



meeting **PLANNING COMMITTEE**

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from: **Director of Environment**

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6

**RUSHCLIFFE BOROUGH COUNCIL 8/04/00336/CTY
INSTALLATION OF FLOODLIT ARTIFICIAL PITCH; DEMOLITION OF
CHANGING ROOMS AND CONSTRUCTION OF NEW CHANGING ROOMS
AND ANCILLARY FACILITIES
DAYNCOURT COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL, GLEBE LANE, RADCLIFFE-
ON-TRENT, NOTTS
APPLICANT: NOTTS COUNTY COUNCIL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT**

Purpose of Report

1. To consider a planning application for the installation of a floodlit artificial pitch and construction of replacement changing rooms with other ancillary facilities at Dayncourt Comprehensive School, Glebe Lane, Radcliffe-on-Trent. The proposals are linked to associated sports facilities at the site which are the subject of a separate application reported elsewhere on this agenda. The proposal raises key issues related to the impact of the floodlights, use of the artificial pitch outside school hours, access and car parking. The recommendation is to grant planning permission subject to conditions.

The Site and Surroundings

2. Dayncourt Comprehensive School lies towards the southern side of Radcliffe-on-Trent directly north-west of the slightly elevated Grantham Road (A52). The site's south-western boundary abuts residential development situated on Cropwell Road, Cropwell Gardens and Glebe Lane which provides vehicular access to the site. Further residential development abuts the site's north-western boundary situated within Victoria Street, Lincoln Grove, Eastwood Road, Gatcombe Close and Bingham Road. The site's north-eastern boundary abuts the rear gardens of residential properties on Golf Road and Grantham Road. Allotment gardens lie to the south-east of the A52 opposite the site beyond which lie further residential properties on Grantham Road and Cropwell Road (see Plan 1).
3. Dayncourt Comprehensive School occupies a large, irregularly shaped campus which is shared with Radcliffe-on-Trent Junior and Radcliffe-on-Trent Infants and Nursery Schools. The various buildings comprising the comprehensive school are concentrated towards the site's south-western end including an existing sports hall, swimming pool and changing rooms. The Infants and Nursery School occupies the northern corner of the campus. The site's eastern corner provides a substantial area of grassed playing fields

separated from the A52 by a stretch of palisade fencing with tree planting on the school side. Established planting also lies within the rear gardens of properties abutting the site's north-eastern boundary.

4. Various areas around the school buildings are used for car parking, including areas adjacent to the sports hall and swimming pool, providing some 84 car parking spaces (see Plan 1). A further 50 cars can be accommodated within tennis courts for infrequent events such as parents evenings. In addition to Glebe Lane, pedestrian access to the school is available from Eastwood Road albeit such access is restricted to an hour at both the start and end of the school day.

Proposed Development

5. The application seeks planning permission for the installation of a floodlit artificial pitch within the existing playing fields. The pitch would measure 105m x 60m arranged on a south-west – north-east axis to the north-east of the sports hall. The pitch would be of a 'rubber crumb' surface laid out to provide a full size pitch but capable of being sub-divided by nets to provide 3 smaller pitches across its width. The ends of the pitch would be enclosed by 5m high mesh fencing whilst the lengths of the pitch would be enclosed by 3m high mesh fencing incorporating 5m high fence inserts around the goals.
6. It is proposed to illuminate the pitch by the installation of 8 No. floodlight columns with a lighting level of 200 Lux. These would be 15.5m high with four arranged at regular intervals along both lengths of the pitch. It is proposed for the facility to be used exclusively by the school from 7.30am until the end of the school day with community use being allowed on a formally managed basis from 5.00 pm until 9.30 pm seven days per week. The pitch is proposed to be used for football, hockey and technique training in other sports.
7. The application originally proposed to site the pitch within the northern corner of the playing field close to the Infants and Nursery School and housing to the north-east. The application has since been revised so as to re-site the pitch nearer towards the existing sports hall and the A52.
8. The scheme also proposes to demolish the existing single storey changing rooms and replace them with new accommodation to provide changing and showering facilities for up to 64 people. Ancillary facilities are also proposed comprising a fitness suite, workshop (for coaching/debriefing) and related offices/stores. These facilities would occupy an area between the existing sports hall and swimming pool (see Plan 2), currently partly occupied by the existing changing rooms, and would link in with associated facilities promoted under the separate application.
9. The new facilities would be contained within a new block with a 'V' shaped roof measuring approximately 25m x 15.8m x 5m (max. height). The block would be constructed in 'Trespa' coloured panels with a metal roof. The scheme has been designed to provide access for all users.
10. Vehicular access to the facilities is proposed to continue to be solely from Glebe Lane. It is envisaged that public users arriving by car would utilise the

existing 84 on-site car parking facilities. It is proposed that the public use of the facilities would be arranged on a formally managed basis.

