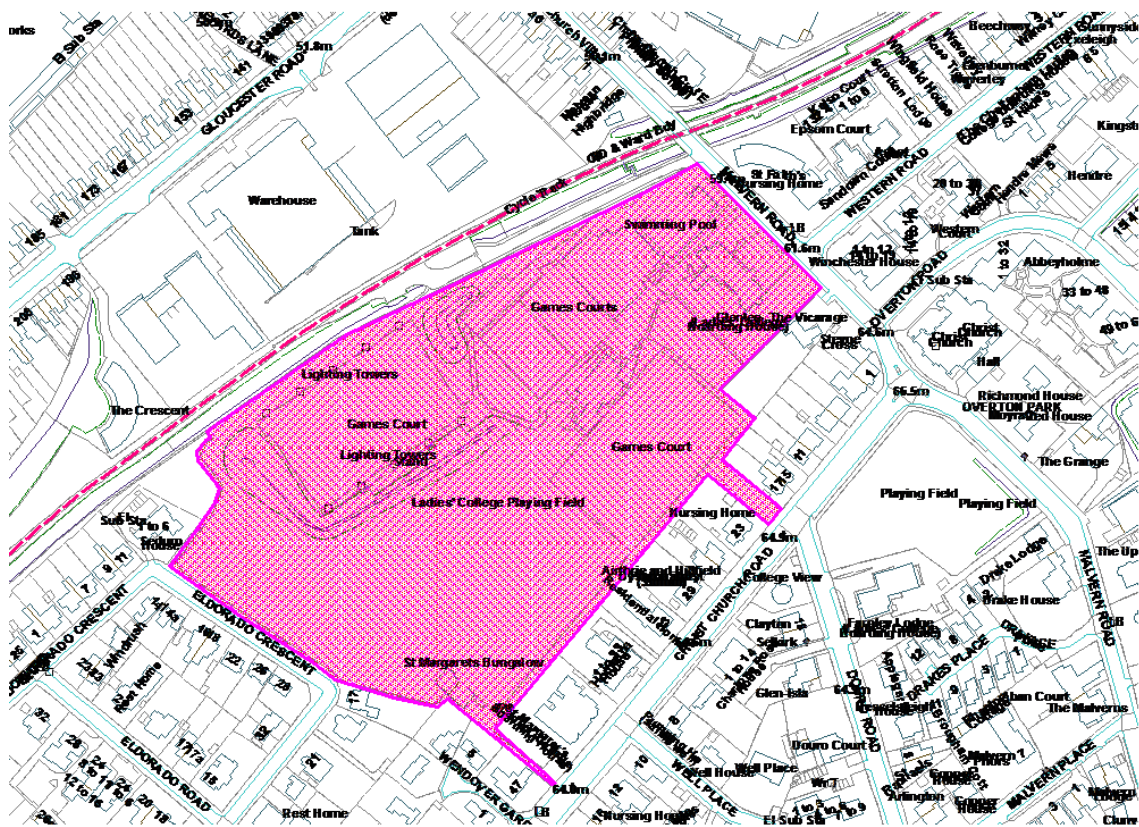


APPLICATION NO: 15/01171/FUL		OFFICER: Mr Ed Baker
DATE REGISTERED: 14th July 2015		DATE OF EXPIRY: 13th October 2015
WARD: Lansdown		PARISH:
APPLICANT:	Cheltenham Ladies' College	
AGENT:	Evans Jones Ltd	
LOCATION:	Ladies College Swimming Pool Malvern Road Cheltenham	
PROPOSAL:	Erection of new sports hall building to provide multi use sport hall, replacement squash courts and ancillary facilities. Erection of floodlighting of external hockey pitch. Demolition of existing squash court building and partial demolition of single storey structure attached to Glenlee House. Alterations to piers to side of access onto Malvern Road.	

RECOMMENDATION: Permit



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1. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND PROPOSAL

- 1.1 The application relates to Cheltenham Ladies College's playing fields and sports grounds adjacent Malvern Road and Christ Church Road.
- 1.2 The grounds comprise a swimming pool and sports hall facilities, squash courts, outdoor games courts, two synthetic hockey pitches and three grassed sports pitches. Also connected with the College are boarding houses on Malvern Road and Christ Church Road. No academic teaching takes place at the site.
- 1.3 The application relates to the eastern part of the playing fields and sports grounds. The application site includes the swimming pool, existing sports hall, outdoor games courts, squash courts and the most easterly hockey pitch closest to Christ Church Road (referred to in the application as "the old astro turf pitch").
- 1.4 The wider sports and boarding house campus extends to some 6.7 hectares. The grounds are relatively flat but lower than Christ Church Road to the south east. The application site is bounded by Malvern Road on its east side and Christ Church Road on its south east side. On Malvern Road there is a mixture of residential and non-residential buildings. Glenlee – which is one of the College's boarding houses – is located next to the swimming pool on the frontage with Malvern Road. To the south east on Christ Church Road is a mixture of private housing, an elderly persons' home and a prep school's boarding house (not part of the College). Also on Christ Church Road are two more of the College's boarding houses: Roderic House and St. Margaret's.
- 1.5 To the north of the sports grounds is the Honeybourne cycle track beyond which are employment uses with planning permission for 107 new homes (13/00106/FUL permitted July 2015). To the west of the site are the College's playing fields including the newer hockey pitch and grassed sports pitches. Further to the west beyond these pitches are houses on Eldorado Crescent.
- 1.6 The site is located within the Central Conservation Area.
- 1.7 The original swimming pool and Glenlee boarding house are buildings of local importance.
- 1.8 Christ Church, situated to the east on the junction of Malvern Road and Overton Road is Grade II* Listed.
- 1.9 The application seeks full planning permission for the following:
 - **Erection of new multi-use sports hall**
 - Provision of new outdoor courts
 - Demolition of the existing squash courts building
 - Partial demolition of single storey laundry next to Glenlee House
 - Alterations to the access and gate piers onto Malvern Road
 - Reconfiguration of car park and external landscaping
 - **Installation of floodlighting to the old hockey pitch (next to Christ Church Road)**
 - Erection of six number 15 metre lighting columns (retractable to 4.5 metres)
- 1.10 The new sports hall will be a multi-use games facility ("MUGA") that includes the following facilities:
 - Principal indoor play space that can be configured for the following uses:
 - 6 x badminton courts
 - 1 x hockey pitch
 - 1 x netball court
 - 1 x handball court
 - 3 x volleyball courts

- 1 x lacrosse pitch (reduced size)
- 1 x tennis court (optional)
- 1 x basketball court
- 5 x squash courts/multi-purpose areas
- Dance studio and storage
- Activity studio/function room
- 2 x multi-purpose studios
- 58-station fitness gym
- Martial arts and spin area
- Changing rooms
- Examination office
- Kitchen

1.11 The application follows pre-application discussions with officers.

1.12 It is supported by the following documentation:

- Design & Access Statement
- Planning Statement
- Justification Statement
- Lighting Impact Study
- Transport Statement
- Heritage Statement
- Energy & Sustainability Statement
- Arboricultural Reports
- Habitat Survey
- Response to public representations up to 10.9.15

1.13 The application is referred to the planning committee because of the nature and scale of the proposals, and at the request of Councillor Mason.

