

APPLICATION NO:

14/0824/03

FULL PLANNING PERMISSION

APPLICANT:

Yelverton Properties Developments Ltd

PROPOSAL:

New cricket pavilion, relocation of machine storage shed and practice nets and new sight screen. Alterations to access

LOCATION:

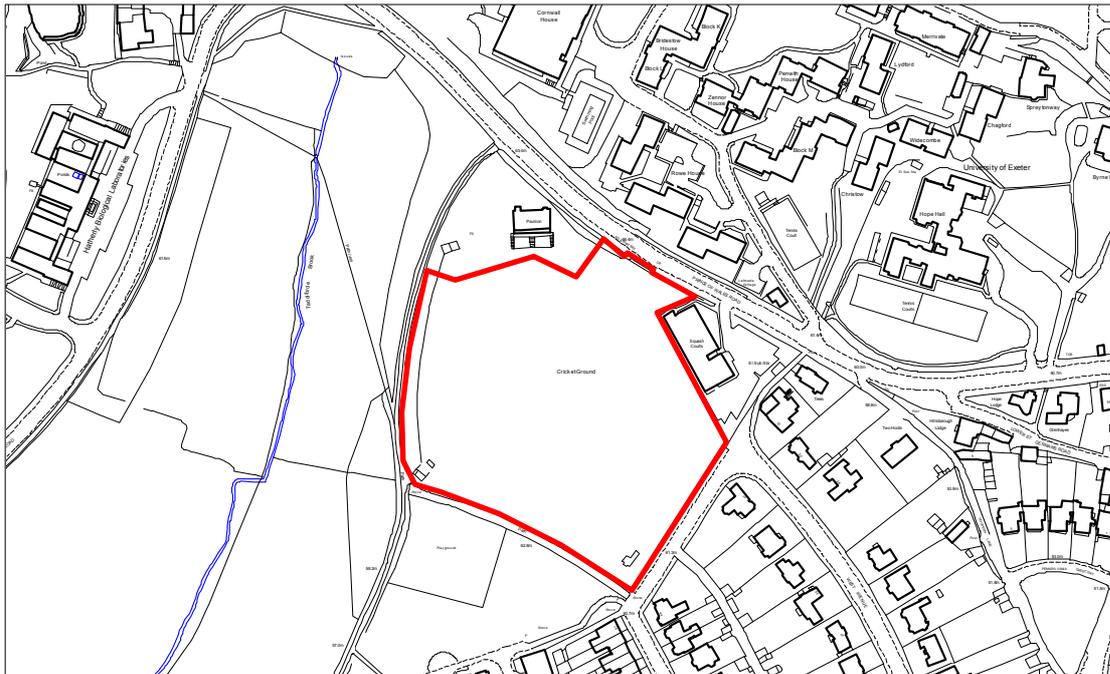
Exeter Cricket Club, County Ground, Prince Of Wales Road, Exeter, EX4 4RP

REGISTRATION DATE:

01/04/2014

EXPIRY DATE:

27/05/2014



Scale 1:4000

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DESCRIPTION OF SITE/PROPOSAL

The existing cricket club pavilion is located on the northern boundary of the cricket ground to the west of the vehicular access into the site off Prince of Wales Road. This building is to be demolished to enable the development of the site for student accommodation (ref 14/0815/03). The proposed new pavilion would be located along the northern boundary to the east of the existing access and adjacent to the Exeter Squash Club building. The ground level of the site would be reduced by approximately 1.2 metres in this location to accommodate the new pavilion.

The proposed two storey building would have changing rooms, bin stores, groundsman area, wc, cleaners room, lift, stairs and lobby on the ground floor with the clubroom, bar, servery, bar store, office, wc and an area for external seating on the first floor level. The slightly angled building footprint (to maximise views of the pitch) would measure a maximum of 23 metres in length by 8 metres in width with a maximum height to its mono pitch roof of 7 metres.

The proposed pavilion would be predominantly red brick with a standing seam grey metal panel roof. The south west elevation which faces towards the pitch contains a significant area of glazing at first floor to complement the external seating area and is cantilevered over

the ground floor which is more solid in appearance. The Prince of Wales frontage contains several windows, panelling and vertical green wall planting. The building would have a level change of between 0.6 metres and 1.2 metres along the pavement level of Prince of Wales Road with the building also set back from the boundary by approximately 1.8 metres. This gap is proposed to be planted with a new hedge and additional trees are proposed either side of the new building.

