

ITEM 1

Application Reference	DC/085815
Location:	Stockport School Mile End Lane Great Moor Stockport SK2 6BW
PROPOSAL:	Variation / Removal of Conditions Application – New sports hall and changing rooms. (The application is to remove Condition 2 and to vary Condition 3 of planning approval DC/004252, which granted planning permission for the “New sports hall and changing rooms” on 20th August 2001)
Type Of Application:	Application for Removal or Variation of a Condition following Grant of Planning Permission
Registration Date:	29.06.2022
Expiry Date:	Extension of Time to 10.02.2023
Case Officer:	Helen Hodgett
Applicant:	Stockport School, Mile End Lane, Great Moor, Stockport SK2 6BW
Agent:	Mr Pete Gleave, Zerum Consulting Ltd.

DELEGATION/COMMITTEE STATUS

This application is before Stepping Hill Area Committee, as representations of objection have been received from the occupiers of more than 4 properties, which are contrary to the recommendation to grant planning permission.

Stepping Hill Area Committee can make a decision upon this planning application.

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

This is an Application to remove Condition 2 and to vary Condition 3 of planning approval ref. DC/004252, which granted planning permission for the “New sports hall and changing rooms” on 20th August 2001.

Conditions 2 and 3 of planning approval DC/004252 for the “New sports hall and changing rooms” currently state the following.

Condition 2 of DC/004252 :

“The development shall only be undertaken in connection with and used ancillary to Stockport School. The Sports Hall shall at no time be used on a dual use basis by the wider community.

Reason - To prevent the wider use of the Sports Hall which would have insufficient parking/servicing space available to it.”

Condition 3 of DC/004252:

“The Sports Hall shall not be used before 0900 hours and after 1800 hours Monday to Friday nor at any time on Saturdays and Sundays except with the specific written approval of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason - In the interests of residential amenity.”

It is proposed to delete condition 2 in its entirety to enable use by the wider community and to amend condition 3 to enable use as follows.

Proposed revised Condition 3:

“During term time, the Sports Hall shall only be open for use by pupils and staff of the school between the hours of 08:30 to 18:00 Monday to Friday, with use of the Sports Hall by community users instead of school pupils and staff only permitted between the hours of 18:00 to 22:00 Monday to Friday and 09:00 to 13:00 on Saturday and Sunday. Outside of term time, the Sports Hall shall be open for use by community users between the hours of 09:00 to 22:00 Monday to Friday and 09:00 to 13:00 on Saturday and Sunday. The Sports Hall shall not be in use at all other times.

Reason - In the interests of residential amenity.”

The application is accompanied by: letters from the agent setting out the planning case; a Noise Assessment; a Transport Technical Note; photographs of the sports hall and wider building; and plans, including an annotated site layout plan.

The application documents state that the proposals are for the Sports Hall to be hired out for use by local community groups for a range of sporting and athletic games activity within the Sports Hall, such as badminton, tennis, circuit training, fitness, indoor cricket, basketball, netball, football, hockey, trampolining, judo, karate and yoga, etc.

It is anticipated that the average number of participants related to the community use of the sports hall would be 20 at any one time, however, the application is based upon 25 participants at any one time.

The periods of proposed community use of the sports hall are:

Term-time:

Weekdays 18:00-22:00

Weekends 09:00-13:00

Outside term-time:

Weekdays 09:00-22:00

Weekends 09:00-13:00

The proposed use would be managed to ensure any potential for disturbance is controlled. Management policies would include:

- Community use of the Sports Hall which involves amplified music during the extended opening hours will not be permitted
- the personnel door leading directly outside from the Sports Hall will remain closed at all times during extended hours use, except in case of emergency
- users will be advised to keep noise to a minimum when outside the school buildings and in the car park to prevent disturbance to neighbours

The proposed community use would, at some times of year, involve the extended use of heating plant, which is located within a boiler room. There is no mechanical ventilation to the sports hall and no condensers would operate during the extended hours as a result of sports hall use.

Use by the school itself is also proposed between 08:30am and 09:00am during term time.

As shown upon the submitted annotated site plan, for community usage, pedestrian and cycle access to and from the site would be provided via Mile End Lane, together with pedestrian, cycle and vehicle access to and from the site via Sandhurst Road. The existing vehicle parking and servicing area accessed via Mile End Lane is not proposed to be used as part of the community use of the sports hall. Covered and secure cycle parking for 30 bicycles would be available adjacent to the sports hall.

Proposed parking/servicing space for the community use of the sports hall is shown within the submitted annotated site layout plan. It is proposed that 111 parking spaces, including 5 accessible spaces, would be provided within the existing car park, located via Sandhurst Road, in association with the community usage.

As can be seen from the below planning history for the site, other buildings have been attached to the sports hall since the sports hall was built. It is proposed that one existing main external entrance/exit doorway of the building would be available to community users to access/exit the sports hall.

The proposed main entrance/exit doorway into the building would be the doorway with a glazed pitched roof, which is located within a corner position within the southeastern side elevation of the building, situated between the school buildings, and marked pedestrian entrance on the annotated site layout plan. (photograph also provided). This entrance/exit doorway does not lead straight into/out of the actual sports hall space.

There is only one exterior door with direct access into and out of the sports hall space and this is an emergency only fire door located within the Mile End Road side elevation of the sports hall, which would be required to be closed other than in an emergency.

It is proposed that a Community Use Supervisor/Caretaker would be employed to oversee and supervise external hire of the premises in order that it would be properly managed.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

This application relates to the use of the sports hall located within the Stockport School site. Stockport School is a Stockport MBC Secondary School, bounded by Buxton Road/A6, Mile End Lane, Sandhurst Road and Lake Street.

As can be seen from the submitted O.S. plan with application site edged in red, the school includes buildings, and an extensive external curtilage, which includes playing fields, games courts, parking, servicing and vehicle and pedestrian circulation spaces.

The school has a capacity of approximately 1,200 students aged between 11 and 16 years. The school's timetabled hours of operation for Tutor/Registration time and daily lessons are: 8.40am – 3.00pm (Mon/Tues/Wed/Fri) and 8.40am – 3.50pm (Thurs).

The sports hall is located adjacent to Mile End Lane and Sandhurst Road, within a northerly position within the wider school site. The sports hall has a floor area of 594 square metres (33 metres by 18 metres), and comprises a double height building (7.6 metres unobstructed height), externally finished in facing brick with a barrel-vaulted roof.

The majority of the school site is not subject to Planning Conditions controlling users or the hours of usage. From the below planning history, it is the sports hall and also the games court to the rear of the sports hall, adjacent to Sandhurst Road, that are restricted in terms of school use and to associated hours of operation.

The only regular letting of the school premises that the school currently has is with the Pauline Quirke Academy – Drama and Performing Arts. They use the dining room, drama studio and up to two classrooms on Saturdays. Students attend for one of two sessions, either AM or PM. Parents do not stay on site therefore, if students arrive/depart by car they are dropped off/picked up.

Stockport School is located within a predominantly residential area, as regards the Council's development plan. Residential properties surround the perimeter of the school site on Mile End Lane, Sandhurst Road and Lake Street. There are also non-residential properties located on Lake Street, including a vehicle MOT and service garage and a day nursery, with a business park off Sandhurst Road.

Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs)/parking restrictions are in place on Lake Street, where residents park vehicles on-street, as properties do not include off-street parking. Parking/servicing restrictions on Lake Street include resident parking areas, school keep clear areas and double yellow restrictions, together with traffic calming measures.

The sports hall and associated car parking area are located immediately adjacent to residential properties on Sandhurst Road, which comprise semi-detached houses, including off-street parking, with front, side and rear curtilages. The rear garden areas of houses on Sandhurst Road bound the car parking area. Houses located on Mile End Lane and the start of Lake Street adjacent to Sandhurst Road are also located adjacent to the sports hall and/or car park.

The site is located within a sustainable location in terms of travel, with the site surrounded by a sizeable local population within walking distance of the site. The site is also accessible by public transport, including bus routes along the A6/Buxton Road, and there is covered and secure cycle parking available on site.

