

WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL
DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE AGENDA

Winchester City
Council
Planning Department
Development Control

TEAM MANAGER
SIGN OFF SHEET

Committee Decision

Case No:	06/01602/FUL	Valid Date	13 April 2006
W No:	02857/17	Recommendation Date	11 July 2006
Case Officer:	Lorna Hutchings	8 Week Date	13 July 2006
		Committee date	
Recommendation:	Application Refused	Decision:	Committee Decision

Proposal: Construction of building to provide 4 no. tennis courts

Site: Winchester Lawn Tennis Club Berewecke Road Winchester Hampshire SO22 6AN

Open Space Y/N	Legal Agreement	S.O.S	Objections	EIA Development	Monitoring Code	Previous Developed Land
N	N	N	Y	N	N	N

APPROVED TO GO TO COMMITTEE
TEAM MANAGER
Signed & Date

AMENDED PLANS DATE:-

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Item No: 02
Case No: 06/01602/FUL / W02857/17
Proposal Description: Construction of building to provide 4 no. tennis courts
Address: Winchester Lawn Tennis Club, Bereweeke Road, Winchester,
Hampshire, SO22 6AN
Parish/Ward: Winchester Town
Applicants Name: Winchester Lawn Tennis And Squash Club
Case Officer: Lorna Hutchings
Date Valid: 13 April 2006
Site Factors:

Recommendation: Application Refused

General Comments

This application is reported to Committee because of the number of letters of support received and as it is for major development.

There is another current planning application on the site for the refurbishment and extension to the entrance foyer, new changing and conference facilities with a terrace reference W02857/17. A delegated decision is due imminently.

Site Description

Winchester Lawn Tennis and Squash Club is located approximately 1.5km northwest of Winchester city centre off Bereweeke Road in a low density residential area of large detached properties in large gardens. The site comprises 16 outdoor tennis courts, a croquet lawn and the club building to the north of the site. The central 5 courts on the east side of the site are subject to the proposal.

Woolverston flatted accommodation lies to the south of the courts and west of the access road. Bereweeke Court nursing home is located to the south also and east of the driveway. Bereweeke Close and Silwood Close are cul de sacs off Bereweeke Road either side of the club.

There is a mature belt of trees of mixed species along the eastern site boundary, which is covered by a Tree Preservation Order, and a coniferous hedge behind that along the boundary.

There are some gaps in this tree line, which is visible in the wider townscape.

Existing parking is to the rear of the site behind the clubhouse. There are levels differences across the site which enabled the creation of level outdoor tennis courts.

Proposal

Replacement of 5 existing outdoor courts to create 4 indoor courts.

Curved structure over courts formed from lightweight PVC coated polyester fabric tunnel supported by a metal frame.

Length 64.0m, width 39.5m, height 11.5m from ground level at ridge, 5.7m approximate wall height.

Relevant Planning History

There have been a number of applications relating to covered court facilities at Winchester Tennis and Squash club over the last 30 years. Initially refused by this Council and dismissed at appeal, the Secretary of State in 1979 ultimately allowed a 9m high building, sunk into the ground to cover two tennis courts to the south of the club house.

Planning permission was subsequently granted in 1997 for outline permission for a similarly styled steel clad building covering two courts, to the south of the club, allowing a maximum of 6 tournaments a year. This was renewed subject to a design overhaul in 2002 and an additional year

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to submit details in compliance was granted in July 2005 to keep this permission open, but lapses 18 July 2006. None of the indoor court buildings have ever been erected.

Consultations

Engineers: Drainage:

No objection provided run off from roof is guided to soakaways.

Engineers: Highways:

No objections previously raised on past applications for covered courts and there are now no significant highway implications for this application so no objection is raised.

Environmental Protection:

No objections subject to conditions regarding hours of work and no burning on site to minimise impact on neighbours.

Landscape:

Recommend refusal due to impact on surrounding properties and insufficient information regarding proposed tree management and new planting required for mitigation. Further information required regarding colour samples and new planting. No management conflict between covering and trees adjacent and overhanging.

Trees:

Inadequate arboriculture survey and methodology for important TPO tree belt.

Architects Panel:

Recommend refusal – 12m high structure will be visually dominant and will dramatically change the informal relaxed atmosphere of open courts with industrial scale building. Potential for light pollution with light coloured roof. A more conclusive visual impact analysis is required on impact in wider and immediate locality. The unbroken tree ridgeline in this part of Winchester plays a crucial role in the land/townscape.