In addition, this application seeks replacements to the existing maintenance shed and cricket practice nets to the north west corner of the site, which would be displaced by the proposed new student accommodation. The relocated maintenance shed would be sited immediately to the south of the proposed new student block and the practice nets located to the south east corner of the site alongside the end of the residential roads of West Avenue and Thornton Hill.

The site is located within the Longbrook Conservation Area.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION SUPPLIED BY THE APPLICANT

Design and Access Statement, Ecological Appraisal, 5 Year Landscape Management Plan, Method Statement Regarding Great Crested Newts, Flood Risk Assessment, Drainage Strategy, Utilities Assessment, Ventilation Assessment, Site Waste Management Plan and External Lighting Assessment have been submitted with this application.

Transport Statement concludes that:-

The redevelopment site comprises an unused area of the existing cricket club site. The existing pavilion building on the site will be demolished and replaced with a development of student accommodation.

The development proposals replace the existing facilities and comprise a new cricket pavilion building, housing changing rooms, kit stores and a club room with bar and seating capacity for up to 60 covers.

The proposed vehicular access coincides with the existing vehicular access to the cricket pavilion on Prince of Wales Road. This takes the form of a simple vehicle crossover. No changes to the existing traffic regulation orders are anticipated to be required in connection with the proposed access arrangements. A separate dedicated pedestrian access to the site will be provided from the footway on Prince of Wales Road.

Currently parking for Exeter Cricket Club and the associated pavilion takes place at the car park adjacent to Exeter Squash Club building (with any overspill parking taking place on the outfield of the ground). It is proposed that the existing car park (which is accessed off Prince of Wales Road) continues to be used to cater for the cricket club activities. No further parking is therefore proposed in connection with the new cricket pavilion building.

Service vehicles, including deliveries and refuse collection, will use the main access and private driveway to service the building. Cycle parking will be provided adjacent to the new building.

The development site is considered to be an extremely accessible location for walking and cycling journeys. It is also highly accessible by public transport, both for local journeys around the city and long-distance travel for visiting spectators.

In conclusion, the development site is considered to be in an extremely accessible location with good public transport opportunities for travel to around Exeter and destinations further afield. It is therefore considered to provide good opportunities for travel to/from the site to undertaken by sustainable modes, thereby fulfilling the requirements of the NPPF in this respect.

The replacement pavilion is not expected to generate any additional vehicle trips, and it is proposed that the existing car parking remains in place to cater for the continued level of demand. The proposed development is not, therefore, expected to result in any traffic impacts.

The development proposals are therefore considered to be acceptable in transport terms and that there should be no highway related reasons to prevent planning permission being granted.

Significance Value Statement of Conservation Area, Existing Pavilion and Cricket Ground states that :-

The existing pavilion has been considerably altered in its life-time and not in a sympathetic manner. Those alterations have also obscured the original floor plan and the working arrangements it was built to accommodate. Despite the incremental alterations intended to keep pace with the evolving needs of a cricket pavilion, those efforts have been in vain. While the pitch carries a high and enviable reputation for its performance factor, the pavilion falls distinctly short by comparison. This imbalance can only be rectified by replacing the pavilion with an up to date version, designed to fulfil the modern requirements of this type of speciality building. The existing pavilion does not make a worthy contribution to the significance value of the conservation area or its setting.

The replacement pavilion will sit alongside the squash club building. The new pavilion's superior design features will raise the vocabulary of the architecture in that part of the cricket ground and the road frontage. The new pavilion will cause no harm to the character or appearance of the conservation area. Instead it will make a positive contribution by enhancing the present appearance of the area.

The important gap in the frontage of the cricket ground will be preserved and in this way the character and appearance of the conservation area will also be preserved.

Statement of Support from Exeter Cricket Club summary states that:-

Exeter Cricket Club is one of the oldest and best cricket clubs in Devon. It has a proud history. The Club and Ground provide cricket for a huge number of adult and junior cricketers from across the world.

Exeter Cricket Club does not own the County Ground - they are tenants. The Club's lease expires in April 2014. A new lease, on its own, would mean the club's income goes down and costs go up which does not provide a viable future for the club.

The Cricket Club has negotiated a new 30 year lease, which is the maximum it could achieve, which provides much more certainty going forwards. However, that certainty of tenure must be matched by certainty of delivery of a new pavilion, machine shed and nets. Following investigation over a number of years, there is no 'off site' solution for the club. The only solution for the future of the Club lies within the existing site.

The existing clubhouse is not fit for purpose, is in poor condition and is very expensive to maintain.

