



Report of the Chief Planning Officer

PLANS PANEL (SOUTH & WEST)

Date: 10TH November 2012

Subject: APPLICATION 12/04061/FU: APPLICATION FOR ALL WEATHER GRASS FOOTBALL PITCH INCLUDING CHANGING FACILITIES, EIGHT LIGHTING COLUMNS AND FENCING AT COCKBURN HIGH SCHOOL, GIPSY LANE, BEESTON.

APPLICANT

Governing body of Cockburn
High School

DATE VALID

25 September 2012

TARGET DATE

20 November 2012

Electoral Wards Affected:

Beeston Holbeck

Yes

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

RECOMMENDATION

DEFER AND DELEGATE to the Chief Planning Officer for approval, subject to the specified conditions.

1. Time Limit on Permission.
2. Plans to be approved.
3. Details of existing and proposed ground levels and finished floor levels to be agreed.
4. Submission of scheme detailing surface water drainage works.
5. Sample walling and roofing materials to be provided.
6. Details of fencing to be provided.
7. Lighting restrictions.
8. Restriction of use.
9. Construction Management Plan.
10. Submission of surfacing materials.
11. Reporting of unexpected contamination.
12. Submission of Phase I Desk Study.
13. Remediation Statement.
14. Verification Reports.

Reasons for Approval: This application has been considered in accordance with the requirements of the RSS and UDPR 2006, policy guidance within the NPPF and Policy “E5” of “Sport England” playing fields policy.

The application aims to provide the school with a new artificial grass pitch together with perimeter fencing and changing facilities on land currently designated for outdoor sports.

The application is considered to comply with the relevant policies as set out in the development plan and constitutes a sustainable form of development.

1.0 INTRODUCTION:

1.1 This application is brought to Plans Panel (West and South) at the request of Councillor Congreve due to the amount of local interest generated.

1.2 This application is a resubmission of a previous scheme ref: 12/02987/FU: Cockburn High School - All weather football pitch with eight lighting columns, fencing and changing facilities. This application was withdrawn at the applicants request in order to address local residents objections and concerns raised by officers with regard to the potential impact on residential amenity from light pollution and noise nuisance as well the appearance of the facility when viewed from residential properties/sites, given its close proximity to residential properties bordering the north side of the school playing fields .

1.3 Amendments to the previous scheme are as follows:

- The pitch has been rotated 90 degrees and relocated to the other side of the school playing fields and now retains a distance of 60m to the northern boundary;
- Further to this the pitch surface is now proposed to have a multi purpose surface which can accommodate football (full size or 3 five a side pitches) as well as sports such as Hockey, Handball, volley ball, Winter Athletics, Tennis and Cricket and as such offers a greater degree of versatility.

PROPOSAL:

2.1 The application is for a (full size) artificial grass playing pitch including changing facilities, eight lighting columns and fencing.

2.2 The pitch itself is proposed to be located on a piece of land which currently serves as a grass football pitch, hard surfaced netball court and long jump, near to the southern boundary of the site and to the east side of the school building.

2.3 A perimeter mesh type fence is proposed to border the pitch. This would be a minimum of 3.0m in height, increasing to a height of 5.0m directly behind each goal end. The fence is proposed to be powder coated green.

2.4 Eight 15m high slim line profile lightening columns are proposed to the north and south side of the pitch, four on each side.

2.5 A temporary modular building is also proposed on a piece of land close to the main school building alongside other temporary modular structures. The building is to be used for changing facilities as well as providing toilets, showers, kitchen and a committee room. The building would afford 184 m² of floor space and would have a paneled sheet finished appearance to its elevations (off white in colour) with steel profile (grey) roof over.

- 2.6 Proposed hours of operation are 8:30 – 17:00 for curriculum use and after school club and 17:00 – 21:00 for football matches and community use purposes Monday to Friday and 09:00 to 21:00 Saturday and Sunday.
- 2.7 The management of the day to day operational administration and changing facilities will be the responsibility of the school.