2. CONSTRAINTS AND RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Constraints:

Conservation Area
 Honeybourne Line
 Local Listing
 Residents Associations
 Smoke Control Order

Relevant Planning History:

11/01125/FUL 31st October 2011 PER

Erection of new sports hall building to provide three indoor tennis courts and ancillary facilities, revised parking and replacement squash

11/01126/CAC 31st October 2011 PER

Demolition of squash court building

97/00942/PF 15th January 1998 PER

Erection Of 3 Court Tennis Hall Adjacent To Existing Sports Hall With 3 Outdoor Courts On The Site Of The Existing 6 Tennis Courts

97/00941/PF 15th January 1998 PER

New All-Weather Hockey Pitch At The South West Part Of The Site

96/00158/PF 21st March 1996 REF

Provision Of Floodlighting To The Existing All Weather Sports Pitch

95/00342/PF 24th June 1996 REF APPEAL

To Provide Floodlighting To The Existing All Weather Sports Pitch

95/00812/PF 14th December 1995 PER

Extension To Existing Car Park

95/00275/PF 25th May 1995 PER

Revised Access To Public Highway, Provision Of Demarked Car Parking Spaces And Landscaping

92/01020/CD 17th December 1992 PER

Demolition Of Part Of An Existing Swimming Pool hall Retaining The Entrance Facing Malvern Road(Hall To Be Replaced With A New Pool hall)

92/01017/PF 17th December 1992 PER

Swimming Pool Hall

90/00979/PF 25th October 1990 PER

Link Between New Sports Hall, Changing Room And The Existing Swimming Pool

89/00591/PF 29th June 1989 PER

New Sports Hall, Changing And Ancillary Areas To Be Linked In The Future To The Existing Swimming Pool

88/00312/PF 31st March 1988 REF

Floodlighting To Redgra Pitch

3. POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

Adopted Local Plan Policies

CP 1 Sustainable development

CP 3 Sustainable environment

CP 4 Safe and sustainable living

CP 7 Design

BE 1 Open space in conservation areas

BE 3 Demolition in conservation areas

BE 4 Timing of demolition in conservation areas

BE 11 Buildings of local importance

GE 2 Private green space

GE 3 Development within extensive grounds

GE 5 Protection and replacement of trees

GE 6 Trees and development

CO 1 Landscape character

NE 1 Habitats of legally protected species

NE 3 Biodiversity and geodiversity of local importance

RC 3 Outdoor playing facilities in educational use

RC 9 Honeybourne line footpath/cycleway

UI 2 Development and flooding

UI 3 Sustainable Drainage Systems

TP 1 Development and highway safety

TP 2 Highway Standards

TP 6 Parking provision in development

Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents

Central conservation area: Eldorado Character Area and Management Plan (July 2008)

Central conservation area: Lansdown Character Area and Management Plan (July 2008)

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Policy Guidance

4. CONSULTATIONS

Heritage and Conservation

20th August 2015

Further to: pre-application site visit, and application information.

Analysis of Site:

The site is not especially prominent from the nearby public highways but can be seen from the rear of near-by houses.

Comments:

1. I made very full and detailed comments at pre-application stage (15/00582/PREAPP).
2. There is an extant planning permission (11/01125/FUL) for a new sports hall on this site which was granted on 27th October 2011, and the current proposals are approximately of a similar size and site location to the previously approved scheme. Therefore the principle of these proposals is acceptable subject to the detailed design also being acceptable. Indeed the case for this school of international significance remaining at the forefront of girls' is of course welcomed.
3. There are two adjacent buildings which are on the Index of Locally Listed buildings and these are Glenlee (CLC boarding house) and the front section (i.e. 1930s entrance) of the swimming pool.
4. The existing swimming pool relates well to the retain 1930s entrance building and the setting of this 1930 entrance is enhanced by the current landscaping at the front of the site. The architectural form, design and materials of the existing swimming pool building are good. However the design of the existing sports hall is less successful and the existing entrance link is particularly poor and has been poorly detailed, with materials badly weathering.
5. The existing squash courts are modern and their loss is acceptable, and indeed is welcomed.
6. The proposed demolition of the laundry building which is an extension of Glenlee is of more concern. I raised this issue at pre-application stage as needing an historic assessment of its age and type of construction is required. Unfortunately the applicant's Heritage Statement is weak on the assessment of this area of the Locally Indexed building proposed for removal. From looking at the historic map of 1903, it appears that this area of the building currently proposed for removal was part of the original building. Its removal would not clarify the original floor plan as suggested in the Heritage Statement, if as appears from the historic map it was actually part of the original building.

7. GENERAL COMMENTS

- a. The existing site plan which includes the red line area, appears to have failed to include the area of the site which is the existing laundry (i.e. the part of the Glenlee building) within the red line area, so that needs correcting.
- b. I note that I made comments at pre-application stage to the lack of ground levels and internal floor levels being marked on the drawings. This information remains outstanding and is needed in order to fully assess the impact of the new building, the ramp, and the proposed changes to the existing ground levels. I suggest the level information is needed at that stage now and should not be left for a condition. This ground level information is such important critical information has an impact throughout the whole scheme, including the impact on the setting of the adjacent Locally Indexed buildings.
- c. The principle of the demolition of the squash courts is acceptable although the loss of the laundry is of concern (see below) and a more thorough and accurate assessed is required.
- d. I also suggested at pre-application stage that the site plan should show the proposed scheme and all future ambitions such as 'possible future boarding house extension' and 'possible extended tennis courts and extended parking' should be removed from the submitted drawings. The current proposed drawings for the site (i.e. proposed site plan dwrg. No. 7554/SK010G and proposed site landscape strategy dwrg no 7554/SK029) still are annotated with these notes. This needs correcting now and revised drawing must be submitted. These submitted site plan drawings in this form should not be accepted.
- e. The submitted lower ground plan (dwrg 7554/SK023C) shows the new laundry being located to the west of the new building. However the drawing has not completed. The extent of the laundry is not complete and does not correspond with the roof plan. In addition none of the uses for the rooms have been noted on the drawing. This needs correcting now.
- f. The Heritage Statement -
- i. Is lacking and has some omissions in some respects. I have already commented on the proposed work to Glenlee (see above).
 - ii. In addition the list of relevant saved policies included in the Heritage Statement has omitted to include policies CP7, BE7 and GE3.

8. KEY ISSUES FOR THE PROPOSED SITE LAYOUT SOME OF WHICH WERE PREVIOUSLY RAISED AT PRE-APPLICATION STAGE (these comments remain valid and relevant)

- a. Car parking areas and vehicle movements -
- i. This application has not proposing any extra car parking spaces to the west side of the site. However the cars which are proposed to be located to the west side of the new netball court are not proposed to be screen by landscaping between the netball court and the cars. This lack of landscaping is a disappointment and a lost opportunity.
 - ii. However of major concern is the relocation of the access road to the west car park. It appears that this road is shown to be moving from its current position, to the west by approximately 8m. However the area of land for the new access road is at a significantly lower level than the current road. This lower area of land is immediately adjacent to two very important trees. The impact of the new road in its proposed location and the impact of those new ground levels on the existing

trees cannot be adequately considered without the proposed external ground levels being shown on the proposed site plan and on the internal floor levels. This lack of information in this particular area is also compounded by the incomplete lower ground floor plan drawing. The height of the laundry vehicles in close proximity to the nearby tree canopy is also of concern.