POLICY BACKGROUND

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (“PCPA 2004”) requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Development Plan includes-

- Policies set out in the Stockport Unitary Development Plan Review adopted 31st May 2006 which have been saved by direction under paragraph 1(3) of Schedule 8 to the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004; &
- Policies set out in the Stockport Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document adopted 17th March 2011.

Saved policies of the SUDP Review

<https://www.stockport.gov.uk/topic/current-planning-policies>

L1.1 Land for Active Recreation

L1.2 Children’s Play

CTF1.1 Development of Community Services and Facilities

CDH1.2 Non Residential Development in Residential Areas

CDH1.9 Community Facilities in Predominantly Residential Areas

LDF Core Strategy/Development Management policies

<https://www.stockport.gov.uk/topic/current-planning-policies>

CS1: OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT – ADDRESSING INEQUALITIES AND CLIMATE CHANGE

SD-1: Creating Sustainable Communities

SD-6: Adapting to the Impacts of Climate Change

CS:5: ACCESS TO SERVICES

AS-2: Improving Indoor Sports, Community and Education Facilities and their Accessibility

CS8: SAFEGUARDING AND IMPROVING THE ENVIRONMENT

SIE-1: Quality Places

SIE-2: Provision of Recreation and Amenity Open Space in New Developments

SIE-3: Protecting, Safeguarding and Enhancing the Environment

CS9: TRANSPORT AND DEVELOPMENT

CS10: AN EFFECTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT NETWORK

T-1: Transport and Development

T-2: Parking in Developments

T-3: Safety and Capacity on the Highway Network

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Supplementary Planning Guidance does not form part of the Statutory Development Plan; nevertheless it does provide non-statutory Council approved guidance that is a material consideration when determining planning applications.

<https://www.stockport.gov.uk/topic/current-planning-policies>

National Planning Policy Framework

The NPPF, initially published on 27th March 2012 and subsequently revised and published, sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

The NPPF has not altered the fundamental legal requirement under Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 that decisions must be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations (such as the NPPF) indicate otherwise.

The NPPF representing the governments up-to-date planning policy which should be taken into account in dealing with applications focuses on achieving a lasting housing reform, facilitating the delivery of a greater number of homes, ensuring that we get planning for the right homes built in the right places of the right quality at the same time as protecting our environment. If decision takers choose not to follow the NPPF, then clear and convincing reasons for doing so are needed.

N.B. In respect of decision-taking the revised NPPF constitutes a "material consideration".

National Planning Policy Framework.

Para.1 *"The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied"*.

Para.2 *"Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise"*.

Para.7 *"The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development"*.

Para.8 *"Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):"*

- a) *an economic objective*
- b) *a social objective*
- c) *an environmental objective"*

Para.11 *"Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development."*

For decision-taking this means:

c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or

d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or

ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole”.

Para.12 “.....Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including any neighbourhood plans that form part of the development plan), permission should not usually be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed”.

Para.38 “Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available.....and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible”.

Para 47. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

8. Promoting healthy and safe communities

Para 92. Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which:

a) promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other – for example through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres, street layouts that allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods, and active street frontages;

b) are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion – for example through the use of attractive, well-designed, clear and legible pedestrian and cycle routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas; and

c) enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.

Para 93. To provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should:

a) plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments;

b) take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community;

c) guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs;

d) ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise, and are retained for the benefit of the community; and

e) ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.

Para. 95. It is important that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Local planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education. They should:

a) give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools through the preparation of plans and decisions on applications; and

b) work with school promoters, delivery partners and statutory bodies to identify and resolve key planning issues before applications are submitted.

Para. 96. To ensure faster delivery of other public service infrastructure such as further education colleges, hospitals and criminal justice accommodation, local planning authorities should also work proactively and positively with promoters, delivery partners and statutory bodies to plan for required facilities and resolve key planning issues before applications are submitted.

Open space and recreation

Para 98. Access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities, and can deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change. Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate.

9. Promoting sustainable transport

Para 110. In assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, or specific applications for development, it should be ensured that:

a) appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be – or have been – taken up, given the type of development and its location;

b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users;

c) the design of streets, parking areas, other transport elements and the content of associated standards reflects current national guidance, including the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code; and

d) any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree.

Para 111. Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

Para 112. Within this context, applications for development should:

a) give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second – so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use;

b) address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport;

c) create places that are safe, secure and attractive – which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards;

d) allow for the efficient delivery of goods, and access by service and emergency vehicles; and

e) be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.

11. Making effective use of land

Para 119. Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.

12. Achieving well-designed places

Para 126. The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process.

Para 130. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;

b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;

c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);

d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;

e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and

f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

185. Planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. In doing so they should:

a) mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impacts resulting from noise from new development – and avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life;

b) identify and protect tranquil areas which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason; and

c) limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.

187. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new development can be integrated effectively with existing businesses and community facilities (such as places of worship, pubs, music venues and sports clubs). Existing businesses and facilities should not have unreasonable restrictions placed on them as a result of development permitted after they were established. Where the operation of an existing business or community facility could have a significant adverse effect on new development (including changes of use) in its vicinity, the applicant (or ‘agent of change’) should be required to provide suitable mitigation before the development has been completed.

188. The focus of planning policies and decisions should be on whether proposed development is an acceptable use of land, rather than the control of processes or emissions (where these are subject to separate pollution control regimes). Planning decisions should assume that these regimes will operate effectively. Equally, where a planning decision has been made on a particular development, the planning issues should not be revisited through the permitting regimes operated by pollution control authorities.

Annex 1: Implementation

Para 219. ...existing policies should not be considered out-of-date simply because they were adopted or made prior to the publication of this Framework. Due weight should be given to them, according to their degree of consistency with this Framework (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given).

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

The PPG is a web-based resource which brings together planning guidance on various topics into one place (launched in March 2014) and coincided with the cancelling of the majority of Government Circulars which had previously given guidance on many aspects of planning.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

DC/050890 – Resurfacing and edging existing overflow car park (adjacent to sports hall) (Retrospective). Granted 15/11/2012

DC/051027 – Erection of a 3 metre high fence with gates around a playing /games surface (adjacent to Lake Street on site of former swimming pool). Granted 28/11/2012

DC/049418 – Demolish redundant school swimming pool. Granted 16/4/2012

DC/048665 – Erection of two no. single storey extensions to form three no. additional classrooms and a drama studio. (additions to sports hall building). Granted 29/2/2012

DC/043247 - Erection of extension to sports hall to accommodate two number classrooms and multi use area for creative media diploma. Granted 18/1/2010

DC/026550 – Removal of condition 2 & variation of Condition 3 of Consent DC004252 relating to the sports hall, to increase hours of use and allow use by the wider community together with new vehicular access from Mile End Lane. Refused 19.07.2007 – Reason: “The proposed variation in conditions would lead to an intensification in use of a site which is already busy during daytime hours. As a result of noise and disturbance from traffic generation and associated pedestrian and vehicle movements from the extended hours, the proposal would be unduly detrimental to the amenities of nearby residential properties, contrary to the provisions of Policies DCD1, EP1.3 and CTF1.1 of the Council’s Unitary Development Plan Review.”

DC/013135 – Construction of artificial turf pitch and associated fencing and landscaping – located between sports hall and Sandhurst Road (Retrospective application) – Granted 18.12.2003. Conditions of usage include: Condition 1: “The Multi Use Games Area hereby approved shall only be used ancillary to Stockport School and shall at no time be used on a dual use basis by the wider community. Reason: To prevent the wider use of the Multi Use Games Area in the interests of safeguarding residential amenity.” Condition 2: “The Multi Use Games Area hereby approved shall not be used before 0900 hours and after 1700 hours except with the specific written approval of the Local Planning Authority. Reason: In the interests of safeguarding residential amenity.”

DC/012041 – Removal of condition No. 2 & variation of condition No.3 of planning permission DC004252, to allow for extended hours of use of the school sports hall and its use by the general community – Refused 09.06.2004 – Reason: “The proposed variation in conditions would lead to an intensification in use of a site which is already busy during daytime hours. As a result of noise and disturbance from traffic generation and associated pedestrian and vehicle movements from the extended hours, the proposal would be unduly detrimental to the amenities of nearby residential properties, contrary to Policies UH4.2 and UH4.9 of the adopted Unitary Development Plan.”

