

## SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee

2 September 2015

**AUTHOR/S:** Planning and New Communities Director

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<b>Application Number:</b>	S/1570/15/FL
<b>Parish:</b>	Linton
<b>Proposal:</b>	Erection of membrane 'bubble' roof over tennis courts & shed for tennis equipment
<b>Site address:</b>	Linton Village College, Cambridge Road, Linton, CB21 4JB
<b>Applicant(s):</b>	Mr Paul Harms, Linton Tennis Centre
<b>Recommendation:</b>	Approve
<b>Key material considerations:</b>	Visual Amenity Residential amenity Impact on Setting of Listed Building Highway Safety
<b>Committee Site Visit:</b>	No
<b>Departure Application:</b>	No
<b>Presenting Officer:</b>	Dan Smith
<b>Application brought to Committee because:</b>	The recommendation of the Parish Council is contrary to that of Planning Officers
<b>Date by which decision due:</b>	18 August 2015

### Executive Summary

1. The proposed development is the erection of a membrane 'bubble' roof cover over existing tennis courts at Linton Village College and a shed for tennis equipment. An application for a similar structure for winter use has previously been approved under reference S/1276/14/FL. The new proposed structure would be retained year round and would be 2 metres taller than that previously approved.
2. The Parish Council has objected to the proposals on the basis of the height of the structure, its impact on the amenity of the hills behind the school, its impact on the listed building at the school and the impact of floodlighting on the A1307. No other objections have been received in respect of the proposed development.

3. While the concerns of the Parish Council are acknowledged, it is considered that the impact of the proposed structure would be very similar to that of the previously permitted structure, to which the Parish Council recommended approval, and that the additional height of the proposed structure would not have any significant additional impact on the surroundings. Its retention year round is similarly not considered to cause any additional harm, given no significant harm was considered to be caused by the previously approved structure and no conditions were applied to that permission that it be removed outside of the winter months.
4. Similarly, the impact of floodlighting on the highway is considered to be acceptable, given existing floodlighting of the tennis courts and the immediately adjacent sports pitches and the fact that floodlighting was approved as part of the previous permission for the similar structure. In addition, the new proposal would have the floodlighting housed internally within the bubble rather than externally as originally proposed which would limit its impact on the surroundings including the highway.
5. The proposal is therefore considered to have comparable impacts to the previously approved scheme and is considered to be acceptable in terms of its impact on visual amenity, the setting of the grade II listed school building, neighbouring amenity and highway safety and approval is therefore recommended.

### **Site and Surroundings**

6. The application site is four tennis courts and the land immediately around them which are part of the Linton Village College site on the Cambridge Road in Linton. The school buildings are a mixture of single storey and two storey buildings set back from the road behind playing fields and car park. The original part of the school is a Grade II listed building. The tennis courts are surrounded by a chain link fence and located between the artificial sports pitch and modern classroom buildings.

### **Proposals**

7. The application seeks permission for a permanent membrane bubble roof over four existing tennis courts and a shed to house associated tennis equipment. The proposal would result in the removal of existing floodlights and see new lights located within the bubble.

### **Relevant Planning History**

8. **S/1276/14/FL** - Granted planning permission for the erection of a single skin membrane 'bubble' roof over tennis courts during winter months including shed for storage of roof when not in use.

### **Planning Policies**

9. **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012**
10. **South Cambridgeshire LDF Development Control Policies DPD 2007**  
DP/1 Sustainable Development  
DP/2 Design of New Development  
DP/3 Development Criteria  
DP/7 Development Frameworks  
CH/4 Development Affecting the Curtilage or Setting of a Listed Building  
NE/14 Lighting Proposals

## **Consultations Responses**

11. **Linton Parish Council** – has recommended refusal on the following grounds:
- The height of the membrane bubble far exceeds that of the college itself and of the Granta School. This would have a negative visual impact on the hills behind the school which are of special scenic interest.
  - The height of the membrane would be over-bearing as it is within the curtilage of a listed building.
  - When floodlit, the membrane would be a distraction to traffic on the A1307.

