



Sacred Heart Football Club
Belfield Mill Lane
Rochdale

Introduction

This statement has been produced by AKPlanning in support of a planning application for the erection of a bungalow at the Sacred Heart Football Club, Belfield Mill Lane, Rochdale. It is intended to address the issues raised in a letter from Rochdale BC which stated: -

The site area is also within G/8 (Greenspace Corridor) and G/3 (Protection of existing Recreational Open Space) of the Unitary Development Plan- therefore an Open Space Statement is required with floor/volume calculations.

Site Location and Description

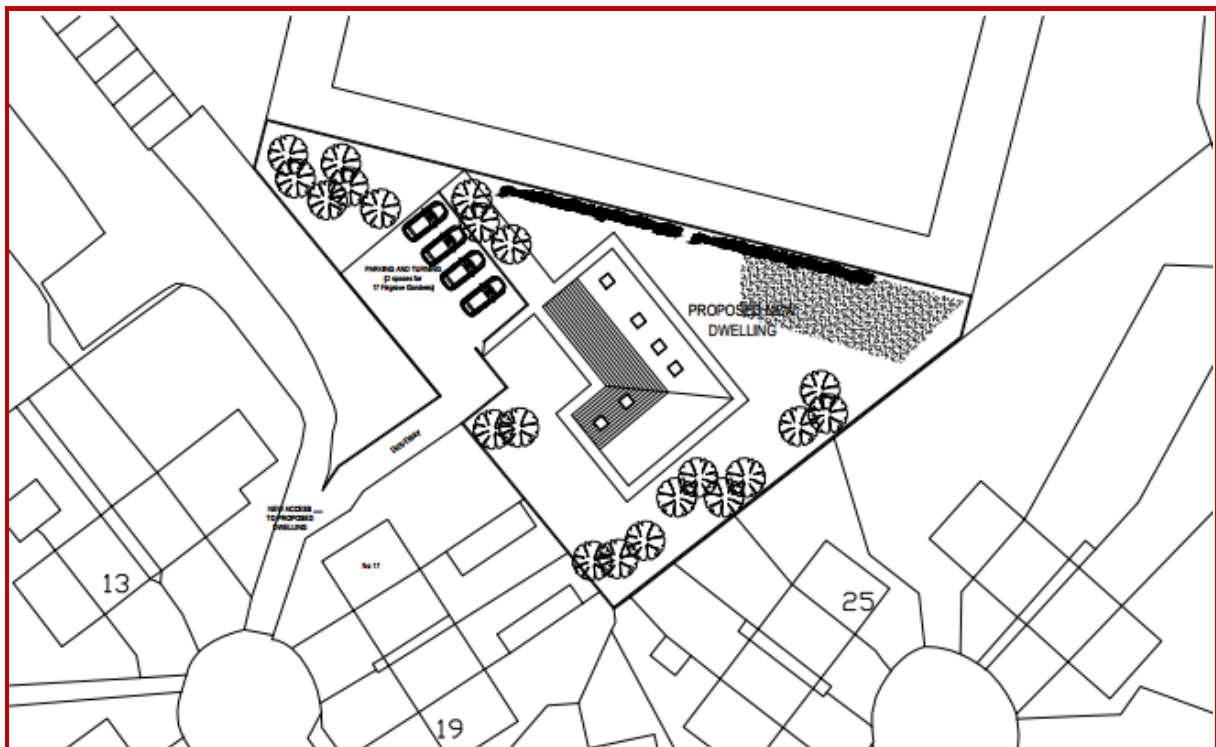
The aerial and photograph view below shows the sites location and appearance.



The site is in the southern corner of the land and is vacant scrub land. The main sports pitch lies to the north along with the club house and car park.

The Proposal

It is proposed to erect a bungalow as shown on the plan below: -



As can be seen the site is a triangular shape in the corner of the applicant's ownership and adjacent to residential properties to the South.

The application is in outline with siting/access included.

Planning Policy

The relevant policies state: -

G8- Greenspace Corridors shown on the Proposals Map will be protected. Development and other measures which will enhance their recreational, ecological or landscape and amenity value will be permitted. In those parts of the corridors which are outside the Defined Urban Area, the provisions of Policy D/10 will also apply. Within all parts of Greenspace Corridors, the Council will not permit development proposals which would:

- a) Lead to an unacceptable narrowing or a division of the corridor into sections, thereby,
 - i. restricting the movement of wildlife along it, or
 - ii. restricting the movement of people along established or proposed recreational routes or rights of way;
- b) Result in the loss or severance of links between areas of recreational open space;

- c) Result in the loss of existing valued recreational facilities or prejudice proposed new facilities; or*
- d) Prevent public access into the corridor at strategic locations; or which would result in unacceptable harm to:-*
- e) The better landscape qualities and character of the corridor;*
- f) The amenity value of the corridor where it provides welcome visual relief from urban development, including attractive views in and out of the corridor;*
- g) Features of nature conservation interest, including designated and non designated sites; or*
- h) Viable agricultural operations, including good quality grazing land and allotments.*

G3- The development of public or private recreational open space for any other purpose will not be permitted unless one or more of the following exceptions applies:

- a) The development is for a non commercial community use within a park or other outdoor recreation area, is ancillary to the recreational use of the area, would not lead to a deficiency in recreational open space in relation to present or future needs, and does not harm the recreational, townscape or nature conservation value of the remaining open space;
- b) Alternative provision is made of at least the equivalent quantity and quality of recreational open space, in a satisfactory location and taking account of local environmental and traffic considerations;
- c) The development funds improvements to existing outdoor sports facilities within the site or on another site, commensurate with the open space being lost; and
- d) The development comprises a built recreational facility of greater benefit to the wider community than the open space being lost and does not result in a serious deficiency in open space in the area.

Where exceptions are to be made under (b) and (c) above, the Council may impose planning conditions and/or seek planning obligations under S106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to secure the suitable replacement or improvement of open space. With regard to criterion (d), such proposals will only be permitted where no suitable alternative brownfield site exists. School playing fields which are surplus to educational requirements, and privately-owned sports grounds which have deteriorated due to lack of use and maintenance, will continue to be safeguarded from development as they still offer potential to meet current and future recreational needs.

Consideration of Relevant Policy

In this section we will consider the proposal against the identified planning policy.

With regard to policy G8. The site is a piece of unused land in the corner of a formal playing field. It does not serve as an access to a wider area nor does it provide any connection to a wider corridor. Given its location adjacent an often used and cut formal playing field it is unlikely to be part of a wildlife corridor and it has no agricultural use or landscape qualities. It is our opinion that the proposals comply with policy G8.

G3 states that planning permission will not be granted unless the development meets one of the specified exceptions.

Parts C and D state: -

c) The development funds improvements to existing outdoor sports facilities within the site or on another site, commensurate with the open space being lost; and

d) The development comprises a built recreational facility of greater benefit to the wider community than the open space being lost and does not result in a serious deficiency in open space in the area.

It is proposed that the funds raised from the sale of the land are used to improve the existing built facilities of the football club. The clubhouse will be revamped and car park facilities improved.

The amount of money is not significant but, as with all private member sporting clubs, funds are always required for improvements/maintenance and repair.

By spending the money on the existing facilities the proposals will comply with parts C and D of policy G8. They therefore comply with this policy.

Conclusions

The proposals will not lead to the loss of a useable part of the football field. The land in question is neglected and is not of sufficient size, shape, topography, or location to be used in the future. Its loss will have no effect on the wildlife corridor and all monies raised will be used to fund improvements to the existing clubhouse and car park. Therefore, policies G3 and G8 are complied with.

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