
Report of the Head of Strategic Investment

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Date: 10-Aug-2017

Subject: Planning Application 2016/92702 Erection of training facility building with ancillary sports areas and demolition of existing pavilion Woodfield Park Sports and Social Club, Meltham Road, Lockwood, Huddersfield, HD4 7BG

APPLICANT

Huddersfield Sporting
Pride Ltd

DATE VALID

30-Dec-2016

TARGET DATE

31-Mar-2017

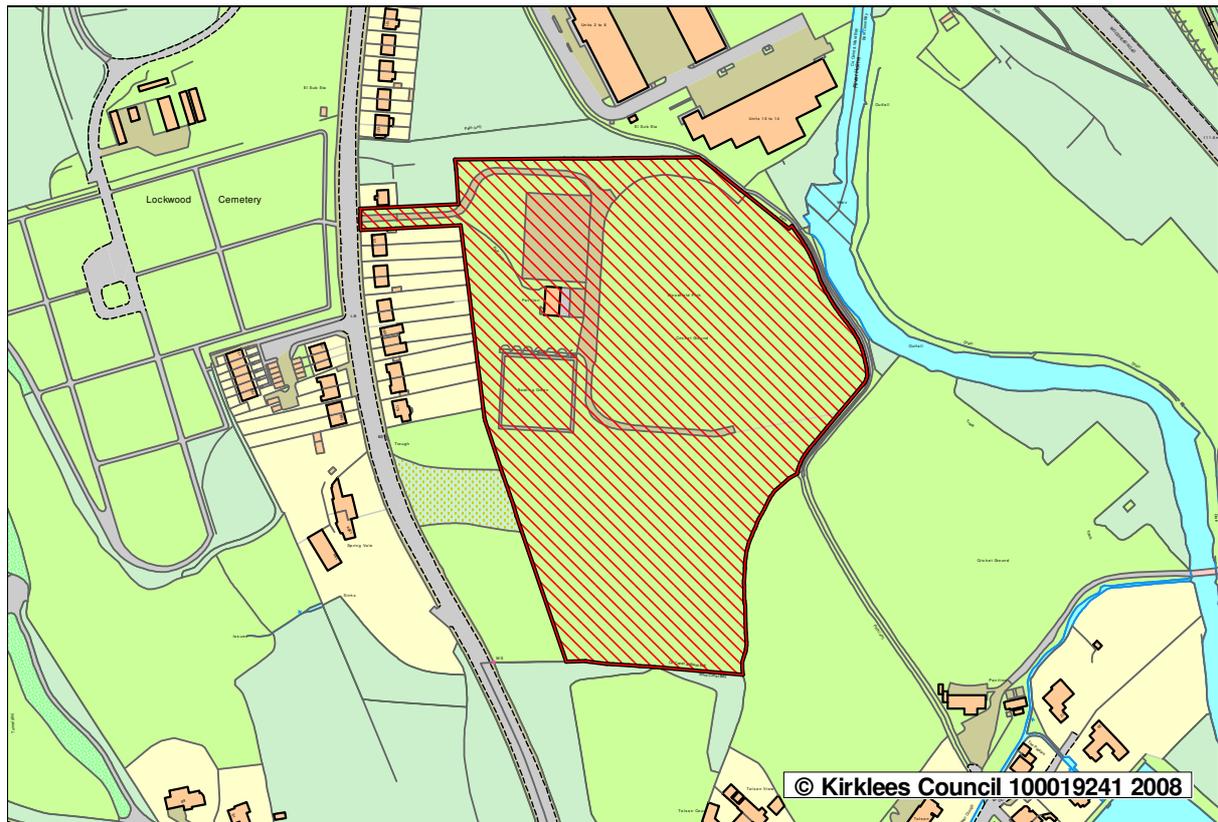
EXTENSION EXPIRY DATE

05-May-2017

Please click the following link for guidance notes on public speaking at planning committees, including how to pre-register your intention to speak.

