

**16/00906/COU**

**Mr Nadir Imamoglu**

**Cllr Cliftt & Cllr Lever  
ESSINGTON**

**Wyrley Rangers Football Club, Long Lane Park, Long Lane  
Springhill WV11 2AA**

**Change of use of part of the property from sports club house,  
ancillary bungalow, and car park to creche or day nursery or place  
of worship or training centre or exhibition space.**

**1. SITE DESCRIPTION AND PLANNING HISTORY**

**1.1 Site Description**

The application relates to Wyrley Rangers Football Club which consists of two football pitches with spectator stand, as well as an associated club house, changing rooms, caretakers residence and car parking. The premises is positioned off Long Lane and extends to just under 3.20 hectares. Adjacent to the north-east is the Wyrley and Essington Canal. The club house and caretakers bungalow, which are the subject of this application, are of modern construction and were purpose built to serve the sports complex.

**1.2 Planning History**

2009, Change of use from clubhouse to 4 bungalows, withdrawn  
[09/00301/COU]

2009, Change of use from clubhouse to 4 bungalows, refused,  
[09/00505/COU]

2002, Variation of condition 6 of 747/94 - use of clubhouse by non-  
members, withdrawn [02/01040/VAR]

2001, Football stand fencing and car parking, approved [01/00126/FUL]

2001, 6 Floodlighting columns and 4 removable training lights, approved  
[01/01090/FUL]

1998, Satellite dish, 4 removable floodlights and columns and 2  
permanent floodlights and columns, approved [97/01032]

1998, Advertisement, approved [AD31/98]

1996, Temporary change of use of fitness room to caretakers residence,  
approved [96/00818]

1995, Clubhouse - changing rooms and caretakers residence , approved  
[94/00747]

1993, Football pitch and club house, approved [93/00014]

**2.1 The Proposal**

2.1.1 It is proposed to change the use of the club-house, caretakers residence and an outbuilding to either a crèche, day nursery, place of worship, training centre or exhibition space (Use Class D1). The football pitches, spectator stand, changing rooms and toilets would remain in their current use.

**2.2 Agents submission**

2.2.1 The application states that whilst the pitches are still used on occasion, previous marketing of the site over a number of years has been unsuccessful. The proposed uses are considered to be compatible with the existing buildings and would aid marketing of the site in the interim to provide a source of revenue.

No external changes are proposed and the new use would be accommodated within the existing buildings.

### **3. POLICY CONTEXT**

3.1 Within the Green Belt

3.2 Adopted Local Plan

Policy GB1: Development in the Green Belt

Policy EQ4: Protecting and Enhancing the Character and Appearance of the Landscape

Policy EQ9: Protecting Residential Amenity

Core Policy 7: Employment and Economic Development

Policy EV12: Parking Provision

Policy HWB1: Protection of Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities

3.3 National Planning Policy Framework

Chapter 1: Building a Strong, Competitive Economy

Chapter 3: Supporting a Prosperous Rural Economy

### **4. CONSULTATION RESPONSES**

4.1 Comments received

Councillors (received 28/10/16) Councillor Clift raised concerns regarding the sustainability of the site location and potential for large numbers of visitors to the venue for events. Also raised concerns regarding weight restrictions on the nearby road bridge.

Parish Council (received 04/11/16) Objection - inappropriate development in the green belt with no special circumstances - environmental issues - highways issues.

Highways (received 28/10/16) No objections on highways grounds

Environmental Health (received 17/10/16) No comments to make

Neighbours (received 03/1/16) Mr D. Twist of The Cottages raised the following concerns:

- o Events at a Place of Worship could lead to huge numbers of visitors which could not be controlled.

- o Increased noise and parking on the lane causing disturbance and disruption

Site Notice (expired 18/11/16) Thirty five comments received from members of the public. Concerns summarised as follows:

- o The surrounding road network and nearby road bridge cannot accommodate the potential levels of traffic from large events, particularly if the building were to be used as a Place of Worship.
- o Long Lane is narrow and poorly lit with no footpaths. In addition parking congestion is already an issue in this area. Any significant increase in traffic would exacerbate these concerns, potentially creating road hazards.
- o Environmental impact upon the nearby Wyrley and Essington Canal and local wildlife.
- o Impact upon the sports facility
- o The proposal would be of no benefit to the local community
- o Noise and disturbance as a result of the proposal would harm the character and enjoyment of the area by local residents.
- o Several of the representations received refer to the potential use of the site as a Light and Life Church for Gypsies and Travellers. Concerns are raised over the scale and frequency of services which could be held at the venue if this were the case. Concerns are also raised as to whether such a use could lead to the pitching of caravans on the surrounding land parcel and the impact this would have on the local area.

