

South Area Development Control Sub-Committee: 20th July 2006

**APPLICATIONS FOR PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT
DEVELOPMENT OR TO DISPLAY ADVERTISEMENTS**

Schedule by Head of Planning Services

Number of items: S1 – S15

- S7 LITTLE BEALINGS – C06/1020 – Regrading of land, installation of multi-use sports court with 3 metre high enclosure, replacement play equipment, paved seating area and paths, and extension to village hall: PLAYING FIELD AND VILLAGE HALL, THE STREET for Mrs Sarah Cartwright, Great Bealings Parish Council**

Target date: 26th July 2006

SITE AND PROPOSALS

The site is the village hall and adjacent playing field situated on the northern edge of the village just beyond the church. The playing field currently consists of a sloping open grassed area and small amount of play equipment tucked away in a corner behind the village hall. There are significant trees and other vegetation on the periphery of the site and between the village hall and playing field.

This application proposes to regrade the land and create two level plateaux to accommodate a paved multi-use sports court and a lawn area for informal recreation and village events. The multi-use sports court will be enclosed with 3 metre high chain link fence. New play equipment targeted at different age groups is proposed together with a paved seating area and paths with trim trail equipment. The creation of a wildlife habitat area to the periphery of the site is also proposed. Proposals to have a barbecue facility and low-level lighting within the paved seating area have been withdrawn from the application following concerns raised from some residents.

It is also proposed to build an extension to the village hall to provide changing and WC facilities and a storage area. The extension measures 6 metres by 4.5 metres and comprises a flat roof to match that part of the building to which it is attached.

CONSULTATIONS

Little Bealings Parish Council raises no objections.

Suffolk County Council Archaeological Unit recommends a condition to ensure adequate record is made of any archaeological features or finds.

The East Area Rights of Way Officer comments that Public Footpath No 6 runs through the playing field site and wishes to make the applicant aware of their responsibility towards members of the public using this path. They should also ensure that the path is not encroached upon or restricted in any way during the construction work. It is also noted the plans show a change to the surface at the commencement of the new path in the north-east corner of the site and the applicants will need to contact this department to agree the nature of this surface before the commencement of any works.

Head of Health would wish to control details of any floodlighting if proposed.

3 letters have been received from local residents raising the following concerns:

- Removal and replanting of established trees provided by Suffolk Coastal District Council under the Parish Tree Planting Scheme. The plan denotes certain areas as shrub and would disagree with this connotation indicating that it is undergrowth that has been left in place to provide cover for wildlife on the site.
- Barbecue facility would cause nuisance to residents by reason of smells, fire hazard and attraction of vermin.
- The use of lighting (for the paved seating area) would encourage the use into the night with potential for vandalism and disturbance. Given it is a quiet rural area lighting of any sort is not necessary as the use of the field should be restricted to daylight hours.
- Traffic problems that have existed when events take place on the field largely from cars parking on the road making it impassable for emergency vehicles.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The proposal is seeking to upgrade existing play/sports facilities in the village. Policy AP101 of the Local Plan encourages development of new or the improvement of existing sport and recreational facilities. It requires proposals to be considered in relation to the character and scale of a settlement, the effect on surrounding countryside, access provision, highway safety and residential amenity.

There are two residential properties situated quite close to the site on the opposite side of the road. Given the lack of any lighting, the withdrawal of the barbecue facility and the substantial tree screen being retained along the roadside boundary it is not felt the proposals would have a detrimental impact on the amenity of nearby residents.

The proposal does involve the removal of some young trees within the site. Although the application indicates these trees would be replanted, it is felt, given their size, this would be difficult to achieve with success. Discussions are in hand with the applicant to try to design the play equipment in amongst the trees which will avoid the removal of some trees, albeit the undergrowth will need to be removed. It is considered important that the large mature trees on the periphery of the site are retained as proposed, as these will reduce the impact of the development on the surrounding countryside. The multi-use sports court and some play equipment will be sited close to these trees and thus a condition would need to be imposed on any consent granted to control works in the vicinity of the trees to avoid potential damage. Overall, it is considered the scheme seeks an appropriate balance between tree protection and providing improved recreation facilities for the village.

The extension to the village hall is relatively modest and its design is reflective of the existing building. The extension will be sited close to existing Oak trees so conditions will be necessary relating to construction and foundation design to ensure no damage to the trees.

Consequently it is considered the proposal would accord with the provisions of the Local Plan and can be supported.

RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE, subject to controlling conditions, including tree retention, tree protection, method statement of works close to trees, details of play equipment and materials relating to all external hard surfaced areas and the village hall extension.