

CLUB HOUSE,
VT SPORTS GROUND,
PORTSMOUTH ROAD, BURSLEDON



Planning application for alterations to the existing chapel building

PLANNING STATEMENT

February 2024

1. Introduction

1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of Greg Wilkins and is submitted in support of a planning application for alterations to the existing Club House at VT Sports Ground, Portsmouth Road, Bursledon. SO19 9PW

1.2 This statement aims to explain the justification and design rationale for the proposed development. The alterations have been sympathetically designed to complement the existing building whilst keeping overall additional mass to an absolute minimum.

1.3 The application comprises:

- Completed application form
- Plans and drawings
- This Planning Statement

2. Site Context

2.1 The VT Sports Ground is located in Old Netley, Southampton. The site is accessed via a long track road off of Portsmouth Road (A3025). Situated to the right hand side of the access road is the bowling green followed by a parcel of land occupied by trees and vegetation. Beyond this are 4 qty detached residential plots.

To the left-hand side of the access road there is an overflow parking area followed by a playing field with a single residential plot adjacent. The cricket pavilion is situated at the end of the access road.

2.2 The application site contains the existing cricket pavilion. Additionally, the wider site also includes the football pitch, club house and associated spectator stands as well as bowling green.

2.3 The existing cricket pavilion needs refurbishment and requires remodel and extension works to facilitate the increased user capacity and need sufficiently. The current facilities do not allow for cricket changing rooms and therefore players must either arrive fully changed or change at the edge of the playing space with no privacy. This will improve the experience for visitors as there is currently little shelter during periods of adverse weather.

3. Relevant Planning History

3.1 The existing Cricket Pavillion was approved by Eastleigh Borough Council in 2018.
(F/18/84145 - Full planning)

3.2 Pre application advice was sort from the LPA in Dec 2023 prior to this submission.
(Q/23/96281)

4. The Proposed Development

4.1 The application proposes to retain the existing footprint of the enclosed area of the building and create a single storey flat roof side extension to provide the required changing facilities for both home and away teams.

4.2 Elevation treatment will be within keeping of existing building materials.

5. Design and Policy Assessment

Use

5.1 The existing use of the site is as follows:

Cricket

On site is Old Netley & Highfield Cricket Club that caters for all age groups from under nines to adults and competes in the Hants Cricket League (2 teams), Southampton evening Cricket League (1 team) & a women's soft ball cricket team. The well-maintained wicket has been used for Hampshire County Seniors (over 50, over 60 & over 70s) inter county matches, Hampshire Regional Performance Centre age group matches (U12 – U15) and Hampshire age group (U12 – U15) representative inter district matches. It has also supported local senior school (Oasis Academy Sholing) in hosting their school games on site as well for a number of years. Currently Old Netley & Highfield Cricket Club has approx. 50 adult members and in excess of 30 junior members. The Club participates in the All Stars & Dynamos Cricket coaching programme for children aged 7-12 years. Due to the development and management of the club's adult and junior sections, the club is well regarded by the Hampshire Cricket Board.

Football

The football club (Sholing FC) has a large adult and junior membership. Currently there are some twelve teams with over 300 members training and playing out of the VT Sports Ground site in the various U18 and women's leagues within the FA sanctioned development structure. The No1-football pitch meets the required Southern League Premier South standards. There are two full size football pitches and additional mini football pitches on the site.

Bowling

Old Netley Bowls Club, established for over 50 years, currently serves the local community, enabling its members to bowl throughout the summer months. Members of the bowls club undertake Bowling Green maintenance. However, sustainability and growth of bowls is intrinsically linked to the sustainability of cricket and football on site for the maintenance of the whole site.

Pigeon Club

VT Pigeon Club operates from a clubhouse on site where it has been in operation for over 20 years. Although having a small membership, it provides a vital social and accessible amenity for the local community.

5.2 The proposed alterations will enhance the experience of home & away guests that will use the facilities.

Amount

5.3 The existing Cricket pavilion is a small building in comparison to the size of the site overall. Therefore, it is considered that scope exists to alter the building to extend whilst preserving the openness of the site.