DC/004252 – New sports hall and changing rooms – Granted 20.08.2001

CONSULTATION

In order to publicise the application, the occupiers of neighbouring properties were notified of this planning application by letter. Neighbours and contributors were later notified of amendments by letter, which included the submission of a Noise Impact Assessment, a revised Transport Technical Note, revised wording for the proposed replacement Condition 3, as set out in the covering letter, and the submission of plans, including an annotated site layout plan.

A site notice was also posted adjacent to the application site on 26/7/22, and a notice was published in the Stockport Express, to give publicity to the application. The application is publically available via the Council’s website.

The Council has received representations from 18 contributors objecting to the application and representations from 46 contributors in support of the application.

A petition/letters of support written by 73 students and parents at Stockport School in support of the application has also been received.

The representations of objection can be summarised as follows:

- Conditions 2 and 3 must be upheld as they are.
- Several attempts to remove and/or vary the conditions have been made in the past and rejected. Nothing has changed and therefore, this application should be refused on similar grounds.
- The conditions were imposed to protect the residential amenity of the properties next to the site, which is already very busy during school hours.
- The proposed relaxation of the use of the sports hall would be detrimental to the amenities of nearby residential properties, as a result of noise and disturbances from traffic generation and associated pedestrian and vehicle movements from the extended hours.
- The proposal will mean considerable increase in traffic and increased parking on our streets from people seeking access to the sports hall. We see this already when it is parents evening or other events. During events it is difficult to manoeuvre, with cars even parking across driveways. Cars beep horns at anytime.

- There will be further increases in traffic on and through Sandhurst Road/Lake Street, as vehicles access the car park. There are already problems with parents using Sandhurst Road/Lake Street causing access issues for residents. The streets are impassable. There is already congestion on Sandhurst Road and Lake Street due to the amount of parked cars and vehicles parked in association with the car repair garage. People already use Sandhurst Road and Lake Street as a cut through from the A6 to Mile End Lane.
- Parking on the residential streets will adversely affect fire engine access to the school and houses.
- Residents surrounding Stockport School suffer enough noise and traffic disturbance during the day without this proposal inflicting more parking problems, noise from people, talking, shouting, engines revving, car door slamming and amenity disturbance until 10pm weekdays and early mornings at the weekend.
- More air pollution, litter and possibly poor behaviour will result without consideration to the neighbourhood, including elderly residents.
- We will suffer the negative amenity and highways impacts from the use of the school 7 days per week, with no break at term time. We look forward to having a break and peace from the traffic over the holidays, in the evenings and weekends.
- Noise and disturbance generated in the evenings will detrimentally affect the ability to sleep for shift workers.
- There is already a high traffic/ noise impact on the residents on Sandhurst Road with the drama/dance classes run in school on a Saturday.
- The real objective of the proposed use of the sports hall is to make money through fees from hires of the space.
- The Transport Note, including statistics, is complete nonsense.
- The only way that any relaxation at all should be considered is if the school can provide sufficient parking on site and enforce that parking to exclude the use of surrounding roads. Currently staff park on residential streets causing a nuisance to local residents and the school does nothing.
- Existing parking restrictions do not work. Parents dropping their children off have no regard for yellow lines or the noise and disturbance.
- Parking Officers do not attend regularly and do not enforce when present.
- Road safety would be compromised. The present traffic calming arrangements are ineffective at slowing traffic down to the 20 mph restriction. Increased traffic into darker evenings will make Sandhurst Road/Lake Street more dangerous.

- The corner turn from Sandhurst Road into Lake Street is already a dangerous corner with restricted vision, with parked vehicles making it more dangerous.
- Road markings have recently been carried out to clearly define traffic lanes at the end of Sandhurst Road. The access to the car park off the end of Sandhurst Road is an accident waiting to happen.
- Chaotic as cars from one session leave and the next session arrive all trying to access and egress one point on the corner of Sandhurst Road and Lake Street.
- There have been near misses with groups of school children walking on Sandhurst Road and cars on Sandhurst Road.
- People will not use the car parking spaces in the car park. They will park on Mile End Lane and Seymour Road, as there are not measures to prevent this and this location is more convenient to reach the sports hall and buildings located adjacent. This is demonstrated every day at 09:00 and 15:00. It is anticipated there would be up to 40 parked cars for 10-15 mins of every hour until 22:00 on weekdays and half of the day weekends.
- There are plenty of other gyms in the area.
- The proposal will result in continued and increased contravention of planning restrictions placed on the use of the Astro turf pitch.
- The sports hall and astro turf pitch were used over the summer holiday 2022 by external groups in contravention of their planning permissions. Usage was between 8:30am and 5:30pm. This has led to increased traffic along all roads surrounding the school and increased noise levels from arrival, use and departure from the facility. This has an adverse effect upon the residential amenities of the neighbours.
- The school have asked people to support the application who may or may not be affected by the proposal.
- The amended application does not affect objection to the proposal.
- The provision of car parking space is almost irrelevant whilst the access on Mile End Lane is available, as it will encourage drop-off/pick up at the most convenient access point. This happen twice on school days and could happen every hour with the proposal, up to 50 cars at a time, which is unacceptable for residents.
- Other venues with more suitable provision would be Aquinas College, Stockport Grammar School, and the Scout Hut on Buxton Road.
- The noise survey was not carried out when the sports hall will be in use at 10pm. The noise of passing traffic will obviously increase if the hours are permitted.

- Increased traffic flow will make the already sinking road surface of Sandhurst Road worse.
- The people supporting this proposal are not the people living within the local area.

The representations of support can be summarised as follows:

- The asset of the indoor sports hall facilities should be available to the community for organised sports and not sitting empty outside of school hours. This would be to the benefit of the school and the community.
- Indoor sports provision removes issues with cold and rain.
- Inclusive sports sessions for children with disabilities and for younger children can prove difficult to achieve without an indoor facility.
- Access to organised sporting and physical activity is beneficial to young people and provides positive opportunities for them to be involved and engaged in during social times. There has never been more of a need for this due to the increasing number of concerns for the mental health of our children and young people.
- There is no sports hall in our local community since the closure of Life Leisure Dialstone in Offerton, and wider social and sports activity provision is very limited in the local area. It is not environmentally sustainable for people to drive lengthy distances to access sport.
- There is a lack of art and sports facilities in Great Moor/Offerton, which has been compounded by the demolition of the Dialstone centre (and sports hall), the demolition of Stockport School swimming pool and Davenport Theatre.
- It is unfair that Bramhall and Cheadle communities have more access to sporting and arts facilities. There is a disparity and there should be a levelling up within Stockport.
- To find indoor cricket nets provision in the winter people travel as far as Ashton.
- Since Covid-19 there is more need than ever to provide opportunities for people to be physically active as part of a healthy lifestyle. As we know the benefits of physical exercise will significantly support the emotional wellbeing of our community.
- Levels of obesity are increasing among adults and children in Stockport and we need to provide access to facilities so that people can take part in sport and exercise. It is a terrible waste that the school sports hall is not used outside school hours to meet this need.

- The Stockport Active Communities Strategy states that the Council wants to encourage everyone to have healthy, physically active lifestyles and enjoy exercise and sport. To do this the Council is committed to ensuring that suitable and accessible facilities, spaces and services are provided for all across the borough by a range of providers. Allowing community use of the school sports hall would support the Council Strategy.
- According to the Active Lives survey in 2020, currently there are 52,259 living in Stockport with a long-term health condition or disability. Of this population 31.3% are classed as "inactive", which compared with individuals with no long-term disability this is approximately 15.8%. This suggests that individuals with a disability are twice as likely to be inactive compared to those with no disability in the borough.
- Additionally, from the Stockport Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) 2020, within the most deprived quintile in Stockport, inactivity levels for 0 to 15 year olds is 22.6%, compared with the least deprived quintiles of 18%. (Wards with higher areas of deprivation include Adswold and Bridgehall, Brinnington, Central Stockport and Offerton). In Offerton, 26.7% are at higher risk of health and social inequalities.
- There are immense physical, mental and social health benefits of access to sport and physical activity for people of all ages.
- Involvement in sport reduces anti-social behaviour.
- The ball hall in Reddish is often booked out for basketball.
- Grass roots girls and boys football teams struggle to find somewhere locally to train.
- Many schools adjacent to housing hire out their sports spaces to community groups, including Stockport Grammar and Hazel Grove High.
- The school is very accessible, within walking distance of people's homes and well served by public transport – several local buses stop outside the school, and Woodsmoor and Davenport rail stations are within 10 minutes' walk.
- Local Sports clubs have written to support the proposals, as they would welcome the availability of an indoor facility to provide access to their sports.