3.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS:

- 3.1 This application refers to Cockburn High School in Middleton. The school building fronts onto to Gypsy Lane and consists of a large two storey rendered structure which serves as the main school building. To the east side (rear) of the school building is a poly tunnel, modular buildings with hard surface play courts and outdoor seating area. The remainder of the site to the east consists of sports fields. The topography of the land consists of two levels resulting in the playing pitch located to the east of the site being at a lower level than the west side of the playing fields.
- 3.2 Access to the site is gained off Gypsy Lane and serves a large car park which is located at the front of the building which comprises of 50 car spaces, 8 disabled spaces, 70 cycle spaces and 3 bus spaces.
- 3.3 The site is located to the north of South Leeds Golf Course, separated by woodland which connects to Middleton Woods Local Nature Reserve which borders the east side of the playing fields. To both the east, south and west of the site there is green space (Cricket pitch, Middleton Woods and Middleton Golf Course), to the north is a mix of housing. The school site is enclosed by a 2.4m high paladin fence. The site forms part of the Green Corridor and the new pitch is to be located on land designated as protected playing fields.

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

- 4.1 12/02987/FU: Cockburn High School - All weather football pitch with eight lighting columns, fencing and changing facilities – Withdrawn:17-Sept-2012
- 12/01445/FU: Cockburn High School - Installation of canopy over courtyard – Approved: 18/06/2012
- 09/03813/FU: Cockburn High School - Detached prefabricated classroom block to school - Approved: 27-JAN-10
- 07/01278/LA: Cockburn High School - 9 temporary classroom units to school - Approved: 08-MAY-07
- 06/07128/LA: Cockburn High School - Reserved matters application for part demolition & erection of part 1 storey, part 2 storey and part 3 storey extensions to school with car parking & landscaping - Approved: 27-FEB-07
- 21/213/05/OT: Cockburn High School Gypsy Lane Leeds - Outline application to erect extension to school - Approved: 05-OCT-05
- 21/133/02/FU: Cockburn High School Gypsy Lane Leeds 11 - Single storey rear extension to school – Approved: 06-AUG-02

21/194/99/FU: Cockburn High School Gipsy Lane Leeds 11 - Two storey extension to side of school - Approved: 05-OCT-99

21/129/99/FU: Cockburn High School Gipsy Lane Leeds 11 - Single storey extension to school: Approved: 07-JUL-99

21/299/99/FU: Cockburn High School Gipsy Lane Leeds 11 - Two storey extension to school - Approved: 25-JAN-00

5.0 HISTORY OF NEGOTIATIONS:

- 5.1 The application is a resubmission of a previously withdrawn scheme ref: 12/02987/FU. This application was withdrawn at the applicants request in order to look to minimize the impact of the development on residential sites from light pollution and potential noise nuisance associated with the use.
- 5.2 The main revision is that the development has now moved to the opposite side of the site and rotated 90 degrees so that the goal ends are now to the east and west apposed to north and south, running parallel to the main gardens of adjacent residential properties. The pitch sits adjacent to a wooded area which bounds Middleton Golf Course and separates itself from the residential sites by over 60m and 80m to the residential properties.

6.0 CONSULTATION RESPONSES:

Statutory Consultations:

Coal Authority – Awaiting revised consultation response to information submitted by applicant in response to the Coal Authorities initial comments.

Sport England – Initial concerns raised by Sport England have been addressed through the submission of additional information.

Non Statutory Consultations:

- 6.2 Contaminated Land – No objections subject to conditions

Highways – No objections subject to a condition restricting the use of the pitch to the public before the hours of 5pm Monday to Friday.

Mains Drainage – No objections subject to a condition for details of drainage scheme

West Yorkshire Police – No objections raised however officers advised that the facility should be managed in order to mitigate potential crime to the school or users of the facility and their vehicles.

Sustainable Development Unit – has raised concerns in relation to possible light pollution and the threat posed to neighbouring wildlife habitats (bats). **Applicant currently looking at ways to mitigate the potential harm.**

Public Rights of Way – No objections raised.

Minerals – **Awaiting comments**

Neighbourhoods and Housing – no objections raised to the revised location of the pitch.

Street Lighting – No objections raised (awaiting written confirmation)

7.0 PUBLIC/LOCAL RESPONSE:

- 7.1 The application was advertised by site notice on 27 September 2012 and neighbour notifications letters posted 27 September 2012 . 16 letters of objection and 2 letters of general comment have been received to the current scheme and 49 letters objections and 2 signed petition to the previous scheme. Objections are made on the following grounds.