<http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/pdf/public-speaking-committee.pdf>

LOCATION PLAN



Map not to scale – for identification purposes only

Electoral Wards Affected: Crosland Moor and Netherton

Y

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

RECOMMENDATION: Conditional Full Permission

DELEGATE approval to the Head of Strategic Investment in order to complete the list of conditions including those contained within this report (and any added by the Committee)

1.0 INTRODUCTION:

- 1.1 The application seeks permission for the erection of a training facility, and the creation of outdoor sports pitches, at the former Woodfield Park Sports and Social Club off Meltham Road at Lockwood. The proposed facilities are for use by professional rugby league team the Huddersfield Giants and would become the home of the First Team and the Academy. It is also intended that the site would be used by the wider community and local junior teams. The proposal is to erect a two storey training building with ancillary community space, and to create a grassed rugby pitch and a 4G rugby pitch allowing for all year round training.

2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS:

- 2.1 The site extends to approximately four hectares, and comprises the former Woodfield Park Sports and Social Club which was previously used as a sports and social club for West Yorkshire Police. Access to the site is off Meltham Road via a single width track. Within the site there is a dilapidated (fire damaged) pavilion, a modular building, a garage/store, tennis courts and a former bowling green and cricket ground. The site is relatively flat, however to the rear of the tennis courts is a grassed banking with mature trees, and the access track follows a route around the banking.
- 2.2 The site is located within the Green Belt on the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) Proposals Map. To the west the site backs onto the rear garden areas of residential properties off Meltham Road and to the north is Park Valley Mills. To the east is public right of way HUD/dmmo app198/10 and the River Holme follows a route to the east of the site. Land to the south is undeveloped beyond which is the settlement of Armitage Bridge. The southern and eastern boundary of the application site adjoins the boundary of the Armitage Bridge Conservation Area.

3.0 PROPOSAL:

- 3.1 The application seeks permission for the erection of a training facility building and the creation of outdoor sports pitches. The proposed facilities are for use by professional rugby league team Huddersfield Giants, and will become the home of their First Team and Academy. The site will be used on a daily basis by approximately 50 players and staff and will host home games for the Academy team, with an anticipated 250 person attendance. It is also intended that the site would be used by the wider community and local junior teams.
- 3.2 The proposal is to demolish the dilapidated and fire damaged sports pavilion and erect a two storey building on the site of the former bowling green. The facilities proposed include changing facilities, a gym, weights and training area, a physio treatment room, office and conference facility, and a community / function space. The proposed building would be predominately clad in dark grey construction materials are stonework to the ground floor, and cladding in a dark grey finish. The existing garage building will be utilised for storage of maintenance equipment.

- 3.3 It is proposed to create two outdoor rugby pitches. A grassed rugby pitch is proposed to the south of the building and an all-weather 4G rugby pitch to the east of the building.
- 3.4 Access is proposed off the existing single width track off Meltham Road. It is proposed to create an area of off-street parking between the proposed building and the existing tennis courts which would operate on a one way basis. It is proposed to secure the site with palisade entrance gates.

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY (including enforcement history):

- 4.1 92/02528 – Erection of Groundsman’s Store – Conditional Full Permission

97/92619 – Use of sports and social club pavilion to include caring for children during holidays – Conditional Full Permission

2000/91083 – Erection of temporary portable building for use as dining/kitchen area – Conditional Full Permission

2001/92453 – Outline application for erection of replacement pavilion – Conditional Outline Permission

5.0 HISTORY OF NEGOTIATIONS (including revisions to the scheme):

- 5.1 Officers have negotiated with the applicant to secure:

- Revised elevational details for the training facility building to reduce the extent of cladding and to secure a less conspicuous dark grey colour cladding to replace the proposed claret and gold cladding.
- A revised Flood Risk Assessment to take into account the 2016 SFRA for Kirklees.
- A Transport Assessment
- Revisions to the Proposed Access Arrangements

6.0 PLANNING POLICY:

- 6.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications are determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for Kirklees currently comprises the saved policies within the Kirklees Unitary Development Plan (Saved 2007). The Council’s Local Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government on 25th April 2017, so that it can be examined by an independent inspector. The weight to be given to the Local Plan will be determined in accordance with the guidance in paragraph 216 of the National Planning Policy Framework. In particular, where the policies, proposals and designations in the Local Plan do not vary from those within the UDP, do not attract significant unresolved objections and are consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (2012), these may be given increased weight. Pending the adoption of the Local Plan, the UDP (saved Policies 2007) remains the statutory Development Plan for Kirklees.

