

**OTHER APPLICATIONS  
(Reports by Development Control Manager)**

---

**Case No: 0803557FUL (FULL PLANNING APPLICATION)**

**Proposal: ERECTION OF FOUR FLOODLIGHT COLUMNS AND FLOODLIGHTS**

**Location: INFORMAL OPEN SPACE NORTH EAST OF 46 HIGH STREET**

**Applicant: LITTLE PAXTON PARISH COUNCIL**

**Grid Ref: 518957 262985**

**Date of Registration: 13.01.2009**

**Parish: LITTLE PAXTON**

---

**RECOMMENDATION - APPROVAL**

- 1. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION**
- 1.1 This site is located on the northern edge of the village, and is a playing field on which stands a basket ball area and two shelters, one open sided and the other open facing the field. The field has a marked out football pitch and a public footpath runs across the field. The village hall lies on the south western corner of the site and the doctor's surgery lies further south adjacent to a formal playground area. Vehicles access the site via a lit roadway from the High Street, and pedestrian access is available from The Rookery. The site is generally devoid of natural features, although there are some trees at the edge of the site. Residential boundary fencing mainly encloses the area on the western and eastern boundaries; the site opens out into open countryside to the north.
- 1.2 The application seeks the erection of four 6.7 metres high columns and floodlights to be positioned at the southern end of the playing field close to the existing formal play area, Village Hall and Doctors Surgery. The information submitted with the proposal confirms the lighting will be used to light the new multi surface play area in the winter months only and will be switched off at 9pm, with the exception of one night per week when a 10pm switch off will be required. The lighting will be operated on a timer basis.
- 1.3 The multi use games area and fencing are considered to be permitted development under Schedule 2, Part 12 - Development by Local Planning Authorities of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995.
- 1.4 The site is within the village limits of Little Paxton Village for the purposes of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995 (part two), but noted as being outside the built framework of the village in the Local

Development Framework Proposals Map and outside the built-up area as defined in the Submission Core Strategy 2008.

- 1.5 The applicant for this proposal is Little Paxton Parish Council. As a number of objections have been received in relation to the proposed columns and flood lights, the application is being put before Members.

## 2. NATIONAL GUIDANCE

### 2.1 PPS1 – Delivering Sustainable Development

- 2.2 **PPS7 - Sustainable Development in Rural Areas (2004)** sets out the Government's planning policies for rural areas, including country towns and villages and the wider, largely undeveloped countryside up to the fringes of larger urban areas.

### 2.3 PPS9 – Biodiversity and Ecological Conservation

- 2.4 **PPG17 – Open Space, Sport and Recreation (2002)** – considers matters relating to the provision of recreational facilities in towns and the countryside.

- 2.5 **PPS23 - Planning and Pollution Control (2004)** is intended to complement the new pollution control framework under the Pollution Prevention and Control Act 1999 and the PPC Regulations 2000.

For full details visit the government website <http://www.communities.gov.uk> and follow the links to planning, Building and Environment, Planning, Planning Policy.

## 3. PLANNING POLICIES

Further information on the role of planning policies in deciding planning applications can also be found at the following website: <http://www.communities.gov.uk> then follow links Planning, Building and Environment, Planning, Planning Information and Guidance, Planning Guidance and Advice and then Creating and Better Place to Live

- 3.1 East of England Plan - Revision to the Regional Spatial Strategy (May 2008) Policies viewable at <http://www.go-east.gov.uk> then follow links to Planning, Regional Planning then Related Documents
- **ENV7** - requires new development to be of high quality which complements the distinctive character and best qualities of the local area and promotes urban renaissance and regeneration.
- 3.2 Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan (2003) Saved policies from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 are relevant and viewable at <http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk> follow the links to environment, planning, planning policy and Structure Plan 2003.
- None relating to this proposal

3.3 Huntingdonshire Local Plan (1995) Saved policies from the Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995 are relevant and viewable at [www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/localplan95](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/localplan95)

- **R1:** Recreation and Leisure Provision – the District Council will directly promote district wide recreation and leisure projects and generally support leisure and recreation facilities commensurate with population levels, housing developments and identified need.
- **R2 -** Recreation and Leisure Provision – applications for recreational facilities will be considered on their merits bearing in mind: advice from sporting recreation authorities on the need for further provision; the effect on residential amenity; the effect on landscape, visual amenity, nature conservation and archaeological interest; access, parking and traffic generation; the siting, design and materials of any building and structures.