The petition/letters of support from students and parents at Stockport School in support of the application can be summarised as follows:

- The use of the sports hall by the community would strengthen the community's involvement in Stockport School.

- Would benefit students, families, clubs and the community outside of school hours to continue to access sports, scouts and guides and other community groups.
- Students would like to have access to a sport/club local and close to where they live, including basketball, handball, football, rugby and cricket, in a venue that is not dependent upon the weather for taking place.
- The use would provide an income stream to enable the school to spend on educational resources.
- The facilities would give students a comfortable place to work and learn.
- Will help the community to continue to be active during the winter.
- Sports are beneficial to mental health, discipline and self-control.
- There is a significant lack of indoor sports facilities in the Offerton area, which has worsened since the closure of Life Leisure Dialstone in Offerton.
- Obesity levels are increasing and not using the sports hall to combat this is a waste.
- Will provide space for children to be engaged in sport/enrichment activities rather than hanging around the streets or on screens.
- The sports hall is a good size and has cricket nets. Currently cricketers have to travel to access cricket nets in the winter. If the hall was available we could use this for local winter nets.
- Sad that there are lots of sports facilities at Stockport School that could be used for children outside of school.
- A lot of great sports people have come from Stockport and we should do everything to support the next generation.
- The sports hall is very well designed to accommodate children, young people and adults who may have disabilities.
- Other local schools such as Bramhall High and Hazel Grove High allow the community to use their sports facilities successfully.
- Would support the Council's Active Communities Strategy, which encourages everyone to lead to healthy, physically active lifestyle.

CONSULTEE RESPONSES

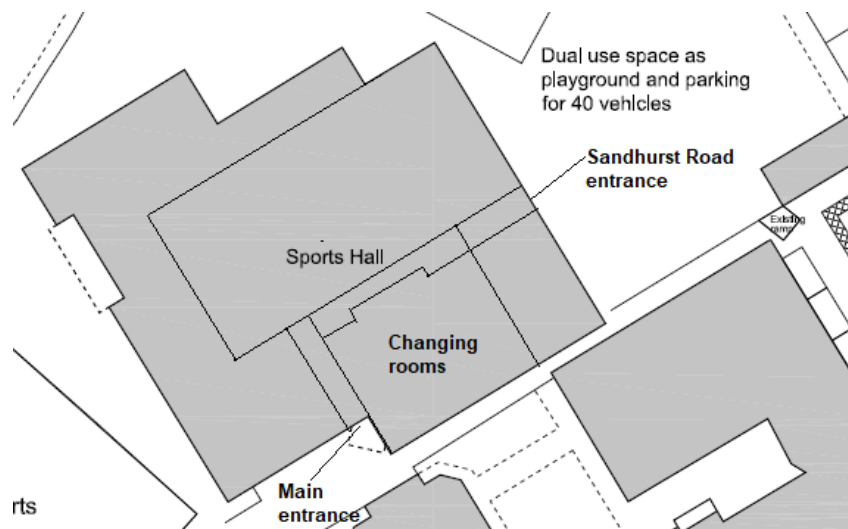
SMBC Highways – From examination of the planning file for the original planning approval for the sports hall, the applicant outlined in the planning submission that the sports hall and changing facilities were for the use of pupils of the school and would only be used during the day on weekdays. On that basis, in his analysis of the planning application, the Council's highway engineer noted that as the facilities were only for use by the school, they would not adversely affect traffic generation or parking

demand. As such, no objection was raised to the application. The application was subsequently approved by Planning and Highways Committee, with conditions restricting the use and hours of operation to those applied for / considered as part of the application.

- 1) The submitted Technical Note is a revision of the Technical Note previously submitted, with various amendments made and additional information provided. Notably, it only refers to car parking to the rear of the site (accessed from Sandhurst Road / Lake Street). In summary, the revised note outlines that:
 - There are 71 car parking spaces in the main car park to the rear of the site
 - There is a dual use car park and playground to the rear of the sports hall which can accommodate approx. 40 cars.
 - Pedestrians would be able to access the sports hall via the existing pedestrian and vehicular entrance on Lake Street or the existing pedestrian entrance on Mile End Lane
 - The school has confirmed that there is no requirement for coaches/buses/minibuses to access the site.
 - Users of the sports hall would be able to use a 30-space cycle store which is located to the south of the sports hall
 - The applicant is seeking to remove condition 2 of planning permission DC/004252 and vary condition 3 to allow the sports hall to be used by the community between 1800 and 2200 on term time weekdays, 0900 and 2200 on weekdays outside term time and 0900 and 1300 on weekends.
 - The applicant has confirmed that only a limited number of activities take place at the school on weekday evenings and the only regular letting at weekends is a drama and performing arts academy (the parking demand for this was picked up in the survey). They have also confirmed community bookings could be restricted to days when there are no school activities, such as open evenings.
 - A parking beat survey was carried out on three days in May 2022 (a Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday). This outlined that after 4pm on weekdays, parking demand in the rear car park reduces from 37 cars at 4pm to 0 cars at 6.30pm, with 7 spaces occupied at 5.30pm. On Saturdays, it outlines that maximum parking demand is 50 spaces and on Sundays, no parking was recorded taking place. As such, after 5.30pm on weekdays, 104 spaces were found to be free, on Saturdays, a minimum of 61 spaces were free and on Sundays, all 111 spaces were free.
 - Assuming all participants arrived by car, the revised Note outlines that parking demand would reach 50 during overlap periods (when one set of participants have arrived and one set of participants are about to depart). Based on this, the TTN notes that the car park will be able to accommodate the demand at the times the community would have use of the facility. It also outlines that parking demand would likely be lower than this as this does not take into account the fact that some users may travel by sustainable modes of transport or car share.

- 2) As previously outlined, although a drawing has been submitted which shows the internal layout of the sports hall, the building has been extended since the drawing was produced and, as such, the entrances to the building are not the same as those shown. Despite a request for an up to date plan, a plan has not been forthcoming. Based on photos that have been submitted, however, it appears that the entrances to the building (excluding fire exits) are as shown on the drawing below. It is noted that a fairly level access route is available from Mile End Lane to the main entrance but that a level access is not available

from the main car park. As such, those with disabilities who travel by car may struggle to access the building based on the current proposals.



- 3) Drawing 205-093-0001 'Site Plan' provides a detailed car parking layout of the rear car park, showing a total of 71 parking spaces, including 5 for disabled badge holders, 4 of which are to the northern end of the building, approx. 35m from the nearest entrance to the sports hall building (the Sandhurst Road entrance). The applicant has not confirmed whether the plan is existing or proposed but a review on site concludes that whilst the standard parking spaces are delineated, the disabled spaces are not and the area where the disabled parking spaces are shown is hatched to keep the area clear for turning. Guidance outlines that disabled parking spaces should be as close to the entrance of a building as possible and level access is also required. As such, it is considered that to enable public use of the sports hall, the Sandhurst Road access needs to be made available to allow those with disabilities to access the building and for disabled parking spaces to be provided close to that entrance. The requirement to do this could be dealt with by condition.
- 4) The 30-space cycle store should be sufficient to meet the parking demand of the sports hall being used for public use. It is noted, however, that there are gates between the main car park and location of the cycle parking. To ensure that those arriving by cycle from Sandhurst Road can access the store, gates will need to be open when the sports hall is in use. The requirement to do this could be dealt with by condition.
- 5) It is questioned as to whether the dual use car park would be able to accommodate 40 cars, noting that part of the area shown is covered and has outdoor seating in it. It is also noted the parking accumulation exercise does not take into account parking generated by staff / sports coaches associated with the community users.
- 6) Notwithstanding Point 5, subject to the number of number of people attending sessions at the sports hall being restricted to 25 and no school activities taking place, I would conclude that the car parking facilities should be able to meet the demand of the community users, as well as existing demand.
- 7) In previous Highway comments provided, it was considered there was a need for an assessment of the impact that the development would have on the local highway network to be carried out. This was on the basis that the use of the sports hall by the community could generate more than 30 vehicle movements per hour during the hours it was being used by the community (a standard

threshold used to determine the need for an assessment). Such an assessment has still not been carried out, with the Technical Note arguing that it is not considered to be required. It is still considered that such an assessment should be carried out, but as this has not been carried out, comments are provided based on the information available and the SMBC Highway Engineer's knowledge of the local highway network.

