

**RECEIVED:** 28 January, 2011

**WARD:** Kenton

**PLANNING AREA:** Kingsbury & Kenton Consultative Forum

**LOCATION:** Woodcock Park, Shaftesbury Avenue, Harrow, HA3 0RD

**PROPOSAL:** Installation of an artificial turf pitch with perimeter fencing on existing tarmac area of park

**APPLICANT:** Mr Shaun Faulkner

**CONTACT:** Mr Neil Martin

**PLAN NO'S:**  
See Condition 2

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## **RECOMMENDATION**

Grant consent

## **EXISTING**

The site comprises an existing hard surfaced play area within Woodcock Hill Open Space. The proposed area of development is located at the western side of the open space in between St. Gregory's School, Woodcock Hill (road) and the Wealdstone Brook which lie to the south, west and north of the site respectively. The closest access to the site is from Woodcock Hill where there are residential properties on there western side of this road. The site is not in a conservation area nor does it contain any listed buildings.

## **PROPOSAL**

Installation of an artificial turf pitch with perimeter fencing (3m high) on existing tarmac area of park

## **HISTORY**

**88/0746** - *Granted*, 05/07/1988

Details Pursuant to Condition 2 of pp DTD 06 Oct 1987 ref:87/1337

**87/1337** - *Granted*, 06/10/1987

Erection of temporart site office & contractors compound for use during river Brent flood alleviation scheme

**20379 3281** - *Granted*, 07/07/1953

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## **POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

### ***National Policies***

*Planning Policy Guidance Note No. 17: Planning for Open space, Sport and Recreation*

### ***Local Policies***

*Brent Core Strategy 2010*

- CP 18 Protection and enhancement of open space, sports and biodiversity**  
 STR33, STR34, STR35, OS4, OS6, OS7, OS8, OS11, OS22  
 Protects all open space from inappropriate development. Promotes enhancements to open space, sports and biodiversity, particularly in areas of deficiency and where additional pressure on open space will be created
- CP23 Protection of Community Facilities**  
 CF2

Brent Unitary Development Plan 2004

*Built Environment*

- BE2 on townscape: local context & character states that proposals should be designed with regard to their local context, making a positive contribution to the character of the area.
- BE3 relates to urban structure, space and movement and indicates that proposals should have regard for the existing urban grain, development patterns and density in the layout of development sites.
- BE4 states that developments shall include suitable access for people with disabilities.
- BE5 on urban clarity and safety stipulates that developments should be designed to be understandable to users, free from physical hazards and to reduce opportunities for crime.
- BE6 discusses landscape design in the public realm and draws particular attention to the need to create designs which will reflect the way in which the area will actually be used and the character of the locality and surrounding buildings. Additionally, this policy highlights the importance of boundary treatments such as fencing and railings which complement the development and enhance the streetscene.
- BE7 Public Realm: Streetscene
- BE9 seeks to ensure new buildings, alterations and extensions should embody a creative, high quality and appropriate design solution and should be designed to ensure that buildings are of a scale and design that respects the sunlighting, daylighting, privacy and outlook for existing and proposed residents.

*Transport*

- TRN1 Planning applications will be assessed, as appropriate for their transport impact on all transport modes including walking and cycling.
- TRN22 Parking standards for non residential developments
- TRN34 The provision of servicing facilities is required in all development covered by the plan's standards in Appendix TRN2.
- PS16 Cycle parking standards

**CONSULTATION**

**Consultation Start Date:** 03 Feb - 24 Feb 2011

Public consultation

Residents along Woodgrange Close, Woodcock Hill, Donnington Road and Retreat Close were consulted. Two site notices were also displayed along Woodcock Hill.

*Objections:* 3 received. The main issues cited in the objections are:

- Visual amenity across the park from residential properties;
- Views across the park disrupted;
- Why the pitch was not placed closer to the school i.e. directly backing onto the school;
- Loud and noisy activities extended till 9pm with the installation of the pitch;
- Increased traffic and congestion by users of the pitch;
- Noise from crowds;
- Increased use of the park by these users will change the calm character of the park;
- Loss of public space;
- Fence prevents wider use of pitch;

- Intimidating path;
- Fencing will be an eyesore;
- Unfair pre-booking system restricts use of the pitch;
- Use of tarmac for other activities such as cycling and remote control car use and cricket;
- Loss of tarmac will increase car parking elsewhere when school events;
- Pitch will block a well used walkway.

