CASE OFFICER'S REPORT

Application Reference: PL/2023/11067
Site: Tidworth Town FC, Humber Lane, Tidworth, SP9 7AH
Date site notice posted: 25.07.2024
Publicity Expired: 15.08.2024
Extended Target Date: 06.09.2024

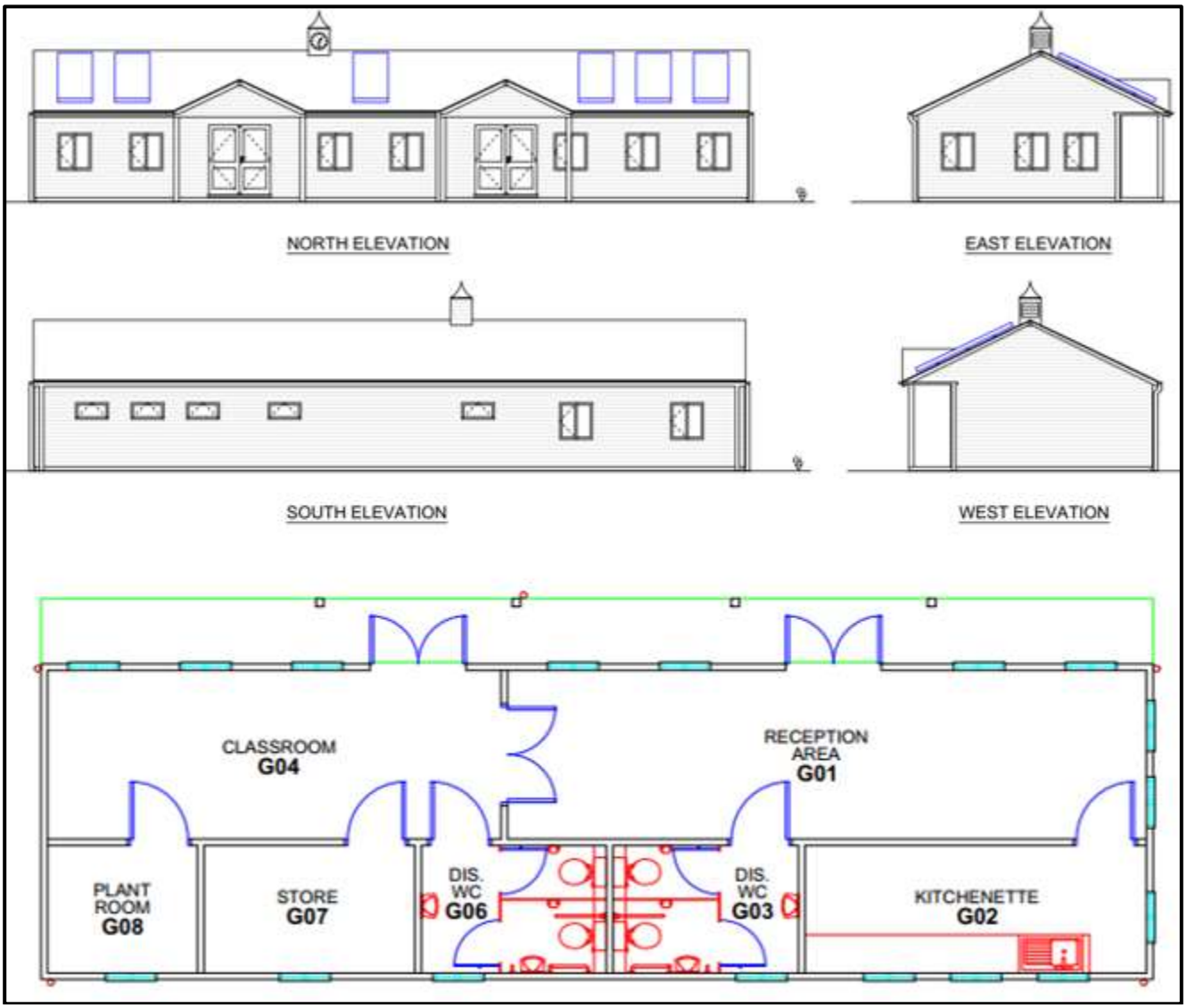
SITE DESCRIPTION:
The 3.6 hectare site is situated in the countryside on the edge of the defined settlement boundary of the Market Town of Tidworth, as determined by Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) policies CP1 (Settlement Strategy), CP2 (Delivery Strategy) and CP26 (Tidworth Community Area). The defined built up area of the settlement starts with the Tidworth MoD Camp on the opposite side of the Bulford Road, which runs along the northern boundary of the site. This main road is also designated as a Public Restricted Byway (Ref: STID26). Humber Lane defines the eastern boundary of the site on the opposite side of which is the extensive grounds serving Tidworth House, a Grade II* listed Manor House and its associated buildings, some of which are Grade II listed buildings. This lane is also designated as a Public Bridleway (Ref: STID23). To the south the site abuts further sports pitches that are neither shown to be in the red line nor any blue land meaning that they are under different ownership to the site. The site abuts paddock land to the west with the Bulford Road wrapping around the wider western boundary. This part of Bulford Road is also designated as a Public Bridleway (Ref: STID23). The whole site is situated in Flood Zone 1 and is in an area that is at low risk of Ground Water Flooding. It is however situated in the catchment of the River Avon Special Area for Conservation (SAC); and is also within the 6.4 kilometre recreational buffer of the Salisbury Plain Special Protection Area (SPA).

