

ITEM NO.

4

COMMITTEE DATE:

16/04/2012

APPLICATION NO:

12/0332/03

FULL PLANNING PERMISSION

APPLICANT:Ms S Williams
University of Exeter**PROPOSAL:**

Covering of the outdoor tennis/netball courts, relocation of existing multi use games area, provision of changing pavilion with 84 seat viewing balcony next to all weather pitches and associated works

LOCATION:

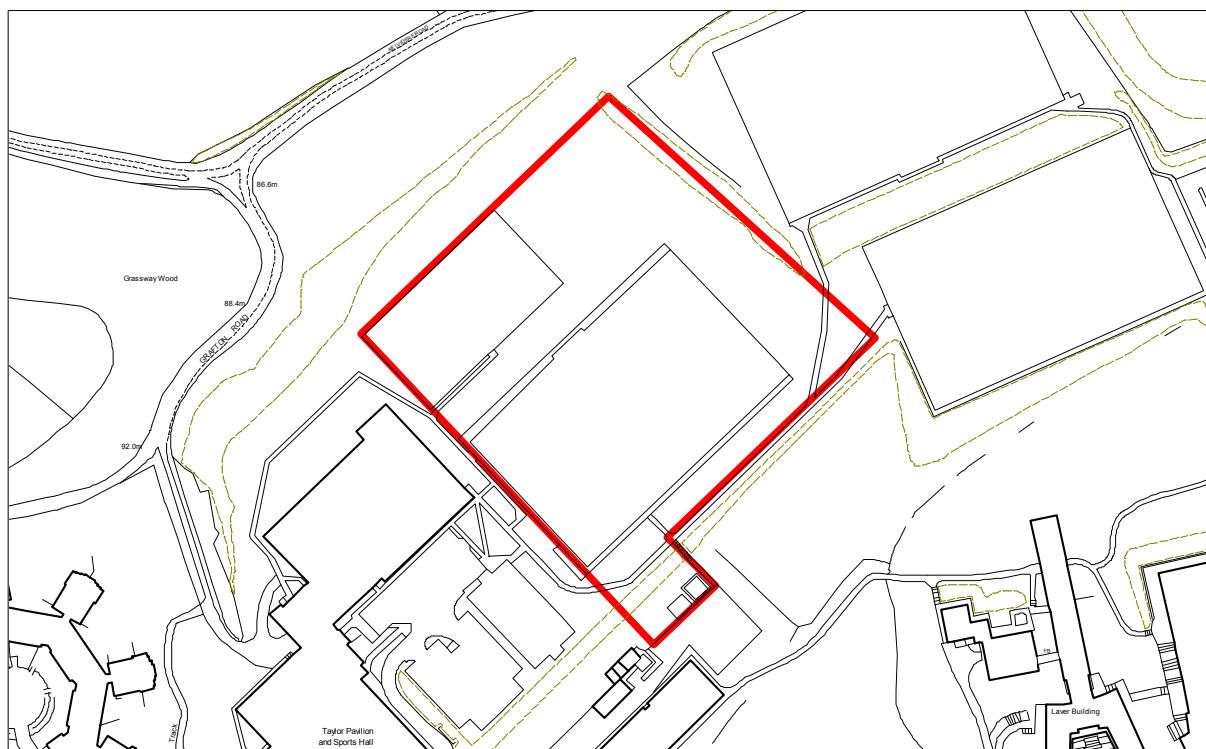
University of Exeter Sports Park, Stocker Road, Exeter, EX4 4QN

REGISTRATION DATE:

01/03/2012

EXPIRY DATE:

31/05/2012



Scale 1:3000

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HISTORY OF SITE

95/0809/03 -	Provision of all weather floodlit sports pitch	PER	05/02/1996
01/00894/03 -	Single storey building	PER	05/09/2001
02/0341/03 -	Development to provide indoor tennis centre together with 4 floodlit outdoor courts, alterations to form link and lobby to existing buildings, car parking, improved access for pedestrians and vehicles and associated works	PER	24/07/2002
03/0396/03 -	Development to provide indoor tennis centre together with 4 floodlit outdoor courts, alterations to form link and lobby to existing buildings, car parking, improved access for pedestrians and vehicles and associated works	PER	16/04/2003
03/1845/01 -	Alterations to sports pitch, perimeter fencing (3.6 metres high) and associated works	REF	08/01/2004