- iii. Also of major concern is the redesign of the car area located between the existing swimming pool and Glenlee. There is an apparent increase in hard landscaped area (i.e. the ramp) alongside the east side of the swimming pool and the general lack of soft landscaping to the west side of Glenlee, with the consequential erosion of the setting of this building. Again the lack of levels makes the impact of the new ramp difficult to assess. For example will the ramp have to be long to allow for the emergency exit door from the existing swimming pool? Indeed the elevation drawings showing the length of the ramp are not consistent with the plan drawings.
- b. The relocation of the refuse bin storage area to the front of the 1930s swimming pool is completely unacceptable. Indeed this area is currently rather neglected and should be improved and enhanced not visually harmed by bins. This proposal will harm the setting of the Locally Indexed building and the conservation area.
- c. Alterations to the entrance gates - the proposed widening of the west gate is acceptable in principle subject to the detailed design. The proposed removal of the section of boundary wall which currently screens the bin store area is unacceptable in principle without the bin store issue being satisfactorily resolved.
- d. However the removal of the visually dominating existing ramp into the first floor entrance to the existing sports hall and swimming pool is welcomed and the simplification of the existing access arrangements is welcomed.
- e. The impact of the flood lights to the hockey pitch cannot be assessed without more detailed information on these lights being submitted.
- 9. PROPOSED ARCHITECTURE
- a. The excellent quality of the existing buildings relies on the clear architectural form and clear detailing of the swimming pool building. However the existing sports hall and the link between the swimming pool and sports hall is less than successful and in some respects quite poor. Therefore the proposals to create a new entrance which partially obscures the existing sports hall building are welcomed. In order to create architectural harmony and avoid the ad-hoc appearance of this group of buildings; I suggest that the new entrance screen wall is extended north-eastward slightly to the junction with the swimming pool building.
- b. I fully support the barrel vault form of the new roof over the sports hall. However there are long views of this new building especially its new roof. Therefore the lack of relationship of the 'wrap-around' buildings (ie function/multi-purpose hall and kitchen and studio) and the strong roof form beyond is disappointing. The resulting south-east elevation is poor and gives the appearance of extension on extension.
- c. The proposed roof ventilators and rooflights on the new sports hall building, detract from the strong roof form, and make this roof look fussy and are unacceptable. Please ask for the ventilation to be resolved by some other method. Could some ventilation be provided via the end gables?

10. MATERIALS

- a. The proposed materials have now been confirmed and I remain unconvinced at the proposed aggregate facing blockwork.

11. SUMMARY

The principle of the proposals are acceptable, however there a number of significant concerns about the detailed proposals. The most important of these concerns being the resultant rather ad-hoc architectural form of the whole group of buildings (ie existing building and new building), with the end result looking somewhat disjointed and random.

CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE SUMMARY:

Please ask for revised drawings to address the above comments. Without significant revisions these proposals will harm the setting of the adjacent Locally Indexed buildings and harm the conservation area and should be refused.

2nd October 2015

Further to: pre-application information, application information and revised information.

Comments:

1. Most of the concerns I had previously appear to have been addressed in the revised information and/or the revised information had been more fully explained and justified.
2. I would like to see the narrow strip of landscaped area parallel to the new main entrance ramp to be as strong as possible and this strength will rely on a good planting scheme, which can be conditioned.
3. I have concerns about the height of the floodlights and their impact will rely on a suitable time related/use related condition.

CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE SUMMARY:

I do not object to the proposals provided the conditions suggested above can be attached.

Landscape Architect

12th August 2015

With respect to landscape issues, the proposal to demolish the existing squash court building is welcome. However, the proposal to erect a new multi-use sports hall building presents problems which would have to be resolved before the application could be supported.

The problems centre on the negative impact of the proposed building on the character and visual amenity of the local area.

Character Areas

The proposal site lies within Cheltenham's Central conservation area, which is divided into 19 character areas.

The Character Areas affected by the proposals are:

- Eldorado
- Lansdown

Character area appraisals and management plans for these areas were adopted by Cheltenham Borough Council as supplementary planning documents (SPD) in July 2008.

Eldorado Character Area

The proposal site lies within this character area.

The view of the Malvern Hills, seen across the Ladies College playing fields from the street next to the Christ Church Road entrance, is identified as a key view and vista in Fig 1 - Townscape Analysis Map of Eldorado Character Area.

Long distance views of Cleeve Hill, seen through spaces between buildings, form a rural backdrop for landmark buildings such as Christ Church.

The management plan requires that development proposals demonstrate how the setting and long distance views into and from the character area have been taken into account. (See page 26).

Lansdown Character Area

The Lansdown Character Area appraisal identifies long distance views of the surrounding countryside - the Cotswold escarpment, Leckhampton Hill, the Malvern Hills, as an essential characteristic of the locality, providing a visual connection to its landscape setting.

The Ladies College playing field, although private land, is an important green space, contributing spaciousness and affording long distance views.

Para 4.8 of the character area appraisal refers to views of the Malvern Hills being particularly visible across the low-lying Ladies College playing field. A photograph of this view is included (Fig 13). This view is identified as a key view and vista in Fig 1 - Townscape Analysis Map of Lansdown Character Area.

It is noted that in the Design & Access Statement submitted with the application the photographs of this view appear to have been taken on hazy days and the photomontages 'white-out' distant views and sky. On recent site visits, however, the view of the Malverns has been clear and vivid and it was easy to understand why the character area appraisal had identified it as a key view and vista.

The management plan requires that development proposals demonstrate how the setting and long distance views into and from the character area have been taken into account. (See page 35).

Local Plan Policies

Policy BE1 Open Space in Conservation Areas

Due to its height (12.1m) the proposed new multi-use sports hall would block the view of the Malvern Hills obtained from the street at the Christ Church Road entrance to the Ladies College playing fields. Views of the surrounding countryside are an essential part of Cheltenham's overall character, providing a visual connection between the town and the surrounding landscape. Para 5.18 of the Cheltenham Borough Local Plan (Second Review, Adopted July 2006) specifically refers to the importance in conservation areas of views and vistas afforded by open and green spaces. Para 5.19 refers to the cumulative impact of even small reductions in open space. The proposal, as currently submitted, would therefore not be in accordance with Policy BE1 Open Space in Conservation Areas, because it would block a key view identified in the Lansdown and Eldorado Character Area appraisals.

Policy GE2 Private Green Space

In addition to policies relating to conservation areas, the Local Plan also highlights the role of private green spaces, such as the Ladies College playing fields, in the urban green environment. Along with public green space they contribute a sense of spaciousness to the town and provide opportunities for 'views and vistas which create relationships between the built environment and the landscape'. (See Para 6.12). Blocking the view of the

Malvern Hills would undermine this relationship and have a negative impact on the visual amenity of the local area. See Note (e) of Policy GE2.

In order to comply with Policies BE1 and GE2 and the management plans of the Eldorado and Lansdown character areas, the height of the proposed multi-use sports hall should be reduced such that clear views of the Malvern Hills are maintained.

Consider the following:

- setting the proposed building deeper into the ground
- reviewing the sports offered in the existing and proposed sports halls such that those requiring greatest height, such as tennis, would be located in the existing hall.