## **5. APPRAISAL**

5.1 The application is to be determined by Planning Committee as the application was called in by Councillor Clift.

### **5.2 Key Issues**

- Principle of development
- Impact on neighbouring amenity
- Impact on character of the area, landscape and wildlife
- Highways and parking

### **5.3 Principle of development**

5.3.1. The proposal is located within the Green Belt. Policy GB1 of the Adopted Core Strategy states that the re-use of a building within the Green Belt will normally be permitted, providing that the making of a material change of use would have no material effect on the openness of the Green Belt or the fulfilment of its purposes. No external alterations are proposed to the buildings which would have a material effect on the openness or purpose of the Green Belt. The re-use of the existing buildings would provide a new use for part of the site which could result in the creation of some jobs. In addition the football pitch and spectator stands would be retained in their current use, providing continued access

to a community facility. It is therefore considered that the principle of the development is acceptable in terms of national and local policy.

#### **5.4 Impact on neighbouring amenity**

5.4.1. Core Strategy Policy EQ9 requires that proposals take into account the amenity of any nearby residents, with regard to security, noise and disturbance and pollution. The site is surrounded largely by open fields, with the exception of 'The Cottages' a residence which is positioned approximately 98m south-west of the site entrance.

5.4.2. A number of objections have been received from members of public who are concerned that one of the potential uses, a Place of Worship, could generate significant numbers of vehicles from visitors to church services and large events such as weddings. Concerns have been raised that the movement of such vehicles and visitors could create noise and disturbance which would be harmful to local residents and users of the nearby canal.

5.4.3. Whilst there is one residence in the vicinity of the proposal the area is largely surrounded by open fields. The closest residents to the south-west are positioned in excess of 400 metres from the site and the closest residents to the north-east are positioned over 340 metres away. It is therefore considered that the uses proposed would cause no additional harm to residential amenity over that of the existing use, and the Council's Environmental Health Officer has raised no concerns regarding the proposal. Neighbours have also raised other concerns which are addressed in sections 5.5 and 5.6 of this report.

#### **5.5 Impact on the character of the area and landscape**

5.5.1. Policies EQ4 and EQ11 of the Core Strategy state that development proposals should take account of the sensitivity of the landscape and ensure that local character and distinctiveness is protected. The proposed uses would be contained within the existing buildings on site and car parking provision would remain as existing. No external alterations are proposed which could impact on the character of the area, and there are no works to trees which could affect the appearance or quality of the landscape or wildlife habitats. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Policies EQ4 and EQ11.

#### **5.6 Highways and parking**

5.6.1. In line with Core Strategy Policy EV12 all development proposals are required to make adequate provision for off street parking. Concerns have been raised by members of the public regarding the capacity of Long Lane to accommodate the proposed use. The premises is an existing facility and the parking provision and access arrangements would remain unchanged. The site benefits from an existing car park which meets the Council's Car Parking Standards for the uses proposed and the County Highways Officer has raised no objections on highways grounds.

### **6.0 CONCLUSION**

6.1. The change of use of part of the premises would provide a viable new use for the buildings whilst retaining the football pitch as a valuable community facility. Previous marketing of the site has been unsuccessful and a new use for the site could support the local economy, potentially providing employment opportunities within the area. It is considered that the change of use would cause no undue disturbance to local residents and given that no external changes or extensions are proposed, there would be no impact upon the openness or function of the Green Belt. Parking provision is adequate and there are no highways safety concerns arising. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with the relevant policies therefore approval is recommended.

## **7. RECOMMENDATION      APPROVE**

Subject to the following condition(s):

1. The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of 3 years beginning with the date on which this permission is granted.
2. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved drawings: FC/1 (Location Plan with Red Edge) FC/1 (Floor Plan).
3. The change of use hereby approved shall relate to the club house, ancillary bungalow and outbuilding only.
4. No other stables, containers, caravans, shelters or other ancillary building or structures, temporary or otherwise, shall be sited on the land without the prior approval of the Local Planning Authority.
5. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), the site shall be used for purposes only as defined within Class D1 of the schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) or any other subsequent equivalent order.

