



**TO:** Planning Committee North  
**BY:** Development Manager  
**DATE:** 7 February 2017  
**DEVELOPMENT:** Erection of covered stand for spectator seating and 8no 15m high floodlight columns for use ancillary to football pitches  
**SITE:** Broadbridge Heath Sports Centre Wickhurst Lane Broadbridge Heath Horsham  
**WARD:** Broadbridge Heath  
**APPLICATION:** DC/16/2272  
**APPLICANT:** Horsham District Council

**REASON FOR INCLUSION ON THE AGENDA:** Horsham District Council is the Applicant and more than 8 No. letters of representation contrary to the Officer recommendation have been received

**RECOMMENDATION:** To grant planning permission subject to appropriate conditions

**1. THE PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT**

To consider the planning application.

**DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION**

- 1.1 Planning permission is being sought under a separate application for three sports pitches and an associated pavilion (reference DC/16/2700) required within the s106 attached to the wider residential-led development of Land South of Broadbridge Heath/Wickhurst Green (DC/09/2101). This application is solely for the erection of 8 floodlights and two spectator stands adjacent to the principal sports pitch adjacent to the pavilion building on the northern part of the site. These facilities being infrastructure necessary to meet Football Association requirements to enable occupancy by Broadbridge Heath FC.
- 1.2 The northernmost of the three sports pitches would lie between 28m and 32m from the westernmost boundary with the adjacent newly completed and mostly occupied housing. It would be set back between 15m and 24m from the northernmost boundary and would be orientated broadly in an east-west direction. Eight floodlights are proposed – 4 placed each side along the length of the pitch just outside the spectator rail: one in each corner and two spaced evenly between. Each of the southern floodlights would be 15m in height comprising a galvanised steel column with two x 2kw Philips 'Optivision' low glare floodlights facing onto the main pitch (the northernmost pitch) and a single light facing south towards the adjacent pitch. Each of the 4 floodlights placed along the northern length of the pitch would also be 15m in height and have two lights facing onto the main pitch.

- 1.3 The submitted plans indicate that the floodlights would provide lighting to the whole of the main pitch and to approximately 2/3's of the second (middle) pitch, with the level of luminance declining towards the southernmost boundary of the second pitch. There will be some limited light spillage beyond the boundaries of the pitch but this reduces to virtually zero beyond the line of the proposed boundary planting.
- 1.4 The two proposed stands are required to meet the Football Association Ground Regulation requirements. These are to house 100 people seated and 100 people standing. The 100 seats are produced by two smaller units being joined (total of 13.23m wide and approximately 3.0m deep) whilst the 100 standing will be accommodated in a single larger unit (9.85m long and 3.0m deep). The Stands are prefabricated and are bolted down onto concrete bases. The stands will be located with the standing stand at the westernmost end of the pitch, i.e. with its back facing the adjacent residential area, whilst the seating stand will be located midway along the southern length of the pitch. The stands would comprise light grey cladding and blue seats.
- 1.5 Further ancillary works involving a 1.83m high perimeter fencing to the ground, a spectator rail to the pitch, and a turnstile adjacent to the pavilion are proposed however these do not require planning permission given their limited height. Additional footpaths are proposed around the pavilion building to link the pavilion and pitches directly to the new leisure centre and its car park granted planning permission under DC/16/1844, once completed.
- 1.6 Until such time as the new leisure centre and car park is are completed, pedestrian access would remain as per the layout proposed under DC/16/2700, with the main access via the northern boundary further to the east. The western access from the adjacent residential area would be for service, emergency and disabled vehicles only. Spectators are to park in the Leisure Centre car park using the northern access points as their primary point of access to the site.

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

- 1.7 The site forms part of a green open space lying to the south of the existing Leisure Centre and Bowls Centre to the south of the Tesco superstore in Broadbridge Heath and to the west of the A24. The site is level with a raised boundary with the public highway to the south and along part of the boundary with the highway to the east. Housing lies to the east forming part of the wider redevelopment of this wider area.
- 1.8 Outline Planning permission was granted by application reference DC/09/2101 for the redevelopment of the wider area for housing and village facilities and that application identified this area as being the location for sports pitches with a pavilion, skate park, and land for a leisure centre extension. It also identified the use of this land to provide facilities for Broadbridge Heath Football Club. The leisure centre extension is no longer planned, permission having been granted recently for a new leisure centre and 174 bay car park on land to the north of this site under DC/16/1844.