In respect to this, the Technical Note outlines that with sessions of 25 participants, the proposal could generate up to 50 two-way vehicle movements per hour between 1800 and 2100 on weekdays and 0900 and 1200 at weekends. Although not all participants are likely to travel by car and some may car share, taking into account the fact that some people will be dropped off and collected (generating double the number of trips) and this does not take into account the traffic generated by staff / coaches, traffic generation could be around this figure. Assuming vehicle movements were split between Sandhurst Road and Lake Street, then the proposal would generate 25 vehicle movements on each road per hour. These would likely occur in the 15 minute periods before and after each session (e.g. 1845-1915) and therefore the proposal would be expected to generate a vehicle every 2.4 minutes in each direction on both roads. This will be less than the number of vehicle movements generated at school start and finish times.

Noting that both roads are traffic calmed and there are no recorded accidents on either road, it is not considered the proposal will materially increase the risk of accidents. It will, however, generate noise and disturbance in the evening and weekends, potentially affecting residential amenity. In addition, due to the width of the road and the lack of passing opportunities on Lake Street when the street is parked up at night, such vehicle movements could potentially result in some congestion. This could potentially be mitigated by parking restrictions to create passing places along Lake Street, but at a cost of around £7,500.00, it is questioned as to whether this would be justified.

Conclusion.

Subject to the sports hall only being used for community users at times that school activities, such as open evenings, are not taking place and the number of people using the sports hall being restricted, it is concluded that the existing car parking at the school would be able to accommodate the parking demand of the community users.

It is also considered that sufficient cycle parking will be available for use by community users. It is, however, considered that there is the need for disabled parking provision to be provided close to the building entrance and for the Sandhurst Road entrance to the building to be available for use by disabled persons. This matter, as well as other matters of detail, could be dealt with by condition, if the application was to be approved.

The applicant, however, has not carried out a detailed assessment to assess the impact that the proposal would have on the local highway network, as was requested and considered to be required. Based on the SMBC Highways Engineers own analysis of the proposal and knowledge of the local highway network, it is concluded that the proposal should not materially increase the risk of accidents, although it will generate additional noise and disturbance and will potentially result in some congestion on Sandhurst Road and Lake Street. The implications of this will need to be considered by Members when considering the application. If there are concerns, additional assessment work could be requested, the applicant could be asked to

explore options to mitigate the impact, or a temporary permission could be granted so as to allow the impact to be assessed over a period of time.

In the event that the application is to be approved, a list of recommended conditions is listed below. The exact wording of the condition which limits the use of the building may need to be reviewed.

RELEVANT CONDITIONS / REASONS / INFORMATIVES

SUGGESTED CONDITIONS (In the event that the application is to be approved)

Condition (Max use):

This permission grants approval for use of the Sports Hall by community users during the hours stated in Condition (3) with the maximum number of 25 people permitted to use the sports hall at any time. The sports hall is not permitted to be used by community users at any time that school activities, such as open evenings, concerts or similar events that will generate a large car parking demand, will be taking place within any part of the wider school site. No other parts of the school shall be hired out / used by external organisations (other than the Pauline Quirke Academy which presently operates from the site) during times that the sports hall is being used for community users, unless written approval has been received from the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed development does not result in a parking demand or a level of vehicle movements to / from the site greater than the level considered as part of the planning application, having regard to Policies T-1 'Transport and Development', T-2 'Parking in Developments' and T-3 'Safety and Capacity on the Highway Network' of the Stockport Core Strategy DPD.

Commentary on above proposed Max use condition - Concern has subsequently been raised by the applicant/agent regarding the proposed wording of this condition, which would limit the use. This is on the basis that it would limit what activities could take place within other parts of the school. The condition was drafted on the basis of the information that was submitted. If the school wants some more flexibility to allow other parts of the school to be used for other uses in the future, there is no objection to this in principle, subject to the overall level of activities that take place at the site being restricted.

This could be achieved by means of an operational method statement that outlined what activities could take place at any time. The agent has confirmed that such an approach would be acceptable to the school in principle and an alternative condition to the above will be drafted. A method statement could either be submitted prior to approval being issued or could be agreed at a later stage, as part of a discharge of conditions application.

Condition (Car parking spaces available):

The sports hall shall not be used for community users until:

- 1) A revised Site Plan which shows the provision of 3 parking spaces for disabled badge holders in the vicinity of the Sandhurst Road entrance to the sports hall and the existing turning area to the northern end of the linear car park being retained has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- 2) The 3 parking spaces for disabled badge holders have been provided and marked out in accordance with the approved drawing and these and all other parking spaces in the entrance parking, linear parking and dual use parking

areas, as indicated on the approved drawing are available for use by community users of the sports hall

The parking spaces shown on the approved drawing shall be retained and shall remain available for use by community users of the sports hall at all times that the sports hall is being used for community users. The Sandhurst Road entrance to the sports hall shall be available for use by disabled persons to access the sports hall at all times that the sports hall is being used for community users.

Reason: To ensure that adequate parking facilities are provided and that they are appropriately located and are of a safe and practical design, in accordance with SIE-1 'Quality Places', T-1 'Transport and Development', T-2 'Parking in Developments' and T-3 'Safety and Capacity on the Highway Network' of the Stockport Core Strategy DPD, supported by Chapter 10, 'Parking', of the SMBC 'Sustainable Transport' SPD.

Condition (Cycle storage):

The existing cycle store, as indicated on drawing 205-093-0001 'Site Plan', shall be made available for use by users of the Sports Hall at all times that the Sports Hall is available for use by community users. At all times that the Sports Hall is available for use by community users, access to the cycle store from both Mile End Lane and Sandhurst Road shall be provided, with all gates on access routes to the store unlocked during such times.

Reason: To ensure that safe and practical cycle parking facilities are provided so as to ensure that the site is fully accessible by all modes of transport in accordance with Policies CS9 'Transport and Development', T-1 'Transport and Development' and T-3 'Safety and Capacity on the Highway Network' of the Stockport Core Strategy DPD and the cycle parking facilities are appropriately designed and located in accordance with Policies SIE-1 'Quality Places' and T-3 'Safety and Capacity on the Highway Network' of the Stockport Core Strategy DPD, supported by paragraphs 10.9-10.12 'Bicycle Long and Short Stay Parking', of the SMBC Sustainable Transport SPD.

Condition (Travel Plan):

The sports hall shall not be used for community users until either:

- 1) The existing Travel Plan for the school (Stockport School Travel Plan Report Revision 3 09/07/2021) has been updated to take into account use of the sports hall by community users, or
- 2) An addendum to the existing Travel Plan for the school which includes details of how sustainable travel for the community users of the sports hall will be permitted and encouraged has been produced

and either the updated Travel Plan or the Addendum to the Travel Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and have been brought into operation. The approved updated travel plan or addendum to the travel plan shall be operated at all times that the sports hall is used for community users and shall be reviewed and updated on an annual basis in accordance with details that shall be outlined in the approved updated travel plan or addendum.

Reason: To ensure that measures are implemented that will enable and encourage the use of alternative forms of transport to access the site, other than the private car, in accordance with Policies CS9 'Transport and Development', T-1 'Transport and Development' and T-3 'Safety and Capacity on the Highway Network' of the Stockport Core Strategy DPD, supported by Chapter 4 'Travel Plans' of the SMBC Sustainable Transport SPD.

Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) – Response received to confirm that TfGM have no comment to make on the application.

SMBC Environmental Health – This service accepts the conclusion of the NIA 20.12.22: Spectrum have carried out a noise impact assessment to determine the potential effects of the use of the sports hall at Stockport School during term-time evenings, out-of-term daytime and evening, and weekends by community groups.