The site currently consists of sports pitches used by Tidworth Town Football Club. The site and pitches are situated on elevated ground above Bulford Road to the north. The sports ground is defined by a chain link fence on the peripheral boundaries of the entire site, even between it and the further off site pitches to the south. Vehicular access is gained from the north eastern corner of the site off a spur road linking Bulford Road to the north and Humber Road to the east. The applicant previously confirmed that all onsite parking is provided on the existing grassed areas between pitches and near to this access. The submitted plans confirm that the site is currently laid out as 5 pitches of various sizes. The eastern half of the site provides 3 of the pitches on an elevated plateaux; the western half provides a further two pitches. In between the two halves is a mown strip of land providing pedestrian/vehicular circulation spaces and spectator areas. A tree belt exists along the northern boundary which extends into the middle of the site.

PROPOSAL:
This is a full application proposing the erection of a new clubhouse to serve the existing sports pitch facility and the football club as a whole. This application follows a withdrawal of a previous scheme (considered under ref: PL/2022/08875) and a complete redesign following concerns previously raised by Sport England.

As can be seen in PLAN A below, the current proposal involves a new detached building that is to measure 17.4 x 7.2 metres in footprint; and will extend to a height of 3.7 metres in height, to its ridge (2.2 metres to its eaves). It is designed in a typical pavilion style vernacular complete with square clock tower cupola on its roof; and overhung covered veranda along its front/northern elevation. The building is to be constructed with factory made softwood panels which will be preservative treated. The roof is to be finished with a fibre cement slate. Solar panels are also proposed, which are shown on the northern roof slope. However subsequent communication with the applicant has confirmed that these

