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Heritage Statement & Viability Statement

MBC Planning Application Ref : 16/505598/FULL

**Staplehurst Cricket and Tennis Club,
Frittenden Rd,
Staplehurst,
Kent
TN12 0DH**



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Planning Heritage Statement & Viability Statement

Re : Planning Application Ref : 16/505598/FULL

Premises : Staplehurst Cricket and Tennis Club, Frittenden Rd, Staplehurst, Kent TN12 0DH

Introduction

Background of Application.

Following the Clubs lengthy deliberations over how to raise enough funds to keep the Club afloat and moving into the future in a way that is both meaningful and effective to the Staplehurst Community and local Schools and Clubs it was decided to look at the physical assets available to the Club on the Club property.

As no significant funding has been injected into the Club for the past ten years it has become clear that only a sizable injection of funding would save the Club and its buildings from decline. See attached Photo Appendix – Club Structures Condition Survey

The Application

The initial Application was submitted for two modest semi-detached 3 Bedroom family homes and received the support of the Parish Council.

Subsequently, an Arboricultural Survey and Ecological Survey were requested by MBC.

Please see attached Reports by:

Quaife Woodlands

Marsh Environmental

In both cases no specific species of trees or ecological specimens were noted on the site.

Mixed native hedging (Holly, Hornbeam, Hawthorn) to enclose the whole site will be provided and this will be a considerable increase to the amount of current hedging provided.

Boundary fencing will be erected within the line of the mixed hedging and will comprise good quality timber close board fencing. Slots will be cut at low level in the fencing, to allow passage of rodents and hedgehogs.

The site will be fully screened from the Main Road by existing retained trees and shrubs

In conclusion the Planning Application has been comprehensive with in depth investigation into all areas that effect the site, in Planning Design, Arboricultural and Ecological matters.

This Report further clarifies the Planning Application in respect of the Special Circumstances which underline the reasons why the Application should be Approved by Maidstone Borough Council Planning Department and provides further in depth details in respect of a Heritage Statement and a Viability Statement.



Heritage Statement

Background

Staplehurst Cricket and Tennis Club which has been serving the local community for many years is a private unincorporated body and commenced as a formal Trust in 1955.

Club land is located to the south side of the Frittenden Road from which the Staplehurst Conservation Area runs in a northerly direction.

Existing Development

The Conservation Area itself incorporates All Saints Church and Churchyard.

But, to the south of the Church three modern detached properties within the Conservation Area, located north of Old Rectory Lane have received Planning Permission, namely Brightwell House, The Maples and Ecclestone House. The Old Rectory has itself been split into three dwellings namely Staplehurst Cottage, Staplehurst House and the Old Rectory.

Further, to the south of this development, two further more recent detached dwellings Bardon House, Ash House form the lower South boundary of the Conservation Area and these properties are of relatively modern construction.

The subject property in this application actually lays outside the Conservation Area, but has been designed to respects the design requirements of the National and Local Planning Policies incorporating vernacular design, bay windows, clay tile hanging and stock bricks to elevations.

As such, the properties will assimilate well into the local variety of diverse designs such as Cricket Lodge and the more modern built form in the south of the Conservation Area to the north of Frittenden Road such as Bardon House and Ash House .

Density

The provision of this single structure/built form, is concurrent with the general disbursed density of larger single house structures along the east side of the main road in this location and within the Conservation Area.

Conservation Area & Design

Although the site is located outside the Staplehurst Conservation Area, the proximity of the Conservation Area has been taken into account and the dwellings have been designed using period style gables and jettied bays to the front and tile hanging to first floor and stock brickwork to ground floor with oak framed front door porch canopies.

The properties have been designed to reflect the vernacular designs of the older style properties such as farm workers cottages located in the Staplehurst area.



Tree Retention and Screening

As requested by MBC, an Arboriculturist Report has been provided and this concludes that there are no trees of any significant value on the site, as follows;

“7.5 In summary, the landscape impact of those trees to be removed will be commensurate to the scale and appearance of the proposed development and will not have a detrimental visual impact upon the character and appearance of the area.”