Public Response:

- There will be increased traffic generation and congestion
- There is a danger of increase on street parking
- Access will be difficult whilst construction is under way
- Noise generated during development
- Noise associated to players, spectators and rattling of fence
- Light pollution
- Loss of view
- Impact on visual amenity
- The proposal will be harmful to wildlife.
- Effect on house re-sale value
- Attract youths to the area due to community use
- The facility is not needed
- Disruption caused by construction vehicles
- Litter
- Quality of life
- Infringement on basic human rights

8.0 PLANNING POLICIES:

- 8.1 The development plan comprises the Regional Spatial Strategy to 2026 (RSS) and the adopted Leeds Unitary Development Plan (Review 2006). The RSS was issued in May 2008 and includes a broad development strategy for the region, setting out regional priorities in terms of location and scale of development. However, the RSS is a strategic planning document, used to inform more detailed policies at a local level. Accordingly, it is not considered that there are any particular policies which are relevant to the assessment of this proposal.
- 8.2 The Publication Draft of the Core Strategy was issued for public consultation on 28th February 2012 with the consultation period closing on 12th April 2012. Following consideration of any representations received, the Council intends to submit the draft Core Strategy for examination. The Core Strategy set sets out strategic level policies and vision to guide the delivery of development investment decisions and the overall future of the district. As the Core Strategy is in its pre submission stages only limited weight can be afforded to any relevant policies at this point in time.
- 8.3 The following policies from the UDP are relevant:

- Policy GP5 seeks to ensure that development proposals resolve detailed planning considerations, including amenity.
- Policy BD5 seeks to ensure that all new buildings should be designed with consideration to both their own amenity and that of their surroundings.
- Policy N6 states at paragraph (i) that development of playing pitches will not be permitted unless: *“There is a demonstrable net gain to overall pitch quality and provision by part redevelopment of a site or suitable relocation within the same locality of the city, consistent with the sites functions”*
- Policy N8 – Urban Green Corridor
- Policy T2 ensures that development proposals should not create new, or exacerbate existing, highway problems.

National Policy/Guidance:

- National Planning Policy Framework (2012)

Other relevant guidance

- Sport England Playing Fields Policy E5 which aims to ensure that there is an adequate supply of quality pitches to satisfy the current and estimated future demand for pitch sports within the area. The policy seeks to protect all parts of the playing from development and not just those which, for the time being, are laid out as pitches.

9.0 MAIN ISSUES:

1. The principle of development.
2. Design and the character.
3. Highways
4. Residential amenity.
5. Representations
6. Conclusion

10.0 APPRAISAL:

1. The principle of development.

Need for the facility

- 10.1 The applicant states that the proposal is not currently linked into a wider Sports Development Network. The need for this facility is driven primarily by the school curriculum with approximately 80% intended usage by curriculum based activities. Currently physical education facilities are at full stretch and subsequently restricting growth in this subject. The current fields are susceptible to flooding and in winter the normal programme of activities is restricted to class room based none practical activities which effects the quality of learning the students receive. Indoor facilities are also restricted at certain times of the year as public examinations take precedent. The all weather surface would enhance the current curriculum as well as extra curriculum based activities by providing additional sporting opportunity and experiences for

children and as such would also improve examination result opportunities for the students.

In addition, there are local community relationships which the school fully intends to strengthen by the realisation of this proposal. These are discussed at paragraph titled Accessibility & Community Use.

Technically suitable

The artificial pitch will replace an existing hard surface netball pitch and long jump, however the long jump is to be re-instated near to the eastern end of the site and the netball use is to be accommodated on an existing hard surfaced area. The proposed artificial grass pitch is now proposed to have a multi purpose surface which can accommodate football (full size or 3 five a side pitches) as well as sports such as Hockey, Handball, volley ball, winter athletics, tennis and cricket and as such offers a greater degree of versatility opposed to a football use only. In addition the proposed facilities would also enhance the schools extra curriculum activities especially during the winter months which currently have to cease between October and March as a result of darkness.