## **2. INTRODUCTION**

### STATUTORY BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

### RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICY

- 2.2 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Section 1 Building a strong competitive economy  
Section 7 Requiring Good Design  
Section 8 Promoting Healthy Communities

#### RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICY

- 2.3 Horsham District Planning Framework  
Policy 1 Strategic Policy: Sustainable Development  
Policy 2 Strategic Policy: Strategic Development  
Policy 3 Strategic Policy: Development Hierarchy  
Policy 24 Strategic Policy: Environmental Protection  
Policy 32 Strategic Policy: Quality of New Development  
Policy 33 Development Principles  
Policy 43 Community Facilities, Leisure and Recreation

#### RELEVANT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

- 2.4 Broadbridge Heath has not been designated as a Neighbourhood Plan Area

#### PLANNING HISTORY

DC/09/2101	Erection of 963 residential units, community facility including land for a primary school, neighbourhood centre, youth and recreational facilities, other formal and informal open space, landscaping and environmental works, transport and access arrangements, new east-west link road, improvements to Five-Oaks roundabout, realignment and partial closure of existing A264 Broadbridge Heath by-pass and other ancillary works (Outline)	Approved
DC/16/2700	Development of Broadbridge Heath Sports Facilities including pavilion building, sports pitches and a skate park	Pending

### 3. OUTCOME OF CONSULTATIONS

#### INTERNAL CONSULTATIONS

- 3.1 **Community and Culture:** Support  
Through limited floodlight use and covered spectator areas for 200 spectators the club can maintain their existing competitive status when they locate to the new recreation ground. This will also help them to maintain and develop their cradle-to-grave football offer for Broadbridge Heath residents that currently begins with under 7's and runs right through to veterans.
- 3.2 **Environmental Health Officer:** No Objection  
The predicted light spillage is sufficient to mitigate light pollution and light trespass to any neighbouring residential dwellings for use outside of daylight hours. Given proposed scheme for floodlighting this Department have no objections to make regarding this application.

Although this level of football attracts small crowds, noise from bursts of crowd cheering and chanting can have an impact on neighbouring residents.

In the absence of any recognised guidelines specific to the assessment of the impact on residents of noise from sports stadia, it is necessary to consider the ways in which effects of noise can be reduced to an acceptable level. Generally there is little that can be done to

control vocal noise from crowds. In order to reduce the spectator noise impact planning conditions are recommended to prevent spectators from taking air horns, drums, trumpets, etc. into the stadium.

No mention has been made to noise from public address (PA) systems or crowd noise and if such a system is to be installed reference should be made to the relevant British Standard and if a public address system is to be installed it is recommended that prior to the commencement of the development, details of a scheme to protect neighbouring residential properties from noise from the proposed activities shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Thereafter the approved details shall be implemented in full prior to the development being operated and shall thereafter be permanently maintained in full accordance with the approved details.

3.3 **HDC Access Forum**: Comment

In the design and access statement there is reference to disabled access.

The applicant should ensure that there is easy access through the turnstiles for wheelchair users, and also that the new stand meets the requirements for accessibility.

EXTERNAL CONSULTATIONS:

3.4 **Archaeology**: No Objection

3.5 **Sussex Police**: Comment

Concerns expressed regarding the ability of the parking to cope with both football spectators and the visitors to the leisure centre.

3.6 **Sport England**: No Objection

3.7 **WSCC Highways**: No Objection

No changes to existing vehicle access/ parking are proposed. The floodlights will not encroach or face on to the public highway and are contained wholly within the site. No highways comments/ concerns.

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS

3.8 **Broadbridge Heath Parish Council**: No comments received

3.9 **20 letters** of objection have been received raising the following issues:

- adverse impact upon residential amenities resulting from noise, poor crowd behaviour, additional traffic in the area, light spillage
- some new residents were not aware that this land would be for a football club – rather were told they would be surrounded by green space
- overshadowing of residents houses/gardens by the nearest stand
- loss of outlook resulting from stands
- late night noise
- lack of clarity about boundary hedging and fencing as promised by Countryside
- loss of security to nearest residents by people using the pitches
- harm to nearby bat colony
- the fencing off of the pitch would reduce the freedom of movement and use for local residents
- the club should stay where they are
- this is too close to housing
- the Council's handling of this has not been transparent – why wait until people move in to propose these works

- adverse impact upon local property prices
- light intrusion will prevent local residents from sleeping

3.10 **34 letters** of support, including from the Broadbridge Heath Joint User Group (BJUG), have been received and raise the following summarised points:

- plans for this site have been public for many years so those moving into the surrounding area should not be surprised by this application. This has been available to new residents of the area.
- Broadbridge Heath Football Club provide a valuable resource for the local community and this scheme should be supported to enable their continuation
- this is one of the largest clubs in the District and the club have been looking for a permanent ground since 1919 – this is the last chance within the District to make this a reality
- this would provide a vital social hub in the village – available to the wider village when not in use by the football club
- the crowds are generally less than 50 for a match – the FA regulations require such a large amount of seating.
- there is little noise created by one of the clubs games
- such an opportunity would be beneficial for the health of local children
- the existing floodlights have virtually no light spillage so similar would be expected in the new facility
- it would be a huge benefit for the club to have all its games/training etc played in one location – would aid the club spirit.
- parking has been well planned and there should be no adverse impact upon the local area
- the Council should honour their obligation to provide these facilities

3.11 Letter from Countryside Properties drawing attention to the fact that the application should ensure that the amenities of nearby residents are not affected and that the residents are fully consulted.

