

## PLANNING COMMITTEE SITE INSPECTION PANEL

Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2019

18/P/0781/FUL - Extension of existing building to facilitate more seating and storage area at the Football Pitch at Woodland Road, Croesyceiliog, Cwmbran.

Councillors in attendance	Stuart Ashley (Acting Chair), Ron Burnett and Gwyn Jenkins.
Croesyceiliog South Ward Member in attendance	Councillor Veronica Crick.
Apologies	Councillors Steven Evans, Fay Jones, Janet Jones, Richard Overton, Norma Parrish, Louise Sheppard and Alan Slade.
Officers in attendance	Rachel Beale – Senior Business Support Officer (Democratic Services) Adam Foote – Planner Norman Jones – Team Leader (Applications) Paul Wheeldon – Group Leader for Transportation and Highways Development

The Chair welcomed everyone to the visit and asked Members if they had any interests to declare. There were no interests declared.

The Planner displayed the plans and made the following comments:

- The proposal was to extend the existing stand and building to the rear by 10.5m either side to facilitate more seating to progress in the Football Association of Wales.
- The application included the removal of the existing storage containers as all equipment would be stored in the extended unit. The unit would be 32m in total.
- The Football Club had said that they are unable to afford roller shutters for the new unit and Officers were currently awaiting amended plans to show an alternative.
- The unit would be of a standard design and would be a continuation of the existing building.
- The unit would comprise of additional seating, a storage area and a meeting room.

Councillor Crick raised a number of concerns including:

- There had been a history of problems with the club although they did a great job with youngsters they did not follow the rules. For example the existing roller shutters on the building and the two storage containers were installed without planning permission.
- They had extended into the school grounds and did not have a lease to do so, the school were taking legal advice regarding the issue.

- The Club did not use Woodland Road Sports & Social Club after their matches or training sessions and the Community Council had to subsidise the Social Club's income by £50,000 a year.
- She would question how the new meeting room would accommodate 200 youngsters.
- The Football Club had asked for parking for five cars adjacent to the pitch, however the access route was a footpath and cycleway and was not intended for heavy vehicle use.
- The Community Council were concerned that the parking would spill out of the car park in to residential areas when there were matches being played.
- There was a bollard installed to stop cars driving to the pitch which the Football Club and the Council had a key for, however a number of bollards had been installed but had ended up in the river as it had not been locked after matches.
- When the Football Club had matches on a Saturday and Sunday there would be additional pressure on the Morrisons Roundabout which was already going to increase with the New Sixth Form College and the proposed location of the Lidl Supermarket.
- The green building located to the rear of the stand was the changing rooms, she was concerned how far back the new changing rooms would go as there had recently been a number of trees planted including a memorial trees which each cost £2000.

In response to the concerns and questions raised, Officers gave the following replies:

- The Football Club were trying to remedy a number of breaches through the proposed Planning Application.
- The Football Club could not be made to use the Woodland Road Sports & Social Club.
- The length of the unit was set by the number of seats required to progress with the Football Association of Wales.
- The ground was owned by Torfaen Council and the club leased the football pitch from the Council.
- The Clubs lease allowed for 3 parking spaces adjacent to the pitch to assist people with limited mobility.
- The planning application needed to be judged on planning merits such as the visual impact and whether the increase in the size of the stand could be justified. The Club not using Woodland Road Sports & Social Club after matches and accessing the school playing fields were not planning matters.
- The application needed to be looked at on merit and Members would need to consider if there would be an increase in traffic through the proposal to extend an existing stand.
- The width of the unit would be the same as existing.

Site notes written by Rachel Beale, Senior Business Support Officer (Democratic Services) Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2019