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Fallowfield Ward	Application Number 081930/VO/2007/S1	Date of Appln 17th Jan 2007	Committee Date 15th Mar 2007
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Proposal CITY COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT Construction of a BMX track including the erection of a 2.4 metre high weld mesh fence and provision of 2 portable containers to form office and store, construction of a hardstanding area for spectator seating, creation of a new pedestrian footpath and associated landscaping including remodelling of existing earth mound. Erection of 6 floodlighting columns

Location Disused Tennis Courts/Kickabout Area, Platt Fields Park, Platt Lane, Fallowfield,

Applicant Geoff Iball Leisure Department, Pink Bank Lane, Manchester

Agent Manchester City Council Landscape Practice , MEDC, P O Box 463, Town Hall Extension, Manchester, M60 3NY

Description

This application was deferred at the applicants request in order for them to carry out further consultations in line with a request from Ward Members.

The application relates to an area of land measuring 0.7 hectares (1.7 Acres) located in the south east corner of Platt Fields park. The land is currently disused tennis courts, a kickabout area and parkland. The nearest park boundary is to the south, beyond which are residential properties, largely new build and conversions to flats on Wilbraham Road and Hart Road.

It is proposed to construct a sculptured BMX track approximately 306 metres long by 10 metres wide. It is essentially a dirt track containing a series of bends, straights, mounds and hollows. The track together with two steel cabins used as offices and a store , an assembly area and a concrete hardstanding capable of taking a dismountable stand will be enclosed in a 2.4 metre high paladin fence. In addition 8, eight metre high floodlighting columns will be provided each with two lanterns.

The new development will provide a venue for BMX cycling in the City for the local community and will help to improve the physical wellbeing of users. It will also provide a safe and accessible venue for the local youths to ride their bikes and take part in competitive events. The track would be open throughout the year and will be used for training by the British Olympic BMX Cycling Team. Regional competitions will be held once a year that will attract between 600 and 1000 competitors and spectators. The proposed hours of use are 9.00am to 10.00pm seven days a week.

The track will be managed by the Manchester BMX Club in partnership with Manchester City Council's Leisure Department in-house staff and then by the British Cycling Organisation who will be using the track for training.

The proposed works will involve the removal of 16 middle aged trees all of which are in fair condition, save one which is in good condition. New planning

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including 32 trees will be provided to the south of the BMX track between it and the flats to the south.

Consultations

Local Residents - Nine letters have been received from local residents, four support the proposed development the other five object. The comments in support of the application are:-

1. Whilst there will be some loss of open space, the proposed track will enable riders to venture into a different area of the sport. There are plenty of pitches elsewhere for the footballers.
2. The track will give an opportunity for other park users to enjoy their chosen sport.
3. The area referred to is not often used by walkers as it is very boggy. In addition, it isn't the prettiest corner of the park. Therefore, the BMX Track could be good use of this area and a valuable addition to South Manchester and Platt Fields. A major problem with the area is the lack of available facilities for opportunity for a productive and healthy use of their time.
4. A resident has received anonymously posted propaganda photocopies through the door regarding this proposal, which contained factually incorrect information, and it is worrying that many local residents may have trusted, and reacted to, this information.
5. This is a good idea but more consultation is required.

The grounds for objecting are:-

1. The loss of green space within the park.
2. The proposal will conflict with the Council's green policies.
3. Why is the fencing required if the facility is unlocked and available for public use.
4. The scheme should provide some public toilets.
5. The metal containers are not appropriate.
6. It is unclear what guarantee there is of community benefit from the scheme.
7. The track is a good idea it just should be somewhere else and not in Platt Fields
8. The proposed track would neither enhance or protect the park
9. Residents are strongly opposed to the gradual erosion of the park that is taking place and remind members of the outcry over the proposed temporary car park for MRI.

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10. The existing chain link enclosure ("old tennis courts") is currently the only place where dog walkers can exercise and train their dogs.

11. The proposed fence should be lower, 1.5 metres high would be adequate.

12. The pathway need to be realigned as it cuts across a football pitch

13. The cabins should be relocated so as to be less visible from the lake

Ward Members - Councillor Peter Morrison has expressed concern over the consultations carried out prior to the application being made and the speed with which it was originally brought before the committee

Further consultation with ward members - the Head of Leisure received a positive feedback from Ward Members in response to the consultation.

Friends of Platt Fields Park - any representations will be reported

Sport England - the proposed development is for an outdoor sports facility the provision of which would be of sufficient benefit to the development of sport as to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss of the playing fields.

British Cycling - any comments will be reported

MEDC/lighting - comments will be reported

Head of Leisure - details of the further consultation will be reported

Head of Environmental Health - recommends that conditions be attached to any approval restricting the opening times to:-

Monday to Saturday, 9.00 a.m. to 9.00 p.m. Sunday, 10.00 a.m. to 8.00 p.m.