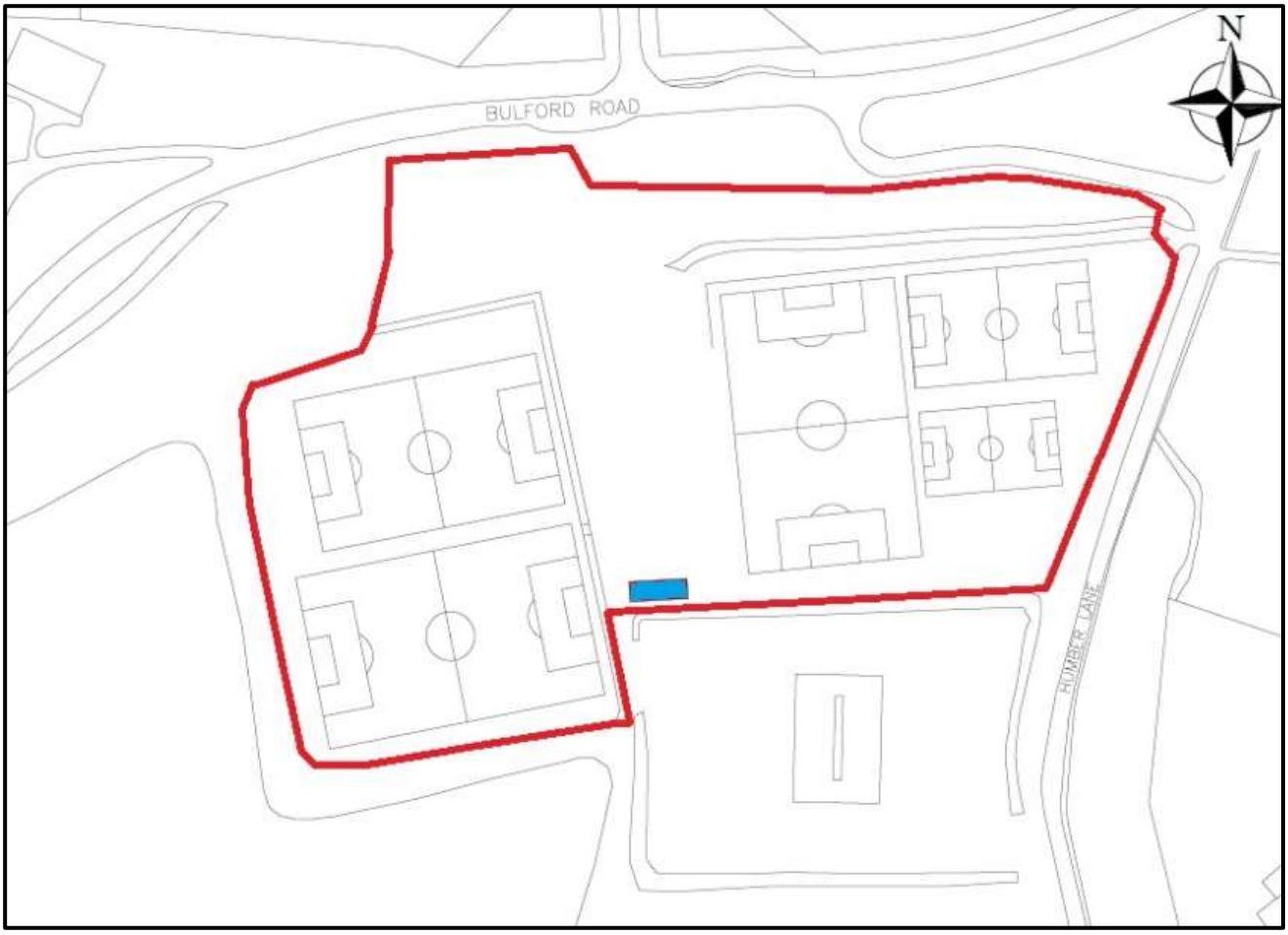
will actually be positioned on the southern roof slope, if approved, in order to maximise solar gain. A condition will therefore be imposed on any permission to secure this change.



PLAN A – Proposed Elevations & Floor Plan

Internally the building will provide toilets; a kitchen; store and plant rooms; a reception area; and a classroom. The previous scheme also included changing rooms but such facilities need to meet particular size specifications and as the new clubhouse and site is to serve predominantly youth teams, such changing facilities are deemed to be unnecessary as the players generally arrive at the site already changed. The changing rooms have therefore been replaced in this scheme with a class room which will provide wet weather and post match analysis facilities.

As can also be seen in PLAN B below, the new club house is to be positioned parallel to the southern boundary of the existing site, within the mown circulation areas that exists between designated pitches. It is confirmed that this is the best position to ensure that no functional pitches are affected or lost by the proposals; and it enables the spectators and players using the clubhouse to be kept separate from the parking areas and access movements in the north and north eastern parts of the site.