Planning Policies

11. Central Government advice in respect of Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation is set out in Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) Note 17.
12. Policy 5/12 of the Nottinghamshire Structure Plan Review (SPR) states, outside Nottingham city centre, that new development will be expected to provide appropriate off-street parking which seeks to reduce the pressure for on-street parking, but does not contribute to generating unnecessary traffic.
13. SPR Policy 7/1 states that, provided there is no adverse environmental and traffic impact, permission will be granted for recreational facilities which (inter alia):
 - a) are located where the need is greatest, especially in areas of social and environmental disadvantage where existing facilities are inadequate;
 - b) where appropriate, are reasonably accessible to all sections of the community, thus minimising the need to travel;
 - c) increase range and choice, especially by the multiple use of resources and facilities, and the enhancement of facilities of local and regional importance;
 - d) reduce the pressure for recreational developments on areas vulnerable to environmental damage; or
 - e) minimise conflicts with other recreational activities and land uses.

Policy 7/2 refers to open space and playing fields. It states that in order to retain and where necessary increase open space and playing field provision:

- a) development on public and private open space will only be permitted where it would not involve a loss in meeting recreational needs or of a valuable amenity area and the long term implications have been taken into account;
- b) all playing fields will normally be protected from development which would result in their loss, except where:
 - (i) the redevelopment of a small part of an area of playing fields enables the retention and enhancement of the remaining facilities;
 - (ii) alternative provision of equivalent community benefit and accessibility is made available; or
 - (iii) the relevant local plan shows an excess of sports pitch provision and public open space in the area;
- c) provision will be made for additional public open space and playing fields on land which is readily accessible to all sections of the

community, based on the objective assessment of local needs where available, or using National Playing Fields Association standards, particularly within and on the fringe of urban areas and in villages where present provision is inadequate;...”

14. Policy ENV1 of the Rushcliffe Borough Local Plan confirms that planning permission will normally be granted for new development provided various criteria are met. These include there being no significant adverse effect upon the amenity of adjoining properties; compliance with car parking standards; sufficient amenity/circulation space; and the scale, height, design and materials of the proposal are neither unsympathetic to the character of its surroundings nor overbearing on neighbouring properties.
15. Policy M2 confirms that wherever possible new proposals which are acceptable in principle, conform with car parking standards. Policy M7 refers to access for the disabled in respect of development proposals.
16. Policy CRT1 confirms that permission for local community facilities will normally be granted where existing facilities are inadequate. Policy CRT4 states that proposals which would lead to a loss of playing fields will not normally be granted planning permission except where:
 - a) the existing sports and recreation facilities can best be retained and enhanced through the redevelopment of a small part of the site; or
 - b) alternative provision of equivalent community benefit can be made available.
17. The Local Plan also comments that the sharing of facilities, especially school buildings, is successfully carried out in certain areas and the Borough Council wishes to continue to encourage this policy. Accordingly, CRT/A gives a Statement of Intent that the Borough Council will actively pursue with the County Council or boards of governors, the greater use of educational buildings and facilities for community and recreational uses outside normal school hours.
18. Similar policies are contained within the Rushcliffe Borough Replacement Local Plan Deposit Draft.

Consultations

19. **Rushcliffe Borough Council** – no response. Any observations received will be orally reported to Committee.
20. **Radcliffe-on-Trent Parish Council** do not object to the proposals but do raise concerns about:
 - a) security fencing to Glebe Lane and Golf Road;
 - b) the proximity to the Infants School;
 - c) parking in Glebe Lane; and
 - d) light pollution.

21. **The Highways Agency** does not object in principle, subject to conditions to ensure the safety of trunk road users.

22. **Sport England** note that the existing grass playing fields are prone to flooding rendering them unusable for sport for considerable periods. The proposed pitch would resolve this problem and floodlighting would enable community use into the evening. Accordingly the application is supported.
23. **Central Networks** raise no objection.
24. **Transco** raise no objection but confirm the presence of plant in the vicinity. A copy of their advice is to be provided to the applicant.