A combination of the above should allow for sufficient reduction in height of the proposed buildings to maintain clear long-distance views and preserve the character and visual amenity of the area.

Other Issues

Building Materials

A characteristic of the Eldorado and Lansdown areas is their leafiness.

The materials of the external building fabric of the new building have been selected to be in keeping with the existing sports hall and are generally visually recessive. However, the combination of new and existing buildings will result in the background leafiness of boundary trees being replaced with stone aggregate blocks. Green wall panels, climbing plants or other mixed landscaping next to the building could be considered to soften the built form.

In order to emphasise the main entrance it is proposed to use aqua-blue copper cladding in this area. It may be that this will be too visually intrusive in this conservation area and that a more natural option, such as green wall panels or signature landscaping, could be considered.

External Landscaping

- More details of the landscape embankment planting are required.
- It is not clear from Drawing No. 7554/SK010 H where the proposed 2.4m high security fence terminates. It starts at the boundary and the D&A says it links with the existing hockey pitch fencing - but this is not indicated on the drawing. Please could the line of the new security fence be clearly shown on the drawing.

Lighting

There are issues of amenity associated with the proposal to install floodlights around the existing hockey pitch nearest to residences along Christ Church Road. This is a matter for environmental health officers to comment on.

In terms of the effect on the landscape, it is important to guard against 'visual clutter'. When looking from the Christ Church Road entrance it may be that the viewer would be presented with: hockey pitch fencing, floodlight columns, security fencing, embankment leading up to the new building - all of which, unless carefully planned, would result in a cluttering of a key view in this conservation area.

Conditions Required

Should planning permission be granted, please could the following conditions be applied:

- LAN02B Landscaping scheme (short version)
- LAN03B Landscaping - first planting season
- A long-term maintenance plan for the landscaped areas should be supplied.

6th October 2015

Comments

Having reviewed the revised drawings, the principal landscape concern with the scheme remains i.e. the blocking of the view of the Malvern Hills, especially from the Christchurch Road entrance to the Ladies College. Therefore my previous comments still stand.

To summarise my previous comments:

- The view of the Malvern Hills is identified as a key view and vista in both the Eldorado and Lansdown Character Area Appraisals, and should be preserved.
- Policy BE1 *Open Space in Conservation Areas* and Policy GE2 *Private Green Space of the Cheltenham Borough Local Plan (Second Review, Adopted July 2006)* are relevant to this application.
- In order to comply with Policies BE1 and GE2 and the management plans of the Eldorado and Lansdown character areas, the height of the proposed multi-use sports hall should be reduced such that clear views of the Malvern Hills are maintained.
- In order to achieve a sufficient reduction in height of the proposed buildings consider the following:
 - setting the proposed building deeper into the ground
 - reviewing the sports offered in the existing and proposed sports halls, such that those requiring greatest height, such as tennis, would be located in the existing hall

In addition to the above, some further comments:

Bin Storage

The Proposed Site Plan (*Drawing No. 7554/SK0101 Rev 28.08.2015*) shows the existing redundant bike store to be used as a bin store. However, the Proposed Boundary Wall – Plans and Elevations (Dwg No. 7554 SK049) shows bin storage behind the proposed railings. Please could this be clarified. Storage of bins behind railings is not acceptable as it would have an adverse effect on the street scene.

If the bins are to be stored in the redundant bike store, gates to the store will need to be installed in order to screen the bins which might otherwise be seen through the railings and adversely affect the street scene. Please could details of the enclosure be supplied.

Planting

Consider planting in front of the new 2.4m high security fence and in the area between the maintenance path and the path to the netball court in order to screen parked cars when viewed from within the playing fields.

Environmental Protection Officer

24th September 2015

In relation to application 15/01171/FUL for Cheltenham Ladies College, Malvern Road, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire please see below for my conditions to be put forward, if you'd like me to add or change parts please do let me know.

Condition 1:

None of the flood lights hereby approved shall be illuminated outside the following hours:

Monday to Friday – till 19:00 hours

Saturday – till 18:00 hours

The flood lights shall not be illuminated on Sundays or on Bank Holidays.

Reason: to reduce the impact on nearby residential properties.

Condition 2:

As the proposed floodlight columns are retractable, the columns holding the floodlighting are to be fully retracted when the floodlights are not to be used on any day.

Reason: to reduce the impact of visual amenity on neighbouring residential properties.

Condition 3:

The lights shall be retracted by 19:00 hours at the latest Monday – Friday and by 18:00 on a Saturday.

Reason: to reduce the impact of visual amenity on neighbouring residential properties.

Condition 4:

In order to reduce the noise impact from balls hitting the edges of the pitch the applicant has put forward that a buffer could be installed around the sides. This buffer should be of an appropriate material to mitigate the impact and noise from the activities on the pitch, it must be installed according to the manufacturer's specification and maintained as required to keep it in good condition.

Reason: to aim to reduce some of the noise impact from the use of the pitch on residential properties.

Condition 5:

There will be 6 fixed floodlighting columns only on the pitch.

Reason: to reduce the impact on nearby residential properties

Condition 6:

For the pitch to be used by Cheltenham Ladies College only and there shall be no external hire of the pitch to any outside team.

Condition 7:

The vertical illuminance shall not exceed 5 lux as measured on a vertical wall of the property which faces the pitch at the nearby residential properties.

Reason: to reduce the impact of the new lighting on residential properties.

7th October 2015

The conditions recommended by this team have been made from an internal consultee perspective as a Senior Environmental Health Officer in the Environmental Protection Team. In order to make these conditions I have been involved in the process from the beginning by reviewing the pre-application information which was submitted by the applicant and providing feedback via the Planning Officer in the team.

As a result of concerns made, a site visit was undertaken by myself and a colleague, also a Senior EHO in the team, along with Ed Baker (Planning Officer), a lighting engineer and the applicant. This visit was conducted on 8th July and was useful for all to review the proximity of the homes in the vicinity as well as the proposed placement of the lighting columns in relation to fencing and vegetation which is already in situ at the site. At this meeting our concerns at the pre-application stage were discussed and the applicant took these on board to consider prior to submitting the full application.

Once the application was submitted, the information was passed to me as an internal consultee of the planning team here at CBC and all associated documents, reports and plans were reviewed again at this stage. At this time all comments on the public consultation section of application were also reviewed. As a result of this, contact was made with the lighting engineer for this project to discuss with him the potential impact on the levels of lighting at the nearest residential properties if the weather was to be foggy or if it was raining to various degrees. These concerns were addressed by him when the applicant provided responses to the objections raised (on the spreadsheet submitted by them) regarding the proposed scheme. All of these have also been reviewed in conjunction with putting forward these conditions from this team.

In order to finalise these comments and conditions from this team, all of the above have been reviewed as well as having regard for the relevant documentation on the lighting levels required for the sports the pitch will be used for, predominantly hockey. Further information was also reviewed from the Institute of Lighting Professionals (ILP) – “Guidance notes for the reduction of obtrusive light”, which provides lighting levels for various environmental zones. This has been reflected in condition 7 where a set lux level has been set for light at nearby residential properties. Other conditions have been compiled from the information provided in the application i.e. times of use, retracting the columns when not in use, number of columns to be installed. Other conditions have been placed on the proposals as a result of the joint visit to the site i.e. the buffer to be installed around the pitch.