Accessibility and Community Use

The school has some existing community use established by a condition on the planning permission for the original school development. These groups are as follows: Soccer Central, Keldon School of Dance, Leeds City Council, Leeds Baton Rouge, Mosaic church, Westwood Primary School, Hunslet Nelson Cricket Club, Lara Academy of Dance, South Leeds Archers, 220 Sports and Social Club, Leeds Carnegie Basketball Foundation, Beeston Primary School, The Learning Trust (South Leeds), Beeston JFC and Driglington RFC.

The proposed facility will be available for community use for local sports clubs for matches and training purposes. This will help the school strengthen its relationship with the local community whilst also having wider social benefits. These benefits include helping promote physical activities amongst the younger generation and thus combating growing obesity rates. In addition it offers the opportunity to experience other sports and activities not previously experienced and develop a new generation of participants.

Impact on local pitch provision

The current proposal introduces a new artificial turf/pitch surface onto the external playing field area and therefore results in the loss of part of the schools playing fields. The re-siting of the pitch has minimised the impact on other sporting features by locating half of the pitch over a hard surfaced area. The applicant states that the loss of this facility would not effect curricula activities as there are already adequate hard surface areas to the west of the proposal to cater for these. The applicant has also submitted details which show that the lower grass rugby pitch can accommodate both 200m and 100m running tracks and a new long jump track and pit and as such maintains the current provision. Further to this, the existing grass football pitch will now be retained on the original surface that is between the proposal and the northern boundary of the site, adjacent to the rear garden boundaries of residential properties on Southleigh Grove . This pitch meets with current FA guidelines.

On balance it is considered that the proposal complies with the aims and objectives of policies N6 (UDPR) and Sport England Playing Fields Policy E5 and as such is considered acceptable in principle, subject to meeting all other material considerations.

2. Design and the character of the area

- 10.2 The detached modular building is proposed to be located adjacent to the existing classroom building to the east of the main school building. The location is relatively hidden from view outside of the site and sits within the built area of the site. The proposed structure is single storey and of similar scale to other buildings on site. The building is to accommodate a changing facility for users of the proposed all weather pitch which at present cannot be afforded in the school. Its scale, height and design reflect the purpose of the intended use.

With regard to the perimeter fence to the new pitch. This is to be of a mesh design which allows through views and is to be painted green to blend in with the surrounding playing fields and woodland. The artificial pitch will replace a hard surface area as well as a grassed playing area and is to be set at a level to minimise cut and fill with natural shallow banking constructed around the pitch to help merge it into the surrounding landscape.

With regard to the lighting columns these are to have a slim line structure and be afforded a backdrop of woodland to the east and south when viewed from residential estate to the north and be screened by the school buildings to the west. The woodland would also screen the development from the golf course.

As such and when taking into account its distance from residential sites, existing boundary treatment and screening it is considered unlikely that its appearance would have a significantly harmful effect on the general visual amenity of the area or the function of the wider Urban Green Corridor.

3. Access and highway safety considerations

- 10.4 Highways officers have raised no objection to the proposed development as the community use of the pitch will occur in the evenings after 5pm and as such will not conflict with the school use. The schools car park affords 56 car parking spaces which will be available for the community users of the new pitch. Whilst it is acknowledged that the application will result in an increase in vehicle movements on adjacent streets, this is not deemed to be to such an extent as to cause safety or capacity concerns.

Therefore, subject to a condition restricting the hours of community use to after 17.00 hrs it is acceptable in terms of highway safety.

4. Impact on Residential Amenity

- 10.5 The all weather pitch has now been re-sited to the south side of the playing fields, adjacent to a wooded area which borders Middleton Golf Course. Further to this the pitch has been turned 90 degrees so that the goal ends are now positioned on the east and west sides of the playing fields. These revisions were made in order to address concerns raised by residents in relation to light pollution and noise nuisance associated with the use. The artificial pitch and associated fencing and lighting columns now distance themselves from the residential sites by approx 60m, thus mitigating the impact of the development when viewed from their sites.