04/0092/03 -	Alterations to sports pitch to include shelter/store, 8 flood lighting columns (16 m. high) and perimeter fencing (up to 6 m. max. high) and associated works	PER	02/03/2004
05/1533/03 -	Two outdoor tennis courts with floodlighting	PER	18/01/2006
06/0413/03 -	Provision of ten 5m high lighting columns supporting 50 watt high pressure sodium lamps to illuminate pedestrian footpath (part retrospective)	PER	13/06/2006
06/2350/03 -	Two outdoor tennis courts with floodlighting (AMENDMENT to Ref. No. 05/1533/03 granted 18 January 2006) (Retrospective)	PER	19/01/2007
06/2670/03 -	Two storey extension (1420 sq. m.) on north west elevation to provide indoor cricket centre, pedestrian link and ground floor extension on south west elevation and associated works	PER	23/02/2007
09/1246/03 -	Provision of doors and steps on south east elevation	PER	09/10/2009

DESCRIPTION OF SITE/PROPOSAL

This application relates to alterations and additions to the existing Sports Park at the University of Exeter. The site is a mostly level area to the north east of the existing sports hall and indoor tennis and cricket centres. In this area there is an existing multi-use games area (MUGA), uncovered netball/tennis courts and an existing all-weather sports (hockey) pitch.

There are four distinct elements to the proposal:

1. A new cover to the existing tennis and netball courts. This will create a structure of up to 12m (max.) high, with aluminium profile sheet walls up to 3m, and an off-white PVC fabric tensile structure above and over the roof, which is curved.
2. A new MUGA to the north-east of the all-weather sports pitch. This will have a synthetic turf surface, 3m high perimeter sports fencing and four floodlights. It is positioned on an area of grass which currently has no specific use.
3. A new changing pavilion to the south east of the all-weather sports pitch. This is a single storey building with a viewing platform above it, overlooking the all-weather pitch. It is proposed to be constructed of blockwork with flat cladding panels and a standing seam metal roof with solar panels. No new lighting is proposed in connection with this building. It is positioned on a strip of grass which currently has no specific use.
4. A new electricity substation. Further information on the appearance of the substation is awaited.

A second phase of development is also proposed, involving an extension of the existing tennis centre to create a fitness suite, and reworking of the existing car park, including removal of the existing MUGA. These works will form a separate application in due course.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION SUPPLIED BY THE APPLICANT

The application is supported by the following documents:

- Design and Access Statement
- Lighting Assessment
- Sustainable Travel Plan
- Arboricultural constraints report

The Design and Access Statement includes the following information:

This project includes the provision of a cover to the six existing external courts with a single span structure outdoor tennis/netball courts with a tensile structure (steel frame, with a PVC cover). This will provide protection from the external elements and will increase the volume of

indoor sports space. The covering will enable most netball, korfbal (a mixed gender team sport, with similarities to netball and basketball) and ultimate frisbee activity to take place within the tensile structure. This will release space in the main hall, which is inadequate for the current needs, for other activities such as badminton, basketball and volleyball. The tensile structure has a guarantee of 50 years, with the fabric having a 10 year guarantee.

The facility will be used by student clubs, as a venue for hosting local netball clubs and leagues, and for developing the tennis programme for young people around Devon.

The size, location and quantity of team changing rooms are not sufficient to deal with demand on most Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays. This project includes the construction of a new pavilion including 8 changing rooms, to meet requirements.

The pavilion will also include toilets for other users of the outdoor facilities, a deck for filming matches on the hockey pitch, and a storage space for use by grounds staff, being of a good size and location relative to the existing grounds staff accommodation. The facilities are used extensively by student groups, local clubs, national governing bodies of sport and for hosting occasional international hockey matches.

The existing MUGA facility is approaching the end of its lifespan, and will be reconstructed at a new location to release space for car parking. The MUGA is very popular, and is used extensively by many customer groups for small sided football matches. These include student and staff groups, Exeter College Academy, and Great Britain Paralympic Football players. The floodlights will be turned off at 10pm, in line with other floodlit pitches on site.

In order to facilitate power to the new proposals a new electrical substation is required.

In addition, the University has advised as follows in response to comments from the Assistant Director Environment:

The application will not lead to an increase in hours of use or intensity of use for the MUGA or hockey pitch. Both are used intensively during the autumn, winter and spring, up until 10pm and not before 7am. Usage during the summer months continues on both facilities, but at a less intensive level. There are no plans for this to change as a consequence of this application.

An external tannoy system is not planned for either facility. Very occasional use of a public address system will continue as existing, using a temporary installation. This happens on less than 5 occasions each year, never at antisocial hours. There are no plans to change this usage pattern from the existing.

REPRESENTATIONS

Representations: 7. Principal planning issues raised:

- Noise from spectators and participants.
- Intrusive light pollution, particularly from the enclosed tennis courts structure and the relocated MUGA.
- Existing floodlighting proposals associated with previous developments on the Sports Park have never been resolved.
- Incomplete visual impact assessment.
- Parking in surrounding streets.

CONSULTATIONS

County Director of Environment, Economy and Culture - the previously agreed access, public transport and parking strategies for the whole of the Streatham Campus are contained

in the Exeter University Sustainable Travel Plan, which will apply to these proposals and are acceptable from a highway view.