Kirklees Unitary Development Plan (UDP) Saved Policies 2007:

- 6.2 BE1 – Design principles
- BE2 – Quality of design
- T10 – Highway Safety

Local Plan

- 6.3 PLP1 – Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- PLP 21 – Highway Safety and Access
- PLP 24 – Design
- PLP 27 Flood Risk
- PLP 35 – Historic Environment
- PLP 48 – Community facilities and services
- PLP 50 – Sport and Physical Activity
- PLP 56 – Facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation and cemeteries

National Planning Guidance:

- 6.4 Chapter 7 – Requiring good design
- Chapter 8 – Promoting Healthy Communities
- Chapter 9 – Protecting Green Belt Land
- Chapter 10 – Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- Chapter 11 – Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

7.0 PUBLIC/LOCAL RESPONSE:

- 7.1 The application was advertised by neighbour letter, site notice and press notice. The publicity period expired 10th February 2017.

Two representations have been received which have raised concerns. The concerns raised are précised below:

- The building appears to be predominantly corrugated steel/cladding. In the winter it will be visible from Armitage Bridge, a conservation area which will influence the look and feel of the village. In the village, buildings are of Yorkshire stone construction. There are steel clad buildings adjacent but out of sight from the village. Consider a traditional construction comprising real stone, or using less club colours. A single uniform colour with a club crest would be more attractive, age better, and be more sympathetic to its surroundings.
- Believe there is a covenant that the park was donated to the police only for this use.
- Concern about noise when 1st team training and the academy or other games possibly during weekends.
- Concern about parking and traffic during games, lighting for training on outdoor pitches and around building or car park.

- Concern the colour of the building will contrast and not be in line with local surroundings.
- Concern about devaluing neighbouring properties.
- The proposal would increase traffic to a level that would not be suitable for the location, and on street parking would increase. Residents struggle with parking on Meltham road when a funeral is being held in the cemetery. If games are played on a weekend or at night with academies the local support and travelling support, circa 250 persons according to the application, this would create an over-spill of vehicles which the proposed car park would not be able to hold.
- If a rugby match is played on a weekend the noise will be excessively loud. Concern this would prevent neighbours using their garden.
- The plans show no external lighting. Light pollution already arises from the business park. The training grounds on Meltham Road light up the valley. Any strong flood lighting would have an impact on residents on the boundary and affect children sleeping.
- The coloured cladding is not in line with the surrounding environment or buildings. Branding is not a requirement if the idea is to be placing the building out of eyesight for the least amount of visual impact.
- The facilities will disrupt peace and views, especially if there is a purple building with 250 people shouting and cheering on a weekend, whilst 100 cars are parked outside neighbouring properties.

8.0 CONSULTATION RESPONSES:

8.1 Statutory:

K.C Highways – Advise Conditions

Sport England – No objections

Environment Agency – No objections

8.2 Non-statutory:

K.C Ecology – No objections

K.C Environmental Services – No objections

K.C Arboricultural Officer – No objections

K.C Flood Management – No objections

West Yorkshire Police Architectural Liaison officer – No objections

K.C Public Rights of Way – No objection

9.0 MAIN ISSUES

- Principle of development
- Urban design issues
- Residential amenity
- Highway issues
- Flood Risk / Drainage issues
- Representations
- Other matters

10.0 APPRAISAL

Principle of development:

- 10.1 The proposed development is to provide a new training facility and outdoor sports pitches for the professional rugby league team Huddersfield Giants. The site is located within the Green Belt on the Kirklees Unitary Development (UDP) Proposals Map. Paragraph 87 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states as with previous Green Belt policy, inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Paragraph 89 states a local planning should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate. Exceptions to this include the provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation and for cemeteries, as long as it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.
- 10.2 The proposed grassed and all weather 4G pitches, together with the training facility building are considered to constitute essential facilities for outdoor sport and recreation. The proposed re-development of this existing sports facility is therefore considered to be appropriate development within the Green Belt in accordance with paragraph 89 of the NPPF. This is subject however to the proposal preserving the openness of the Green Belt and not conflicting with the purposes of including land within it.
- 10.3 The proposal is not considered to conflict with the purposes of including land within the green belt which include:
- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas
 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another
 - To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment
 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
 - To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land