3.4 Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alterations (2002) Saved policies from the Huntingdon Local Plan Alterations 2002 are relevant and viewable at [www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/localplan](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/localplan) - Then click on "Local Plan Alteration (2002)

- None relating to this proposal

3.5 Policies from the Huntingdonshire Interim Planning Policy Statement 2007 are relevant and viewable at <http://www.huntsdc.gov.uk> click on Environment and Planning, then Planning then Planning+Policy then Informal policy statements where there is a link to Interim Planning Policy Statement 2007

- **B1 –** Design Quality - developments should demonstrate a high quality of design in terms of layout, form and contribution to the character of the area.
- **B2 –** Street scene – development proposals should make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of streets and public spaces.
- **B3 –** Accessibility, Adaptability and Security – the location and design of new development should enable ease of access, have convenient and appropriate facilities and minimise the extent to which users feel at risk of crime.
- **B4 –** Amenity - developments should not have an unacceptable impact upon amenity of existing or future occupiers.
- **P8 –** Development in the Countryside – Outside the defined limits of the key centres development will be restricted to: that which is essential to the efficient operation of agriculture, horticulture or forestry, or required for the purposes of outdoor recreation; the alteration, replacement or change of use of existing buildings in accordance with other policies; limited and specific forms of housing, business and tourism development, as provided for within the Local Development Framework; or land allocated for particular purposes.

3.6 Policies from the Huntingdonshire Local Development Framework Submission Core Strategy 2008 are relevant and viewable at

<http://www.huntsdc.gov.uk> click on Environment and Planning then click on Planning and then click on Planning Policy where there is a link to the Local Development Framework Core Strategy.

- **CS1** - Sustainable development in Huntingdonshire – all developments will contribute to the pursuit of sustainable development, having regard to social, environmental and economic issues. All aspects will be considered including design, implementation and function of development.

#### **4. PLANNING HISTORY**

4.1 No Planning history as been recorded for this site

#### **5. CONSULTATIONS**

5.1 **Police Architectural Liaison Officer** – Supports the application

5.2 **HDC Lighting Engineer – NO OBJECTION**

5.3 **Sport England – NO OBJECTION**

5.4 **Wildlife trust – NO OBJECTION**, but suggest consultation with Cambridgeshire Bats Society

5.5 **Cambridgeshire Bats society** – any response will be reported to members

5.6 **Cambridgeshire Footpaths Officer – NO OBJECTION**, however the footpath should not be obstructed at any time

#### **6. REPRESENTATIONS**

6.1 Eight letters of objection have been received. The concerns are:

- \* Value of property
- \* Anti social behaviour - additional noise and disturbance from an already noisy area
- \* Out of keeping with rural area
- \* Free floodlit area will attract others into the area
- \* Need for unauthorised night time play area
- \* Environmentally unfriendly/ energy consumption
- \* Times of flood light area
- \* MUGA less than 5 metres from No. 7 The Rookery
- \* Lack of consultation and lack of information about impact on residents
- \* Lack of facilities to serve area i.e. W.C's
- \* Discourage people for who the area was intended for, fear of intimation
- \* Light pollution and disturbance
- \* Should be supervised play area
- \* Suggestions made by residents ignored by Parish
- \* Visually obtrusive to residents and those using Paxton Pits/eyesore
- \* Does not enhance public space
- \* Doctors surgery and formal play space enclosed - object to another enclosed space
- \* 24 hour access to MUGA

- \* Waste of resources
- \* Health and Safety of those leaving pitch when floodlights switched off
- \* Will not discourage youth using car park as football area
- \* Figures misleading in supporting evidence about public support
- \* Impact on bats in the area

## **7. SUMMARY OF ISSUES**

- 7.1 The site is an existing informal play area and whilst located in the open countryside as noted within the Local Development Framework Proposals Map, the playing field is mostly enclosed by residential properties apart from the very northern boundary. The lighting proposes to be located to the southern end of the field and in an area that has some lighting and relates more to the residential part of the village than the wider open countryside to the north. In any case Policy P8 states that recreation use may be acceptable in the countryside, Policy R2 of the Local Plan 1995 suggests applications for recreation facilities should be considered on their own merits. The effect upon the amenity of the adjacent residents and the effect on the visual amenity should be considered.
- 7.2 The information submitted with the proposal confirms this proposal is the final part of a project of improvements for this recreation area. The recently constructed doctor's surgery was constructed in part of the children's play area. It was established during consultation with village groups, organisations and the Local Primary School that a multi surface play area for 10 plus age group was the most wanted facility.
- 7.3 The information goes on to say that the basketball/football goal area on the playing field is well used, to the extent that due to the constant use children have used the lit village hall car park and scout hut area to play football. By installing flood lights in the new multi use games area the facility can be used in the winter evenings to provide better facilities for the young people of the village.