PLAN B – Proposed Site Plan

During the course of the application further details and clarification has been provided about the proposed clubhouse; how it will function; why it is needed; and where it will be positioned. Amended plans have also been received clearly identifying the proposed building and the existing layout of pitches etc at the site.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

PL/2022/08875 Erection of a new clubhouse at Tidworth Town FC Home Ground at Humber Lane. Withdrawn

POLICIES:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)
National Design Guide (January 2021) (NDG)

Kennet Local Plan policies (Saved by Wiltshire Core Strategy) (KLP):
TR17 Existing Outdoor Sport & Recreation Facilities

Wiltshire Core Strategy (January 2015) (WCS):
CP1 (Settlement Strategy)
CP2 (Delivery Strategy)
CP3 (Infrastructure Requirements)
CP26 (Tidworth Community Area)
CP38 (Retail & Leisure)

CP48 (Supporting Rural Life)
CP49 (Protection of Rural Services & Community Facilities)
CP50 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity)
CP51 (Landscape)
CP57 (Ensuring High Quality Design & Space Shaping)
CP58 (Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment)
CP60 (Sustainable Transport)
CP61 (Transport & Development)
CP62 (Development Impacts on the Transport Network)
CP64 (Demand Management)
CP69 (Protection of the River Avon SAC)
Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan (February 2020) (WHSAP)

Supplementary Planning Documents:
Wiltshire Design Guide (March 2024)
Creating Places Design Guide SPG (April 2006)
Achieving Sustainable Development SPG (April 2005)
Wiltshire Climate Strategy 2022-2027
Wiltshire Local Transport Plan – Car Parking Strategy

REPRESENTATIONS:
Cllr Connolly – Support
- The application is very welcome.
- TTFC needs a club house to provide modern facilities for its members and visiting teams.
- The club is a truly local club that helps many young people from the town learn about team sport, improve their social skills and mental health through team bonding and lead a healthier lifestyle.
- A modern facility will provide a home base for the club, which it has never had.
- I fully support the use of solar panels to make the building as self-sufficient as possible.

Highways – No Objection
- The facility is proposed to support the existing sporting activities already taking place on site and on this basis, I recommend that no Highway objection is raised.

Public Open Space – Comment
- As there are not any dwellings to be built, there is no requirement for open space/equipped play provision on a development of this type.

Sport England – No Objection
- We have considered the application in light of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), in particular paragraph 103, and Sport England's Playing Fields Policy, which is presented within our 'Playing Fields Policy and Guidance Document': www.sportengland.org/playingfieldspolicy
- Sport England's policy is to oppose the granting of planning permission for any development which would lead to the loss of, or prejudice the use of:
  - all or any part of a playing field, or
  - land which has been used as a playing field land remains undeveloped, or
  - land allocated for use as a playing field
- unless, in the judgement of Sport England the development as a whole meets with one or more of five specific exceptions.
- The proposal is for a club room which will result in a loss of approximately 126m2 of playing field.
- We note that it is a resubmission of PL/2023/1167 and has been significantly changed to omit the changing accommodation and replace it with a classroom.

- According to Wiltshire FA affiliation data, the site is home to Tidworth Town Youth FC (14 teams from U7s – U18s, including 2 girls' teams).
- The designs provided seem vastly different from the previous application which was subsequently withdrawn following advice from SE. why this is the case, and why a classroom is proposed on what is seemingly a grassroots football site?
- The plans now provided seem to lack any changing or officials changing space. updated plans required
- This current planning submission is disappointing given what we fed back on the previous planning application.
- We have a concern that the location of the proposed clubhouse will require a tarmac footpath to allow visitors in wheelchairs to use the building.
- We estimate the footpath will be in excess of 80m in length. This could be considered to be in conflict with the Equalities Act 2010 and Part M1 of the Building Regulations.
- The location of the building will be costly for providing the utilities and would be better located near the entrance to the site.
- The construction of the building would not meet Part L of the Building Regulations and therefore the proposal would require to either increase its overall footprint or decrease its internal floor area.
- There would also be a requirement for an access ramp to comply with Part M1 of the Building Regulations.
- The classroom as part of the club house does not meet an exception to Sport England's planning field policy, as it is disproportionate in area to the club house. However, if the proposal was for a proper club house with changing accommodation and the classroom was a propionate size of the overall development, then Sport England would reconsider its position.
- Finally, if this building was to service the adjacent cricket field it would need to meet the ECB technical guidelines as set out their document TS5.
- Given the above, Sport England raises a statutory objection to the application because it is not considered to accord with any of the exceptions to our Playing Fields Policy or paragraph 103 of the NPPF.