- 10.4 The proposed training facility building is greater in scale and massing than the existing pavilion building which it would replace. The new facilities include changing and shower facilities for home games, a gym and physio room, offices/conference facilities and a function / community space. The proposed function space would occupy less than half of the ground floor and would be an ancillary use to the principal use of the building as a training facility for the rugby club. The existing sports site is well screened and the building and parking areas would be clustered together to minimise the footprint of development across the site. The majority of the site would continue to be open with open views across the field retained and therefore for these reasons it is considered the proposed development preserves the openness of the Green Belt.
- 10.5 Paragraph 73 of the NPPF states that access to high quality spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities. Paragraph 74 states that existing open spaces, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:
- An assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
 - The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
 - The development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.

In this case the proposal is for alternative sports and recreation provision, which would bring back into active use this redundant site where there is a clear need for such provision to serve Huddersfield's professional rugby league team.

- 10.6 Sport England raises no objection. They are satisfied that the proposed development meets the exception policy that: the proposed development is ancillary to the principal use of the site as a playing field or playing fields, and does not affect the quantity or quality of pitches or adversely affect their use.
- 10.7 The principle of development within this green belt site is considered to be acceptable.

Urban Design issues

- 10.8 Policies BE1 and BE2 of the UDP are considerations in relation to design, materials and layout. The application site is relatively well screened, due to its position below the highway and the presence of mature trees along its boundaries. The site is however visible from the amenity spaces of adjacent residential properties off Meltham Road. Furthermore, the southern and eastern boundaries of the application site abut the boundary of the Armitage Bridge conservation area. Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that "in the exercise of (of planning

functions), with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area...special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area'.

- 10.9 The proposed building has a functional design and would be constructed of stonework and cladding. Officers have liaised with the agent to amend the design of the building to incorporate more stonework and reduce the extent of cladding. It was also requested that the cladding be dark grey in colour rather than the team colours of claret and gold to minimise the appearance of the building adjacent to the boundary of the Armitage Bridge Conservation Area. Amended Plans have been received which have introduced a higher band of stonework, and which confirm the cladding would be grey in colour. As noted the site is well screened from the conservation area by mature trees and it is considered the building would not have a detrimental impact on the setting of the conservation area or the visual amenities of the area.

Residential Amenity

- 10.10 UDP Policy D2 requires the effect on residential amenity to be considered and policy BE12 sets out the normally recommended minimum distances between habitable and non-habitable room windows of existing and proposed dwellings. The nearest neighbouring properties to the site which would be affected by the development include properties off Meltham Road to the west. Due to the topography of the area, these properties are positioned above the level of the sports ground with sloping gardens which overlook the site.
- 10.11 It is intended that the facilities will be used daily by approximately 50 people and as such there will be a level of disturbance to neighbouring properties off Meltham Road that does not currently exist. It is also proposed to host matches for the Academy Team where it is expected that 250 people could be on the site. Environmental Services have concerns in relation to noise from the club affecting the amenity of the residential uses in the area. They recommend the imposition of a condition to secure a noise report which specifies measures to be taken to protect the occupants of nearby noise sensitive premises. Subject to this Environmental Services are satisfied that noise issues would be addressed.
- 10.12 No lighting scheme has been submitted with the application and the agent was asked to confirm if lighting is to be installed on the pitches and / or car park. The agent has requested that this matter be conditioned in line with the condition suggested by Environmental Services. They envisage however that the lighting scheme will include down lights to the parking areas, 6m high floodlights to the 4 g pitch (only used up to 10.00pm if required during winter training) and no lighting on the grass pitch. Security lighting will be required to building and LED lights to the roadways every 20m on both sides. A proposed lighting scheme will be conditioned and the impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers will be assessed through a discharge of conditions application. Subject to details being secured by condition, this matter is addressed.

10.13 It is considered, that subject to suitable conditions, there proposal would not have a detrimental impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring properties.