### **Impact on the character of the area:**

- 7.4 The four 6.7 high lighting columns are to be set at the edge of the new multi surface play at the southern end of the site, in an area used by the general public to access the doctors surgery and village hall. This part of the site relates more to the residential part of the village compared to the more rural nature further north into the site. The columns are therefore not considered to be visually harmful to the immediate area or the wider area of the village, or the rural landscape to the north, mainly due to their height and siting.
- 7.5 The footpaths officer has not objected to the floodlights providing the footpath which runs across the site is not obstructed in any way, or at any time.
- 7.6 Sport England considers the lighting will enable the playing field to be used in a more intensive way, particularly during the winter months. As such, it will greatly increase the opportunities for young people in the village to access the new play area. They have however advised the new play area should be at least 3 metres away from the touch

line of the football field. Amended plans received show the games area 3 metres from the pitch.

- 7.7 The proposal therefore accords with R2 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995 and Policy B1 of the interim Planning Policy Statement.

### **Neighbour Amenity:**

- 7.8 A number of letters have been received from residents that abut the site, the main issues relating to neighbour amenity appear to be about light pollution, anti social behaviour, and additional noise and disturbance.

- Anti-social behaviour: The Police Architectural Liaison Officer has supported the proposal and considers the lighting will allow good surveillance of the area. As the proposed lighting will be limited during the winter months, this will help reduce the possibilities for antisocial behaviour in the way of noise to nearby residents, whilst providing facility for the youths in the area. As the lighting columns will be relatively low, a guard will be secured to discourage anti-social behaviour by the lights being vandalised.

- Light pollution: The lighting engineer has no objections to the 400 watt metal halide lamp now proposed. 1000 watt lamps were originally proposed. The lighting columns are approx 45 metres from the nearest residential property. The use of sensor lighting has been explored; however, it is considered that flood lights flashing on and off would result in a nuisance to the adjacent neighbouring properties. A sensor system would also use more power due to the constant need to switch on and off during use. The floodlighting scheme has been designed to minimise light spillage, and, although the glow will be visible from the adjoining properties, it will not be so bright as to cause a significant loss of amenity due the siting and design.

- Protected Species: Concern has been expressed in relation to the impact the lighting could have on protected species of bats in the area. However, while the site is close to Paxton Pits County Wildlife Site and bats are known to be in the area, the Wildlife Trust does not expect the proposed development to have any significant impact on the site or the protected species, and bats are unlikely to be adversely affected. Comments have not been received at the time of writing the report from the Cambridgeshire Bats Society, any comments will however be reported to Members.

- 7.9 There may be some increase in the amount of noise and disturbance from the site due to the more intense use of the site, but this would not be sufficient to justify a reason for refusal. The lighting scheme has been designed to minimise impact on the amenity of neighbours by means of light pollution. The other issues raised have also been taken into account, but a refusal could not be sustained on any of these grounds. The proposal therefore accords with Policy R2 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995 and B4 of the Interim Planning Policy Statement 2007.

- 7.10 In conclusion, there are no objections to this proposal. It will improve the play facilities for the youth in the area, and will not cause an undue loss of amenity to immediate neighbours. Therefore having

regard to applicable national and local planning policies, and having taken all relevant material considerations into account, it is considered that planning permission should be granted in this instance.

If you would like a translation of this document, a large text version or an audio version, please contact us on 01480 388388 and we will try to accommodate your needs.

**8. RECOMMENDATION – APPROVE**, subject to conditions to include the following;

**02003** Time Limit (3yrs)

**Nonstand** Time limit and months of use

**BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

East of England Plan - Revision to the Regional Spatial Strategy (May 2008)  
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan, 2003  
Huntingdonshire Local Plan, 1995  
Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alterations (2002)  
Huntingdonshire Interim Planning Policy Statement 2007  
Huntingdonshire Local Development Framework Submission Core Strategy 2008

**CONTACT OFFICER:**

Enquiries about this report to **Linda Morse Planning Officer 01480 388411**