“8.2 The spatial relationship of the proposed new houses with the trees has been a matter of careful consideration. The orientation of the site is helpful, as there is good direct sunlight and ambient light.”

The dwellings have been sited to the east end of the site where trees are sparse and inspection of the Arboriculturists Report (See attached Plan) also shows that the majority of trees including the Ash pole trees on the site will be retained to provide screening to the main road to the west.

Existing and Proposed Built Form – See Photos 5196,5197,5200

Currently there are two significant built structures within the boundary of the Staplehurst Cricket and Tennis Club which stand to the south east of the proposal site and are shown on the attached Ordnance Survey Map.

These structures, comprise the Old Pavilion (Timber weatherboard elevations and clay plain tiled roof) and the adjacent Storage Sheds (Dilapidated Asbestos Cement construction).

The Club has agreed that these structures can be removed to ameliorate any bulking effect in the landscape, thus moving towards a neutral value in respect of built form when replaced by the new dwellings.

Conclusion

It is clear that the Staplehurst Cricket and Tennis Club is an important asset to the local community and under these very special circumstances needs to be retained as a viable and thriving support, to both local residents and schools.

Structures already in existence on the site will be removed to balance the new built structures in the local landscape.

The above Heritage Statement explains that the design has been carefully crafted to match the local design vernacular and development density and respects the adjacent Conservation Area



Viability Statement

Staplehurst Cricket and Tennis Club

The Clubs vision statement is a simple one:

To facilitate and promote the participation of the whole community in the sports of cricket and tennis and support other local sports and athletic clubs/groups.

The Clubs Strategy:

- keeping costs low (broadening their income base)
- growing playing opportunities and capabilities
- improving facilities
- promoting and rewarding participation
- building a welcoming and inclusive sports culture

Legal status:

- Private unincorporated body. Assets held in Trust created on conveyance of land (1955)
- Community Amateur Sports Club
 - Irrevocable quasi-charitable status
 - Open access membership
 - Gift Aid
 - Corporation tax exemption on non-trading income
 - Statutory 80% ground rates relief
 - Assets for purpose of cricket and tennis
 - On dissolution, assets to be used for cricket and tennis in locality, transfer to sports governing bodies or HM Treasury.
-

The Club Is Community Oriented:

- Sport England Clubmark accredited (2006) and re-accredited 3 times
- England & Wales Cricket Board Focus Club
- Lawn Tennis Association 'Place to Play'
- The home of Staplehurst Running Club
- Staplehurst Emergency Help Team designated rest centre
- The busiest Event Venue in Staplehurst



Self Funding Initiatives

In 2006 – The AGM was told that in the opinion of officers the Club had 5-10 years viability. Since then, over 3 development plans the club has worked hard and raised £100,000 in cash and kind which has been invested in club development;

- New car park enabling all-year-round opening
- Family friendly safe decking area
- New perimeter fencing
- New clubhouse roof

Club Progress & Achievements

- Almost all investment internally generated
- Largest community and youth organisation in Staplehurst
- 450+ members – 50% under age 18 years – an increase of 60% since 2005
- 120 Junior cricketers – ages 5-16 years - registered in 2016 (0 in 2005)
- 60 Junior tennis members
- Average age start is 6.5years
- 80% of Under-16s at state schools
- 70% attend or attended Staplehurst Primary
- Increasing retention rate at 16+ youth players
- 12 x ECB (English Cricket Board) Level I and Level II coaches qualified
- 24 Coach Support Workers accredited since 2015 – ages 16-65 years
- 50% of promoted 1st XI 'home grown'
- 70% of promoted 2nd XI aged under 23
- 60% of promoted SVL team home grown & aged under 23

Schools outreach 2015-17 : In-curriculum and after school coaching

- Staplehurst Primary School -- 180 hours
- Colliers Green Primary School - 48 hours
- Marden Primary School - 36 hours

The Club's 2016-20 Development Plan

- The Club has to raise around £30,000 per annum for day to day running costs and maintaining the facilities they have. The Club has already increased total annual income by 130% in the past 10 years through membership growth and increased bar turnover.
- The Club has to recognise that people lead increasingly busy lives and some members simply want to play and not contribute their time and skills as has been the case in the past. This means additional costs to cover essential works previously undertaken by volunteers.