It was agreed with the EHO that noise from vehicle activity in the car park at Stockport School would be assessed as the key potential source of disturbance. In addition, the management plan for the hall will ensure that external doors remain closed during use. The potential for noise impact from mechanical plant was also ruled out.

The detailed assessment of noise from road traffic demonstrated through calculation and prediction that noise levels at the nearest residences would be both below absolute guideline levels and at or below existing ambient and background sound levels during the quietest hour of the evening.

Therefore, taking into account the intended use and the existing environment, the proposed variation/removal of conditions has a low (or very low) potential for adverse effect on the surrounding residential receptors, in terms of noise. Accordingly, this assessment supports the conclusion that the variation/removal of conditions will be acceptable.

In addition, subjective comments have also been provided as an appendix to indicate that no adverse effect is expected as a result of the school using the sports hall between 08.30 and 09.00

At section 2.2, page 3: The proposed use will be managed to ensure any potential for disturbance is controlled.

Management policies will include:

- Community use of the Sports Hall which involves amplified music during the extended opening hours will not be permitted
- The personnel door leading directly outside from the Sports Hall will remain closed at all times during extended hours use, except in case of emergency
- Users will be advised to keep noise to a minimum when outside the school buildings and in the car park to prevent disturbance to neighbours

The proposed community use will, at some times of year, involve the extended use of heating plant, which is located within a boiler room. There is no mechanical ventilation to the sports hall and no condensers will operate during the extended hours as a result of sports hall use.

Proposed use by the school itself between 08:30 and 09:00 is discussed in Appendix F.

Appendix F Addendum, to address use by the school between 08.30 and 09.00 - This proposed extension of use between 08.30 and 09.00 will be by the school and will not involve any use by community groups. Use during 08.30 and 09.00 will be consistent with existing use by the school during the current permitted hours of 09.00 and 18.00

This service accepts the NIA conclusion and recommendations.

RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS

Condition - Development in Accordance to NIA

The development shall operate in accordance with:

Spectrum, Stockport School Sports Hall - proposed community use during evenings and weekends Planning Noise Impact Assessment, Report ref. MM1498/22314/Rev. 2, Rev.2, Minor amendment in response to LPA comments,20.12.22

Reason: To ensure that existing noise sensitive receptors are adequately protected from noise impacts, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

Sport England – Condition 2 restricts the use to school use only and no community use, whereas condition 3 restricts the hours of use to 9am and 6pm Monday to Friday.

The application seeks to remove condition 2 and variation of condition 3 to extend the hours of use. Sport England supports the removal of condition 2 and variation of condition 3, as community use is a key objective of both Sport England's Planning for Sport principles and our Strategy 'Uniting the Movement'. Both documents aim to increase physical activity amongst all age ranges and abilities. Access to local sports facilities such as school sports hall are important in helping to achieve those objectives.

In addition, community use of the sports hall will be compliant with Section 8 of the National Planning Policy Framework and in particular paragraph 92(c) "*enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.*"

It is strongly recommended that a condition to secure a Community Use Agreement is attached to any planning approval. This is different to a Lettings Policy and ensures safe and secure community use for the duration of the development.

Within 3 months of planning approval being granted, a Community Use Agreement prepared in consultation with Sport England shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The agreement shall apply to the Sports Hall and include details of pricing policy, hours of use, access by non-educational establishment users, management responsibilities and a mechanism for review. The development shall not be used otherwise than in strict compliance with the approved agreement and for the duration of the development.

Reason: *To secure well managed safe community access to the sports facility, to ensure sufficient benefit to the development of sport and to accord with Development Plan Policy [insert relevant local plan policy] and Section 8 of the NPPF.*

Informative: *Guidance on preparing Community Use Agreements is available from Sport England. <https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/planning-for-sport/community-use-agreements> Sport England also has a resource called 'Use Our School' which may be of assistance to the applicant: <https://www.sportengland.org/funds-and-campaigns/use-our-school>*

SMBC Active Stockport – Facilitating communities to be active is the primary objective of the boroughs ONE Stockport Active Communities Strategy 2022 – 2030. Providing high quality sport and recreational facilities is fundamental to this and sports halls have the ability to host a broad range of sporting activities for all age

group and abilities. Sports halls are extremely important in ensuring there is access to recreation for people who do not wish to take up gyms and would rather take part in activities like badminton and seated exercise.

Our most recent Sport England Facilities Planning Model demonstrated a balanced supply vs demand of sports halls for the boroughs population, however, since this assessment was undertaken both sports halls at Dialstone have closed. This has resulted in a current deficit position.

Our most recent Playing Pitch Strategy, which informs the boroughs Local Plan, also identified a shortfall of indoor cricket nets and we know from data captured in the Needs Assessment that cricket is a fast growing sport in Stockport. The School wish to work with the Council and Cheshire Cricket Board to fund the installation of these much needed cricket facilities.

It is therefore, clearly evidenced that opening up Stockport School's sports hall for wider community use has strategic importance.

Not only does the site have excellent active travel and public transport links, this application also aligns with national recommendations to increase community access at school sites as is successfully done across other local schools in the area.

SMBC Public Health Strategic Lead – Physical Activity & Healthy Weight –

Tackling physical inactivity is both pivotal and catalytic to addressing many of the local health, social, regeneration, transport, environmental and educational inequalities and priorities.

Opening this existing facility for wider community use would directly support the key priorities outlined in the ONE Stockport Active Communities Strategy 2022-2030 and support Stockport to be 'More Active, More Often';

www.stockport.gov.uk/showcase/stockport-moving-together

Ensuring that communities have easy, affordable access to sports and fitness facilities within their locality is fundamental to achieving these goals. This is especially true for the priority and underrepresented groups outlined in the strategy.

Evidence that physical activity and movement are good for us, both physically and mentally, is undisputed. However, the factors that currently result in a more sedentary and less active lifestyle are complex. Opening Stockport School's sports hall for wider community use would significantly contribute to a reduction of those complexities in a neighbourhood with limited indoor sports facility provision – especially with the Dialstone Leisure Centre being currently closed.

Stockport Council's ambition within the ONE Stockport Borough Plan is to ensure that;

'Stockport's neighbourhoods, local and district centres are exciting places to live, where people are active and celebrate culture'

To achieve this ambition, and in developing '15 minute neighbourhoods' across the town, support for residents to access sport and leisure must be considered.

The sports hall sits on a site with excellent walking and cycling options for new users, with the school currently enhancing its secure cycle storage to further promote the use of active transport. The school also sits in the A6 corridor with excellent public transport links.

A local community facility that promotes and facilitates both active and public transport options can undoubtedly contribute to other Stockport ambitions for cleaner air and reduced motorised vehicle traffic (especially targeting shorter journeys under 1 mile).

In addition, this planning application not only supports local strategic ambitions but also national policy to open schools for community use;

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/schools-encouraged-to-open-up-sports-facilities-all-year-round>

<https://www.sportengland.org/funds-and-campaigns/use-our-school>

Opening school facilities for community use can play a significant role in supporting a number strategic priorities in Stockport, with this application being no exception.

Maximising physical community assets, engaging local communities, promoting health and wellbeing, facilitating social cohesion, supporting active and public transport ambitions and positively impacting on environmental challenges are all strong arguments in support of this application.

ANALYSIS

Policy principles

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides in para. 92 that Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places, which promote social interaction and enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs, for example, through the provision of safe and accessible sports facilities.

The NPPF explains in para. 93 that to provide the social, recreational, and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should

- a) plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments;
- b) take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community;
- c) guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs;
- d) ensure that established... facilities and services are able to develop and modernise, and are retained for the benefit of the community; and
- e) ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.

Para. 98 of the NPPF regarding 'Open space and recreation' provides that: "Access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities, and can deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change."

Stockport's Core Strategy policy CS5, regarding access to services, states "The Core Strategy will promote and safeguard a broad range and distribution of accessible, quality indoor sports facilities and community uses across the borough. The Core Strategy will seek to enable adequate provision to be made for these uses to meet the needs of the borough's population through the plan period. Improvements are sought to the condition and modernisation of secondary schools in the borough."