Publicity

25. The application has been publicised by means of site notices and neighbour notification letters sent to the nearest occupiers. 39 letters of representation have been received from local residents plus a letter from the Head Teacher of Radcliffe-on-Trent Infants and Nursery School objecting to the proposals on various grounds.
26. Amendments to the scheme, proposing to re-site the pitch, have been publicised in a similar manner and the school is also understood to have held its own public meeting. This has resulted in a further 18 representations from local residents, a letter from the Head Teacher of the Infants and Nursery School plus 21 pro forma letters from the Cropwell Road Action Group (CRAG) objecting to the proposals. The grounds for objection are articulated in some detail – the following paragraphs, while summarising where appropriate, need to reflect this. The grounds are as follows:

27. Access

- Existing access via Glebe Lane inadequate. Scope for alternative signal-controlled access off A52 for school buses, delivery vehicles and emergency vehicles to relieve existing congestion. The stretch already has a bus stop pull-in and the speed limit has recently been reduced to 40 mph;

28. Parking/Traffic/Highway Safety

- Parked cars on Glebe Lane during school hours cause near misses between vehicles turning into Glebe Lane and those forced to use the other side of the road. Cars park on both sides of Glebe Lane (photos supplied) during events and block accessways. Those with pushchairs forced to walk down the middle of the road. Reduced visibility from school buses and cars parked on Cropwell Road (photos supplied) right up to its junction with Glebe Lane;
- Presently parking on surrounding roads at the start and end of the school day is “a problem” and this would continue until proposed closing time. Cars park on Glebe Lane in the evening in connection with the Bowling Club.
- Inadequate parking facilities within the school. Existing on-site parking is taken up by evening classes attendees and users of the swimming pool.

School should resolve its parking problems prior to embarking on new projects. Any required security fencing to secure the school buildings would reduce car parking availability on site;

- Delivery lorries regularly forced to reverse along Glebe Lane due to insufficient turning space on the school premises causing several near misses with vehicles emerging from Glebe Lane properties. Glebe Lane should have parking restrictions allowing only access for residents. On occasions lorries cannot access the school due to parking on both sides with implications for emergency vehicles;
- During larger events at the school traffic becomes grid locked in both directions on Cropwell Road. Fears that the proposals would exacerbate existing congestion/safety;

29. Siting

- Proposals are out of proportion with the size of the campus dominating the remaining green space. Proposals would cause loss of most of the existing school playing field used for athletics, rugby and cricket and prevent pupils from enjoying the current open space. Fear that the school would be supplying an all weather facility to local football clubs to the detriment of other sports;
- No compulsive reasons/local needs for the development;
- Proposed location too close to residential development where many retired people live. Proposed siting would affect quality of life/learning environment for staff/pupils at the Infants School and prevent them from using the field for their sports day. Pitch should be sited as close as possible to Dayncourt School.
- Revised siting “even worse” bringing the pitch/lighting nearer to No 1 Grantham Road and the A52. Fear of north-eastern strip of the site becoming shielded and providing a ‘hanging out’ area. Scope for pitch to be turned through 90 degrees leaving substantial ‘buffer’ to adjoining residential properties.

30. Visual Impact

- Proposed high fencing and floodlight columns would create a considerable eyesore within a natural green leisure area, particularly from properties situated on lower ground;
- Proposals would result in loss of a visually important green space at the heart of the village and would result in a detrimental outlook compared to the currently pleasant open aspect;

31. Floodlighting

- Light pollution would be caused to adjacent properties and users of the A52 whilst light spillage would cover an even wider area;

- Games continuing beyond specified time limits;
- Floodlights would be a distraction to drivers on this “notorious stretch” of the A52. Greater scope for balls to end up in the road.

32. Noise/Disturbance

- Existing nuisance from noise, cheering plus loud speakers at annual sports day would be exacerbated. Extended hours seven days a week would be “totally unacceptable” to neighbours including young children comparable with living next door to a pub/nightclub. Only respite is currently during school holidays;
- Local residents currently suffer abuse from pupils. Noise/disturbance currently experienced at the end of the garden to No. 8 Gatcombe Close would become continuous from car activity/parking making it impossible to enjoy the garden;
- An earlier closure of 8.30pm should be imposed but understood to be not possible due to the funding criteria;

33. Security

- Disturbance caused at present by footballs coming over boundary hedges with individuals breaching hedges to recover them or as a short cut to the A52. Previous security fencing scheme failed to protect the site’s north-eastern boundary adjacent to housing. Fencing will have been a “waste of money” as gates would need to be left open until closure.
- Boundary fencing “in constant need of repair” due to people seeking access from the site to Bingham Road which would become exacerbated. Prospect of further break-ins/trespass;
- Concerns about security of the Infants School after normal school hours. Recently installed security gates to the Infants School could become a desire route to the facilities. Assurance sought that groups can only access the fenced pitch;

34. Litter

- Litter dropped within the school field and thrown through/over boundary hedges;

35. Alternative Sites

- An artificial floodlit pitch/tennis courts and grass pitches with changing rooms and car parking exist nearby on Bingham Road which is under-utilised and could be extended;
- Alternative facilities for displaced sports would be up to 3 miles away yet the nearby Bingham Road facility is considered too far away;

- Dry play areas exist at Bingham Leisure Centre with football pitches at the Recreation Ground, Wharf Lane and the village cricket club off the A52;
- Scope for a more suitable site on the edge of Radcliffe “away from the housing” where ample parking could be provided. Money could be used to provide a custom built Sports College with all activities on site at the end of Bingham Road or the end of Shelford Road with proper access rather than if located in the middle of the village”.