UPDATE:.

- We have reconsulted with Wiltshire Football Association and the Football Foundation.
- They have reviewed their previous comments after discussing the proposal with applicants and are now happy to support the proposal.
- Therefore, its Sport England's opinion, that the proposal would meet our planning policy exception E2.
- Given the above, Sport England withdraws its statutory objection because the application is considered to accord with the exception E2 to our Playing Fields Policy.

Ministry of Defence – No Objection

- The Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) Safeguarding Team represents the MOD as a consultee in UK planning and energy consenting systems to ensure that development does not compromise or degrade the operation of defence sites such as aerodromes, explosives storage sites, air weapon ranges, and technical sites or training resources such as the Military Low Flying System.
- I can confirm that, following review of the application documents, the proposed development would be considered to have no detrimental impact on the operation or capability of a defence site or asset.
- The MOD has no objection to the development proposed.

Tidworth Town Council – Support

Letters – None

ISSUES:
The main considerations which are material to the determination of this application are listed below:

- Principle
- Heritage, Character & Design
- Neighbouring Amenities
- Highway Safety
- Ecology

PLANNING ASSESSMENT:
Principle:
As has been identified above, the application site is situated in designated countryside and the proposals involve the redevelopment of part of an existing playing field to provide an ancillary clubhouse. Saved KDLP policy TR17 confirms that the development of existing outdoor sport and recreational space will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that: *'(a) the development of a small part of the existing facility provides improvements to the remaining facilities and provides for their greater use; or (b) a suitable alternative site and facilities is provided in an acceptable location; or (c) the proposal is for an alternative recreation or community use of benefit to local residents. In this case the overall recreational value of the open space available to local residents must be maintained*'.

In addition, in line with the NPPF and Sport England's policy to protect playing fields, planning permission will not normally be granted for development that involves the loss of playing fields, unless one or more of the five exceptions stated in Sport England's national guidelines apply. Sport England has therefore been consulted on the application accordingly.

In this instance the development will result in the loss of approximately 125 square metres of the grassed part of the site in order to provide a new clubhouse that is to be used in association with the existing sporting facility. Sport England originally objected to the proposals as very little information was submitted in support of this proposed loss of sports pitches or to explain how the building was to be used or why no changing facilities were included. The design and position of the proposed clubhouse was also questioned, given its position at the furthest point from the site access.

However additional information has subsequently been submitted. This has confirmed that whilst the new clubhouse will utilise existing grassland within this site, the grassland is currently used as incidental movement and spectating space and does not form part of the formally laid out sport's pitches that exist or are in use at this site. In addition it has been confirmed that the football club has decided that changing facilities are not necessary in this building as the facility is generally used by school children and youth teams who generally arrive and leave the site already changed. Instead a classroom facility is to be provided in the clubhouse facility as it is felt that this would be more beneficial providing both wet weather educational and post match analysis space for the youth teams. It has also been confirmed that the position of the clubhouse has been chosen so as to separate the activities within the clubhouse from the comings and goings and other vehicular activity at the site access.

Following this clarification, Sport England has assessed these proposals against the exception criteria outlined in their policies and has confirmed that the proposals would now meet their exception policy E2. Policy E2 requires the proposed development to be ancillary to the principal use of the site as a playing field or playing fields (which can be secured by condition); and seeks to ensure that it does not affect the quantity or quality of pitches provided at the site or adversely affect their use. It is also considered that the proposals now satisfy criterion (a) or saved KDLP policy TR17, outlined above. On that basis the principle of a new clubhouse on this part of the site is accepted.

This principle acceptability is however subject to the detail in terms of the implications for the character of the area, nearby heritage assets; design; neighbouring amenities; highway safety; and ecology. These matters will therefore be considered in more detail below.