Light pollution - The lights would be used periodically throughout the year apposed to all year round, during the winter months upto 21.00hrs in the evening. Lighting Level details submitted by the applicant indicate that the light spill would fall within the school site (40m from residential boundaries) and designed so that less than 2 Lux

vertical luminance will be projected towards the residential properties. This meets the requirements for an environmental zone E2 location. The design also minimizes upward light, 0% would be projected into the atmosphere meeting the recommendations of The Campaign for Dark Skies, an organization which look to lower light pollution.

Whilst it is acknowledged that the lights when in use would be visible by residents bordering the north side of the site. The lighting details submitted clearly indicate that light spill would no longer fall within their sites and would retain a 40m unlit corridor.

The Councils Lighting Technicians have been consulted in relation to the lighting columns and from the design simulation provided, they expect no light trespass into the windows of these residential properties.

As such it is considered unlikely that the proposed lighting columns given their periodic hours of use throughout the year, design and distance from the neighbouring sites would pose a significant harmful impact which would outweigh the material planning merits of the scheme

Noise - As discussed above, the proposed pitch has been rotated 90 degrees so that the goal ends sit opposite the school to the west and woodland to the east allowing the pitch to retain 62m to the schools northern boundary and 80m to residential properties. The new pitch will replace an existing pitch and a hard surfaced netball court, between which is a further grass football pitch which is to be retained adjacent to the northern boundary. As such it is considered unlikely that that the artificial grass pitch would generate anymore noise than that already experienced from playing pitches in general.

With regard to potential noise generated from spectators and participants, the community use would be managed and policed by the school as it is now with appropriate action taken if needed to deter inappropriate language or behavior. Mindful of this when taking into account its distance from the northern boundary it is considered unlikely that the new facility would create additional harm which would outweigh the planning merits of the sports facility.

With regard to the fencing this is to be used to retain the ball in the playing area and will incorporate anti vibration EPDC rubber washers to ensure minimal impact noise when hit.

Community Use - With regard to community use this is proposed between the hours of 17.00 and 21.00 weekdays and 09.00 and 21.00 hrs weekends and bank holidays. At these times it is anticipated that noise levels will be more noticeable, however it is questionable if the noise would be any greater than that already experienced from local sports clubs which use the facilities currently on offer at the school.

However, it is likely that the pitch would generate more use at these times because of the enhanced facilities on offer and as such could pose a threat to neighbouring amenity during unsociable hours even when taking into account its distance from the residential properties. In order to mitigate this threat a condition is imposed restricting hours of use 1700hrs and 2100hrs weekdays and 1000hrs and 18.00hrs weekends and bank holidays.

5. SDU

- 10.6 The conservation officer has raised concerns in relation to the potential impact on bats (European Protected Species) that use the adjacent line of trees and group of trees to the south and south-east of the proposed pitch location for foraging and commuting from increased light levels and light spill.

His recommendation is that consideration is given to ensuring there is no light spill onto surrounding linear vegetation features (particularly at along the southern boundary of the pitch).

(The applicant is currently looking at various ways to mitigate this threat without having to significantly restrict the use of the lights during dark nights when the bats would be active)

6. Representations

Objections raised in relation to the need for the facility, highways matters, noise, light pollution, impact on wildlife and visual amenity have been assessed in the appraisal section of the report and found to be acceptable. In response to concerns raised in relation to disruption caused during construction. Whilst this would be for a limited time only (estimated at 3 months) a Management Plan is conditioned to be submitted and agreed by the Local Planning Authority prior to commencement of the development in order to control construction generated traffic in and out of the site.

Objections regarding impact to house values and loss of view are not material planning considerations and thus cannot be taken into consideration when determining the application.

In response to objections raised regarding the community use attracting youths to the area, litter and infringement on basic human rights. When in use the facility will be managed and policed by the school and secured by the perimeter fence after hours. It is acknowledged that the site when lit during the winter months will be visible from the residential properties, however the lanterns proposed are indicated as a 'full cut off' lantern and as such providing that the lantern is installed with a 0deg. Tilt, the lit area will have a distinct cut off to minimise light spread. The Councils Lighting Technicians have been consulted in relation to the lighting columns and from the design simulation provided, they expect no light trespass into the windows of these residential properties.