#### **4. HOW THE PROPOSED COURSE OF ACTION WILL PROMOTE HUMAN RIGHTS**

4.1 Article 8 (Right to respect of a Private and Family Life) and Article 1 of the First Protocol (Protection of Property) of the Human Rights Act 1998 are relevant to this application, Consideration of Human rights forms part of the planning assessment below.

#### **5. HOW THE PROPOSAL WILL HELP TO REDUCE CRIME AND DISORDER**

5.1 It is not considered that the development would be likely to have any significant impact on crime and disorder.

#### **6. PLANNING ASSESSMENTS**

6.1 The main issues are the principle of development, the impact of the floodlights and stands on neighbouring amenities and the adjacent highway, and the impact of use by Broadbridge Heath FC in terms of spectator noise, disturbance and parking pressure. The application includes fencing and turnstiles around the northernmost pitch which do not require planning permission given their height and coverage. Additional pathways are proposed around the pavilion and to the stands which are not considered harmful given their limited site coverage.

### Principle of Development:

- 6.2 The use of this land has been established by the original outline application (DC/09/2101) for the wider development of the area, with the s106 agreement securing the provision of three sports pitches and a pavilion for use by Broadbridge Heath Football Club as well as for the wider community, and a skate park. The precise layout and appearance of these elements is addressed separately under application DC/16/2700, therefore this application is based on these pitches and the pavilion having been granted permission. It should be noted that the provision of the pavilion and pitches alone under DC/16/2700 would not enable occupancy by Broadbridge Heath FC as wider infrastructure is required to meet Football Association regulations.
- 6.3 This application therefore deals only with the infrastructure necessary to enable occupancy by Broadbridge Heath FC, namely the installation of floodlights and two 100 capacity stands. As occupancy by Broadbridge Heath FC (both its senior and junior teams) would intensify the use of the land, consideration is to be had to how spectators would access the site without causing undue disturbance to adjacent residents by way of noise and parking pressure. These matters are addressed below.

### Parking and Highways Impacts:

- 6.5 Although ostensibly for stands and floodlights only, these additions would enable Broadbridge Heath FC to play their games on this site, thereby bringing increased footfall and associated traffic and parking demand than would otherwise be the case for formalised playing fields.
- 6.6 In this respect it is noted that Broadbridge Heath FC currently play their matches on the adjacent athletics ground to the north, therefore it is not envisaged that supporters would increase traffic or parking pressure beyond current levels provided such activity remains to the north of the site. It is anticipated that users of the facilities will be local to the area and that a large proportion will not use cars to attend the site, but that those who do drive will use the nearby car parks to the north of the site as current. Moving forward it is noted that the planning permission for the new leisure centre includes a new 174 bay car park in close proximity to the pavilion thereby increasing parking capacity for the site. The submitted plans detail a clear direct access link between the pavilion and this new car park, thereby ensuring that users of the facilities and supporters use this direct northern access point rather than the more difficult to reach western access point. Accordingly it is not anticipated that the proposed use by Broadbridge Heath FC enabled by the provision of the stands and floodlights would generate more parking need than the adjacent car parks could accommodate or any wider traffic implications.
- 6.7 Concern has been expressed by local residents about access to the pavilion and pitches being from the western access point from the adjacent residential area, which could bring associated parking problems, noise and disturbance. This western access point is provided under the accompanying application DC/16/2700 and is conditioned to be for service, emergency and disabled vehicles only, with a scheme of measures to encourage visitors/users to use the northern pedestrian access point only. Given that direct links are proposed to the new leisure centre car park, with a further pedestrian link to the east maintained at all times, it is not considered that such problems would be likely or of significant harm as a result of these proposals, in compliance with Policy 40 of the HDPF.

### Neighbours Amenities:

- 6.8 In this case the potential impacts of the development would clearly be on the residential development newly completed along the western site boundary. Whilst impacts from the intensification of use of the playing fields have been addressed above, there remains

potential impact from light nuisance and noise from the stands during matches. It is not considered that the size of the lights or the stands would result in loss of light or outlook to nearby residents given their modest size and separation.