Assistant Director Environment - subject to confirmation that there will be no increase in intensity of use of the MUGA or tennis courts (which would require a noise impact assessment), approve subject to conditions relating to construction/demolition hours, noise mitigation works (if required), use of a tannoy system, and hours of use of floodlights.

Devon Gardens Trust - no objections in principle subject to protection of existing trees.

PLANNING POLICIES/POLICY GUIDANCE

Central Government Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework

Paras. 56-62 - Requiring good design

Paras. 69-78 - Promoting healthy communities

Paras. 93-99 - Meeting the challenge of climate change

Paras. 196-198 - Determining applications

Paras. 203-204 - Planning conditions and obligations

Exeter Local Development Framework Core Strategy

CP10 - Meeting Community Needs

CP13 - Decentralised Energy Networks

CP14 - Renewable and Low Carbon Energy

CP15 - Sustainable Construction

CP17 - Design and Local Distinctiveness

Devon County Structure Plan 2001-2016

CO6 - Quality of New Development

Exeter Local Plan First Review 1995-2011

E4 - Exeter University Campus

L8 - Indoor Sport Facilities

T1 - Hierarchy of Modes

T2 - Accessibility Criteria

T3 - Encouraging Use of Sustainable Modes

LS4 - Local Nature Conservation Designation/RIGS

EN5 - Noise

DG1 - Objectives of Urban Design

DG2 - Energy Conservation

Supplementary Planning Document

University of Exeter Streatham Campus Masterplan Framework

OBSERVATIONS

The University of Exeter Streatham Campus Masterplan Framework identifies this area as suitable for consolidation of sports use.

Design

In the context of the site location and the surrounding Sports Park development, the design and materials are considered to be appropriate and complementary. The site benefits from substantial mature tree planting around its periphery. During daylight hours, the proposal will not have a significant visual impact from medium or long distance views.

Lighting

There has been a history of problems associated with floodlighting of existing development within the Sports Park. Some local residents perceive that the lighting is intrusive and in the

past this has not been addressed to their satisfaction. A lighting report for both the MUGA and the covered tennis courts is provided with the application. The Design and Access Statement advises that the reports show that current levels of light will be reduced. However, the reports are highly technical and not readily understandable to the lay person. It would not be appropriate to approve the application unless it is clear that the impact of the proposed lighting does not add to the amount of light currently spilling from the site. Consequently further information on lighting and landscape visual impact has been requested from the applicant.

Noise

Following advice from the University confirming that the intensity of the uses on the site will not be increased as a consequence of this proposal, it is not considered that there is justification for refusal on noise grounds. In accordance with the advice of the Assistant Director Environment, a condition will be imposed preventing the installation of an external tannoy system as part of the development. It is not considered that the intensity of use of the proposed elevated spectator area would be such that it would cause significant additional noise nuisance to neighbours.

Parking

In the absence of an intensification of the current uses, and in accordance with the advice of the County Director of Environment, Economy and Culture, there is no justification for refusal of the proposal on grounds of insufficient parking.

Trees

The arboricultural report submitted with the application advises that there is no need to remove any trees as a consequence of the development, but that they will need to be protected adequately during the development. Appropriate conditions will be imposed.

SUSTAINABILITY

Limited information is provided concerning the sustainability of this proposal. Core Strategy policy CP13 states that new development with a floorspace of over 1000 square metres will be required to connect to any existing or proposed Decentralised Energy Network in the locality to bring forward low and zero carbon energy supply and distribution. Otherwise it will be necessary to demonstrate that it will not be viable or feasible to do so. Core Strategy policy CP14 states that new development with a floorspace of over 1000 square metres will be required to use decentralised and renewable or low carbon energy sources unless it can be demonstrated that it would not be viable or feasible to do so. Core Strategy policy CP15 states that all non-domestic development will be required to achieve BREEAM 'Very Good' standards. Core Strategy policy CP17 states that all proposals for development will exhibit a high standard of sustainable design that is resilient to climate change.

In view of the above further information has been requested from the applicant.

NORTHERN AREA WORKING PARTY

Members noted that because objections had been received to a major application, this matter would be considered by the Planning Committee.

RECOMMENDATION

Subject to receipt and consideration of satisfactory additional information relating to substation design, lighting and landscape visual impact,

APPROVE subject to the following conditions:

- 1) C05 - Time Limit - Commencement

- 2) C15 - Compliance with Drawings
- 3) C17 - Submission of Materials
- 4) C36 - No Trees to be Felled
- 5) C38 - Trees - Temporary Fencing
- 6) 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 interests of local residential amenity.
- 7) The development shall not include an external tannoy or other system for the electronic amplification of sound. Reason: In the interests of local amenity.
- 8) The MUGA floodlights and internal tennis court lighting shall not be used between the hours of 2200 and 0700. Reason: In the interests of local amenity.

**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