Making adequate provision for refuse storage, ensuring that the lighting is designed and installed so as to control glare and overspill onto nearby residential properties and restricting the use of amplified sound to competitions.

In addition the Head of Environmental Health feels consideration should be given to noise attenuation along the southern boundary of the site. This could be in the form of an acoustic fence or a mound in addition to the proposed planting.

That the track should only be used for non-motorised bicycles as is intended in the plans. Any use of motorised vehicles is likely to cause dis-amenity to occupants of nearby residential accommodation and should be prohibited.

Finally, the supervision of the site during opening hours would have a direct bearing on the behaviour of users and therefore noise from the site that could impact on the amenities of occupants of nearby residential accommodation.

Consideration should be given to the enforcement of any management policies

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in regard to preventing motorised vehicles on the track, the capacity at any one time and the preventing of amplified noise from the site.

Greater Manchester Police architectural Liaison Officer - No objections

Issues

Unitary Development Plan - the relevant policies are L1.2 which seeks to protect sports pitches from development, L1.5 which looks to improve sporting facilities within the city and H2.2 which seeks to protect the occupiers of residential property from the adverse impact of development.

Regional Spatial Strategy - There are no specific policies within the RSS.

Government Guidance - PPG17 sport and Recreation says that open spaces, sports and recreational facilities have a vital role to play in promoting healthy living and preventing illness, and in the social development of children of all ages through play, sporting activities and interaction with others.

Principle-Manchester is the home of competitive cycling in Britain with the National Cycling Centre at Sports City. This facility is aimed at providing a resource for use by the general public, as well as a temporary training base for the British Olympic BMX team, pending the construction of a new facility at the National Cycling Centre. Beijing in 2008 will be the first Olympics to feature BMX cycling as a competitive sport. The proposed track will replace existing decaying sports facilities within the park that are no longer used. The Head of Planning feels that it is appropriate to locate such facilities within public parks where they can contribute to the range of facilities provided and encourage their proper use by a wider cross section of the community. The principle of the proposed development is therefore considered acceptable.

Disabled access - the facility will be accessible to the disabled.

Major Development - the application has been advertised as a major development.

Screening Opinion - the size of the site exceeds the threshold for carrying out a screening opinion to determine if an Environmental Impact Assessment is required. On this occasion the screening Opinion has concluded that an EIA is not required.

Crime and Disorder - this facility will provide a focus for local youths and discourage the anti-social use of BMX bicycles within the park in general and the surrounding areas and is therefore strongly supported.

Residential amenity - Platt Fields Park is accustomed to housing large scale events and is sufficiently large to absorb an event of the scale envisaged here without significant impact on residential amenity. The properties most likely to be affected are the houses to the south. It is proposed to plant a substantial screen of trees and shrubs to minimise any disturbance.

Hours of use - The Head of Environmental Health has indicated that a mound of between 1 and 1.5 metres high to the south of the proposed track will help ameliorate any noise issues. On this basis the Head of Planning believes that

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the additional hour required on a Sunday evening is not significant so as to cause an unacceptable loss of amenity.

Floodlighting - is potentially a source of some limited impact on nearby properties. The scheme has been designed to minimise light spillage and should permission be granted their use will be restricted till 10.00 pm. Confirmation of the acceptability of the Scheme is awaited from MEDC.

Trees - the development will result in the loss of 16 trees, these will be replaced with 32 new trees planted to provide a screen to the south of the track. It is necessary to remove the trees from within the track area as they would present a danger to cyclists. The replacement exceeds the requirement of the Council's Tree Strategy, which would require the replacement of all the trees lost plus 10%.

Community Use - whilst the driving force behind this proposal is the need to a training facility for the 2008 Olympics it will primarily be a community facility that is available to the general public seven days a week for both informal use and organised training sessions. In addition schools and local clubs would also have access.

Car Parking - No new parking is proposed as part of this development. It will rely on the existing parking facilities for the park.

Conclusion - In the view of the Head of Planning This is an opportunity to increase the range of facilities available to the general public and assist in delivering a number of the Council's Key Corporate objectives including those linked with enhancing health, reducing crime and increasing the cultural offering of the City.

Human Rights Act 1998 considerations - This application needs to be considered against the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998. Under Article 6, the applicants (and those third parties, including local residents, who have made representations) have the right to a fair hearing and to this end the Committee must give full consideration to their comments.

Protocol 1 Article 1, and Article 8 where appropriate, confer(s) a right of respect for a person's home, other land and business assets. In taking account of all material considerations, including Council policy as set out in the Unitary Development Plan, the Head of Planning has concluded that some rights conferred by these Articles on the applicant(s)/objectors/residents and other occupiers and owners of nearby land that might be affected may be interfered with but that that interference is in accordance with the law and justified by being in the public interest and on the basis of the planning merits of the development proposal. He believes that any restriction on these rights posed by approval of the application is proportionate to the wider benefits of approval and that such a decision falls within the margin of discretion afforded to the Council under the Town and Country Planning Acts.

