

Planning Department,

Waverley Borough Council,

The Burys,

GODALMING. BY EMAIL

Dear Sirs,

Planning Application 2017/2222

Haslemere Recreation Ground Pavillion.

It is appreciated that the pavilion is currently under utilised (which may not always be the case) and the current leaseholder Haslemere Recreation Ltd is experiencing difficulties being the sole occupant of the pavilion and alternative uses are being considered. However The Haslemere Society is keen to see the pavilion used for the purposes it was given to the people of Haslemere –ie sport and recreation. We list below our concerns relative to this :-

1)The retention of sports facilities in the town, especially given the planned population increases, and well into the future should be a priority consideration. The introduction of a children’s day care centre will detract from and have an adverse effect on this sports facility.

The proposals if implemented, resulting in the loss of a shower room, children entering through a ‘multiuse corridor’ past adult toilets, storage and changing areas are indicative of insufficient consideration of the effect on the main sports activities both now and in the future. Whilst there is no statement regarding the times of operation of the day care facility there will be the potential for mid week and daytime sport especially in the summertime and we do not consider that an adequate assessment of all the operational requirements has been made. A short lease condition should be required to enable full sports/leisure use in the future if demand requires this.

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2) The Waverley Local Plan Policy LT1 seeks to retain leisure facilities where a clear need exists. The pavilion as a sports club house is such a facility. It is unclear for how long the proposed change of use/commercial activity is intended which is a relevant consideration against the necessity to provide adequate sports and recreation facilities for the planned increase in population in the town.

3) It is common knowledge that the Recreation Ground was given to the people of Haslemere in 1920 to commemorate those from the town who lost their lives in the First World War. Certain covenants were attached to this gift of land which may preclude the use for commercial purposes (eg a fee paying child day care centre). The Haslemere Society requests that Waverley B C reveals to the public these covenants to clarify this point. Additionally a Deed of Declaration was made in 2015 requiring the area occupied by the pavilion to be retained for public community events which is clearly in conflict with the proposed use being applied for. A full public discussion, involving Haslemere T C of all these aspects is necessary before Waverley TC considers a decision on this application.

4) The application seems to presume that parents bringing and collecting their young children and babies will park in the remote car park to the south and walk across the playing field area to the pavilion. In all probability they will not do this but instead park in Old Haslemere Road and take a much shorter route around September Lodge creating an adverse effect on the amenity of local residents. There is already significant parking on this road by users of the tennis and bowls facilities and the proposed use will exacerbate this disturbance.

Road access from the centre of Haslemere is exceptionally difficult with steep hills , narrow roads and a difficult junction. The lower part of Old Haslemere Road (which was not used by most going to the Heights School) is particularly steep and only wide enough for one vehicle. An assessment should be made of the access difficulties and the effect of the proposed increased use of the pavilion on the local amenity.

5) The applicant is proposing to remove a significant length of the existing hedge which separates the pavilion from the Old Haslemere Road and replacing it with a fence. This will have an adverse effect on the local character of this area, also reveal a less than attractive rear of the pavilion and remove a useful sound and visual barrier between the child day care activities and the local residents. The Society considers that the mature hedge should be retained and maintained.

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Whilst expressing concerns about the above points The Haslemere Society is not registering its approval or objection to the application until these are fully discussed and adequately answered which we hope Waverley B C will undertake given the status of the recreation ground in the local community.

Yours faithfully,

John Greer ( Vice Chairman, The Haslemere Society)

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