36. Other

- School rarely missed a day’s sport on the field over the winter. Modern funding provides substantial sums but no finance exists for more appropriate drainage works to the field. Project is a waste of money when schools cite a lack of money for repairs etc;
- Hope that the pitch is to be multi-sport and “not discriminate against females by focussing on football”;
- Fear that the pitch would attract users from throughout the County;
- Applicant’s survey found that respondents wanted badminton and improved swimming facilities whilst footballers are already well served. Need has not been demonstrated and is doubted given other facilities in the village. Money would be better spent redeveloping the swimming pool and opening longer hours;
- Proposals would lead to a further invasion of privacy if more people have access to the area. Depreciation in property values;
- Likelihood of bad language. Numbers of pupils roaming the village “creating havoc” from 7.15am.

37. The pro forma letters request the County Council monitors the “traffic chaos on Cropwell Road” at peak times and suggest that the playing field area be converted into a bus and car park allowing the environment to revert to one commensurate with the Council Tax charges paid. Other issues raised reiterate concerns set out above.

38. A further letter gives “whole hearted support” for the facilities but raises concern at the loss of the grassed area to the detriment of rugby, cricket and athletics.

39. The applicants have provided the results of a locally distributed questionnaire aimed to establish local opinion regarding the development of additional specified sports facilities. A sizeable majority of respondents supported provision of additional sporting and social facilities and confirmed they would use them. The questionnaire also resulted in a small number of adverse comments including the access and parking problems cited above.

40. The applicants have also provided 16 letters which support the application to the Football Foundation for funding the proposals. These letters include support from NCC Education and Community Services Departments; Rushcliffe Borough Council Leisure Facilities; Radcliffe Olympic Football Club; Nottinghamshire Schools' Football Association; Heads of Schools within Dayncourt's 'family' of schools and various other groups promoting football for females and those with disabilities. The above issues are considered in the Observations Section of this report.

Highway Observations

41. No objection on highway grounds although it is recommended that planning conditions are imposed to control the hours of use.

Observations

42. Dayncourt Comprehensive School is a Specialist Sports College which serves a catchment of Radcliffe-on-Trent, Cotgrave, Holme Pierrepont and the Meadows area of Nottingham. These proposals have developed as a result of an extensive local survey assessing future sporting/community needs and is the subject of a funding bid to the Football Foundation. Linked proposals, the subject of a funding bid through the Active England Initiative, are being pursued through a separate planning application.
43. Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 recognises that sports and recreational facilities have an important role to play in promoting healthy living and preventing illness, a topic which has recently been highlighted in the national media. The Local Plan offers general support for greater use of educational buildings for community and recreational uses. The proposals would in principal accord with relevant Structure and Local Plan policies provided they would not have significant adverse environmental effects.
44. The proposed built development would replace dilapidated changing rooms with new facilities which would be visually well contained between existing buildings and link into the separate proposals. The proposed choice of materials would give the buildings a welcome 'lift' in appearance.

Access/Parking/Traffic/Highway Safety

45. The proposals would be used solely by the school during normal school hours with community use allowed thereafter. On that basis the proposals are unlikely to exacerbate existing conditions since community users would be free to park within designated areas on the school campus which are largely vacated at the end of the school day. Provision of additional parking within the school site is, therefore, not considered necessary.
46. Concerns regarding existing access arrangements are noted. The school's sole vehicular access is via Glebe Lane and the significant proportion of pupils arriving via school buses, together with vehicles used by parents, teachers and sixth formers all contribute to congested conditions at peak times.
47. The site has been inspected at various times and the presence of vehicles parked along Glebe Lane and Cropwell Road was noted. Whilst such parking

is hardly ideal, preventing two way traffic flowing freely, it was noted on all occasions that vehicles park on the southern side of the lane and observed signs requesting that access ways be kept clear.