Representations:

City of Winchester Trust:

Strongly Object – exceptionally unsympathetic scheme for the residential character of this residential neighbourhood in which a structure of this scale would be very intrusive. Details are misleading, no parking for visitors to tournaments. Previous schemes allowed as building sunk down, scheme is of an industrial scale, intrusive to neighbours, potential for light pollution, detrimental to character of locality visually and socially.

Letters from 12 households were received objecting to the application for the following reasons:

- Mass and height is incongruous in the location,
- No architectural merit, is purely functional,
- Colour and texture of material out of keeping with surrounds,
- Unclear regarding additional service support required,
- Potential for other uses,
- Planning history dictates this building is unacceptable as it exceeds the maximum height allowed and is not in location approved.
- Building will loom over gardens and facing windows, the enormity of the scale of the building is not apparent from the plans,
- Viewing sub committee requested,
- Substantial loss of amenity and negative effect on enjoyment of property,
- Trees will be removed (loss of TPO trees) and no replacement planting, existing will not screen development, unclear and inconsistent statements regarding exactly which trees will be taken out,
- Loss of light,
- Options for location were given to residents but the site with most impact is chosen,
- Loss of wildlife,
- No proposal for exhibition visitor seating,

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- No details on air conditioning or rainwater runoff,
- Overdevelopment,
- Noise disturbance from tournaments,
- Structure is across entire width of some gardens,
- Increase in traffic,
- Precedent for this sized building in residential areas,
- Unsubstantiated statements made in justification,
- Many residents from Berewecke Close directly affected, objected but were keen to point out that the club is well respected and is generally a very good neighbour; the need for the indoor facility is also accepted in principle. Many positive suggestions also made to improve proposal including resiting in centre, reducing height, changing design, less courts.

Letters from 6 households were received supporting the proposal.

- Would greatly improve facilities and provide year round, all weather and evening play;
- Lawn Tennis Association recognise the need for more indoor courts.
- Indoor courts needed in Winchester as important for development of tennis and to maintain status as junior development club, to retain high quality players and compete.
- Tree screening will minimise visual impact;
- Covering courts will minimise noise and light pollution.

Relevant Planning Policy:

Hampshire County Structure Plan Review:

UB3, R1.

Adopted Winchester District Local Plan Review

RT1, RT2, SF1, SF6, DP1, DP3, DP4.

National Planning Policy Guidance/Statements:

PPS 1 Delivering Sustainable Development

PPS 6 Planning for Town Centres

PPG 17 Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation

Supplementary Planning Guidance

None.

Other Planning guidance

Winchester City and its Setting

Planning Considerations

Principle of development, impact on character of area / trees, impact on neighbours, highways, other matters.

Principle of development

Local Plan policy SF6 positively encourages the development of improved facilities within settlements including Winchester but expects a high architectural profile by virtue of their function as a public building and location.

Policy SF1 also requires a sequential approach to the location of leisure development starting with potentially suitable sites to be explored from the centre of town, then edge of centre and outwards. This is relevant in this case, although the merits of the existing use and nature of the site need also to be considered with a clear desire by the applicants to provide indoor tennis courts themselves at the Winchester Tennis Club. The background to the proposal in this respect is one of ensuring the economic viability of the club, retaining membership and existing tournaments, improving their own facilities to meet customer expectations of modernised facilities, to allow a longer playing season and evening and wet weather use and for the development of tennis. The Lawn Tennis Association clearly identify the need for providing indoor tennis courts in

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order to improve tennis opportunities both at grassroots and a competitive level and endorse the specification of the proposed building. The Council's Sports Development Officer also advises of this need which is particularly relevant for the development of juniors. The applicants have provided a lot of information in this respect and have also considered alternative sites for the provision of such courts for Winchester, in accordance with policy, with accepted discounted reasons given, as below:

-Westgate Field (part of Westgate School) – contrary to policy, designated as a playing field.

-Peter Symonds College – contrary to policy, designated as a playing field,

-River Park – long term option, covered courts additionally needed, not viable at present due to other priorities (recent refurbishment)

-Winton House, Andover Road – housing development proposed.

Therefore it is concluded that the principle of providing indoor courts is acceptable at the site but is subject to design, size, location, visual impact on character of the area and neighbours and other material consideration.

