

Ref: 21/01830/FUL - Land West of Hither Green Lane Redditch Worcestershire B98 9AZ

Proposal: Residential development (Class C3) with a vehicular access point onto Hither Green Lane, play areas, public open space including footways and cycleways, sustainable urban drainage systems and all other ancillary and enabling infrastructure.

Response prepared by Ishrat Karimi Fini, Parks and Events Service Manager of Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Councils (January 2024).

Provision for children (Toddler and Junior Play Provision)

Following consideration of the plans we would suggest given the location of the play area to vehicle access and parking that the area is fully fenced.

Given the proximity to a roadway we would appreciate confirmation from WCC as highways authority that they are comfortable with the location of the play area in highways safety recommendations. The play facility itself should be constructed with safer surfacing throughout and extend under the perimeter fence. A perimeter of grass around the fence for maintenance as opposed to shrubs is requested. Sufficient gated access for both pedestrian and maintenance needs to be provided. For safety purposes two pedestrian gates at either end of the area is sought. We would require a minimum of 7 pieces of equipment to cover toddler and junior play up to 12-year-olds. Equipment should be installed that will provide a long-life span.

In addition to the above seven pieces of equipment within a suitably surfaced and fenced off area, any natural play throughout the site should be constructed from natural products that will not degrade over time, this could be features incorporated naturally into the landscape or use of landscape features to promote imaginative play.

Inspections of the play areas should be carried out in line with industry standards such as laid out by ROSPA.

Provision for Teenagers / Young People

It would be preferable if this was provided on site as there is not teenage play available within close proximity. Based on the estimated number of teenagers on this site it is assumed that adequate provision of teenage play equipment is needed to be provided on site. It is suggested that this is provided in proximity to the toddler and junior play area, and it could also be usable by adults. Redditch Borough council can advise on the types of equipment required.

If provision cannot be provided on site it is advisable that Abbey Stadium is an adequate space for teenage provision. If an offsite provision was to be explored then further discussions would need to be taken place with Rubicon, preliminary discussions has flagged a concern for anti-social behaviour (ASB), a contribution of £33,143 would be required.

Outdoor Sports Facilities

It is noted that there are no outdoor sports facilities on site. There would therefore be a requirement for a contribution for offsite provision. Based upon the size of the development a £50,635.80 would be requested.

The Playing Pitch Strategy

The action plan for Redditch indicates that to protect, enhance and bring pitches back into use at the Abbey Stadium. It also suggests areas similar with protect and enhance for Terrys Memorial field

adjacent Redditch Utd FC. To explore the possibility of changing rooms at this site. There is also the Cricket, Rugby and Hockey Club site adjacent to that. These are the nearest sites, but also Greenlands and Arrow Valley South pitches and facilities require improvement.

Allotments and Community Gardens

In terms of allotments, current provision in the area indicates that there is a surplus as whole in Redditch, however if contributions are considered then Bridge Street allotments (closest to the application site 2.1 miles away) would be suitable for infrastructure improvements.

Redditch	Total population of 84,989 Ha	17.19691 Ha	18.479Ha	Surplus of 1.283 Ha (approximately 50 full sized plots)
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We would advise that provide a community garden on site would not be ideal and a local site would be more advantageous to accommodate a good take up of plots.

It is noted that a small native orchard is proposed as part of the wider landscaping scheme.

Parks and Gardens

We would insist that signage is installed around ponds and watercourses in line with ROSPA recommendations and that Water Risk Assessments are carried out annually. Barriers should be in place where risk assessments deem necessary, to prevent access or reduce the risk of falls from height.

Green spaces should be maintained for biodiversity alongside public access, designated pathways should be maintained in a safe condition. Any BNG on site and/or off site should be monitored for delivery at the cost of the developer and reports submitted in agreement with the planning authority.

Amenity Green Space and Natural and Semi Natural Green Space

The proposed layout excludes extensive woodland areas throughout the site including an area around a SUDs. These areas combined are in excess of what would be required for a proposal of this size.

Other Matters

There should be improvements to the footpath which runs along the south of the site and through the meadow along the river Arrow onto the Birmingham Road and towards the Abbey Stadium (from 52.321286, -1.942693 to 52.319876, -1.939756). We would suggest tarmacking the path on the development site (52.320391, -1.938970) and widening the path to the Birmingham Road (52.321699, -1.942425) as a cycle and footpath route through to the Abby Stadium. We would also suggest improving the footpath through the Abby Golf Course to the point where it joins the Arrow Valley park (52.318018, -1.924514) and improving the surface in Arrow Valley Park to join the Tarmac path at (52.315063, -1.922348).