Recommendation **MINDED TO APPROVE** (subject to confirmation of the satisfactory nature of the floodlights.)

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on the basis that the proposal is in accord with the City Councils Unitary Development development plan in particular policies L1.5 and H2.2 and there are no material considerations of sufficient weight to indicate otherwise

Conditions and/or Reasons

1) The development must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason -

Required to be imposed pursuant to Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2) Construction of the works hereby approved by this permission shall not take place until samples and specifications of the materials to be used on all external elevations of the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the City Council as local planning authority. The development shall be constructed only using the approved materials unless otherwise agreed in writing by the City Council as local planning authority.

Reason

To ensure that the appearance of the development is acceptable to the City Council as local planning authority in the interests of the visual amenity of the area within which the site is located.

3) The landscaping scheme approved by the City Council as local planning authority shown on drawing ref ***** , shall be implemented not later than 12 months from the date of commencement of works. Any trees or shrubs removed, dying or becoming severely damaged or becoming severely diseased within 3 years of planting shall be replaced by trees or shrubs of a similar size or species to those originally required to be planted unless otherwise agreed in writing by the City Council as local planning authority.

Reason

To ensure that a satisfactory landscaping scheme for the development is carried out pursuant to policies H2.2 and L1.5 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of MAnchester

4) In this condition "retained tree" means an existing tree on site which is to be retained and a tree on a neighbouring site whose root structure extends into The site as shown on plan number and any replacement tree planted under paragraph (c) below; and paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) below shall have effect until the expiration of 1 year from the date of first occupation of the building hereby approved.

(a) No retained tree shall be cut down, uprooted or destroyed.

(b) No retained tree shall be topped or lopped other than in accordance a scheme (which is in accord with British Standard 5837:2005) previously

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approved in writing by the City Council as local planning authority and following the City Council's previous written approval.

(c) If any retained tree is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies, another tree shall be planted at the same place as soon as reasonably possible and that tree shall be of such size and species, as may be specified in writing by the City Council as local planning authority.

(d) All retained trees shall be protected in accordance with a scheme (which is in accord with British Standard 5837:2005) previously approved in writing by the City Council as local planning authority before any equipment, machinery or materials are brought on to the site. The approved protection shall be maintained until all equipment, machinery and surplus materials have been removed from the site. Nothing shall be stored or placed in any area fenced in accordance with this condition and the ground levels within those areas shall not be altered, nor shall any excavation be made, without the written consent of the City Council as local planning authority.

Reason

In order avoid damage to trees/shrubs adjacent to and within the site which are of important amenity value to the area pursuant to policies pursuant to policies L1.5 and H2.2 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester

5) The BMX Track and associated facilities, including flood lighting, shall not be used outside the following hours:-

* 9.00am to 10.00pm seven days a week

Reason - To safeguard the amenities of the occupiers of nearby residential accommodation, pursuant to policy H2.2 of the adopted UDP.

6) The floodlighting shall be directed onto the BMX track at all times.

Reason

To protect the occupiers of nearby residential accommodation from light spillage should any of the lighting head be displaced pursuant to policy H2.2 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester.

7) before the development hereby approved commences a scheme for the erection of an acoustic mound to the south of the proposed BMX track shall be submitted to and approved by the City Council. The approved scheme shall be implemented in full.

Reason

The mound will act as a acoustic barrier between the proposed BMX track and the residential accommodation to the south of the development pursuant to policies H2.2 and DC26 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester

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The documents referred to in the course of this report are either contained in the file(s) relating to application ref: 081930/VO/2007/S1 held by Planning or are City Council planning policies, the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester, national planning guidance documents, or relevant decisions on other applications or appeals, copies of which are all held by the Planning Division.

The following residents, businesses and other third parties in the area were consulted on the application:

Sport England (NW Region)
Environmental Health
Engineering Services
Chief Executive's Landscape Practice Group
Environment & Operations (Trees)
MEDC
Judith Sadler, Crime Reduction Officer
Greater Manchester Police
Platt Lane Tenants & Residents Association
Rusholme & Fallowfield Civic Society
Friends Of Platt Fields Park
British Cycling Federation

Approximately 1,800 properties, in the area bounded generally by Wilmslow Road, The Fallowfield Loop Footpath cycleway, Yew Tree Road and Whitmore Road/Grangethorpe Road were notified of the proposed development.

Representations were received from the following third parties:

Dr Peter Capon, 137 Birchfields Road, Manchester
Anne Tucker, 3 Birch Polygon, Rusholme
Tim Blackwell, 76 Ealing Avenue, Off Platt Lane,, Rusholme,, Manchester,
, 14 Lynton Street, Fallowfield, M14 7NZ
, 31 Leslie Street, Rusholme, M14 7NE
, Oliviamoore@orange.net
, Gregthorne370@hotmail.com
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