48. Photographic evidence has been provided showing parking on both sides of Glebe Lane although this would appear to relate to infrequent events. Claims that HGVs have been forced to reverse down Glebe Lane/the footway have been raised with the applicants. The applicants point out that the largest vehicles visiting the site are waste collection vehicles which access and egress the site in forward gear. Consequently there should be no implications for emergency vehicle access. Any incidence of drivers reversing down Glebe Lane is, therefore, understood to be infrequent and more likely to be a symptom of driver laziness since sufficient turning space is clearly available within the campus.
49. Requests for an access to the school site from the A52 for school buses, HGVs and emergency vehicles is essentially a matter for the Highways Agency to advise upon. At present the Highways Agency oppose a new access primarily because the policing of such an access would be out of their control and thus open to abuse by general traffic other than the intended contract buses. It is understood that the school is, nevertheless, keen to pursue discussions on this as a future option. The suggested conversion of the playing field into a bus and car park is neither desirable nor would enable the school to deliver its curriculum in line with its status as a Sports College.
50. The incidence of 'near misses' caused by existing traffic conditions is regrettable although the parking of vehicles on the public highway is a traffic management issue, as is any imposition of parking restrictions. The introduction of parking restrictions on Glebe Lane would, however, only serve to displace existing conditions during school hours. Concerns that the proposals would generate parking during evenings in surrounding roads is considered unlikely given the availability of extensive on-site parking in closer proximity to the proposed facilities. Consequently it is highly unlikely that users of the facilities would propose to park in Golf Road, since Glebe Lane would provide the only means of access to the proposed facilities.
51. Any required security fencing would seek to isolate school buildings rather than deny access to existing car parking areas. It is accepted that some car parking already occurs in the vicinity after normal school hours comprising evening class attendees and users of the existing sports facilities and bowling club. However, given the significant number of on-site car parking spaces and existing cycle parking facilities, the scheme is not considered likely, even allowing for the parallel proposals, to exacerbate existing traffic, parking or safety conditions. The proposals do not give rise to an objection on highway grounds. However the implementation of a School Travel Plan is considered beneficial at this location and could be covered by an appropriate planning condition.

Siting

52. The proposed pitch dimensions are sizeable and concerns that they are out of proportion with the size of the campus are noted. However, this size of pitch is recommended by the Football Association for Sports Colleges looking to

develop football. The proposals would substantially reduce the amount of open green space currently available for pupils to enjoy, although no doubt a proportion of those pupils would wish to make use of the facility. This consideration needs to be balanced, however, against the overall benefits the proposals would provide.

53. The impact of the pitch upon staff and pupils at the Infants School and nearby residents is recognised. The revised location, however, enables a greater buffer between the pitch and the Infants School/adjacent housing although the proximity of the A52 precludes any further shifting nearer Dayncourt School. That factor, coupled with prohibitive excavation costs, also prevents turning the pitch through 90 degrees. The impacts upon the quality of life for adjacent occupiers and learning environment at the Infants School are not considered unacceptable given the revised location and the fact that sports can currently take place adjacent to such development. The Infants School would be allowed to use the facility for their own needs and Sports Days.
54. It is accepted that the revisions have resulted in the pitch being proposed closer to the front building line of No. 1 Grantham Road in order to provide an improved buffer to the Infants School. However, it is difficult to accept that the revised location is “even worse” and “nearer” to No. 1 Grantham Road, given that the nearest part of the pitch to the property is now approximately 38m as opposed to 32m. The revised location also increases the buffer to the rear gardens of properties on Golf Road to typically 30m and the scheme has been designed to avoid that area becoming a ‘hanging out’ area. Additional fencing could be erected if necessary.
55. The impact of the proposals upon other sports has been raised with the applicants. The school and Sport England have commented that the existing playing field suffers from flooding from the A52 making it unusable over much of the winter period. The school has entered into an agreement with Radcliffe Cricket Club to use their cricket ground for matches in exchange for members of that club using winter nets within the linked sports hall. The school has room elsewhere on site for the provision of cricket nets.
56. The existing athletics track is in fact only a 280m long circuit and, consequently, is primarily used for technique training. The school is, however, able to use the 400m track at Bingham Road whilst, for special events, can use the 8 lane track at Toothill School. The school only teaches rugby as an introduction and the proposed pitch could, in addition to football and hockey, be used to teach rugby techniques. The pitch would, therefore, still be multi-sport. Concerns that the emphasis on football may discriminate against females would appear unfounded given the support for the proposals expressed by girls/ladies teams.
57. Whilst it is accepted that some participants in other sports may have to access sites further afield to take part in matches, it should be stressed that existing facilities for those sports are inadequate and, therefore, the arrangements would enable such participants to benefit from superior quality facilities. On balance, therefore, the proposals are not considered to be to the detriment of other sports. The proposals are part of a County-wide initiative to provide this size and standard of artificial floodlit pitch. Consequently, it is

unlikely that the proposals would attract from “throughout the County” on any exclusive basis.

58. Claims that there is no compulsive need for the development would appear contrary to the significant support cited by numerous local teams for the pitch whilst the associated built development would provide improved facilities for existing users in line with desires expressed in the school’s survey.