Tree Officer

4th August 2015

The Tree Section does not object in principle to this application on the basis that the following information is submitted and agreed prior to determination of this application:

Tree Survey to BS 5837:2012 to include:

- Tree Protection Plan

2nd October 2015

The Tree Section has no objections with this application. In the current proposed site landscape strategy there is no tree planting, the Tree Section would like to see some tree planting as there is a large number of mature trees on the site. If permission is granted please use the following condition:

Tree Protection

Tree protection shall be installed in accordance with the specifications set out within the Arboricultural Report reference Cheltenham Ladies College Sports Centre and the Tree Protection Plan Drawing Number 12974/49433 dated July 2015. The tree protection shall be erected/installed, inspected and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of any works on site (including demolition and site clearance) and shall remain in place until the completion of the construction process.

Reason: In the interests of local amenity, in accordance with Local Plan Policies GE5 and GE6 relating to the retention, protection and replacement of trees.

GCC Highways Planning Liaison Officer

29th July 2015

I refer to the above application plans and documents received on the 15th July for a new sports hall and facilities and alterations to access onto Malvern Road to which I have the following comments.

Site Location and Characteristics

The site is located within Cheltenham east of the town centre with pedestrian and vehicle accesses from Malvern Road a class 4 residential road within a 20mph speed limit zone with an additional vehicular access onto Christchurch Road subject to a 30mph speed limit. The site is within walking distance of some local amenities and services within this suburban area, regular bus services, rail services and Cheltenham Town Centre. Therefore the site is considered to be sustainably located providing alternatives to private vehicle use to access the site.

However despite the sustainable alternatives as illustrated in the transport statement interview surveys carried out illustrated that the predominant mode of travel is driving by private car.

Highway Safety

There has been only one report collision in the past 5 years nearby on a Western Road close to the site which was unrelated to the site access.

Trip Generation & Parking

The transport statement mentions that the primary use of the facilities will be for College pupils and private members, but does not preclude use by members of the public. The design and access statement states that members of the public can book facilities, which would restrict use. The statement mentions the majority of the use of the facilities by CLC (Cheltenham Ladies College) pupils and the vehicular traffic arising will be unaffected by the proposal, as the vast majority of pupils at CLC are boarders (79 percent) and walk and cycle the short distances from boarding houses. This is accepted and given the proposal would not affect pupil numbers trip patterns would remain largely unchanged. Therefore surveys of trips have focused on private members surveys.

The transport statement includes a worst case and realistic peak trip forecasts based on numbers of users expected and anticipated to use the proposed sports facilities at any one time. The worst case suggests a maximum of 128 people using the facilities at any one time and a lower realistic forecast of 98 additional people based variability of demand, availability of staff and changing room capacity. The statement based on a survey between 18:30 and 21:00 Thursday 25th June of private members mentions 45% of those surveyed were private car drivers.

Therefore based on this survey and maximum number of people using proposed facilities it is stated this would give rise to a demand for an additional 58 car parking spaces.

The application proposes a reduction in on-site parking from 85 to 81 parking spaces. The transport statement concludes that this is sufficient based on a parking survey of the surrounding streets and on-site parking spaces available showing between 70 and 138 on street parking spaces available and between 11 and 68 on site spaces available following parking surveys carried out. These surveys were carried out at identified peak on-site and off-site demand periods on a weekday and weekend.

Therefore on this basis and given the relatively sustainable location of the site it is accepted sufficient on and off site parking provision exists for the additional potential parking demand generated by the increase in trips to the proposed facilities.

The application site plan includes a new cycle store providing 22 spaces (11 stands), replacing previous cycle store with 15 spaces for the existing sports facilities. This is below the local plan standard for floor space of the new extended sports facility and it is noted that the cycle parking surveys are based on just that of private members and not for students. Therefore it is considered that increased cycle parking provision should be provided to meet Local Plan standards for the proposed building equating to 60 spaces of 30 Sheffield stands. These stands should be covered.

The application includes 5 disabled parking spaces which is compliant with the local plan disabled parking standards for the proposed and existing sports facilities.

Site Access

The site includes four existing vehicle accesses which will be retained for the proposed site uses as well as the existing site uses. These include three site accesses onto Malvern Road and one onto Christchurch Road. The transport statement in provides visibility splay drawings in Appendix B, drawings SK01 to SK04 of the existing accesses stating sufficient visibility splays are available for posted speed limits. However it is unclear on drawings SK01, SK02 and SK03 of visibility splays provided due to the red line on the plans not clearly showing the existing boundary gateways and walls.

It is accepted that the accesses are existing and have operated without any related reported collisions. The proposals will likely increase traffic generation and pedestrian and vehicle visibility may be slightly obstructed by the existing site walls and gateways, however with the proposed alterations to widen the eastern access and replace a wall adjacent to the secondary access with a railing to improve existing inter-visibility and accessibility the site accesses are considered suitable.

I refer to the above planning application received on 25th June 2015. I recommend that no highway objection be raised subject to the following condition(s) being attached to any permission granted:-

1. The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until details of secure and covered cycle storage facilities for a minimum of 60 bicycles has been made available in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA.
Reason:- To ensure that adequate cycle parking is provided, to promote cycle use and to ensure that the opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up in accordance with paragraph 32 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
2. The building(s) hereby permitted shall not be occupied until the vehicular parking and turning and loading/unloading facilities have been provided in accordance with the submitted plan 7554/ SK010 H, and those facilities shall be maintained available for those purposes thereafter.

Reason:- To ensure that a safe, suitable and secure means of access for all people that minimises the conflict between traffic and cyclists and pedestrians is provided in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

11th August 2015

I will amend my response to reflect the provision of 40 [bicycle] spaces (20 Sheffield stands) in reference to the amended plan when received or otherwise will revise my previous comment cycle condition for the provision of 40 spaces (20 Sheffield stands).

Environment Agency

15th July 2015

Thank you for your letter consulting us on the above planning application. I note whilst you include a copy of our consultation checklist (filter), you have not identified a 'reason for consultation'.

Notwithstanding the above, this appears to be a lower risk planning consultation which does not appear to require direct consultation with us; it does not fall within our 'consultation filter'.

The proposed development appears to fall within Flood Zone 1 based on our 'indicative' Flood Map for Planning (Rivers and Sea). On this basis, we would recommend you refer to our area Flood Risk Standing Advice - for 'Operational Development (+1ha) within Flood Zone 1' and consult with the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) i.e. the Gloucestershire Flood Risk Management team.

INFORMATIVES

1. For contaminated land matters, you are advised to seek the comments of your Environmental Health Officer or Contaminated Land Officer, with reference to our 'Developer Guidance' sheet.
2. For foul drainage matters, you are advised to seek the completion of the 'Foul Drainage Assessment Form' for your consideration.
3. For Pollution Prevention and any consent requirements (separate to planning) you are advised to refer to our 'Developer Guidance' sheet which includes Pollution Prevention Guidance Notes (PPG's) targeted at specific activities.

