

- Cabinet Member
(Reports to The Cabinet, to be cleared with appropriate Cabinet Member)
- Chief Executive
- Legal I Marriott – comments incorporated.
- Finance
- Other Chief Officers
- District Councils Stratford on Avon – No objection, subject to conditions.
- Health Authority
- Police No concerns.
- Other Bodies/Individuals Southam Town Council – welcomes the application subject to floodlights/hours of use condition.

FINAL DECISION **YES/NO** *(If 'No' complete Suggested Next Steps)*

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS :

Details to be specified

- Further consideration by this Committee
- To Council
- To Cabinet
- To an O & S Committee
- To an Area Committee
- Further Consultation

Regulatory Committee - 27th February 2007

Southam College – Floodlit Artificial Sports Pitch and Changing Rooms

Report of the Strategic Director for Environment and Economy

Recommendation

That the Regulatory Committee authorises the grant of planning permission for the construction of a floodlit new generation artificial sports pitch plus associated changing facilities at Southam College, Welsh Road West, Southam subject to the conditions and for the reasons contained in **Appendix B** of the Report of the Strategic Director for Environment and Economy.

Application No: S433/06CC032

Submitted by: The Strategic Director of Resources on behalf of Cabinet.

Received by: The Strategic Director for Environment and Economy on 3/10/2006.

Advertised Date: 17th November 2006.

The Proposal: Construction of a floodlit new generation artificial pitch plus associated changing facilities. [Submitted under Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning Regulations 1992.]

Site & Location: 10.94 ha of land at Southam College, Welsh Road West, Southam [Grid ref: 413.623].

See plan in **Appendix A**.

1. Application Details

- 1.1 The proposals are made up of three developments within the school site at Southam College. First, is the provision of an artificial sports pitch measuring 91.5 metres by 55 metres, including the provision of floodlights. Second, is the provision of changing rooms, adjacent to the existing sports hall and finally a small extension to the existing sports hall to form a reception area.

- 1.2 The pitch area would be enclosed by 3 metre high fencing with 16 floodlights mounted on top of 8 poles at 15 metres in height. 12 of these floodlights would have medium beams, with the remaining four having narrow beams for corner areas. The pitch would be to English School standards for football. It has been sited away from the school buildings to utilise a natural bowl feature that would mean that the floodlights would also be at a lower level limiting the prominence of the floodlighting.
- 1.3 The proposed changing rooms have a floor area of approximately 23.5 metres by 13.5 metres. This building includes four changing rooms, two rooms for officials and a community coaching area. It would be finished with a double pitch roof and incorporates photovoltaic cells and two roof lights on the south facing roof slope. The roof ridge height would be 4.5 metres.
- 1.4 The sports hall reception area would measure 7 metres by 5 metres and would be attached to the existing hall entrance. Both roof slopes would contain two roof lights with a roof ridge height of around 4.5 metres.
- 1.5 The facilities would enable the artificial pitch to be used outside of school time by other groups. As part of the submitted football development plan it is intended to use the pitch between 0930 and 2130 hours, with the floodlights having an automatic cut off at 2130 hours. External users include primary and Special Educational Needs (SEN) schools, local clubs, school holiday courses, mens, women and senior football leagues, as well as community target groups such as those on low incomes and the unemployed. These numbers will supplement the existing community usage at the school. In addition the school will utilise the pitch during school time and as part of extra-curriculum activities.
- 1.6 To accommodate use by external teams and individuals further information regarding parking and vehicular movements has also been submitted. The scheme would provide for an overspill of 20 additional parking bays adjacent to the sports hall and changing rooms. This is in addition to the existing parking space provision of 128 spaces.
- 1.7 As part of the scheme geothermal heating loops are proposed along with photovoltaic cells on the roof slope of the changing rooms. These would make a positive contribution in terms of the use of renewable energy source.
- 1.8 Since the application has been received a traffic management drawing illustrating a scheme of on site parking signage and some additional parking spaces has been received. This will help users of the facility access on site parking that is scattered over the school site. In addition, such signage should keep any off site parking associated with the facility to a minimum.

2. Consultations

- 2.1 **Stratford on Avon District Council** - No objection subject to the following:-
matt colour finish to floodlighting columns; lights to switch off no later than 9.30pm; a tree protection scheme; a landscaping scheme and control of materials on changing room building.