*Officers response :*

- Discussion between Planning, the Parks Service and Sports Service have resulted in a proposal that 6 semi-mature trees be planted to the west of the pitch. This would help assuage objections about the fencing around the pitch being an eyesore and provide a better outlook for residents facing the park. Given the size of Woodcock Hill Park, the impact of the proposal should not have a significant impact on the calm aspects of the park
- The pitch is proposed in this location because of the requirement for even ground levels and Council policies which deterred the loss of green space. As such the pitch could not be brought closer to the rear of the school
- The pitch is of a relatively small size as it is for 5-a-side football. As such it is not envisaged that large numbers of people will attend matches. Additionally, no floodlighting is proposed so there will be limited use outside of school times. Full details will be secured through a condition relating to community access.
- Parking for users and visitors of the pitch will be accommodated within the school grounds.
- The Sports Service has a strategy for increasing sports uptake within the borough and in particular use of its parks for these activities. This also ties in with the boroughs wider strategy for preventing obesity by encouraging sports uptake. As such placing the artificial turf pitch within the park and as a facility managed by the school would comply with the Council's strategies.
- The pitch will be open for community use with prior permission and will be managed by the school in order to maintain good operation of the site and prevent vandalism. As such there will be no loss of community space.
- The existing tarmaced area is of poor quality and the proposal to provided a formalised play facility is considered to be of benefit.
- In terms of a walkway, a 10m path will remain between the north west corner of the pitch and the tree line to the north. The width of the pathway is considered sufficient to not feel overly enclosed.

Internal consultation

*Transportation:* No objections raised.

*Landscape Team :* No objections raised subject to conditions for Tree Protection Plan and Arboricultural Method Statement.

Statutory consultees

*Environment Agency :* No objection raised. Would like to see naturalised zone of 8m from the Wealdstone Brooke

*Sport England :* No objections raised subject to condition for maintenance plan

**REMARKS**

***Introduction***

The proposal involves the formation of an artificial turf pitch to be used for 5-a-side football as part of a donation from the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA). It will be laid over an existing section of a tarmaced area within Woodcock Hill Open Space to the rear of St. Gregory's Science College. The new pitch will measure 20m x 40m and will be surrounded by a 3m high weld-mesh fence with a connected walkway to St. Gregory's school.

***Principle of the Development***

This proposal is part of a larger project to improve sports provision at Woodcock Hill Park. A pitch of this nature is often difficult to establish for reasons of its cost, management and maintenance. This site presented an opportunity whereby the neighbouring school, St. Gregory's Science College, can manage use of the pitch and provide associated facilities including changing rooms for use by local community football teams outside of school hours. The pitch would also provide the school with a purpose built facility where it's pupils can play sport.

A further important aspect of this site is the existence of an area of hardstanding on top of which the artificial turf can be laid without incurring the loss of an existing grassed area which would be contrary to Core Strategy policy CP18. Currently the surface is covered with tarmac which has become undulated from tree root growth at its northern end which borders the Wealdstone Brook. As such the hardsurface cannot be used to play any competitive team sports.

### ***Impact on Neighbouring Properties***

There have been 3 formal objections to this proposal and further comments which have been discussed in the consultation section. It is considered that the proposed sports facility will not have a significant impact on the amenity of residents through its use. There will be no floodlighting therefore the hours of operation will be controlled by daylight hours. In addition a Community Access Strategy will ensure that the facility is appropriately managed and provides access for local residents.

### ***Floodlights***

Floodlights are not proposed with this planning application and given the size of the pitch such lighting is not deemed necessary. Any proposals for future lighting or floodlighting would require planning permission and the applicant has been made aware of this.

### ***Transport Impacts***

The school has confirmed that two car parks are currently available for staff use comprising 37 parking spaces. There is also a disabled car parking space. As such, these spaces will be available for use after school hours for users of the facility.

It is noteworthy that the proposal is small sized pitch for 5-a-side games. As such, a large crowd of visitors is not expected during out of school hours use. Information will be provided to users as part of the Community Access Plan.

Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) directly to the site is considered low but there are a number of bus routes along Kenton Road to the west of Woodcock Hill.

### ***Design and layout***

The existing tarmac area is 80m long x30-35m wide and lies towards the south-west area of Woodcock Hill Park. The proposed artificial turf will cover approximately half of this area closest to the rear of St. Gregory's School. The pitch will be surrounded by a 3m high weld-mesh fence with 1.2m high rebound boards fixed to the inside of the mesh.

The remaining tarmaced area is to be returned to natural grass for the benefit of other sports as well as outlook of the park.