Heritage, Character & Design:
As is discussed above, the site is situated in the vicinity of a Grade II* listed building (Tidworth House) and associated Grade II stables. Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires 'special regard' to be given to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting. In having 'special regard' the NPPF requires an assessment as to whether the proposal causes 'substantial harm', 'less than substantial harm' or no harm to the asset. At a local level, WCS policy CP58 (Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment) further aims to ensure that Wiltshire's important monuments, sites and landscapes and areas of historic and built heritage significance are '…*protected and enhanced in order that they continue to make an important contribution to Wiltshire's environment and quality of life'*. However it also states that '…*the designation of a heritage asset does not preclude the possibility of new development'* and confirms that the council is committed to '…*working pragmatically'* with owners to find positive solutions which will allow adaptation of such buildings to reflect modern aspirations. It is therefore expected that the form, scale, design and materials of new developments are complementary to the historic context.

In this instance the proposed clubhouse is a small scale, functional building that is to be positioned in the middle of this site and separated from any peripheral/public boundaries by existing formal sport pitches. The nearby listed buildings are also set in extensive treed/mature grounds and are thus some distance from this common boundary with the application site. It is therefore considered that the proposed development on this site is unlikely to result in *any* harm for the nearby assets.

The new building will be visible from the public domain especially because the site is raised above Bulford Road to the north and does plateaux above other fields/pitches surrounding the site. The site boundaries are also defined by only chain link fencing which provides quite an open aspect to the site from the north and east and to a lesser extent from the west. However the boundaries are also supplemented by mature trees which will provide some dappled screening of the centre of the site from the periphery. In addition, as has already been discussed, the proposed building is to sit centrally within the site and is fairly small scale in height and footprint (17.4 x 7.2 metres in area; extending to a maximum height of 3.7 metres). It is also to be designed in a typical pavilion vernacular which is appropriate for the function and uses that are already occurring at this wider site. Therefore whilst the proposed building will be visible, it is not considered that it will be particularly strident or dominant in the landscape and will be in keeping with the existing character and uses that already operate at this site. The proposals are therefore considered to be acceptable in this regard.

Neighbouring Amenities:
WCS policy CP57 (Ensuring High Quality Design & Space Shaping) requires that new development should be designed to ensure that the impact on the amenities of existing occupants/neighbours is acceptable and that appropriate levels of amenity are achievable within the development itself. The NPPF further confirms that planning should '*always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings*'. Residential amenity is affected by significant changes to the environment including privacy, outlook, daylight and sunlight, and living areas within private gardens and this therefore needs to be carefully considered accordingly.

Given the site's position, in the countryside and some distance from any neighbouring properties, it is considered unlikely that the proposed club house will create any implications in terms of overlooking or loss of light for any surrounding residents. In addition the proposed clubhouse is to serve an existing sports facility and will be used ancillary to the use of the surrounding pitches. It is not therefore considered that the proposals will result in any additional noise or disturbance or comings and goings than is already generated from the existing site and its uses.

Highway Safety:
The proposals do not involve any changes to the existing access and parking arrangement at the site and is to supplement the existing use of the site as a sport and recreation facility. It is therefore considered unlikely that the proposals will result in any additional implications for highway safety and the Highway Authority has raised no objection to the proposals accordingly.

Ecology:
River Avon Special Area for Conservation:
As is identified above, this proposal falls within the catchment of the River Avon SAC and has potential to cause adverse effects, alone or in combination with other developments, through discharge of phosphorus in wastewater. The development therefore needs to be appraised in line with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (Habitat Regulations) and WCS policy CP69 (Protection of the River Avon SAC).

However as the proposals do not involve any overnight accommodation, it is not considered that the development will result in any implications for this sensitive river system and does not therefore need to be appraised in line with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (Habitat Regulations) or WCS policy CP69 (Protection of the River Avon SAC. The proposals are therefore considered to be acceptable in this regard.

Salisbury Plain SPA:
The site also lies within the 6.4km buffer zone of the Salisbury Plain SPA and in light of the HRA for the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the HRA for the Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan, the application is screened into appropriate assessment due to the potential impact of recreational pressure on stone curlew in-combination with other plans and projects. However again, as this proposal does not involve the creation of any additional households in the catchment it is considered unlikely that it will result in any additional recreational pressure on this nearby designation either.