- 2.2 **Southam Town Council** – Welcomes the application but would like to see the floodlights/hours of operation controlled by condition.
- 2.3 **Stratford on Avon District Council (Environmental Health)** – No objection subject to the scheme being implemented in accordance with submitted details and the hours of use restricted.
- 2.4 **Councillor J Appleton** – No comments received as of 13/2/07.
- 2.5 **Adult, Health and Community Services** – No objection subject to conditions and notes.
- 2.6 **Environment Agency** - No comments received.
- 2.7 **Sport England (West Midlands Region)** – Asked for additional information including a business plan, fencing and surfacing detailing, draft community use agreement and a statement to address policies protecting the loss of playing fields – no comments received following additional information as at 13/2/07.
- 2.8 **Police Architectural Liaison - Stratford** – No concerns regarding the development.

3. Representations

- 3.1 Three letters of objection raising the following points:-
- (i) General light and noise pollution that extends past school hours.
 - (ii) Pitch to be used during the hours of darkness when families are trying to relax.
 - (iii) The pitch is sited far away from any vehicular access.
 - (iv) Services will need to be put in due to the isolated location at considerable cost.
 - (v) The changing rooms are removed from the pitch.
 - (vi) Is there a need for such a facility in Southam?
 - (vii) Costs incurred generally.
 - (viii) Will the costs associated with such a facility be justified by the use of the facility.
 - (ix) Have alternative locations been considered.
 - (x) Increased road traffic.
 - (xi) Contrary to Warwickshire County Council's "switch it off" campaign resulting in greater carbon dioxide emissions.

- (xii) Close proximity to residential properties.
 - (xiii) Traffic noise at late hours.
- 3.2 One telephone objection, objecting to light pollution and noise generated.

4. Observations

Site and Surroundings

- 4.1 The school site is located on the western side of the town of Southam. It has an area of 10.94 hectares and is bounded by Welsh Road West to the south and the rear gardens of residential properties along Mayfield Road to the east. To the north and west of the school site lies open countryside.
- 4.2 The site in the proximity of the artificial pitch is subject to changing ground levels. The proposed pitch is in a sunken position when compared with the school buildings to the south and the closest residential properties on Mayfield Road to the east. This area is currently occupied by a grass playing pitch, laid out for rugby, as part of the school's extensive playing fields.
- 4.3 The ground levels at the eastern boundary of the site are around 1.5 to 2 metres higher than the level of the proposed artificial pitch. In addition the slope continues to increase in height towards the main back walls of the properties on Mayfield Road for up to an additional 2 metres, and as such the ground floors of these properties are around 3 to 4 metres higher than the proposed pitch. The school boundary with these properties is located between 97 and 107 metres from the eastern edge of the pitch, with the rear main wall of properties lying between 122 and 130 metres from the eastern edge of the pitch. These would be the closest properties to the proposed pitch.
- 4.4 The nearest residential properties to the south of the school site on Welsh Road West are at least 180 metres away. These properties would largely be screened by built development associated with the school or leisure centre, and the tree belt lying along a break in slope about 10 to 20 metres south of the pitch. The pitch is positioned 2 metres lower across this break in slope.
- 4.5 The pitch is sited 11 metres from the northern boundary of the school. This boundary is characterised by a tree hedge line reaching up to 15 metres in height. Beyond lies open countryside containing a public footpath.
- 4.6 The two further proposals, the sports hall extension and the proposed changing rooms, are located within the vicinity of the existing school buildings. The changing rooms are sited 3 metres from the corner of the sports hall and next to the area of hardstanding to be used as overspill parking.

Impacts on Amenity

- 4.7 The merits of the scheme, in terms of impacts on the amenities of the surrounding area, both the impact of the development from the public domain

and on the amenities enjoyed by the occupants of residential properties need to be considered. In terms of the impact on the public domain, the principle view would be from the public footpath that runs close to the eastern and northern boundaries of the site. The northern boundary contains a dense 15 metre high tree hedge and the pitch with the floodlighting would be set 11 metres within the site. This would mean that the poles would not be overly prominent when viewed from the surrounding area.