- 6.9 In respect of the proposed floodlights, the submitted light distribution plans demonstrate that there would be very little light spillage beyond the boundary of the sports pitches site towards the adjacent residential area. At a height of 15m the lighting columns will be visible to houses in the adjacent residential area however, it is not considered that the lighting columns would be unduly intrusive or harmful to the amenities of residents. At the closest point the floodlights would lie 32m from the nearest house and garden – however these lights would be pointing at the pitch and therefore away from the houses shielded to direct the glare down onto the pitch.
- 6.10 Whilst the main pitch would be surrounded by lighting columns the second pitch would only have four lights facing onto the northernmost part of the pitch. The impact upon houses closer to the two southernmost pitches is therefore considered not to be significant. It is proposed that the lights would operate until 22.30pm. It is considered that this would be acceptable in terms of potential impact upon adjacent residents and can be appropriately conditioned.
- 6.11 Of the two stands proposed, the stand closest to the adjacent housing would face onto the pitch with its rear wall set parallel to the site boundary at a separation of 25m from the boundary and approximately 45m from the nearest facing primary windows. This stand would be the smallest – being 9.86m's wide with a height of just over 3m's, with its orientation focusing noise away from the adjacent housing. Access to this stand would be via the main gate adjacent to the pavilion, thereby ensuring users are directed to and from the car parks to the north. The second stand would be midway along the southern touchline facing north towards the pavilion and leisure centre with the same access/exit arrangements. Again this orientation would direct potential noise away from residents.
- 6.12 Concern has been expressed by some local residents about noise disturbance from spectators attending the football matches, their language and the general impact upon the adjacent residential amenities. The size of the stands (100 capacity each, 200 capacity total) and the infrequent number of matches per season that would generate an appreciable crowd (circa 25 matches per season, with average spectator numbers currently under 100), is such that it is not considered that potential noise disturbance would be so significant, prolonged or unneighbourly as to warrant the imposition of further specific conditions or to warrant the refusal of permission. As set out above, crowds would in the main access and leave the ground from the north thereby maintaining a suitable separation from the residential area before, during and after matches. Furthermore, the scheme for the pavilion and pitches under DC/16/2700 includes an 8m wide landscape buffer strip along the western site boundary with the adjacent housing. This would not provide immediate height and cover for the stands and pitches but would in time provide a well landscaped barrier between the pitches, floodlights, stands and the adjacent housing, reducing the impact of these facilities further.
- 6.13 For these reasons the proposed installation of stands and floodlighting would not have a significant impact on the amenities of adjacent residents, in compliance with Policy 33 of the HDPF.

Other Matters:

- 6.14 The applicants have confirmed that the turnstiles will enable access by disabled persons, and that both stands include a cut out space for wheelchair users.





## CONCLUSION

- 6.15 The principle of the use of the site and playing fields and the use of these by Broadbridge Heath FC has been established by the original outline permission for the wider area. The impact of the two modest sized stands and the 8 floodlights, enabling the intensification of use of the site by Broadbridge Heath FC, would not add significantly to the parking or traffic pressure and would not result in significant noise or visual impact on the amenities of local residents such as to make the scheme unacceptable, in accordance with development plan policies.

## 7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 Grant permission subject to appropriate conditions.

1. A condition listing the approved drawings
2. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.  
Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
3. The stands hereby permitted shall not be occupied or brought into use until the relevant footpaths, turnstiles, fencing and access points have been implemented in accordance with surfacing details that shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.  
Reason: To secure satisfactory standards of access for the proposed development and to protect the amenities of adjacent residents in accordance with the NPPF and Policies 33 and 40 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).
4. The use of the site by Broadbridge Heath Football Club for matches shall not commence until a scheme of measures to ensure that the northern access point forms the primary point of access for supporters has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved measures shall be fully implemented prior to the first use of the site by Broadbridge Heath Football Club for matches and shall thereafter be permanently adhered to.  
Reason: To secure satisfactory standards of access for the proposed development and to protect the amenities of local residents in accordance with the NPPF and Policies 33 and 40 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015)..
5. Pedestrian access from the northern site boundary to the adjacent car parks to the north shall be maintained and open at all times.  
Reason: To secure satisfactory standards of access for the proposed development and to protect the amenities of adjacent residents in accordance with the NPPF and Policy 40 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015)..
6. The floodlights hereby permitted shall not be used except between the hours of 08:00 to 22.30 daily.  
Reason: To protect the amenities of local residents in accordance with the provision of Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).
7. Prior to their installation, full details of any public address system shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The public address system shall be installed in full accordance with the approved details and shall be maintained as such thereafter.  
Reason: To protect the amenities of local residents in accordance with the provisions of Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

8. Other than in the half hour immediately preceding the kick-off of Broadbridge Heath FC first team matches and during the half-time interval of said first team matches only, no external amplified music shall be played at any time.  
Reason: To protect the amenities of local residents in accordance with the provisions of Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

Background Papers: DC/16/2272 & DC/16/2700