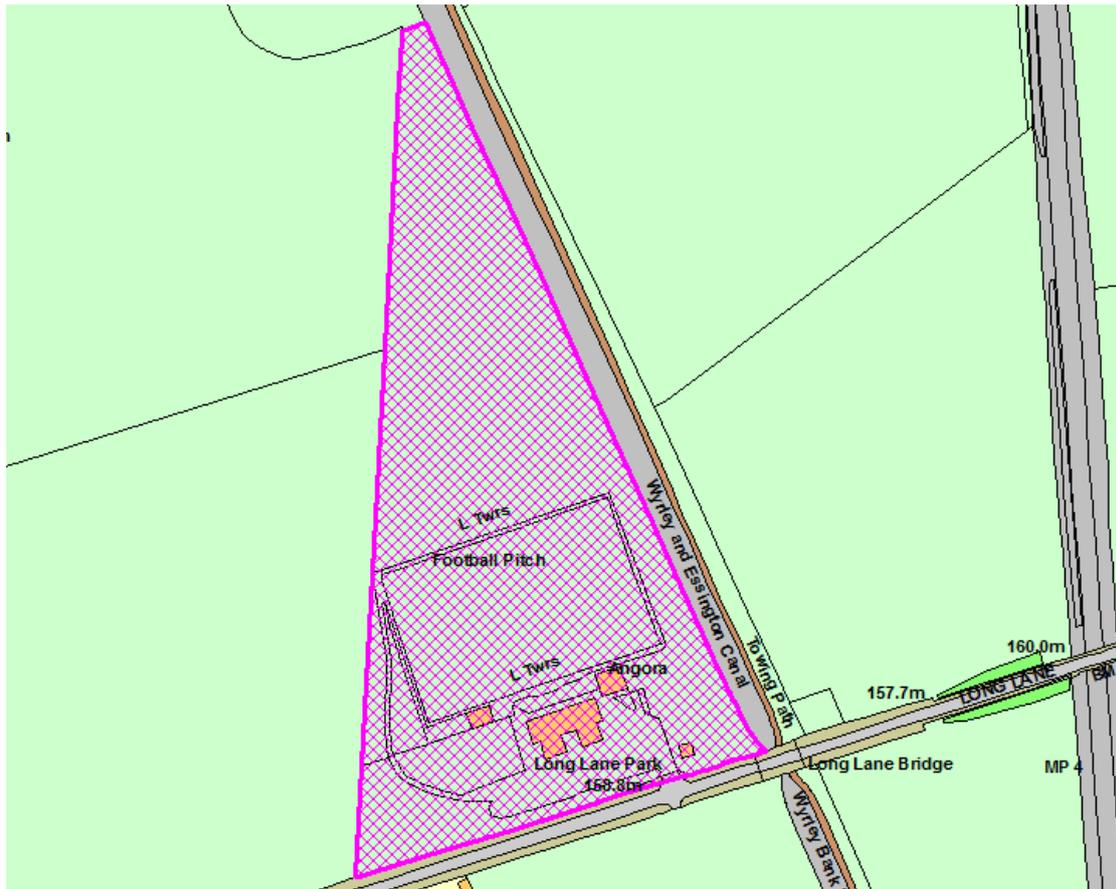
Reasons

1. The reason for the imposition of these time limits is to comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
2. In order to define the permission and to avoid doubt.
3. To safeguard the football pitch and spectator stands as a valuable community facility in accordance with policy HWB1 of the adopted Core Strategy.

4. The site is within the Green Belt within which, in accordance with the planning policies in the adopted Core Strategy, there is a presumption against inappropriate development
5. To define the permission.
6. Proactive Statement

The Council has considered the application submitted, but did not consider amendments to the proposal were necessary. The application is considered to be acceptable in accordance with the reasons for granting planning permission above. The Local Planning Authority has therefore worked in a positive and proactive manner in relation to dealing with the planning application, in accordance with paragraphs 186 and 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework, 2012.

The proposal is considered to be a sustainable form of development and so complies with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework, 2012.



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