- 4.8 The implications associated with the lighting, when in use, is one of the major considerations on amenity. In terms of any nuisance there are three main considerations, sky glow causing the brightening of the night sky, glare associated with the brightness of a light source when viewed against a dark background, and light trespass caused by the spillage of light beyond the area the floodlighting serves.
- 4.9 In terms of light spillage, the lighting has been designed to focus lighting onto the pitch. This would ensure that the lux values would diminish from a maximum of 562 within the playing area to zero within 33 metres of the edge of the pitch. This means that the lighting would not overspill into any of the residential properties surrounding the school site. As such the proposals would be acceptable in terms of light spillage.
- 4.10 Whilst sky glow and glare effects would be impacts that need to be taken into account, the pitch is located some distance from residential properties and benefits from siting in a sunken position. In addition the lamps to be used are asymmetrical in design that focus lighting onto the pitch without unnecessary upward light spillage and without the need for further cowling. It must also be noted that the hours of operation of the lighting would be limited to 2130 hours to restrict any night time nuisance to acceptable hours and the District's Environmental Health Officer, who is principally concerned with any nuisance that may occur in terms of lighting and noise, has no objection to the scheme subject to these hours.
- 4.11 The proposed changing rooms building would be well away from residential properties and not visible from the main frontage of Welsh Road West because of the intervening main school buildings. In addition, the changing rooms are set well within the site and are single storey and would not be seen as overbearing when viewed in relation to the much higher Sports Hall building, which is the nearest existing building.
- 4.12 The sports hall reception area would be a small scale extension especially when the size of the sports hall is considered. As such this part of the scheme would have negligible impacts on the surroundings and neighbouring properties.

Traffic implications

- 4.13 The applicant has provided 20 additional overspill car parking spaces in addition to the existing 128 spaces on site. This parking provision should be sufficient to cater for the pitch usage and other school uses. However, the parking on site is found in a number of sporadic locations which are not too apparent to new users of the site. This may mean that parking may overspill outside the school site. In

order to make the on site parking more evident a scheme of signage is to be submitted.

Playing Field/Open Space Issues

- 4.14 Since Sport England's initial comments the applicant has submitted further information, including the following:-
- (i) A business plan.
 - (ii) A justification incorporating existing provision within the area, census data, projected students numbers, targeted users and types of booking.
 - (iii) Amendments to the proposed layout plan showing fencing details.
 - (iv) The provision of a private changing room added.

This information is intended to address Sport England's concerns. Their response has yet to be received. If Sport England are satisfied with the additional information then the application would be acceptable in their terms.

- 4.15 National Planning policy relating to Open Space Provision is contained within Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) Note Number 17: Sport and Recreation, and it's annex "*Assessing needs and opportunities: a companion guide to PPG17*". The PPG encourages a local assessment of Open Space, sports and recreational facilities at a district level to assess the need for various types of open space within a local area.
- 4.16 Policy COM4 of the adopted local plan seeks to provide a minimum standard of open space provision in Main Rural Centres. For Southam this standard has been set at 2.6 ha per 1,000 population, which is further broken down into various categories.
- 4.17 The district has also published an open space audit in March 2005, which has identified that there is an overall acceptable level of provision in Southam. Despite this, the level of formal open spaces recognised by the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) is at a deficit of -16 ha. However, there is a further 16 ha of institutional playing areas etc that have been identified but discounted as there were no public access agreements at the time of the Open Space audit.
- 4.18 The proposal would allow for wider community use, indeed a condition is attached requiring a community use agreement. As such the scheme would help to address the deficit in such formal open space with the provision for wider public access. This would also help in meeting the standards outlined in policy COM4 of the adopted local plan.
- 4.19 As part of the application a business plan, and further justifying information has been submitted, such as details of potential user groups, including schools and football clubs within the wider local area, and the distance between the site and other such specific footballing facilities. In view of this and the fact that the

nearest facility is some 8 miles away at Myton School, Warwick it has been demonstrated that the facility would serve a local need.

Planning Policy

- 4.20 Policy DEV8 of the Stratford Local Plan addresses Energy Conservation and expects proposals to take into account the scope for utilising renewable forms of energy amongst other things. As the scheme incorporates renewable energy sources it would also be supported by this policy.
- 4.21 Policy CTY1 addresses control over development within the countryside and stated that all forms of development other than those in accordance with policies elsewhere in the plan, will generally be resisted in order to preserve its character and ensure that resources are protected. The policy then goes on to acknowledge that forms of development that are not covered by other policies within the plan will need to be fully justified.
- 4.22 In this case, the development concerned relates to the provision of recreational facilities and as such policy CTY10 regarding rural recreation is of particular importance. This policy states that "proposals which seek to provide and extend the benefits of small-scale recreation and leisure facilities in the countryside will be supported". However, the impacts in terms of potential for nuisance to be caused to local residents, the affect on the tranquillity of the area and any harm likely to be caused to features of acknowledged importance will need to be assessed.
- 4.23 As outlined above the proposal would help to deliver open space that would be available to the community and as such help to achieve the targets set out in policy COM4.