Highway issues

10.14 Policy T10 of the UDP sets out the matters against which new development will be assessed in terms of highway safety. A transport assessment has been provided that included details of a survey of the existing traffic generation and parking demand undertaken on 29th April 2017. This is used to determine the anticipated peak traffic generation and parking demand for the proposed development site. Kirklees Highway Services assessed the Transport Assessment and noted that access to the existing site is via an existing access/track from Meltham Road leading to the proposed training facility building and associated parking. The proposals include 75 permanent off-street parking spaces are proposed, 4 of which are for disabled parking and a further 84 spaces available within the overflow parking area.

10.15 The first team will train at the site but they will not have professional games at the site. Academy games will be played on a weekend, generally in the early afternoon and will generally be played every other weekend which can be split into:

League games with approximately 100 spectators expected; and
Cup games with approximately 250 spectators expected.

10.16 Highway Services initially raised concerns due to lack of a Transport Assessment but one was submitted and they now advise that subject to conditions that require the following details the scheme can be supported:

- improvements to the access to achieve greater visibility splays,
- relocation of the existing bus stop
- construction specifications of surfacing, drainage, kerbing
- Safety audit
- Layout 7 parking (including overflow parking)

Flood Risk / Drainage issues

10.17 The River Holme flows down the eastern boundary of the site and the site falls within Flood Zones 1, 2 and 3 and 3b (functional flood plain). The application is supported by a Flood Risk Assessment. The site layout has been designed with the building directed towards the lowest risk areas of the site. It is proposed that the finished floor level of the building should be set no lower than 600mm above the 1 in 1000 year level of 81.42mAOD with a 150mm upstand in relation to adjacent ground levels to prevent the ingress of surface water at the buildings interface. The proposed sports pitches are proposed to be set to a level that ensures that there is no positive land raising to ensure that there is no loss of flood storage area in the areas of the site that are shown to be in Flood Zones 2 and 3. The pitches are water compatible therefore no specific measures have been proposed to protect them outside of ensuring a balance in cut and fill.

- 10.18 Kirklees Flood Management raised initial concerns that the FRA failed to take into account the 2016 SFRA for Kirklees which shows a proportion of the site as zone 3b – Functional Floodplain. It was considered the FRA carries only a basic outline of drainage options and submissions should take note of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority SUDS guidance document. Although BGS data suggests infiltration will be problematic on site, a privately managed ground drainage scheme, incorporating water treatment, could be incorporated in this development for buildings and car park areas that would otherwise require an interceptor. The applicant was asked to provide a revised Flood risk assessment,
- 10.19 Kirklees Flood Management have reviewed the revised assessment and can now support the application. The revised Flood Risk Assessment has confirmed that no buildings or raised levels are to be made in the functional floodplain. There remain some outstanding matters as the assessment fails to consider the culvert crossing the site which must be investigated to understand its location and condition. Furthermore, the assessment concludes that there is no formal drainage of current buildings and Flood Management disagree with the run off values produced which should be limited to greenfield discharges should a connection need to be made. They also expect a treatment element to the private drainage system developed for the site. Flood Management consider however that these matters can be adequately addressed by conditions.
- 10.20 The Environment Agency raises no objection. They note the development will only meet the requirements of the NPPF if the development is carried out in accordance with the approved FRA and the mitigation measures. These include that there will be no land raising in flood zone 3, and that the proposed building will be located wholly within flood zone 1. They advise that future occupants sign up to the flood warning service. Subject to conditions, flood matters are addressed.

Other Matters

- 10.21 The site falls within the bat alter layer. However, as the building to be demolished is dilapidated, a bat survey is not required in this instance. There are no objections to the proposal subject to ensuring no additional light falls onto areas. The trees on the southern, eastern and western boundaries which are protected by Tree Preservation Orders would be unaffected.
- 10.22 In respect of Air Quality matters the proposal has been assessed in accordance with the West Yorkshire Low Emission Strategy. To mitigate against the development it will be necessary for the developer to provide a low emission travel plan, and to install charging points in 10% of parking spaces, which may be phased with a 5% initial provision and the remainder at an agreed trigger level.

- 10.23 The site is isolated and away from routine surveillance, whilst still being in a very accessible location, adjacent to a major road, providing easy access and egress that criminals could take advantage of. The West Yorkshire Police Liaison Officer notes physical security measures should accord with Secured by Design.
- 10.24 The proposal incorporates ground source heat pumps. The Environment agency regulates open-loop ground source heating and cooling schemes and advise that the applicant contacts them.

