



Michael Dillon

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Dear Mr Dillon

PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE: RESPONSE

Reference: 25/01247/PAMEET

Proposal: Pre Application Advice (Meeting) - Extend and remodel existing pavilion

Location: Arthur Nicolson Recreation Ground Spring Lane Bidborough Tunbridge Wells Kent

I refer to your request for pre-application advice regarding the above location and proposal. Your proposals have been considered and I have the following advice;

The site is the sports pavilion on the Arthur Nicolson Recreation Ground and the proposal is for the extension of the pavilion to the side and rear, the provision of a roof level external terrace area and general upgrading of this building to enhance the facilities. Planning permission would be required for these works. The site is located in a sustainable location inside the Limits to Built Development and it is noted that Bidborough Conservation Area abuts the western edge of the recreation ground.

Planning policies

Policies EN1, EN5, EN8, CS6 of the Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan 2006, Core Policies 1, 4, 5, 8 and 14 of the Core Strategy Development Plan and Policies STR1, EN1, EN4, EN5, EN8, EN9, OSSR 1 of the Submission Local Plan 2021 are relevant to the proposal. These policy documents are available on our website under the Planning Policy pages and all these documents form the Development Plan for the purposes of the determination of any planning application.

Policy OSSR 1 of the Submission Local Plan seeks to retain existing sports provision whilst also allowing for its enhancement.

Core Policy 8 of the Core Strategy supports the provision of additional community facilities where they are deficient, particularly where this will provide a range of facilities on a single site. Policy CR3 of the Local Plan 2006 supports community and recreation uses where these would not have a detrimental impact on the vitality and viability of villages.

Paras 96 and 98 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) support the provision of sports and community facilities, including their modernisation, where they are retained for the benefit of the community and where they will enhance the provision of healthy, inclusive and safe places and provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services a community needs.

As such, I would consider the proposal likely to be acceptable in terms of policy, subject to the details submitted and the outcome of consultation. We will also consult with Sport England, whose comments carry significant weight.

Design and impact on visual amenity

The existing sports pavilion sits in the north east corner of the recreation ground. The proposal would be to extend the building on the north west flank and to the rear. From the site visit it was clear that the land to the rear is currently overgrown with vegetation and there would be room to extend. On the flank elevation, a single sectional garage building would be removed making room for the proposed extension here with an attached external store. This would retain new footprint closely around the existing building and in a location that would be discreet. In terms of layout this would likely be acceptable.

The scale of the resulting building would appear to be proportionate and in keeping with the existing site context and subject to details is likely to be acceptable. Given the level changes here details of levels, finished floor levels and height/elevations of any retaining walls should be included.

In terms of design, the roof form would be altered including an asymmetric increase in ridge height and roof pitch and the external terrace area formed to the front. A feature clock tower would be added and roof lights on the rear facing roof slope. The design would retain a pavilion aesthetic and is considered likely to be acceptable. The proposed materials of timber cladding for the elevations are also likely to be appropriate and would be sympathetic to the surroundings. Full details of all external materials/windows, including specification documents where available and details of finish should be included. Please also provide details of the roof lights.

A supporting statement should be provided to outline exactly how the building will be used and by whom, including hours of use. A noise assessment may be relevant and helpful, if there will be an increased use for functions etc.

Full details of the proposed pedestrian access should be provided. If any parking is proposed full details of this and the surface finish to the car parking area should be provided. These areas should also be included within the red application site outline and also included in any PEA or BNG assessment.

The application will need to be supported by a Phase 1 Preliminary Ecological Survey, and any further surveys it recommends. You will need to assess the proposal in the light of the statutory requirements for Biodiversity Net Gain as required by recent legislation (and explained further on our website).

Any external lighting would need to be sensitive to the location and be of appropriate illumination level, be sensor controlled and designed to project light spill downwards. A full landscaping scheme should be submitted.

Proposed use and hours of use

Any application should clarify the type of uses that will be undertaken and the hours of use that will be necessary so that we can understand the operation of the site and assess whether this will cause harm to the residential amenity of any adjacent property.

Highways/parking impact

Planning application 20/02971/FULL for a replacement pavilion on the site was withdrawn prior to determination, however, it is noted that KCC Highways made comments on this which related to the submission of a Transport Statement to assess all proposed/combination of uses, swept path analysis within the car park, assessment of access by sustainable modes, and to include the provision of details of existing traffic levels,

parking demand and parking arrangements associated with the existing use so that the existing context could be understood. It is not known at this stage whether the same level of information would be necessary for the extension of the existing pavilion but you may wish to undertake pre-application advice with KCC Highways on your proposal or provide supporting information to fully explain the scheme in relation to these matters to hopefully address any concerns that may arise.

Impact on significance of Conservation Area and Grade II* St Lawrence Church

The Bidborough Conservation Area abuts the western edge of the recreation ground and an assessment of the impact on the character and appearance of the CA and the listed church should be included. However it is unlikely that the development would harm their significance.

Residential amenity

The scheme would appear likely to be acceptable in terms of residential amenity, given existing distances between the pavilion and neighbouring properties. The external terrace area position would also likely ensure there would be no overlooking issues to nearby dwellings. A full assessment of impact on residential amenity would be undertaken as part of any application submitted.

Applying for planning permission

To apply for planning permission, an Application for Planning Permission form should be submitted, the simplest way is online via the Planning Portal, along with a location plan at 1:1250 scale with the application site outlined in red (including the pedestrian access from the road and any parking areas), existing and proposed block plans at 1:500 scale, existing and proposed elevations at 1:100 scale, existing and proposed floor plans at 1:50 scale and biodiversity/landscaping/boundary details. Levels information should be provided as well as details of materials. Supporting statements such as a Planning Statement/statement of use should be included with your submission as well as any other supporting and explanatory information to fully explain the use of the building and service provision. Please also refer to guidance on the Council's website regarding Biodiversity Net Gain requirements and include relevant information. Arboricultural reports (AIA,AMS,TPP) should be provided to demonstrate that the proposal would not have an adverse impact on existing trees. The relevant fee for your proposal should be paid via our website. Applications take 6-8 weeks to be determined from the date of validation.

As part of the application, Notice would need to be served on all leasehold and freehold owners of the land within the site location plan (if the applicant is not the freehold owner).

Any advice given by Council Officers for pre-application enquiries does not indicate a formal decision by the Local Planning Authority. Any views or opinions are given in good faith, and to the best of ability, without prejudice to the formal consideration of any planning application.

Any pre-application advice provided will be carefully considered in reaching a decision or recommendation on any subsequent application; subject to the proviso that circumstances and information may change or come to light that could alter that position. It should be noted that the weight given to pre-application advice notes may decline over time.

Please be aware that any correspondence between us will be available for public inspection if requested, unless it is marked 'commercially confidential', with a valid explanation as to why this is the case.

The final decision on any subsequent application that you may make can only be taken after the Local Planning Authority has consulted local people, statutory consultees and any other interested parties.

Yours sincerely

Hayley Starkey
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