“Indoor sports, community and education facilities will provide sustainably accessible services to relevant communities that respect residential amenity with regard to their scale, character and intensity of development.”

“The overall level of indoor sports facility provision across the borough will be safeguarded and criteria for the location of any new provision is set out in Development Management Policy AS-2 'Improving indoor sports, community and education facilities and their accessibility'.... locations in or adjacent to existing centres are considered appropriate for indoor sports facilities. Community uses are directed to relevant centres in the service centre hierarchy in the first instance, with flexibility of location for new and extensions to existing indoor sports facilities allowed in connection with schools, other educational establishments and premises providing dual-use facilities. Exceptions are also permitted where the indoor sports facility is sustainably accessible to the communities it serves, especially where the proposal would help to address inequalities.”

“Indoor sport, community and education facilities will provide integrated service delivery and / or be co-located with associated facilities where possible and appropriate in order to encourage linked trips, reduce the need to travel and facilitate comprehensive and efficient service delivery. The Core Strategy will seek to explore and capitalise on any community development to ensure the potential for the widest possible community use.”

Stockport's Development Management Policy AS2 regarding 'Improving Indoor Sports, Community and Education Facilities and their Accessibility', states Stockport are going to do or require sufficient indoor sports, community and education facilities to provide measures including, community facilities that are well located to serve the relevant population, including indoor sports development connected to educational establishments, providing dual-use facilities, especially where the proposal would help to address inequalities.

Stockport School is located within an urban residential area with a substantial local population accordingly located in close proximity. Pursuant to the above policies of the NPPF and Stockport's development plan, it is considered that the proposed availability of Stockport School's sports hall for community use when currently vacant would provide accessible and integrated sports facilities to members of the community, in an area with local health and well-being needs, to enable and support access to sport and healthy lifestyles.

The area has an identified need for indoor sports facilities and facilitating communities to be active is the primary objective of the boroughs ONE Stockport Active Communities Strategy 2022 – 2030. With the closure of both sports halls at Dialstone (Offerton) Leisure Centre*, the Council is reportedly in a deficit position as regards supply vs demand for sports halls (Sport England Facilities Planning Model). The Council's recent Playing Pitch Strategy has also identified a shortfall in availability of indoor cricket nets, which would be available within the sports hall, and data captured in the Needs Assessment shows that cricket is a growing sport in Stockport.

Sport England supports the removal of condition 2 and variation of condition 3, as community use is a key objective of both Sport England's Planning for Sport principles and their Strategy 'Uniting the Movement'. Both documents aim to increase physical activity amongst all age ranges and abilities. Access to local

sports facilities such as school sports hall are important in helping to achieve those objectives.

In addition, community use of the sports hall will be compliant with Section 8 of the National Planning Policy Framework and in particular paragraph 92(c) “*enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.*”

A condition to secure a ‘Community Use Agreement,’ as outlined by Sport England in their above response, would be required to be attached to a grant of planning permission to secure well managed safe community access to the sports facility, to ensure sufficient benefit to the development of sport and to accord with Development Plan Policies CS5 and AS-2, together with Section 8 of the NPPF.

*(Dialstone (Offerton) Leisure Centre has been closed since January 2022 and there is a current public consultation (9/1/23 to 12/2/23) on the proposal that Dialstone (Offerton) Leisure Centre is permanently closed. ([Dialstone \(Offerton\) Leisure Centre Consultation - Stockport Metropolitan Borough Citizen Space - Citizen Space](#)))

Amenity

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides in Para 130. “Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;

e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and

f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

Para. 185 of the NPPF confirms that “Planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. In doing so they should:

- a) mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impacts resulting from noise from new development – and avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life;”

Stockport’s saved UDP policies CTF1.1 ‘Development of Community Services and Facilities’, CDH1.2 ‘Non Residential Development in Residential Areas’ and CDH1.9 ‘Community Facilities in Predominantly Residential Areas’ confirm that proposals for the provision of additional community services and facilities within residential areas will be permitted provided they are sustainably located, have satisfactory access and parking, would not prejudice highway safety, and there would not be resultant harm to the living conditions of neighbouring residents or the residential area as a whole. Residential amenity including in terms of noise, traffic generation, parking, hours of

operation, proximity to dwellings, the scale of the proposal and conformity with the character of the area.

Stockport's Development Management Policy SIE-1 regarding Quality Places provides that specific account should be had of:

"4. Provision, maintenance and enhancement (where suitable) of satisfactory levels of access, privacy and amenity for future, existing and neighbouring users and residents;

5. The potential for a mixture of compatible uses to attract people to live, work and play in the same area, facilitating and encouraging sustainable, balanced communities;"

As introduced above, this is an Application to remove Condition 2 and to vary Condition 3 of planning approval ref. DC/004252, which granted planning permission for the "New sports hall and changing rooms" on 20th August 2001.

Conditions 2 and 3 of planning approval DC/004252 for the "New sports hall and changing rooms" currently state the following.

Condition 2 of DC/004252 :

"The development shall only be undertaken in connection with and used ancillary to Stockport School. The Sports Hall shall at no time be used on a dual use basis by the wider community.

Reason - To prevent the wider use of the Sports Hall which would have insufficient parking/servicing space available to it."

Condition 3 of DC/004252:

"The Sports Hall shall not be used before 0900 hours and after 1800 hours Monday to Friday nor at any time on Saturdays and Sundays except with the specific written approval of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason - In the interests of residential amenity."

It is proposed to delete condition 2 in its entirety to enable use by the wider community and to amend condition 3 to enable use as follows.

Proposed revised Condition 3:

"During term time, the Sports Hall shall only be open for use by pupils and staff of the school between the hours of 08:30 to 18:00 Monday to Friday, with use of the Sports Hall by community users instead of school pupils and staff only permitted between the hours of 18:00 to 22:00 Monday to Friday and 09:00 to 13:00 on Saturday and Sunday. Outside of term time, the Sports Hall shall be open for use by community users between the hours of 09:00 to 22:00 Monday to Friday and 09:00 to 13:00 on Saturday and Sunday. The Sports Hall shall not be in use at all other times.

Reason - In the interests of residential amenity."

As advised in the planning history above, consent has been refused twice previously for the proposed relaxation of conditions to allow community use and increased hours of usage of the sports hall at Stockport School.

The most recent refusal was in 2007, (DC/026550), (with Proposed Condition 3: "The sports hall shall not be used before 08:00 hours or after 21:30 hours Monday to

Saturday nor at any time on Sundays and Bank Holidays except with the specific written approval of the Local Planning Authority.”) for reasons as follow: (Policies DCD1 and EP1.3 are superseded by the above policies).

Refusal reason for DC/026550: “The proposed variation in conditions would lead to an intensification in use of a site which is already busy during daytime hours. As a result of noise and disturbance from traffic generation and associated pedestrian and vehicle movements from the extended hours, the proposal would be unduly detrimental to the amenities of nearby residential properties, contrary to the provisions of Policies DCD1, EP1.3 and CTF1.1 of the Council's Unitary Development Plan Review.”

The current application is submitted 16 years since the previous refusal and must be considered in terms of current planning policies, the current material considerations and the accompanying supporting documentation including the Noise Assessment and Transport Technical Note.

At the time of the last applications, a public swimming pool operated on the school site, adjacent to Lake Street. The demolition of this dual school and community use swimming pool, following a grant of consent for demolition in 2012 (reference DC/049418), has resulted a reduction in community activity associated with the school site.

An additional area of car parking has also been created close to the sports hall (reference DC/050890) and this provides an increase in on-site car parking availability when compared to the earlier applications. As outlined above, the site is located within a sustainable urban location, therefore, there is the real likelihood and opportunity for participants to walk, cycle or catch a bus to and from the site, alternatively, there would be 111 car parking spaces available on the school site, off Sandhurst Road.

This application, including the supporting documents, (Noise Assessment and Transport Note), for the community use of the sports hall and for longer hours of use, is based upon the community use of the sports hall accommodating a maximum of 25 participants at any one time.