Representations

- 10.25 Two representations have been received. In so far as the concerns raised have not been addressed above:
- 10.26 The building appears to be predominantly corrugated steel/cladding. In the winter it will be visible from Armitage Bridge, a conservation area which will influence the look and feel of the village. In the village, buildings are of Yorkshire stone construction. There are steel clad buildings adjacent but out of sight from the village. Consider a traditional construction comprising real stone, or using less club colours. A single uniform colour with a club crest would be more attractive, age better, and be more sympathetic to its surroundings. Concern the colour of the building will contrast and not be in line with local surroundings / The coloured cladding is not in line with the surrounding environment or buildings. Branding is not a requirement if the idea is to be placing the building out of eyesight for the least amount of visual impact.
Response: Revised plans have been received which show a reduced amount of cladding, to be coloured dark grey with the team colours restricted to the club logo and lettering.
- 10.27 Concern about noise when 1st team training and the academy or other games possibly during weekends / If a rugby match is played on a weekend the noise will be excessively loud. Concern this would prevent neighbours using their garden / The facilities will disrupt peace and views, especially if there is a purple building with 250 people shouting and cheering on a weekend, whilst 100 cars are parked outside neighbouring properties.
Response: There will be a level of disturbance to neighbouring properties off Meltham Road that does not currently exist. Environmental Services raise no objections subject to the imposition of a condition requesting a noise survey which the imposition of a condition to secure a noise report which specifies measures to be taken to protect the occupants of nearby noise sensitive premises.

10.28 Concern about parking and traffic during games / The proposal would increase traffic to a level that would not be suitable for the location, and on street parking would increase. Residents struggle with parking on Meltham road when a funeral is being held in the cemetery. If games are played on a weekend or at night with academies the local support and travelling support, circa 250 persons according to the application, this would create an over-spill of vehicles which the proposed car park would not be able to hold.
Response: Highways have considered the proposal to be acceptable subject to conditions.

10.29 The plans show no external lighting. Light pollution already arises from the business park. The training grounds on Meltham Road light up the valley. Any strong flood lighting would have an impact on residents on the boundary and affect children sleeping / Concern about lighting for training on outdoor pitches and around building or car park
Response: As detailed above a lighting scheme will be conditioned and the impact on neighbouring properties will be assessed through the discharge of this condition.

10.30 Believe there is a covenant that the park was donated to the police only for this use.
Response: This is not a material planning consideration

10.31 Concern about devaluing neighbouring properties
Response: This is not a material planning consideration

11.0 CONCLUSION

11.1 The NPPF has introduced a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The policies set out in the NPPF taken as a whole constitute the Government's view of what sustainable development means in practice. This application has been assessed against relevant policies in the development plan and other material considerations.

11.2 The proposed training facility will provide a purpose built facility to serve Huddersfield's professional rugby league team and bring back a redundant sports site back into active use. There would be no detrimental impact on highway safety, flood risk or residential amenity and would not conflict with national policies for development within the Green Belt.

11.3 It is considered that the development would constitute sustainable development and is therefore recommended for approval.

12.0 CONDITIONS (Summary list. Full wording of conditions including any amendments/additions to be delegated to the Head of Development Management)

1. The development shall commence within 3 years of the date of approval
2. The development shall be completed in accordance with the approved plans
3. Samples of materials shall be inspected prior to the erection of the superstructure of the building
4. There shall be no buildings located, or raising of ground levels, within the functional flood plain
5. Submission of a survey is required of the location, size, depth and condition of the culverted ordinary watercourse
6. A scheme detailing foul, surface water and land drainage.
7. A report specifying the measures to be taken to protect the occupants of nearby noise sensitive premises from noise.
8. A lighting scheme
9. A low emissions travel plan
10. Provision of charging plug in points
11. Access improvements, surfacing, drainage and kerbing
12. Layout and parking details including overflow parking
13. Details of community use and access to the facilities for local teams

Background Papers:

Web Link:

<http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2016%2f92702>

Certificate of Ownership –Certificate A signed