Conclusions

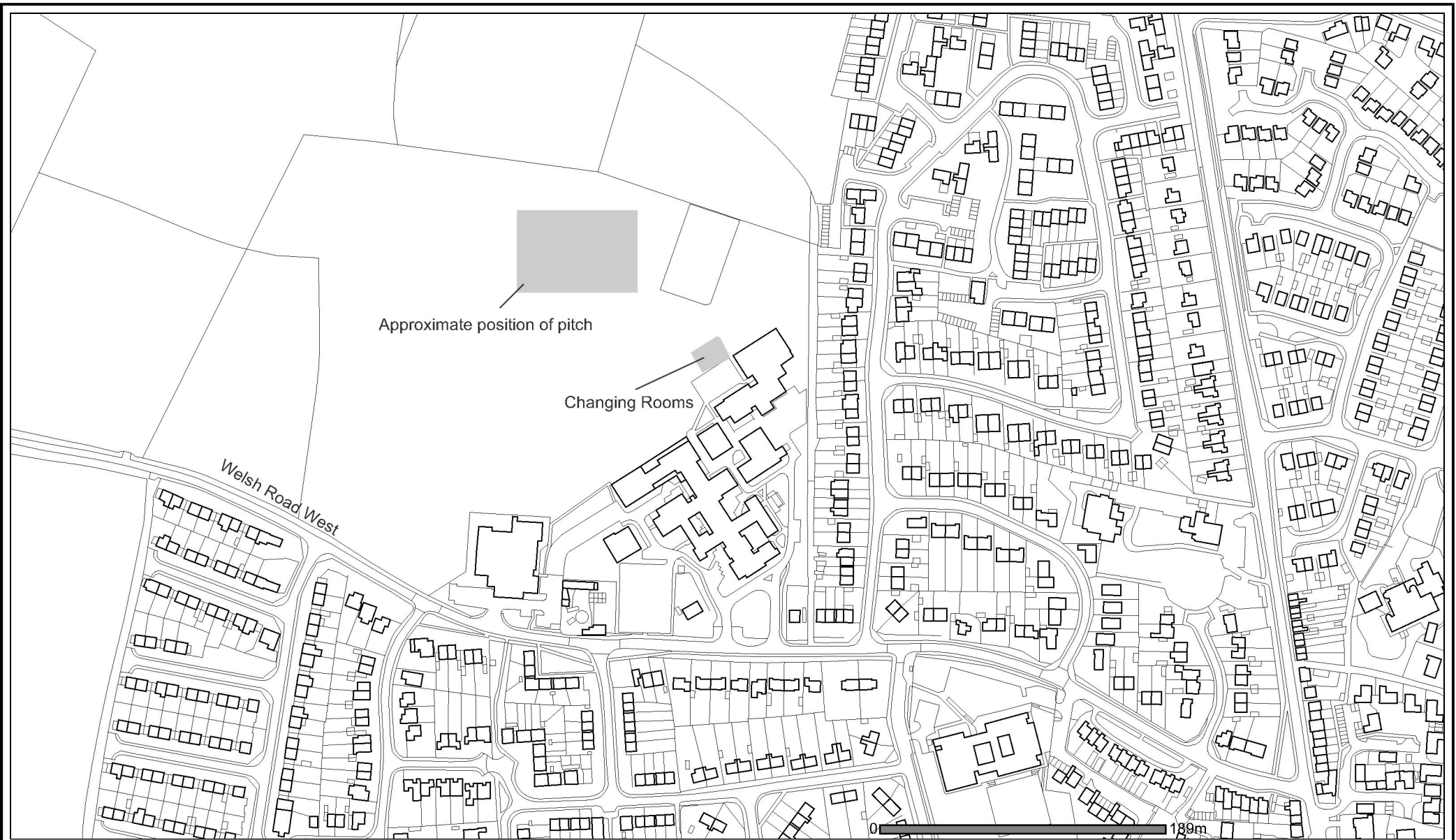
- 4.24 The proposed pitch and lighting are located some distance away from residential properties. The floodlighting scheme has been designed to ensure that lit areas are restricted to the pitch area and the immediate area. As such the impacts on neighbouring properties would be acceptable and the development would accord with the adopted local plan.