## **Representations**

11. No representations have been received in respect of the proposed development.

## **Planning Comments**

12. The main planning considerations in respect of the proposed development impact on visual amenity, the impact on the setting of the listed building, the impact on residential amenity and the impact on highway safety.

## **Visual Amenity**

13. The site is located outside of the Development Framework for Linton but within the wider school site and adjacent to both the two storey classroom building and the high fencing and floodlights of the artificial sports pitch. The membrane 'bubble' roof would be relatively prominent in views from the main road and on approach to the village from the higher ground to the West. However, the significant existing development on the main site is such that it is not considered that the structure would look out of place nor would it appear at odds with the established character of its immediate environs.
14. The structure would be seen in some views of and from the rural land around the site, however given it is in keeping with the existing nature of development on site, it is not considered that it would significantly increase the impact of the college site on the rural surroundings nor cause harm to that rural character. In addition, it is significant that the structure would have broadly the same appearance as the previously permitted bubble roof. While it would be slightly higher at 11 metres high as opposed to 9 metres high for the permitted bubble, the impact is considered to be broadly the same in visual terms. In order to ensure an acceptable impact on visual amenity, materials to be used for the construction of the membrane roof would be required by condition. On that basis, the proposed structure is considered acceptable in terms of its impact on visual amenity.
15. The storage building would be located close to existing storage buildings and the cricket nets. It is not considered that a structure of similar scale to those existing on the site would cause any significant harm to the visual amenity of the area.

## **Setting of Listed Building**

16. The proposed membrane roof would be located some distance from the listed building and not significantly closer to it than the existing fencing around the tennis court. It is visually separated from the listed building by more modern extensions to the school and it is not considered that it would cause any harm to setting or special

historic character of the listed building. Again, its impact on the setting of the listed building when compared to that of the previously approved bubble roof are considered to be broadly equivalent and therefore acceptable.

### **Residential Amenity**

17. The structure would be approximately 200 metres from the nearest residential neighbours to the site and given the distance and the limited increase in scale compared to the approved bubble roof, it is not considered that it would cause any significant harm to the amenity of the occupants of those dwellings in terms of being overbearing or causing harm to their outlook.
18. While the originally permitted structure would have relied on fans generating air pressure to maintain its structure, the proposed structure would be self-supporting and would not require the use of fans. While the noise generated by the fans was not considered to be so significant that it would be detrimental to the amenity of neighbouring dwellings, it is considered to be a benefit of the currently proposed structure that it does not rely on noise generating plant and therefore does not contribute to an elevated background noise level.

### **Highway Safety**

19. The proposed development would require the removal of the existing floodlights which currently light the courts and the provision of new lighting housed within the structure. Given that there are existing floodlights associated with the courts as well as the fact that floodlights were approved as part of the previous permission for the similar bubble roof, it is not considered that the proposed development would have any significant additional impact on highway safety in the area.

### **Recommendation**

20. Having regard to applicable national and local planning policies, and having taken all relevant material considerations into account, it is recommended that the application be granted planning permission, subject to the following condition(s):
  1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.  
(Reason - To ensure that consideration of any future application for development in the area will not be prejudiced by permissions for development, which have not been acted upon.)
  2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 635/06, 635/07, 635/08, 635/09, 635/10 and 635/11.  
(Reason - To facilitate any future application to the Local Planning Authority under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.)
  3. No development shall take place until details of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the membrane roof structure and the associated shed, hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.  
(Reason - To ensure the appearance of the development is satisfactory in accordance with Policy DP/2 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

## **Background Papers**

Where the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 require documents to be open to inspection by members of the public, they must be available for inspection: -

- (a) at all reasonable hours at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council;
- (b) on the Council's website; and
- (c) in the case of documents to be available for inspection pursuant to regulation 15, on payment of a reasonable fee required by the Council by the person seeking to inspect the documents at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council.

The following list contains links to the documents on the Council's website and / or an indication as to where hard copies can be inspected.

- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies DPD 2007
- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan Proposed Submission July 2013
- South Cambridgeshire Supplementary Planning Documents
- National Planning Policy Framework 2012
- Planning File Refs: S/1276/14/FL and S/1570/15/FL

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