Visual Impact

59. The visual impact of the fencing and floodlighting columns would be substantially screened from nearby properties by established planting. More open views from other properties would be over substantial distances and properties to the south would view the proposals against the backdrop of road lighting columns on the A52. The views from properties on the south-east of the A52 would be oblique and partly obscured by planting whilst, for users of the road, the visual impact would be transient. The loss of a green space would be regrettable although since the use of such green space is principally for playing sport which in itself is not possible for part of the year, such a loss needs to be balanced against the benefits the scheme would provide.

Floodlighting

60. The floodlights have been designed so as to turn on/off with a slow increase/decrease in illumination rather than any sudden flash. The design would ensure that no distraction is caused to users of the A52 and accords with advice provided by the Highways Agency. It is accepted that the proposals would allow use of the land beyond what is currently possible. However, it is questionable whether the proposals would give greater scope for balls to end up in the road given that goal posts are already located close to the boundary fence and the scheme would provide for an additional fence enclosure. The claim that this stretch of the A52 is “notorious” is also disputed given the proximity of nearby traffic lights and the 40mph restriction.
61. Concerns that the games would continue beyond permitted hours would be overcome by installation of a timer switch which automatically turns off the floodlights at a pre-set time. Such a system is understood to operate successfully at the existing Bingham Road facility. The applicants are also willing to ensure that the facility is not lit during evenings when no bookings have been taken, to avoid any unnecessary disturbance.
62. The installation of floodlights has the potential to cause light pollution. Whilst the proposed floodlighting columns are relatively high, this enables the lighting units to be directed directly down onto the pitch, thus minimising light spillage, which would not be possible with shorter, angled units. A light spillage diagram has been provided which confirms that the proposed lighting level of 200lux would not result in any unacceptable light spillage to nearby properties.
63. The lighting would create a ‘box’ of light over the pitch. However, the nearest properties on Grantham Road and Golf Road are screened by established planting which includes evergreen species. Accordingly the impact of such light would be filtered. Views of the light from other properties would be at greater distances and, whilst properties on Gatcombe Close are on lower

ground, views of the development would be against the backdrop of the A52 which is illuminated along this stretch. The greatest impact of this 'box' of light would be to users of the A52 although such impacts would be of a transient nature.

Noise/Disturbance

64. The proposals have the potential to generate noise and disturbance from extending the hours of available play and from the use of cars to nearby residents, particularly those on Glebe Lane and at its junction with Cropwell Road. The scheme proposes welded mesh fencing rather than timber rebound boards, which can be noisy. The proposed rubber crumb pitch provides a 'giving' carpet surface which is also relatively quiet. Whilst an even wearing of the pitch is important to maintain its life, the applicants have offered to ensure that where single games are booked in an evening the pitch nearest the school is used. It is proposed that the management committee would issue warnings to teams for the use of bad language which ultimately could lead to their ejection. Such a system is understood to have operated successfully at the Bingham Road facility.
65. Noise arising from use of the pitch during school hours is not considered an issue given that sports are currently played on the site and, incidentally, much closer to adjacent housing than the pitch would facilitate. Despite the above measures, however, it is recognised that the proposals would allow sports to be played into the evenings which has potential to cause disturbance. Whilst the benefits of using the pitch as a community facility are recognised, the proposed hours of use would not provide residents with any respite from evening use. It is accepted that public use is important to the financial set up of the scheme, that evening usage is the popular time, and that restrictive hours would jeopardise the whole funding. It is considered, however, that a suitable balance can be achieved by providing for an earlier closure on Sundays, which can be controlled by planning conditions.
66. Any existing abuse of residents by pupils is regrettable as is any disturbance caused by pupils in the village. This is a difficult issue to control effectively although arguably the provision of enhanced facilities may provide pupils with more constructive outlets for their behaviour. The pitch would lie over 100m from the rear garden of No. 8 Gatcombe Close and between which there is established planting.
67. The proposals have the potential to generate some noise and disturbance from increased car usage on site. Bearing in mind that evening activities in connection with the existing sports hall presently conclude at 9.30 with school gates being locked at 10.00 pm it is unlikely that the proposals, even when taken into account with additional usage proposed under the associated proposals, would give rise to any significant adverse impacts. It is, however, considered that more restrictive hours would be appropriate in respect of the artificial pitch, which could be attached as a planning condition, and would seem to represent an appropriate compromise to ensure that the wider benefits of the scheme are delivered.

Security

68. Disturbance caused by stray balls and individuals breaching hedges to retrieve them should, if anything, be reduced bearing in mind sport would be undertaken further away from such properties than may presently be the case and the pitch includes catch fencing. Breaches to boundary treatment as a short cut to the A52 is a management issue which lies outside the scope of

this application. It is noted that the security fence to the A52 does partly return back alongside No. 1 Grantham Road and adjoins dense, established planting. The applicants have suggested, however, that some additional fencing could be installed.