The Cricket Club has worked to a clear set of principles in considering development options for the County Ground, namely the playing area must be protected; a new pavilion, machine shed and practice nets must be provided; development must make a positive contribution to the character of the area and development must be financially viable and deliverable.

The Cricket Club has carefully considered options for the location and design of the new clubhouse.

The Cricket Club has worked closely with Yelverton Properties, landowners, City Council, local residents, design forums and St James' Forum on the location and design of the clubhouse, as part of a comprehensive development of the County Ground.

The Cricket Club supports the proposed development of student accommodation, on the site of the existing pavilion, as a form of enabling development. It allows the County Ground to continue to be used for cricket and provides an essential financial contribution to the delivery of a new clubhouse, machine shed and practice nets.

If the proposed development does not happen, then Exeter Cricket Club will be financially unviable within 3 years and may well have left the County Ground. That outcome is not what the Club, community or Council wants.

REPRESENTATIONS

50 letters of support mainly through the Exeter Cricket club highlighting the importance of the new student accommodation to provide the necessary funding for the new cricket pavilion and the continued presence of the club in this location.

3 letters of objection concerned that:-

- a) the student accommodation should not be occupied until the new pavilion is built to the cricket club's satisfaction. Failure to ensure this would result in cricket disappearing from the site and leaving the whole site open for possible development;
- b) the design of the new cricket pavilion would be characterless and the design needs to be significantly improved;
- c) there is a need for further information of the proposal from multiple viewpoints;
- d) problems caused from surface water run off from the cricket field to Thornton Hill and West Avenue needs to be addressed.

3 letters of comment (including a petition from 6 residents of Horseguards) stating:-

- a) concern over the use of red brick and stating a preference of a lighter material or timber;
- b) need for additional native tree species in the gaps to the south and west boundary to improve the overall setting of the site for residents and cricketers;
- c) improvements needed for drainage from the current cricket ground to Thornton Hill and Hoopen Valley footpath.
- d) condition needed to ensure that control of late night use of pavilion;
- e) design of new pavilion unacceptable in conservation area and should be maintained not replaced.

St James Design Review Panel comment that the detailed designs for the cricket pavilion and student accommodation are linked in terms of materials and other elements. The comments made in relation to application 14/0899/03, which relate mainly to the student accommodation, would therefore be expected to also have an impact on the design of the cricket club. (See the report on this agenda).

CONSULTATIONS

County Head of Planning Transportation and Environment comment that the application is one of two applications for the Cricket Ground site, the other being a more substantial proposal for student accommodation (ref 14/0815/03). Comments relating to that application, particularly regarding the access, are also applicable to this proposal. The replacement pavilion does not pose a concern in highway terms and therefore no objection. Nevertheless, Princess of Wales Road is a classified road and the construction and demolition will need to be carefully managed to ensure the impact of these is minimised. It is therefore recommended that a condition is attached to ensure adequate areas are made available within the site to accommodate construction vehicles off the public highway. The applicant is also advised that secure cycle parking should be provided.

Environmental Health Officer raises no objection subject to the imposition of conditions in respect of hours of demolition/construction and a contamination report.

English Heritage's summary on both this application and application 14/0815/03 states that they do not support either proposal stating that it has not been demonstrated that the needs of the cricket ground could not be met otherwise than by the demolition of the unlisted but characterful pavilion. In addition they are opposed to the proposal to build 4 blocks of student accommodation on the site because of the poor design whose massing and scale does nothing to enhance or preserve the setting of the Conservation Area.

Sport England raises no objection to the proposal as the application meets policy E2 of the Playing Field Policy in that 'the proposed development is ancillary to the principal use of the site as a playing field or playing fields, and does not affect the quantity or quality of the pitches or adversely affect their use. Sport England have also consulted the English Cricket Board who raise comment in respect of non compliance with their guidance for pavilion

design regarding the internal configuration of the changing rooms and the need for a disabled wc on the first floor which will need to be addressed.

RSPB comment that it would be sensible to locate bird boxes away from the vicinity of the cricket nets to avoid disturbance and the design of the new pavilion and machine storage shed are more likely to be more appropriate for house martins and swallows than the student complex.

Devon and Cornwall Police comment that there has been extensive pre-application discussion between the architects and the police. Consequently no objections are raised as the proposal elements discussed have been incorporated into the design and therefore meet the Police's Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design and Secured By Design.