GCC Local Flood Authority (LLFA)

21st July 2015

I refer to the above application received by the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) on 15th July 2015, for comment on the management of surface water. It is understood that the development is in flood zone 1 but there is not any definite drainage strategy mentioned in the application for LLFA to assess. It is a mandatory requirement to provide sufficient information relating to the proposed surface water drainage strategy and consideration must be given to the provision of a sustainable drainage system.

On the basis of the documentation supplied to Local Planning Authority (LPA) it has not been possible to successfully review this application for the purpose of assessing the adequacy of the surface water drainage system. Insufficient detail has been provided in the applicant's submission and therefore the LLFA objects to the current proposal. We need further information, including the following:

1. Existing drainage survey information, details of diameter of existing pipes and their capacities and discharge points.

2. Please clarify total site area and developable area and topography of the site.
3. As it is a brownfield site LLFA (statutory consultee) recommends flow rate off site should be reduced by 40%.
4. LLFA requires further detail of the proposed outfall from site. It is recommended to conduct Soil Condition Test results BRE 365 /evidence to demonstrate that site is suitable for infiltration to cope with additional runoff due to climate change.
5. Any consideration to flow controls and pollution control devices? How are rates being restricted?
6. Further explanation to show how exceeding events will be adequately catered for and the flow routes on map.
7. Evidences to show if any test done to check the contamination at site and what measures have been taken to counteract this problem.
8. Explanation to show that the SUDS hierarchy has been given consideration.
9. General site levels and finished floor levels of the proposed dwellings.

The LLFA does have standing advice, Flood Risk Assessment Guidance and a SuDS Design and Maintenance Guidance document which can still be applicable in principle for this development. They can be accessed on the following website: <http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/extra/sudsplanning>

23rd September 2015

I refer to the above planning application, which the Lead Local Flood Authority previously objected to due to insufficient detail provided in the FRA and Drainage Strategy. Following further correspondence with the applicant and their subsequent resubmission of revised FRA it is now confirmed that the revised proposal meets the requirements of a major application for which the LLFA is a statutory consultee.

The LLFA have no further objections to this application based upon the surface water management proposals for the site. Section 5.6 states that during detail design stage drainage strategy could be modified so LLFA would recommend the following condition is given to any approval for the development:

Condition:

Development shall not begin until drainage details, incorporating sustainable drainage principles and an assessment of the hydrological and hydro geological context of the development, sufficient information on how exceeding event will be dealt with and have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall subsequently be completed in accordance with the approved details before the development is first brought into use/occupied.

Reason: To ensure the development is provided with a satisfactory means of drainage and thereby preventing the risk of flooding. It is important that these details are agreed prior to the commencement of development as any works on site could have implications for drainage in the locality.

Condition:

Prior to the commencement of development details of surface water attenuation/storage works shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The volume balance requirements should be reviewed to reflect actual development proposal, agreed discharge rate and the extent of impermeable areas and runoff to be generated. The scheme shall subsequently be completed in accordance with the approved details before the development is first brought into use/occupied.

Reason: To prevent the increased risk of flooding, It is important that these details are agreed prior to the commencement of development as any works on site could have implications for drainage in the locality.

Foul Water

Please note that proposed foul water is a matter that will be dealt by local sewerage authority and is not therefore considered by Lead local flood authority in this response.

Management and Maintenance Please note that the proposed future management and maintenance of the sustainable drainage system is a matter that will be dealt with by the Local Planning Authority and is not therefore been considered by the Lead Local Flood Authority in this response.

Land Drainage Officer

4th August 2015

I note the comments made by the Lead Local Flood Authority dated 21st July 2015 and would add the following:

The existing surface water drainage from the site, discharges into a ditch running parallel to the southern edge of the Malvern Road access to the Honeybourne Line (pedestrian and cycle way). This poorly maintained ditch itself discharges into a pipe network, the route and condition of which is unknown. During periods of heavy rain, the ditch and pipe network are often seen to be deficient in their current condition with surface water flowing overland and onto the Honeybourne Line. The Honeybourne Line is susceptible to standing water in this vicinity and therefore, if as proposed, surface water from the new development similarly discharges to the afore mentioned ditch and pipe network, measures should be taken to determine and establish their adequacy.

Sport England

15th July 2015

Thank you for consulting Sport England on the above application. I can confirm the consultation is statutory and that the consultation was accepted on 14 July 2015

In accordance with paragraph 42 of Circular 08/2005 (Guidance on Changes to the Development Control System), Sport England will respond to this consultation within 21 days of the date of receipt.

However, if insufficient information is received in order to allow us to make a substantive response to the consultation, Sport England will contact you to request further information. The 21 day deadline will not commence until receipt of the additional information.

25th August 2015 - Thank you for consulting Sport England on the additional information provided by the applicant.

As you may recall, Sport England asked for information relating to three matters in its letter, they were:

- Which community clubs or users currently use the tennis/ netball courts
- When are the tennis/ netball courts used?
- How will the needs of these clubs or users continue to be met on or offsite?

The first two of the above has been addressed in the submitted letter provided by the School. The third point remains outstanding.

Sport England notes the planning history of the site (and planning precedents establish by past consents) but is simply keen to understand they extent to which netball and tennis activity will continue on the site as a result of the proposed development and how it will be reduced. The internal layout plans for the sports hall indicate that neither tennis nor netball

would be provided in the same quantity as existing, but perhaps the applicant can clarify this.

On receipt of this information, I would be happy to provide swift further comment thereafter.

3rd August 2015

Thank you for consulting Sport England on the above named application.

It is understood that the site forms part of, or constitutes a playing field as defined in The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010 (Statutory Instrument 2010 No. 2184).

Sport England is therefore a statutory consultee and has assessed the application in the context of its policy to protect playing fields, 'A Sporting Future for the Playing Fields of England' which accords with paragraph 74 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Essentially, Sport England will oppose the granting of planning permission for any development which would lead to the loss of, or would prejudice the use of, all or part of a playing field, unless one of five exceptions applies.

A copy of 'A Sporting Future for the Playing Fields of England' which includes the five exceptions can be found at: <http://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/planning-for-sport/development-management/planning-applications/playing-field-land/>

The application proposes the erection of new sports hall building with new multi-use sport hall and squash courts and ancillary facilities, and also the erection of floodlighting of external hockey pitch. Six tennis/netball courts will be lost as a result of the development. One of these will be replaced indoors, and a single new court will be provided externally.

The proposed floodlighting accords with the following Sport England policy exception:

E2 - The proposed development is ancillary to the principal use of the site as a playing field or playing fields, and does not affect the quantity or quality of pitches or adversely affect their use.

The new sports hall building has scope to accord with the following Sport England policy exception:

E5 - The proposed development is for an indoor or outdoor sports facility, the provision of which would be of sufficient benefit to the development of sport as to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss of the playing field or playing fields.

However, before Sport England can be fully satisfied that the proposed development meets E5 above, it seeks clarity/ information on the impact of the loss of the tennis/netball courts.

Specifically, Sport England seeks to know:

- Which community clubs or users currently use the tennis/ netball courts?
- When are the tennis/ netball courts used?
- How will the needs of these clubs or users continue to be met on or offsite?

Upon submission of the above information by the applicant to the local planning authority, Sport England would like to be further consulted and would like to comment further.

If this application is to be presented to a Planning Committee, we would like to be notified in advance of the publication of any committee agendas, report(s) and committee date(s). We

would be grateful if you would advise us of the outcome of the application by sending us a copy of the decision notice.

