

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL
PLANNING CONTROL COMMITTEE
13TH MARCH 2003
REPORT TO THE CHIEF PLANNING OFFICER

PCC 13.03.03
PART 1
ITEM NO
FOR DECISION
CPO

S6/2003/106/FP
VARIATION OF CONDITION 3 OF PLANNING PERMISSION S6/01/1564/FP TO
ALLOW FLOODLIGHTS TO BE USED MONDAY TO FRIDAY UNTIL 10.00 pm AND
SATURDAY, SUNDAY AND BANK HOLIDAYS UNTIL 8.00 pm
DEHAVILLAND SPORTS AND SOCIAL CLUB, ST ALBANS ROAD WEST,
HATFIELD

APPLICANT: DEHAVILLAND SPORTS AND SOCIAL CLUB

(Hatfield North)

1.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 1.1 The application relates to the multi-use games area provided as part of the outdoor recreational facilities associated with the new De Havilland Sports and Social Club at the Hatfield Aerodrome site.
- 1.2 The sports and social club have outdoor facilities in the Green Belt land adjacent to the club, these are a bowling green and a multi use games area (MUGA). The two facilities are sited at a right angle to St Albans Road West and the MUGA is some 65m away from St Alban's Road, and 95m from the nearest housing.
- 1.3 The MUGA is a surfaced and fenced all weather type play area capable of being used for a number of team and individual activities eg volleyball, basketball etc. The MUGA is a square area of 40m x 40m with a total area of 600sq m.

2.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The application seeks permission to alter the permitted hours of use of the floodlights to serve the MUGA, which received permission in April last year. The conditions attached to this permission included an hours of operation condition, which states:

'The floodlights hereby approved may only be used on 5 nights per week which shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in advance, and only in accordance with the following – the lights may not be used after 9.00 pm at night on Monday to Friday, not after 8.00 pm on Saturdays and not at all on Sundays, Bank or Public Holidays unless agreed otherwise in writing with the local planning authority.'

Reason – In the interests of residential amenity and to avoid adverse impact on wildlife habitats in the adjoining.'

- 2.2 This application seeks to vary this condition to permit the use of the floodlights Monday to Friday until 10.00pm and Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays until 8.00pm.

3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 Hatfield Aerodrome Site Outline Permission – S6/1999/1064/OP

De Havilland Sports and Social Club Reserved Matters Approval – S6/2000/1471/DE

Installation of Four 10m High Lighting Columns and Floodlights to Serve Multi Use Games Area for De Havilland Sports and Social Club – S6/2001/1576/FP

4.0 PLANNING POLICY

- 4.1 Hatfield Aerodrome Supplementary Planning Guidance

Policy GB3 – Welwyn Hatfield District Plan Alterations No1 1998

5.0 REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

- 5.1 Publicity has been by way of individual letters of notification and a site notice.

- 5.2 Individual letters of representation have been received from 4 residents raising concerns about: the potential for further time extensions, no justification for additional hours, additional noise and disturbance and that they should not be used Sundays at all.

The Ellenbrook Residents Association have written making the following comments:

- The existing hours of use are sufficient
- Noise emanating from the pitches will increase
- Road safety will be compromised

Herts Biological Records Centre advise of the importance for carefully designed floodlighting schemes in relation to the impact on wildlife and that the duration should be carefully controlled.

6.0 DISCUSSION

- 6.1 The determining issues in relation to this application, is whether the proposed additional hours of operation will give rise to an unacceptable disturbance to local residents.

- 6.2 The hours of operation on the previous approval were carefully considered by officers before the application was reported to Members.

- 6.3 Of relevance is the condition restricting the hours of operation for the floodlighting to the nearby University pitches, which permitted operation on three of the pitches until 9pm Monday to Friday and for bona fide Hockey matches on Saturdays till 6pm and not at all on Sundays. This differs slightly from the approval at DeHavilland Sports and Social Club, but retains the latest time of 9pm during the week and prevents use on Sundays. Clearly, should permission

be granted for the proposed additional hours, it will set a precedent for the University pitches to extend their hours of operation. The existing permitted hours are not felt to be unfairly restrictive to the operation of the club.

- 6.4 It is considered that the proposed additional hours of operation will lead to disturbance to local residents. Although the pitch is located some 90m away from the nearest residential properties, there is the potential for noise and disturbance to local residents. A finishing time of 9pm is considered reasonable in such circumstances, whereas an extension will inevitably lead to disturbance at an unreasonable hour. It is therefore considered that original condition is reasonable.

7.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1 That the application be refused for the following reason:-

The proposed additional hours of operation of the floodlights due to the siting of the facility in relation to nearby residential dwellings, will lead to additional noise and disturbance, particularly during evening hours. As such, the proposal will give rise to an unacceptable loss of residential amenity to local residents.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Planning application S6/2003/106/FP



SPORTS & SOCIAL CLUB

SCALE: 1:1250

DRAWN BY: LIZA WREN

DATE 27th February 2003

Drawing No.

2003/106

Council Offices, The Campus,
Welwyn Garden City, Herts. AL8 6AE

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