PLANNING POLICIES/POLICY GUIDANCE

Central Government Guidance - National Planning Policy Framework

Exeter Local Development Framework Core Strategy

CP10_ - Meeting Community Needs

CP15 - Sustainable Construction

CP17 - Design and Local Distinctiveness

St James Neighbourhood Plan March 2013

EN1 - Protection of Green Spaces

EN5 - Trees

EN6 - Biodiversity

D1 - Good Quality Design

SD2 - Development that ensures a long term and viable future for the Cricket Club will be supported where:

a) proposals are supported by a thorough landscape and visual appraisal of the site to determine impact on local views and the Hoopern Valley;

b) proposals are supported by an appropriate heritage assessment and include measures which will mitigate or compensate for the loss of any heritage values identified;

c) high standards of sustainable design and construction would be achieved which respond to the identified landscape and heritage values of the site.

Exeter Local Plan First Review 1995-2011

T1 - Hierarchy of Modes

T2 - Accessibility Criteria

T3 - Encouraging Use of Sustainable Modes

T10 - Car Parking Standards

C5 - Archaeology

EN2 - Contaminated Land

EN5 - Noise

DG1 - Objectives of Urban Design

DG2 - Energy Conservation

DG7 - Crime Prevention and Safety

Exeter City Council Supplementary Planning Documents:-

Sustainable Transport March 2013

Longbrook Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (November 2005) identifies the cricket ground as a positive open space within the conservation area and the cricket pavilion as a making a positive contribution to the conservation area.

OBSERVATIONS

The St James Neighbourhood Plan identifies the Cricket Club and its associated grounds as a valued community asset and green space and recognises the need for investment to ensure its long term viability and the preservation of the open space. The committee report for the student accommodation (ref 14/0815/03) addresses the issue of the existing clubhouse's retention against its removal and concludes that its removal is justified. The assessment of the application is therefore based on the details of the scheme namely the siting of the building, its impact on the conservation area, external appearance, parking, servicing, drainage and impact on residential amenity resulting from its use. Assessment of these issues need to be accompanied by appropriate levels of supporting information as required by Policy S2 of the St James Neighbourhood Planning in respect of landscape and visual appraisal, heritage assessment and the need for high standards of design and construction. However although the adequacy of the written and illustrative information submitted has been criticised, as explained more fully in the report for student accommodation, it is considered that it is appropriate for this development and therefore sufficient for a decision to be made.

The need to provide an area of sufficient size to accommodate the enabling development is addressed in the report on student accommodation (ref 14/0815/03) and consequently a new location for the replacement pavilion is required. The proposal to separate the student accommodation and pavilion both in terms of use and to ensure that the Prince of Wales frontage is not overly dominated by buildings is logical. Accordingly the proposal to site of the pavilion immediately to the east of the existing access is considered acceptable, as there is no alternative suitably sized area available within the existing cricket ground. This area of the site contains sufficient space for the new pavilion and it is considered that a suitably designed building and the proposed landscaping has the potential to add to the overall character and appearance of the Prince of Wales Road streetscene. The pavilion's siting does not impinge on the important area of open space as recognised by the Longbrook Conservation Area and the St James Neighbourhood Plan and therefore is considered appropriate.

At the Devon Design Review Panel in November 2013 the design of the cricket pavilion was discussed alongside the student blocks proposal. Whilst the Panel were encouraged by the images presented, concern was raised about the proposed building in terms of fenestration, proportions and detail. An additional comment was made that the street elevation appeared very tall and flat. In response to these comments the architect has made significant changes to the building. In particular, the existing ground level will be lowered to reduce the overall height of this two storey building in the streetscene as suggested by the Panel. To compensate for the 'flat' appearance the building has been angled, which improves views of the pitch, but also creates visual interest when viewed from Prince of Wales Road. In addition, to reduce the built form to the road frontage this elevation, further glazing and vertical planting has been introduced to soften the building's appearance within the streetscene. It is acknowledge that the building will represent a significant addition to the Prince of Wales Road frontage but the changes made and the introduction of landscaping between the proposed building and road will, it is considered, represent an acceptable development. Whilst the new building will close up an area which allows views over the open space from the road, it is considered that sufficient space exists between the new pavilion and student accommodation to ensure that the character and appearance of the open space within the conservation area is sufficiently maintained.

Local residents have highlighted concerns in respect of parking, servicing and drainage which have been assessed in detail as part of the student accommodation application (ref 14/0815/03) and are deemed to be acceptable. However an additional concern from residents relates to the use of the new cricket pavilion. Concern has been raised regarding the potential for noise and disturbance from functions taking place during late evening. It is

therefore considered that a condition restricting the hours of use is imposed to address this issue.