69. The recently erected security fence will not have been a “waste of money” as it would help to secure the site outside any permitted hours of operation. In any event the gates are presently locked at 10.00 pm after existing activities have finished and the proposals do not seek to extend that period. Whilst it is accepted that the proposals aim to attract more people to the site, equally it can be argued that such an increased presence, coupled with caretakers remaining on duty, could deter break ins at all schools on the campus and to adjacent housing. The boundary fence at the rear of No. 8 Gatcombe Close is considered to be in reasonable condition and the scheme does not propose to alter the existing position.
70. The sole permitted access would be via Glebe Lane. Any desire lines which may be created would need to be assessed and further measures considered as appropriate.

Litter

71. The collection of litter from the site is a management issue. Users of the proposed pitch would not be afforded access to the boundary hedge which is currently the subject of litter deposition. The applicants plan to set up a Community Management Group and propose to invite Governors, Parish Councillors, Senior Management and Resident Associations to be represented. Any particular operational concerns could, therefore, also be channelled through this Group.

Alternative Sites

72. It is not disputed that the existing sports facilities at Bingham Road run by the Radcliffe-on-Trent Sports Association (ROTSA) could be used to a greater extent. That facility is, however, unsuitable during mornings for school curriculum due to the loss of lesson time in accessing the site and complying with procedures for taking pupils off campus. The facility is used by the school during afternoons when longer periods are available for sports although developing the proposals on this site would necessitate the loss of well used grass pitches and still would not provide usable space for curriculum on the school site.
73. The availability of other play areas, or the development of an edge of centre facility, equally do not assist in delivering the school curriculum and the Wharf Lane facilities are in any event prone to flooding. One aim of the proposals is to provide access for all to encourage greater public participation which may not be best achieved by siting facilities “away from housing”.
74. The displaced sports would be more remote although this would apply to matches only and the current playing field does not provide full size facilities.

Other Considerations

75. Funding for smaller projects such as drainage improvements is available and an extensive programme occurs within the County. In this instance, however, whilst such works could enable greater use of the pitch over the winter period, it would not of itself achieve community participation particularly over the winter months.
76. The survey support for badminton would be met through the linked proposals for a further sports hall. The school is presently seeking to raise money to improve the swimming pool. Football may appear to be well served although the village serves at least 25 teams and evidence produced demonstrates that demand for pitches exceeds supply.
77. Impacts of development proposals upon property values is not a material planning consideration. The siting of the proposals, existing vegetation and controls over hours of use would not lead to any unacceptable invasion of privacy.

Conclusions

78. The proposals are submitted to enhance the school's status as a Specialist Sports College by providing improved facilities which would also be available for community use. A clear need has been demonstrated for the facilities by both the school and a range of external user groups. On balance, it is considered that the wide benefits the proposals would provide are capable of being carried out without causing unacceptable impacts, subject to the imposition of appropriate planning conditions.

Human Rights Act Implications

79. The relevant issues arising out of consideration of the Human Rights Act have been assessed in accordance with the Council's adopted protocol. Rights under Article 8 and Article 1 of the First Protocol may be affected. The proposals have the potential to introduce impacts of noise, disturbance and visual intrusion from the floodlighting columns and when illuminated. However, these considerations need to be balanced against the significant benefits the proposals would bring in enhancing sports facilities for both the school and wider community, the screening provided by existing planting and the ability to minimise such impacts through appropriate planning conditions.

Statutory and Policy Implications

80. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, personnel, Crime and Disorder and users. Where such implications are material, they have been brought to out in the text of the report. Attention is, however, drawn to specifics as follows:-

Crime and Disorder Implications

81. The development would be located within the existing school campus which benefits from security fencing and it is understood that CCTV is proposed to be installed to enhance security. Community use of the facility would be on a formally managed basis.

Statement of reasons for approval

82. The County Council is of the opinion that the proposed development is in accordance with the relevant Development Plan policies. Whilst the proposals have the potential to introduce some disturbance to nearby residents, the County Council recognises, on balance, that the proposals would provide significant benefits to both the school and wider community and considers that any potential harm would reasonably be mitigated by the imposition of the attached conditions.

RECOMMENDATION

83. It is RECOMMENDED that planning permission be granted for the purposes of Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992, subject to the conditions set out in Appendix 1.
84. Members need to consider the issues, including the Human Rights Act issues, set out in the report and resolve accordingly.