The Council can therefore conclude that this development will have no adverse effect on the integrity on the conservation objectives of the nearby SPA or SAC.

Biodiversity Net Gain:
As of 2nd April 2024 the requirement for Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) on *all* new sites came into force. Any small scale (none major)/major scheme will need to demonstrate no net loss and a minimum of 10% net gain in biodiversity on the site, in line with the requirements of the NPPF, WCS policy CP50 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity) and the Environment Act. However this application was first submitted on 20th December 2023, in advance of the BNG legislation coming into force. There is therefore no requirement for BNG from this proposal at this time.

CIL/S106:
As of May 2015, Wiltshire Council adopted the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Therefore this proposal may represent chargeable development under the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended) and Wiltshire Council's CIL Charging Schedule. A note highlighting this requirement to the applicant will therefore be attached to the decision accordingly.

CONCLUSION:
The design, position and small scale nature of the proposals is considered to be appropriate for the existing use of the site and will not result in any additional implications for the character of the area/surrounding heritage assets; highway safety; or neighbouring residential amenities. Sport England is also satisfied that the proposals are required in association with the existing sport's use of the site and will not affect the quantity or quality of the sports pitches available at the site. The proposals are therefore recommended for permission accordingly.

RECOMMENDATION:
Permission subject to Conditions

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

   REASON: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

   Application Form & Certificate
   Ref: Buy A Plan TTF Location Plan. Received – 20.12.2023
   Ref: PP-12690553v1 – Location Plan. Received – 20.12.2023
   Ref: TQRQM22345184846288 – Clubhouse. Received – 04.04.2024
   Ref: GEN-HUM-XX-AR-0001 Rev 01 – Site Plan. Received – 16.07.2024
   Ref: GEN-HUM-XX-AR-0002 Rev 01 – Floor Plan & Elevations. Received – 13.05.2024
   Ref: 53-2683-SHEET1 – Typical Section. Received – 20.12.2023
   Ref: CF-2683 – Foundations for Club Range. Received – 20.12.2023
   Ref: Harvest the Sunshine Solar Panel Manufacturer Details. Received – 20.12.2023

   REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3. The development hereby approved shall be finished in the materials outlined and as specified on the approved section plan (Ref: 53-2683-SHEET1 – Typical Section. Received – 20.12.2023)

   REASON: In the interests of visual amenity and the character and appearance of the area.

4. Notwithstanding the approved plans, the solar panels identified on the northern roof slope of the proposed clubhouse building shall be positioned on the southern roof slope only. They shall be installed flush to the roof plane and in accordance with the submitted manufacturer specifications and details.

   REASON: to ensure maximum benefit and solar gain from the proposed renewable energy infrastructure

5. The clubhouse facilities hereby approved shall be used solely for purposes ancillary to the use of the surrounding sport's pitches and facilities already operating at the site and for no other purpose or business.

   REASON: In the interests of sustainability and surrounding residential amenities and to ensure that the building remains in use for supporting sporting activities

INFORMATIVES

1) The applicant is advised that the development hereby approved may represent chargeable development under the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended) and Wiltshire Council's CIL Charging Schedule. If the development is determined to be liable for CIL, a Liability Notice will be issued notifying you of the amount of CIL payment due. If an Additional Information Form has not already been submitted, please submit it now so that we can determine the CIL liability. In addition, you may be able to claim exemption or relief, in which case, please submit the relevant form so that we can determine your eligibility. The CIL Commencement Notice and Assumption of Liability must be submitted to Wiltshire Council prior to commencement of

development. Should development commence prior to the CIL Liability Notice being issued by the local planning authority, any CIL exemption or relief will not apply and full payment will be required in full and with immediate effect. Should you require further information or to download the CIL forms please refer to the Council's Website: www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planninganddevelopment/planningpolicy/communityinfrastructurelevy.

2) Any alterations to the approved plans, brought about by compliance with Building Regulations or any other reason must first be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority before commencement of work.