2nd October 2015

Thank you for consulting Sport England on additional information and revised plans submitted as part of the above application for planning permission.

The additional information and revised plans comprise:

- Justification Statement - Health and Fitness Centre, by the Principal, dated September 2015
- Site Location Plan - Existing Site Layout (drawing numbered 7554 SK005 Rev C)
- Proposed Site Plan (drawing numbered 7554 SK010I)
- Proposed Lower Ground Floor Plan (drawing numbered 7554 SK011H Rev H)
- Proposed Upper Ground Floor Plan (drawing numbered 7554 SK012H Rev H)

In its first response to consultation on the application, Sport England advised that the proposed floodlighting would fulfil the circumstances described in exception E2 of its Planning Policy Statement. That is to say:

'The proposed development is ancillary to the principal use of the site as a playing field or playing fields, and does not affect the quantity or quality of pitches or adversely affect their use.'

It added that the new sports hall had the potential to fulfil the circumstances described in exception E5 of the same Statement. That is to say:

'The proposed development is for an indoor or outdoor sports facility, the provision of which would be of sufficient benefit to the development of sport as to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss of the playing field or playing fields.'

However, in order to determine whether or not that was the case, clarification was sought over the impact of the development on the loss of existing tennis/netball courts.

From a letter dated 6 August 2015, by the College's Finance Director, it is understood that the needs of current community users of the courts that would be lost would continue to be met at Well Place.

Sport England has considered the additional information and revised plans and is satisfied that the proposal fulfils the circumstances described in exception E5 of its Planning Policy Statement and the third bullet point in paragraph 74 of the National Planning Policy Framework. This being the case, Sport England does not wish to raise an objection to this application.

The absence of an objection to this application in the context of the Town and Country Planning Act, does not in any way commit Sport England or any National Governing Body of Sport to support any related application for grant funding.

Sport England would appreciate being notified of the outcome of the application in due course by way of a copy of the decision notice.

If you would like any further information or advice please contact the undersigned at the address below

Wales and West Utilities

31st July 2015

We enclose an extract from our mains records of the area covered by your proposals together with a comprehensive list of General Conditions for your guidance. This plan shows only those pipes owned by Wales & West Utilities in its role as a Licensed Gas Transporter (GT). Gas pipes owned by other GT's and also privately owned pipes may be present in this area. Information with regard to such pipes should be obtained from the owners. The information shown on this plan is given without obligation, or warranty and the accuracy thereof cannot be guaranteed. Service pipes, valves, syphons, stub connections, etc., are not shown but their presence should be anticipated. No liability of any kind whatsoever is accepted by Wales & West Utilities, its agents or servants for any error or omission.

Wales & West Utilities has pipes in the area. Our apparatus may be affected and at risk during construction works.

Should the planning application be approved then we require the promoter of these works to contact us directly to discuss our requirements in detail before any works commence on site. Should diversion works be required these will be fully chargeable.

You must not build over any of our plant or enclose our apparatus.

Please note that the plans are only valid for 28 days from the date of issue and updated plans must be requested before any work commences on site if this period has expired.

Gloucestershire Centre for Environmental Records

23rd July 2015

Available to view online

Cheltenham Civic Society

14th August 2015

This will have minimal impact on Malvern Road or the Honeybourne Line. It represents appropriate provision of the comprehensive facilities they need.

Architects Panel

3rd June 2015

Comments received in connection with the pre-application:

This proposal for a new sports hall and associated accommodation for pupils and private members has been subject to consents in both 1998 and 2011. The current scheme represents a reduction in footprint over the 2011 approval but is slightly higher. The architect demonstrated that height had been reduced as part of the design process and it was generally felt that given the relatively hidden nature of the site, height was not necessarily an issue and that the scheme sat well within the context of the existing buildings and landscape.

A number of public consultations have been held and feedback was generally positive although comments were received regarding the proposed wind-catchers. The panel did not share these concerns and suggested that it might be interesting to make even more of

a feature of the wind catchers, perhaps echoing architectural features on the existing buildings such as the dome.

Aesthetically, the least successful elevation was the gable facing the sports pitch; however, it was noted that this would be fairly well screened by the ancillary accommodation and not subject to public views. The main longitudinal elevation was well composed and worked well with its context.

Overall, the panel felt that this was a well-considered scheme and an improvement over the previous approval and would therefore support an application on this basis.

5. PUBLICITY AND REPRESENTATIONS

Number of letters sent	6
Total comments received	7
Number of objections	6
Number of supporting	0
General comment	1

5.1 The Council has received a number of very detailed representations and objections to the application. The issues raised are summarised below and a full copy of the representations is appended to this report.

- The new sports hall is too high and will spoil views of the Malvern Hills and countryside.
- The building is unnecessarily bulky. The height of the sports hall is unjustified.
- Resulting harm to the Conservation Area. The proposal conflicts with the Lansdown Character Area Appraisal.
- The proposed floodlighting is too close to neighbouring properties. Harmful impact on neighbours' enjoyment of their properties. Noise disturbance. Loss of privacy. Detrimental to mental health.
- The lighting calculations do not take account of bad weather, rain, mist and reflection from the pitch. Questions the accuracy of the lighting calculations.
- Questions the suitability of the lighting levels for hockey.
- Insufficient information has been provided on the specification of the lighting.
- Lighting detrimental to wildlife.
- Conflict with neighbours' human rights.
- There is no need to floodlight the old astro turf pitch because there is an existing floodlit pitch which is not used regularly.
- Inaccuracies with the plans.
- Inaccuracies in the Heritage Statement.
- Noise disturbance from activities going on after dark. Noise from coaches on Christ Church Road.
- Additional traffic. Insufficient parking.
- The hockey pitch is prone to flooding.
- The proposals are in conflict with the NPPF, draft Joint Core Strategy and draft Cheltenham Plan.

6. OFFICER COMMENTS

6.1 Determining Issues

6.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning decisions are made in accordance with the Development Plan, unless materials considerations indicate otherwise.

6.3 The Development Plan for the area is the Cheltenham Borough Local Plan (adopted 2006).

6.4 The National Planning Policy Framework ("NPPF") is the Government's national planning policy. The NPPF sets the weight to be attached to existing Local Plan policies. Paragraphs 214 and 215 state that where a Local Plan has not been adopted in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Act 2004 – as is the case for the Cheltenham Borough Local Plan – weight should be afforded to Local Plan policies in proportion to the degree of consistency with the NPPF.

6.5 The Cheltenham Local Plan was adopted in accordance with pre-2004 legislation and therefore only policies which accord with the NPPF carry significant weight. Where the Local Plan is not in accordance, or is silent, then the NPPF prevails.

6.6 The main issues relevant to the consideration of the planning application are:

- (i) The need for the development
- (ii) The effect of the proposal upon local heritage assets
- (iii) Impact on trees
- (iv) Impact on neighbouring property
- (v) Access and transportation
- (vi) Drainage
- (vii) Ecology
- (viii) Other matters

6.7 The need for the development

6.8 The application is supported by a justification statement prepared by the College. The statement is summarised as follows.

Background

6.9 Cheltenham Ladies College was founded in the 1850s. It currently enrolls 850 girls who are taught at a 9 hectare site in a central position within the town. There are over 600 boarders and around 200 day pupils (an 80:20 split).