PETER WEBSTER
Director of Environment

Legal Services' Comments

Committee have power to decide the Recommendation. [SHB 25.6.04]

Director of Resources' Financial Comments

This report considers the planning application and has no direct financial consequences. [DJK 28.6.04]

Background Papers Available for Inspection

1. Letter from Transco dated 10.3.04
2. Letters from Highways Agency dated 2.4.04 and.....
3. Letter from AMScott dated 21.5.04
4. Letter from Central Networks dated 24.5.04
5. Email from Radcliffe-on-Trent Parish Council dated 25.5.04
6. Letter from Sport England dated 26.5.04
7. 39 letters from Local Residents dated between 11.03.04 and 18.5.04
8. 2 letters from Radcliffe Infant & Nursery School dated 25.3.04 and 28.5.04
9. 18 letters from Local Residents dated between 21.5.04 and 9.6.04
10. Letter from Local Resident dated 6.6.04 enclosing 21 pro forma letters
11. 16 letters of support dated between 26.9.03 and 22.3.04

Electoral Division(s) Affected

Radcliffe-on-Trent

Please note. Copies of plans referred to in this report may be obtained from: John Sheffield, Environment, Trent Bridge House, Fox Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 6BJ, tel 0115 977 4499, email

john.sheffield@nottscc.gov.uk or from Peter Barker at the same address, tel 0115 977 4416, email peter.barker@nottscc.gov.uk.

SUGGESTED PLANNING CONDITIONS

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun within three years of the date of this permission. The date of commencement shall be notified in writing to the County Planning Authority (CPA) at least seven days prior to the permission being implemented.
2. Unless otherwise previously agreed in writing by the CPA the development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the details shown on Drawing Nos. SK4-1, SK4-6 received by the CPA on 27 February 2004, DC 02 received by the CPA on 4 March 2004 and AL(0)1 received by the CPA on 14 May 2004.
3. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted details shall be submitted to the CPA for its written approval for the protection of existing trees adjacent to the school's south-eastern boundary. The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
4. No development shall take place until details of the proposed facing materials and finishes have been submitted to the CPA for its written approval. The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details unless any variation is subsequently agreed in writing by the CPA.
5. Unless otherwise previously agreed in writing by the CPA, or in the event of an emergency, no construction work shall be carried out or plant operated except between 0730 – 1800 hours Mondays to Fridays and 0800 – 1300 hrs on Saturdays. No construction work shall take place on Sundays, Public or Bank Holidays.
6. All possible measures shall be undertaken to ensure that noise associated with the construction and use of the development hereby permitted is kept to a minimum.
7. The floodlights as shown on Drawing No. DC 02 received by the CPA on 4 March 2004 shall be illuminated at no greater than 200 Lux and shall be angled downwards towards the artificial pitch so as to minimise light pollution.
8. Unless otherwise previously agreed in writing by the CPA the development hereby permitted shall only be used between the following hours:

Training Room/Fitness Suite/Workshop Room:

0730 – 2130 hrs

Floodlit Artificial Pitch:

Mondays – Fridays:	0800 – 2130 hrs
Saturdays:	0900 – 2130 hrs
Sundays/Public/Bank Holidays:	1000 – 1800 hrs

9. Any trenching required to supply power to the floodlighting shall be carried out and reinstated as soon as practicable thereafter in accordance with details which shall have been previously agreed in writing by the CPA.
10. Within 3 month of the commencement of the development hereby permitted a landscaping scheme shall be submitted to the CPA for its written approval. Such a scheme shall provide suitable regrading and mounding to create usable informal space, tree planting to soften the rear of the built development and grass sowing.
11. The regrading, planting and sowing shall take place in accordance with the scheme approved under Condition 11 above in the first available planting/sowing season following the substantial completion of the development. The planting scheme shall be maintained in accordance with good arboricultural practice for a period of 5 years following its implementation and any trees which become damaged, diseased, die or are removed within that period shall be replaced in the following planting season with similar specimens to those originally planted.
12. Within 12 months of the use of the floodlit pitch the school shall, in consultation with the County Council's Travel Awareness and Road Safety Section, implement a School Travel Plan which shall have previously been agreed in writing by the CPA. The School Travel Plan shall aim to mitigate any adverse traffic, access and parking impacts upon Glebe Lane and Cropwell Road and provide covered and secure cycle storage facilities.

Reasons

1. To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act as amended.
- 2, 9 To ensure a satisfactory visual appearance for the development and for the avoidance of doubt.
3. In the interests of visual amenity.
4. To ensure a satisfactory visual appearance for the development and to accord with Policy ENV1 of the Rushcliffe Borough Local Plan 1996.
- 5-8, 10-11. To protect the amenities of nearby residents.
12. To ensure that impacts from traffic, access and parking are minimised.

Note to Applicant:

1. The applicant's attention is drawn to the content of the letters from Transco dated 10 March 2004 and the Highways Agency dated 2 April 2004 copies of which are attached to the decision letter.

EPD.JS/EP4552