5. Environmental Implications

- 5.1 This development would result in some extra noise and light pollution affecting the immediate locality. However this impact is considered to be acceptable and must be balanced against the fact that the development would result in the provision of significantly improved local recreation facilities which would be of benefit to the school and local community.

JOHN DEEGAN
Strategic Director for Environment and Economy
Shire Hall
Warwick

15th February 2007



Scale 1: 3500

Ref No. S433/06CC032

Drawn Richard Forbes

Regulatory Committee - 27th February 2007

Subject

Southam College - Floodlit pitch and changing rooms



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Regulatory Committee - 27th February 2007

Southam College – Floodlit Artificial Sports Pitch and Changing Rooms

Application No: S433/06CC032

Commencement Date

1. The development hereby permitted shall be commenced before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with the provisions of section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

General Operations

2. The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the submitted application ref: S433/06CC032, the submitted Planning Application Support Document for Southam Sports Facility, design and access statement, letter and attached information addressed to Mr M Clifton from Mr J Lewis of Brown Matthew Architects Ltd dated 13th December 2006, the Traffic Management Scheme shown in drawing number 0449/12 Rev A and Drawing Numbers 0449/06 Rev F, 0449/08 Rev F, 0449/09 Rev A, 0449/10 Rev B, and 0449/11 Rev A.

Reason: To ensure development is carried out in accordance with the planning permission hereby granted.

3. The artificial pitch shall only be used between 0930 and 2130 on any day. The floodlights shall be switched off no later than 2130 on any day.

Reason: In the interest of residential amenity.

4. No development shall take place until samples of the external materials to be used in the construction of the walls and roof of the buildings hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. The development shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In order to ensure the satisfactory appearance of the completed development.

5. No development shall take place until details of matt colour finishing of the floodlighting columns hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. The development shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In order to ensure the satisfactory appearance of the completed development.

6. Within 3 months of the commencement of development a scheme of landscaping incorporating native species shall be submitted to the County Planning Authority. Once approved, the scheme shall be implemented during the first available planting season following the commencement of the development. Any tree, shrub or hedge planted in accordance with the approved scheme shall be maintained and any plants which within five years of planting die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a similar size and species, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the County Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of the residential and visual amenities of the area.

7. The total root area of the trees to be retained adjacent to the approved developments shall be protected by 1.2 metre chestnut pale fencing (conforming to BS:1722) to be erected at a distance of 1 metre beyond the tree canopy and staked to the ground, for the duration of the development. No development shall take place until tree protection barriers have been erected; the barriers shall remain in situ and maintained to the satisfaction of the County Planning Authority for the duration of the works.

Reason: In order to protect trees on the site which are of amenity value.

8. No storage of materials, chemicals, fuel, machinery the lighting of fires nor the movement of vehicles shall take place under the tree canopies.

Reason: In order to protect trees on the site which are of amenity value.

9. Prior to the first use of the artificial pitch, the traffic management measures shown on drawing number 0449/12 Rev.A shall be fully implemented.

Reason: In the interest of highway safety.

10. Prior to the first use of the artificial pitch, a Community Use Scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. The scheme shall include details of pricing policy, hours of use, access by non-school users, management responsibilities and a mechanism for review. The approved scheme shall be implemented upon commencement of use of the development.

Reason: To secure community access to the facility.

Notes

- (i) Care should be taken when clearing the ground prior to development, and if evidence of specially protected species such as Common Lizard and Grass Snake is found, work should stop while Warwickshire Museum Ecology Unit or Natural England is contacted. Grass Snakes and Common Lizards are protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.
- (ii) Work should avoid disturbance to nesting birds. Birds can nest in many places including buildings, trees, shrubs dense ivy, and bramble/rose scrub. Nesting birds are protected under the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act. The main nesting season, lasts approximately from March to September, so work should take place outside these dates if at all possible. N.B. birds can nest at any time, and the site should ideally be checked for their presence immediately before work starts.

Development Plan Policies Relevant to this Decision

Stratford on Avon District Local Plan Review 1996-2011 Adopted July 2006.

Policies DEV8, CTY1, CTY10, COM4.

Reasons for the Decision to Grant Permission

The development hereby permitted is in accordance with the relevant provisions of the development plan and there are no contrary material considerations sufficient to justify withholding consent.