5.4 The extension and alteration to the cricket pavilion will respect the footprint of the existing building. The small increase in footprint is deemed appropriate amount of development in order to provide guests with better protection from the elements and improve the experience of the users.

Layout

5.5 The proposed layout of development on the site has been informed by the existing site configuration and the requirements of needing to safeguard views, preserve the environment and make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area. To that end the proposed alterations will not change the layout of the existing building and will merely provide much required changing facilities.

Scale

6.7 The existing building is single storey with a pitched roof. The addition will provide a single storey flat roof building extension to the west elevation.

Appearance

6.9 The original building, finished in fibre cement cladding with a concrete tiled pitched roof and white upvc fenestration, has an appropriate, low-key appearance that complements the setting of the site. The extension to the building is designed to maintain the building's relationship with its setting.

Landscaping

6.10 There are no proposed change to the landscaping as part of the alterations to the building.

Access & Transport

6.11 There are no proposed changes to the existing car parking arrangements onsite. The site has an existing vehicular and pedestrian access, as well as formal and informal on site parking and turning facilities. There are currently 20 parking spaces on an existing hard standing area and 50 on grassed area used for overspill.

6.12 The site is near main bus connections, with a bus stop adjacent to the site entrance.

Projected Use

6.13 Changing rooms

New Changing rooms is desperately required, not only to meet current demand, but to cater for sustainability and growth of outdoor sports activity. Providing space for players and official's accommodation to meet the needs of cricket, the changing rooms facility would provide a more private and pleasant environment for all users of the playing facilities.

Cricket

Old Netley & Highfield Cricket Club has been fast growing over the past 5 years – the standard of cricket now demands an appropriate pitch-side changing rooms facility, providing protection from the elements for players and officials when changing attire. Hampshire Cricket Board have expressed interest in increasing the use of the ground for County age-group inter County matches as have the County Seniors Cricket Club and disability cricket with similar objectives if the changing room facilities are established.

Football

Although well established, the football club has ambitions to offer more opportunities in girls and ladies. Better facilities are also required to allow quality coaching and development of the most talented players to ensure a long-term flow of players into the adult clubs.

Bowls

Development and sustainability of the bowls area will continue to provide for the sport locally. The sport of bowls is increasingly open age and not just a sport for the older generation. Expanding the age profile of the membership and therefore sustainability for the future is directly linked to the sustainability of the whole VT Sports Ground site.

Social Activities

It is envisaged the facility could also be utilised for health and well being activities not directly involved in the above sports and for off school site education purposes.

7. Statement of Community Involvement

7.1 The mission of the applicant is 'To provide sustainable, multi-use sports and social facility serving members, local residents and the wider local community'.

The aims and objectives of VT Sports are:

- To encourage children and adults of all abilities, including some disabilities, to participate in a variety of sports and activities that are locally provided and easily accessible;
- To be a high quality multi-use sports facility providing for all sectors of the local and wider community;
- To ensure the site remains a viable & long-term sustainable but not-for-profit venue for sports and social activity;
- To become the venue of choice for local residents for a variety of activities and sports in a quality, fun and safe environment;
- To offer quality coaching in a variety of sports, including outdoor disability sports and to provide a talent pathway for children and adults to allow them to fulfil their sporting potential and aspire to the highest level of competition.

The current pavilion and ancillary facilities on the site are well used. However, the current facilities do not allow for changing facilities and therefore players have to either arrive fully changed, or change at the edge of the playing space with no privacy and exposed to weather elements. This does not easily attract new users to the site/club nor even meet the current users needs.

This proposal is an ideal opportunity to enhance and provide a more complete multi-use sports and social facility that is utilised by all sectors of the community and therefore becoming a hub for social and recreational sporting activity.

8. Conclusion

8.1 The VT Sports Ground site currently provides for sporting activity and social activity linked to health and wellbeing. However, if permission for this proposal is denied, the sustainability of the site for these activities will be questionable. The current facilities will worsen further and the members of the sports clubs that choose to remain through this period of deterioration will not be in a position to maintain the whole site to an acceptable standard. The likely impact of not granting permission is the closure of the site to these activities in the future.

If permission is granted in a timely manner, sustainability and further opportunities for the ongoing future of the site and the sporting activities taking place there can be viewed in a more positive light.