In conclusion it is considered that the new pavilion and replacement structures represent an appropriate location which addresses the policy requirements of the St James Neighbourhood Plan and respect its location within the Longbrook Conservation Area and should therefore be approved. It is considered that the Section 106 Agreement required as part of the development for student accommodation (ref 14/0815/03) will ensure the continued presence of the Cricket Club at this site.

DELEGATION BRIEFING

13 May 2014 - The student accommodation would be modular in approach with two blocks of four storey and one of five storey with a three storey block on the Prince of Wales frontage. Brick would be predominately used with slate at the top floor level. The pavilion would accommodate 50-70 spectators with a lift and disabled toilets, the first floor to accommodate the club house with a balcony looking out onto the pitch. Parking of two spaces would be provided between the pavilion and the student accommodation to be used on match days and for servicing, delivery etc. to the student blocks only. The existing arrangement between the two clubs for parking for cricket to the rear of the Squash Club would remain.

The proposal was in accordance with the recently adopted Exeter St James Neighbourhood Plan which had a specific policy for Exeter Cricket Club, Policy SD2 stating support for development that ensured a long term and viable future for the Cricket Club site. However, although supportive in principle, the St James Design Forum wished to ensure that the development met requirements in respect of the historical perspective, the Conservation Area setting and landscape matters given the raised nature of the site. The issues raised by the Design Forum would be put to the architect. A Members raised drainage as being an important issue given the slopes down to both the Hoopern Valley Park and to Thornton Hill. Responding to a Member question, the development would not impact on the playing area of the cricket ground. English Heritage had objected, although it was noted that a separate department of this body had also ruled that the pavilion was not listable. The scheme had received a number of letters of support as well as objection.

RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE subject to the following conditions:

- 1) C05 - Time Limit - Commencement
- 2) C15 - Compliance with Drawings
- 3) C17 - Submission of Materials
- 4) C35 - Landscape Scheme
- 5) C37 - Replacement Planting
- 6) C45E - Time Restriction
- 7) No development shall take place on site until a full investigation of the site has taken place to determine the extent of, and risk posed by, any contamination of the land and the results, together with any remedial works necessary, have been agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The buildings shall not be occupied until the approved remedial works have been implemented and a remediation statement submitted to the Local Planning Authority detailing what contamination has been found and how it has been dealt with together with confirmation that no unacceptable risks remain.

Reason: In the interests of the amenity of the occupants of the buildings hereby approved.

- 8) If, during development, contamination not previously identified is found to be present at the site then no further development, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority, shall be carried out until the developer has submitted an investigation and risk assessment, and where necessary a remediation strategy and verification plan, detailing how this unsuspected contamination shall be dealt with. Prior to occupation of any part of the development, a verification report demonstrating completion of the works set out in the approved remediation strategy, shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of the amenity of the occupants of the buildings hereby approved and to prevent groundwater pollution.

- 9) No part of the development hereby approved shall be brought into its intended use until the access, disabled parking facilities, turning area, access drive and access drainage have been provided and maintained in accordance with details that shall have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority and retained for that purpose at all times

Reason: To provide a safe and suitable access and ensure that adequate facilities are available for the traffic attracted to the site

- 10) No part of the development hereby approved shall be brought into its intended use until secure cycle parking facilities have been provided and maintained in accordance with details that shall have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority and retained for that purpose at all times

Reason: To ensure that adequate facilities are available for the traffic attracted to the site

- 11) No development shall take place, including any works of demolition, until a Construction Method Statement has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The statement should include details of access arrangements and timings and management of arrivals and departures of vehicles. The approved Statement shall be adhered to throughout the construction period.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and public amenity

- 12) Construction/demolition work shall not take place outside the following times; 8am to 6pm (Mondays to Fridays); 8am to 1pm (Saturdays); nor at any time on Sundays, Bank or Public Holidays.

Reason: In the interest of residential amenity.

- 13) Unless otherwise agreed in writing, no development shall take place until details of provision for nesting swifts has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the RSPB. Upon written approval of the details, the scheme shall be fully implemented as part of the development and retained thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of the preservation and enhancement of biodiversity in the locality.

Local Government (Access to Information) 1985 (as amended).

Background papers used in compiling the report:

Files of planning applications available for inspection from the Customer Service Centre, Civic Centre, Paris Street, Exeter: Telephone 01392 265223