The site is also a designated site under policy RT1 and thus is classed as an "open area with an important amenity value". Whilst it is not disputed that the recreational value of the site will be undermined in accordance with RT2 also designated at the site, policy RT1 seeks to retain such areas as open with a presumption against the development of buildings, unless they are ancillary, well related to the main building and the contribution of the open area to the character of the wider area is maintained. It is considered that the proposal at such a significantly large scale cannot be considered to satisfy criteria 1 in that it will become the main structure dominating the site. It is not well related in terms of being central or linked to the existing building (scale, design or physically) and it is considered it will harmfully undermine the contribution of the openness of the existing public facility and open space to the character of the wider area which is described above in site description, and this is embodied in recommended reason for refusal one. The issue of character is considered further below.

Impact on character of area / trees

As noted above, it is clear that the structure proposed is significantly greater in its scale, form, height, and significantly different in its colour and materials than anything in the area with reference to the houses around, larger flatted units and the club's main building. The proposal is therefore not in keeping but significantly contrasts to its context, and does not respond in any way to the appearance of the local environment. This is contrary to policy DP3 and is harmful to the character of the area as this will be a building highly visible within the site as a public facility.

The concerns are exacerbated by the inadequate arboriculture survey which does not effectively deal with management of the protected trees in accordance with BS5837 2005 – trees in relation to construction, with a lack of clarity regarding the number of trees to be removed and works to others with no proper tree replacement or landscape proposal submitted. Therefore there may be greater potential for distant and immediate view points of the structure with likely harm to the existing tree belt featuring in the skyline of Winchester.

Trees are noted in the visual impact appraisal as important for mitigating the views into the site of the building and therefore the actual visual impact from certain points is inconclusive and likely to be much greater than as assessed in the appraisal. Notwithstanding this, the visual impact appraisal – assuming that there was effective tree management – gives no conclusive assessment of the level of visual impact instead noting, with regard to localised viewpoints, that there would be "no or negligible impact" or that a "proportion of the upper part of the structure would be visible from the street.

Impact on neighbours

The inadequate information as noted above exacerbates the concern regarding the protection of neighbours' amenities to the east. There are significant breaks in the line of trees where the impact is of greatest concern, adjacent nos 5 and 6 with a separate household in a first floor annex to no. 5, as the building will extend entirely across their rear boundaries. The sheer scale of the building

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and nature of its appearance is considered to have an overbearing impact on the residents amenities whose main outlook, living spaces and gardens will face the proposal. The fact that the building wall slopes away from the residents and that there is a maximum distance of 37m from rear elevation to it is not considered to reduce the material harm identified. There is 35m from windows of Berewecke Court to the south side of the proposal, and with the courts higher in level than the nursing home and with no opportunity of any planting or screen to be put in between, reason for refusal two is recommended.

Highways

No additional parking is required as there will be no intensification of use; the proposal is to modernise and retain existing customers and tournaments.

Other Matters

On balance the need to provide improved facilities does not outweigh the harm identified, particularly as it is considered that there is no material planning or technical reason demonstrated why the central area away from residents cannot be used as recommended initially. Justification not to use the centre was a desire to protect members view out of club house and because it is easier to reconfigure levels on the proposed site.

Recommend approval subject to the conditions below.

Conditions

- 1 The proposal is contrary to policy RT.1 of the adopted Winchester District Local Plan Review in that it represents a new building on important amenity land which is not well related in location to the existing main building and does not maintain (or enhance) the contribution of the open area to the character of the wider area and is therefore harmful to the amenity value of the site and character of the wider settlement.
- 2 The proposal is contrary to DP.3 of the adopted Winchester District Local Plan Review in that it is not considered, in terms of design and scale, to respond positively to the character and appearance of the local environment and it will have an overbearing impact on the neighbouring residential properties to the south and east, due to its size, siting, and the incongruous appearance of the building within the suburban and open setting. Therefore the proposal will be harmful to the visual amenities of the residents and wider character of the area.
- 3 The proposed Arboriculture Survey and Methodology, proposed planting scheme and visual impact appraisal are considered inadequate and inconclusive with no indication of light pollution potential considered, contrary to policy DP.4 of the adopted Winchester District Local Plan Review, so that it is not possible to adequately assess the full impact of the proposal in terms of retaining important public views and skyline features, retaining and managing trees subject to a Tree Preservation Order and retaining open areas important to the townscape, therefore likely resulting in a development harmful to the amenities of the area.

Informatives:

1 The Local Planning Authority has taken account of the following development plan policies and proposals:

Hampshire County Structure Plan Review: UB3, R1.

Adopted Winchester District Local Plan Review Policy: RT1, RT2, SF1, SF6, DP1, DP3, DP4.