Access to the pitch will be from the rear of the school where there is an existing access gate. The path to the pitch will also be surrounded by a 3m weld-mesh for security of the facility . Entrances have been designed for disabled access and use of the pitch.

It is considered that the proposal will be acceptable within the park and, in addition to the provision of trees will not detract from the park.

### ***Management of Use***

St. Gregory's School will manage use of the pitch and maintain the site. Appendix 6 presents a draft Community Access Agreement stating the school will be in charge of the operation of the

pitch citing the core opening times and the provision of use of the changing facilities and toilets for all bookings.

Fees for pitch use will be in line with Brent Council fees and charges will be agreed and reviewed on an annual basis.

### **Landscaping**

It was considered appropriate that the remaining tarmaced area be returned to grass for sports use. This suggestion was welcomed by the Environment Agency in terms of alleviating surface water run-off and sustainable flood risk management and also complies with UDP(2004) policy EP12 for flood protection. Because there are tree routes in this section of the tarmacadam, a tree protection method statement was requested to ensure minimum risk of tree damage. This will be required by condition.

For aesthetic reasons, 6 semi-mature trees will be planted north-west of the pitch bordering the car parking area adjacent to the site. This will help screen the pitch from residents along Woodcock Hill. This complies with UDP(2004) policies BE6 and BE7.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Grant Consent

### **REASON FOR GRANTING**

(1) The proposed development is in general accordance with policies contained in the:-

Brent Unitary Development Plan 2004  
Central Government Guidance

Relevant policies in the Adopted Unitary Development Plan are those in the following chapters:-

Built Environment: in terms of the protection and enhancement of the environment  
Environmental Protection: in terms of protecting specific features of the environment and protecting the public  
Open Space and Recreation: to protect and enhance the provision of sports, leisure and nature conservation  
Transport: in terms of sustainability, safety and servicing needs  
Community Facilities: in terms of meeting the demand for community services

### **CONDITIONS/REASONS:**

(1) The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning on the date of this permission.

Reason: To conform with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

(2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved drawing(s) and/or document(s):

Design and Access Statement Artificial Turf Pitch, Woodcock Park (appendix five)  
Draft Community use proposals at Woodcock Park Artificial Grass Pitch (appendix six)

GUK-MUK376-05

GUK-MUK376-01 (appendix eight)

GUK-MUK376-04 (appendix eight)

School Travel Plan (appendix nine)

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

- (3) Within 3 months of the commencement of development a full Community Access Strategy shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority. This should include details of available parking for users to the development, how booking times and will be arranged and shared with the school. Access to the facility shall be managed in accordance with the approved Strategy.

Reason: To ensure the sports facility will be available for the wider community and will have use of the school premises

- (4) No external lighting shall be installed to the development without prior written approval from the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To minimise any undue impact to the neighbouring residence.

- (5) Within three months of the completion of the development, a Management and Maintenance Plan shall be submitted which shall provide details of a Scheme for a period of 20 years to include measures to ensure the replacement of all artificial surface/s within the next 10 years and, management responsibilities, a maintenance schedule and a mechanism for review shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority after consultation with Sport England. The measures set out in the approved scheme shall be complied with in full, with effect from commencement of use of the facility.

Reason: To ensure that new facilities are capable of being managed and maintained to an acceptable standard which is fit for purpose, sustainable and to ensure sufficient benefit of the development to sport (PPG17 Par 14)

- (6) A Tree Protection Plan and Arboricultural Method Statement in accordance with BS5837:2005 Trees in relation to construction of the pitch and naturalisation of the excess tarmac area shall be submitted prior to commencement of the development. The Arboricultural Method Statement should show how the root systems of a group of trees to the north of the site are to be protected and the installation of a root barrier system to protect the surface of the proposed pitch. The development shall be carried out in full accordance with the approved Plan.

Reason: To ensure existing trees will be protected throughout the duration of the construction and the protection of the pitch surface from invasive root damage

#### **INFORMATIVES:**

None Specified

#### **REFERENCE DOCUMENTS:**

Planning Policy Statement 25

Core Strategy

Unitary Development Plan (2004)

Planning for Sport and Active Recreation Facilities Strategy 2008-2021

Any person wishing to inspect the above papers should contact Harini Boteju, The Planning Service, Brent House, 349 High Road, Wembley, Middlesex, HA9 6BZ, Tel. No. 020 8937 5015



## Planning Committee Map

Site address: Woodcock Park, Shaftesbury Avenue, Harrow, HA3 0RD

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This map is indicative only.