11.0 CONCLUSION:

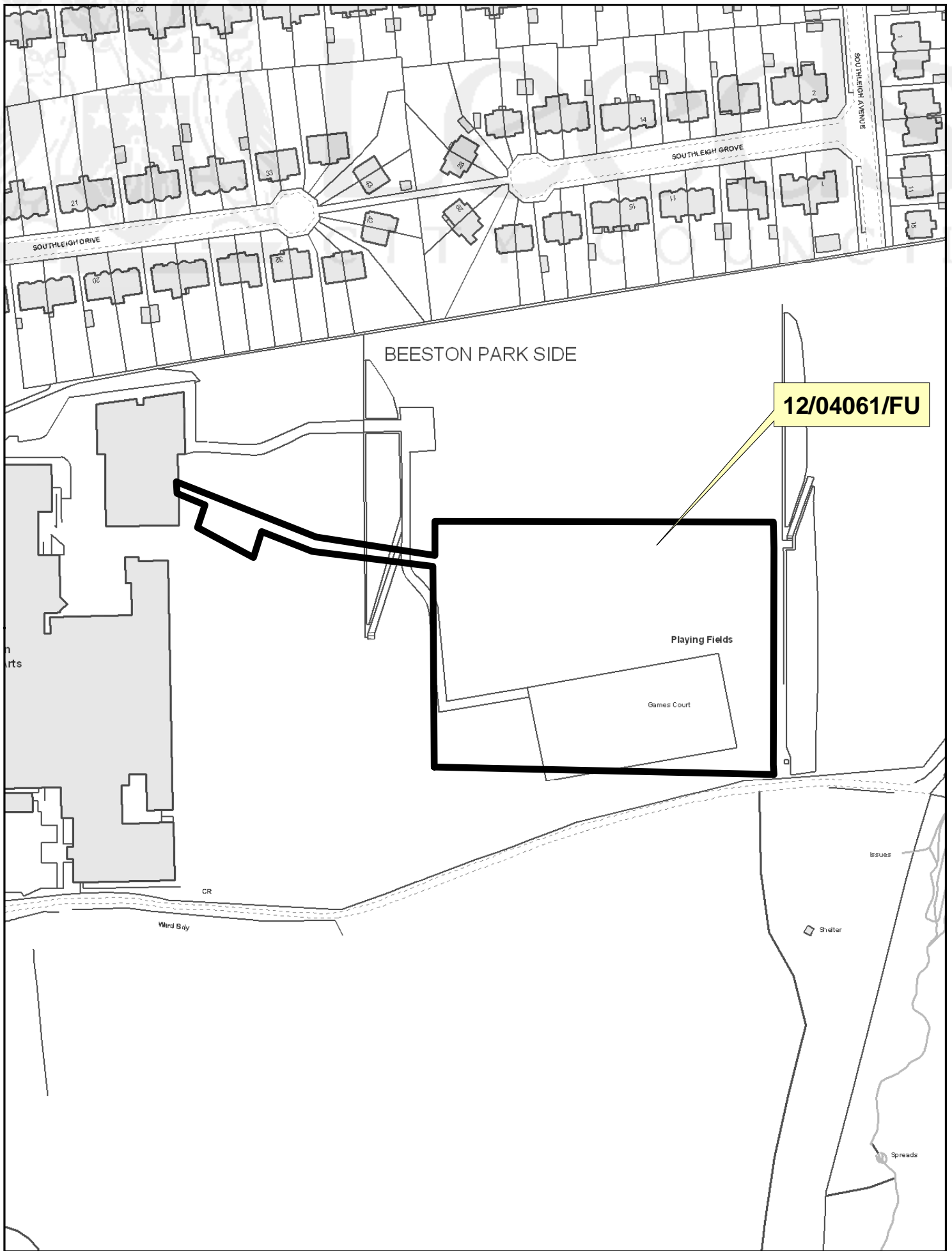
- 11.1 On balance, it is considered that subject to appropriate conditions as discussed above, the proposal is acceptable given that the principle of the development is considered to be acceptable as the site is situated in a sustainable location.

Background Papers:

Application files 12/04061/FU

Certificate of ownership:

As applicant



SOUTH AND WEST PLANS PANEL