- The current additional capital depreciation charge of £5-6,000 per annum is not enough to replace existing facilities and equipment. A more realistic charge would see that figure at least double, a position the Club is intent on moving to after suffering from years of underinvestment.
- Investment in new facilities means more fundraising; more grants and internally generated income.

The challenges the Club faces:

- An ageing demographic on one hand and the prospect of a whole new younger Staplehurst population on the other;
- The Club needs significant new investment to provide the facilities other clubs offer – for example, the new Marden cricket, hockey and tennis facility - which regular cricketers and tennis players now come to expect;
- Replacement of the Club's 72 year-old volunteer Groundsman in the next 2-3 years will require additional £15-18,000 per year to pay contractors for the average 30-40 hours PER WEEK work required in summer months – effectively DOUBLING our operating costs;
- The Club is therefore far from fully financially viable on any basic business yardstick;
- We need to continue developing diversified income sources and rapidly grow income to meet identified future expenditure. It requires substantial capital expenditure to facilitate both standing still and future growth to serve the Staplehurst Community.

2016-20 Development Plan Costing

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| • Resurfacing EXISTING hard tennis courts | £20,000 |
| • 2 further hard courts to meet minimum LTA (Lawn Tennis Association) funding requirements | £70-80,000 |
| • All weather permanent Cricket net site (ECB specification) | £18-25,000 |
| • Clubhouse refurbishment | £100-150,000 |
| • Other Development Plan commitments | £30-50,000 |

Less leveraged funding

- grants agreed in principle
(Only on matched funding basis) by LTA and ECB £90-120,000
- ECB interest free loan
(Only supported by increased income generation) £50-100,000

Club Funding Requirement

£100-150,000*

*Having investigated all conceivable options, the Club identified the sale of a small unused part of its estate, with the planning permission sought in this application, as the only realistic option to meet this funding requirement.



As outlined, if the land can be sold, it will leverage further sports national governing body (ECB & LTA) matched funding, already agreed in principle, enabling a total investment in this local community sports amenity of at least £300,000.

Conclusion

The recent years of underinvestment, due to austerity and thus the inability of the club members and the local community, who use this facility, to contribute funds and raise funds privately, has meant that this important sports/athletics asset and service to the Staplehurst community, has not been able to keep up with the usage and wear and tear imposed on it, by the very community sports and recreation needs for people of all ages, that clearly use it on a regular basis.

The above financial facts are clear and perusal of the attached Photographic Appendix shows further evidence of the decline of the Clubs facilities over the past twenty years. Even with the huge amount of unpaid hard work and fundraising by the Club members and their families year on year, it is now obvious by the disrepair that the Club is struggling to make up for years of underinvestment and maintaining existing income streams.

A serious funding injection is required to bring the Club's facilities back into serviceable condition and provide a sound basis for the future growth and development of what is a very important sports facility for the Staplehurst community.

Above all, capital funding is needed to provide the platform for increased income generation identified in the Club's business plan above .

Primarily refurbishment of the now use worn tennis courts and clubhouse facilities which will encourage new tennis membership/grants and the ability of the clubhouse to be used, to raise income on a year-round venue hire basis, which will assist paying the day to day overheads such as grounds staff and maintenance of grounds and buildings.

The provision of two small family dwellings on this site, adjacent but screened from the main road, will allow the Club to continue to operate without financially burdening the Local Authority/County Council and will provide the private funding required by the Trust to remain Viable and put the Club on a firm footing and in a position to grow and continue to provide and promote these important sports and recreation facilities, to Schools and the Staplehurst Community at large, into the future.