The Council's Environmental Health Service advise that the findings of the Noise Assessment to support the current planning application are accepted. The main concern is noise from vehicles using the school car park and the potential for disturbance from patrons travelling to and from the sports hall, together with noise break out from the sports hall; particularly how this might affect the amenity of the occupiers of nearby properties, including those on Sandhurst Road.

Spectrum have carried out a noise impact assessment to determine the potential effects of the use of the sports hall at Stockport School during term-time evenings, out-of-term daytime and evening, and weekends by community groups. The Council's Environmental Health Service assess that the Assessment supports the conclusion that the variation/removal of conditions will be acceptable.

The proposed use is proposed to be managed to ensure any potential for disturbance is controlled. Management policies would include:

- Community use of the Sports Hall, which involves amplified music during the extended opening hours will not be permitted;
- The personnel door leading directly outside from the Sports Hall will remain closed at all times during extended hours use, except in case of emergency;

- Users will be advised to keep noise to a minimum when outside the school buildings and in the car park to prevent disturbance to neighbours;
- The proposed main entrance/exit doorway into the building would be the doorway with a glazed pitched roof, which is located within a corner position within the southeastern side elevation of the building, situated between the school buildings, and marked pedestrian entrance on the annotated site layout plan. (photograph also provided). This entrance/exit doorway does not lead straight into/out of the actual sports hall space;
- It is proposed that a Community Use Supervisor/Caretaker would be employed to oversee and supervise external hire of the premises in order that it would be properly managed.

In addition, no adverse effect is expected as a result of the school using the sports hall between 08.30 and 09.00. This proposed extension of use between 08.30 and 09.00 will be by the school and will not involve any use by community groups. Use during 08.30 and 09.00 will be consistent with existing use by the school during the current permitted hours of 09.00 and 18.00

The proposed community use will, at some times of year, involve the extended use of heating plant, which is located within a boiler room. There is no mechanical ventilation to the sports hall and no condensers will operate during the extended hours as a result of sports hall use.

As noted above, Stockport School has capacity for approximately 1,200 students aged between 11 and 16 years. The proposed community use of the sports hall by up to 25 participants at any one time would be in marked contrast to the usual term time daily use of the school site. As advised above, there would be 111 parking spaces available within the school car park, thereby accommodating maximum parking demand. The sustainable location of the site would also result in participants travelling by means other than a car.

The only regular letting of the school premises that the school currently has is with the Pauline Quirke Academy (PQA) – Drama and Performing Arts on Saturdays, which is accounted for within the supporting documents. There are also school events held outside of usual school hours, including concerts and parents evenings.

In order that the occupiers of nearby residential properties are adequately protected from noise impacts, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and policies of the saved UDP and Core Strategy policy SIE-1 'Quality Places,' additional conditions would be required to be imposed to ensure that the sports hall is used in accordance with the provisions within the Noise Assessment, including management controls as detailed above.

Conditions would also be required to stipulate a maximum of 25 participants using the sports hall at any one time and to require the submission of an operational method statement to outline and agree what activities could take place at any one time, including for example, PQA drama and performing arts, concerts and parents evenings etc... This in the interests of amenity and to ensure that the proposed development does not result in a parking demand or a level of vehicle movements to / from the site greater than the level considered as part of the planning application, having regard to saved UDP policies and Policies SIE-1 'Quality Places', T-1 'Transport and Development', T-2 'Parking in Developments' and T-3 'Safety and Capacity on the Highway Network' of the Stockport Core Strategy DPD.

Given the scale of the proposed community use of the sports hall and wider use of the school site, the findings of the Noise Assessment, and the proposed controls, it is considered that the proposed use would be acceptable in terms of residential amenity, pursuant to saved UDP policies and Core Strategy policies, together with policies of the NPPF.

Highways

Para 111. of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states “Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.”

Policy CS9 of the core strategy states that the Council will require that development is located in locations that are accessible by walking, cycling and public transport. Policy T1 reiterates this requirement, with this policy setting out minimum cycle parking and disabled parking standards.

Policy T2 of the core strategy states that developments shall provide car parking in accordance with maximum car parking standards for each type of development as set out in the existing adopted parking standards, stating that developers will need to demonstrate that developments will avoid resulting in inappropriate on street parking that has a detrimental impact upon highway safety or a negative impact upon the availability of public car parking.

Policy T3 of the core strategy states that development which will have an adverse impact on the safety and/or capacity of the highway network will only be permitted if mitigation measures are provided to sufficiently address such issues. It also advises that new developments should be of a safe and practical design, with safe and well-designed access arrangements, internal layouts, parking and servicing facilities.

As detailed above, the Council’s Highways Engineer has interrogated the proposed community use of the sports hall, including the submitted supporting documentation. Subject to the sports hall only being used for community users at times that school activities, such as open evenings, are not taking place and the number of people using the sports hall being restricted, it is concluded that the existing car parking at the school would be able to accommodate the parking demand of the community users.

It is also considered that sufficient cycle parking will be available for use by community users. It is, however, considered that there is the need for disabled parking provision to be provided close to the building entrance and for the Sandhurst Road entrance to the building to be available for use by disabled persons. This matter, as well as other matters of detail, could be dealt with by condition, if the application was to be approved.

The Council’s highways engineer points out that the applicant has not carried out a detailed assessment to assess the impact that the proposal would have on the local highway network, as was requested and considered to be required. Based on the SMBC Highways Engineers own analysis of the proposal and knowledge of the local highway network, they conclude that the proposal should not materially increase the risk of accidents, although it will generate additional noise and disturbance and will potentially result in some congestion on Sandhurst Road and Lake Street.

This analysis is based upon a worst-case scenario of participants using their cars in the majority given the lack of assessment. The use of the sports hall would be limited to 25 participants at any one time, and there is considered to be a real likelihood, given the urban residential location of the sports hall, that participants would walk, cycle or catch a bus to and from the site, thereby reducing potential traffic levels on Sandhurst Road and Lake Street.

As the Engineer advises, if there are concerns, additional assessment work could be requested, the applicant could be asked to explore options to mitigate the impact, or a temporary permission could be granted so as to allow the impact to be assessed over a period of time. On balance, however, para. 111 of the NPPF provides that “Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.” It is the case that it has been assessed that there would not be an unacceptable impact on highway safety or severe impacts on the road network as a result of the proposal. It is also not considered that associated noise and disturbance would be harmful to residential amenity given the context.

Conditions would be required to stipulate a maximum of 25 participants using the sports hall at any one time and to require the submission of an operational method statement to outline and agree what activities could take place at any one time, including for example, PQA drama and performing arts, concerts and parents evenings etc... This in the interests of amenity and to ensure that the proposed development does not result in a parking demand or a level of vehicle movements to / from the site greater than the level considered as part of the planning application, having regard to saved UDP policies and Policies SIE-1 ‘Quality Places’, T-1 ‘Transport and Development’, T-2 ‘Parking in Developments’ and T-3 ‘Safety and Capacity on the Highway Network’ of the Stockport Core Strategy DPD.

Conditions would also be required, as outlined above, regarding the continued provision of the proposed car parking provision, including accessible provisions; covered and secured cycle storage; and the development and monitoring of the Travel Plan, pursuant to the above local and national amenity and highways policies.

Given the scale of the proposed community use of the sports hall and wider use of the school site, the submitted Transport Technical Note, and the proposed controls, it is considered that the proposed use would be acceptable in terms of travel and impacts upon the highway, pursuant to saved UDP policies and Core Strategy policies, together with policies of the NPPF.

Conclusions:

Stockport School is a community school for circa 1,200 students, located within an urban, predominantly residential area. The community surrounding the school has a need for access to indoor sports provision. The controlled proposed use of Stockport School’s sports hall for use by members of the community outside of the usual school days, and for the hours sought, would serve to provide the school and community with dual access to a sports hall for sports and recreation, to the benefit of the school and community.

The proposed controls over the hours of use, max numbers of participants, management of the site, use of the car park, availability of accessible parking and covered and secure cycle parking, would serve to ensure that the proposed community use of the sports hall would not result in unacceptable impacts upon the highways or unduly harmful impacts upon the amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring properties.

Overall, the proposal is considered to comply with the Council's development plan and the NPPF, for the reasons set out within the report, and therefore, the NPPF requires the development to be approved without delay.

RECOMMENDATION

Grant; subject to conditions.