Heritage Statement & Viability Statement

Photo Appendix - Club Structures - Condition Survey

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Photo no 5214 - History of the Club – Dating back to 1925



Photo no 5215 - History of the Club – Diversity of Teams



Photo no 5216 – Ageing & Un-Viable Small Kitchen Facilities to serve Club



Photo no 5210 Defective metal window frame and age worn insanitary Shower



Photo no 5211 – Poor/DIY insecure sports equipment storage



Photo no 5205 Old Tired Changing Room facilities



Photo no 5208 Age and use worn insanitary Shower Facilities

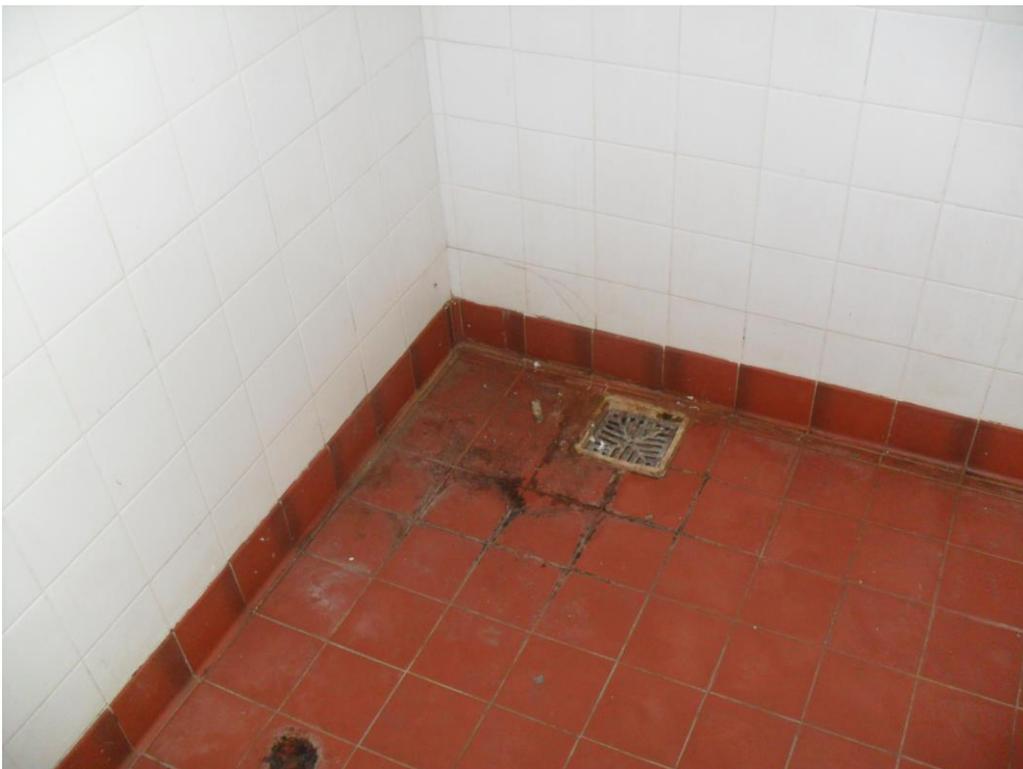


Photo no 5209 Age and use worn insanitary Shower Facilities



Photo no 5207 Age and use worn insanitary WC facilities



Photo no 5195 Redundant/dilapidated detached Pavilion Building-To be removed



Photo no 5196 Asbestos Grounds Equipment Store and Pavilion- To be removed.



Photo no 5197 Redundant /dilapidated detached Pavilion Building –To be removed



Photo no 5199 – Grass Tennis Courts in poor condition.



Photo 5200 Asbestos cement sports storage building- Dilapidated – To be removed



Photo no 5201 Typical poor/defective condition of Tennis Court Fencing



Photo no 5202 Typical poor/defective condition of Tennis Court Fencing



Photo no 5227 External Joinery to Club House - Weathered, use worn and defective



Photo no 5228 External Joinery to Club House - Weathered, use worn and defective



Photo no 5229 Club house roof in need of significant overhaul.



Photo no 5230 – Family Decking Area in need of repair and decoration