6.10 The playing fields and sports complex is a minimum 10 minute walk from the teaching campus. The girls are required to change at their boarding houses *en route* as there are no mass centralised changing facilities available.

Economic context

6.11 The College currently employs over 600 people. It directly contributes around £17 million to the local economy each year.

6.12 The College is renowned as one of the world's leading schools. Nationally, there has been an upward trend in the number of pupils attending independent schools over the past 30 years. However, there has been a substantial fall in the number of boarders over the same period. The College needs to invest in its facilities in order to remain competitive.

Social factors

6.13 The College is passionately committed to promoting the health and wellbeing of its pupils, and to encourage a life-long commitment to healthy exercise. The College wants to provide for all, whatever their sporting abilities. The College emphasises flexibility and versatility, and is aiming to improve the following areas:

- Enhancing dry, lit facilities by extension of space
- Providing additional floodlighting on the outside all weather surfaces
- Providing a long-term base for rowing

6.14 As well as sport and leisure, the brief for the new facilities also includes:

- Disaster recovery facilities away from the teaching site
- A second server room for IT
- Improvement to the College laundry facilities (house-based laundry is unviable)
- Potential for public exams
- Improved systems for segregating college and member use

6.15 The College surveyed its pupils in 2014, the results of which demonstrated support for improved sporting and leisure facilities. 76% of girls aged 11-14 stated that fitness was important to them. This increased to 87% for the 15-18 age group. There is a growing trend for fitness/relaxation/wellbeing/activities alongside more traditional sports.

6.16 The proposals will significantly improve the accessibility and quality of sporting and leisure facilities at the College.

Current problems/challenges

6.17 The proposals will ensure that all lessons can continue as per the normal timetable without disruption by the weather or when ground is frozen. This will lead to better teaching and wider range of activities.

6.18 Matches will not have to be rescheduled or cancelled. Other sports clubs will also not have to be displaced during bad weather conditions.

6.19 There will be an extended and improved fitness suite which will remove the need for queuing. Increased space will improve facilities. Provision of a bespoke fitness studio, which currently does not exist.

6.20 The existing squash courts leak and are in poor condition. There is also currently a shortage of courts.

6.21 Existing spectator facilities are below standard. The new function room will provide an impressive space for hosting mid-week teas, receiving staff and parents, as well as transforming the spectator experience.

Environmental

6.22 Significant commitment to noise abatement and acoustic dampening to meet the needs of exam use.

6.23 Some green energy capture. Low carbon footprint with girls walking to facilities. Improved cycle parking facilities.

Need for flood lighting

- 6.24** The College cites significant benefits to tennis, netball, badminton, trampolining, volleyball, basketball, hockey, lacrosse, football, cross-country training and training for competitive fixtures.
- 6.25** Previous applications for floodlighting the tennis and netball courts at the College's nearby Wells Place site were refused. The after school tennis coaching programme currently has to stop during winter months. With the new flood lighting, the tennis coaching programme could take place all year around. Netball also currently has to take place indoors during winter months. There is currently only one court and four teams often have to share it.
- 6.26** Badminton is currently displaced completely during dark months. This is also the case for trampolining, volleyball and basketball.
- 6.27** During dark months, there can be serious health and safety issues for playing hockey, lacrosse and other hard ball games even after 3pm in poor weather conditions. Lessons are sometimes cut short and have to become theory based instead.
- 6.28** Some team sports currently have to share a pitch which means that training is not carried out on full-size pitches and does not recreate match conditions.
- 6.29** Cross country and running exercise can also better and more safely take place under floodlighting during dark months.
- 6.30** Unusually, the College runs all three team sports (hockey, netball and lacrosse) during the winter. This is necessary because of the large size of the college. Many schools only operate one team sport for a given winter period – this works for them because they are either smaller or co-ed with a smaller pool of girls. If the College did not operate three winter team sports at once then many girls would lose out on competitive sports.
- 6.31** Typically, around 300 of 850 girls represent the College in competitive teams each week. They need to train as a team if they are to be competitive, which places extra demand on facilities. Currently, many squads have to share pitches. The floodlighting of the second hockey pitch would therefore have invaluable benefit in terms of better re-creating match day conditions and providing a greater number of girls with competitive team opportunities. The current situation is that hockey and lacrosse training continue outside in the wet and cold conditions, unless extreme conditions prevail. Netball courts become slippery and dangerous sooner, and lacrosse only comes indoors when the groundsman decrees the pitch as very waterlogged. Therefore, light tends to be the dominant factor more than rain and cold.

Timing

- 6.32** The project has an 18 month timeline. Construction needs to start in March (Easter) so that only one winter cycle is affected by construction (the summer months are lighter and the weather better which allows greater flexibility in providing sporting activities).
- 6.33** A March commencement also means that the facilities could be open in time for September 2017 and the start of the academic year. A later autumn commencement could potentially disrupt three or four winter teams which would have a significant impact.

"Do nothing" scenario

- 6.34** The proposals are required to maintain the College's reputation as a leading world school. It is not possible to relocate or split the facilities. It is not a viable option for the College to do nothing and not proceed with the proposals.

6.35 The consequences of a “do nothing” approach are as follows:

- Increased competition in the private education sector would make the College a less attractive option for parents
- Other schools in the sector have or are improving their health and fitness facilities
- The project is a long identified priority for the College. It is a more versatile, holistic and future-proof option than the elite-tennis proposals previously approved
- There is no reason why health, fitness, sport and wellbeing offerings should be at a lower level than the College’s competitors; and
- Failure to address the operational needs of the College now will, in time, diminish the standing of the school on the world stage. This would negatively impact on pupil numbers and the financial security and viability of the school.

6.36 Officer conclusions on need

6.37 It is clear that there is a very real need for the new sports hall and floodlighting by the College. The significant investment in the project should alone demonstrate the marked need for the proposals.

6.38 The applicant’s Design & Access Statement states that the ‘...existing indoor facilities have insufficient capacity to meet current and projected future requirements for pupils to participate’. (par. 1.1) The proposals seek to redress this deficiency.

6.39 The project is very important to the quality of teaching, the fitness and wellbeing of the pupils and the competitiveness of the College in the market place. In turn, there are economic and social wellbeing benefits to the town. These are very important material considerations in support of the proposals.

6.40 The proposals would consolidate and enhance existing sports and leisure facilities on the existing sports campus. There are no in principle objections to the nature of what is proposed, or conflict with strategic planning policy. The acceptability of the proposals should therefore turn on consideration of the planning issues discussed below, whilst balancing the need and benefits of the proposals as set out above.

6.41 **The effect of the proposal upon local heritage assets**

The character and appearance of the Conservation Area

6.42 The site is located within the Central Conservation Area. The statutory test is that proposals should either preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

6.43 From a design impact point of view, there are four main aspects to the proposal. Firstly, the new sports hall. Secondly, the landscaping changes around the sports hall/swimming pool buildings, including the alterations to the access onto Malvern Road. Thirdly, the removal of the laundry building attached to Glenlee boarding house. Fourthly, the installation of the new floodlighting.

i) New sports hall

6.44 The Council has already accepted the principle of a new sports hall in this location through the granting of the previous planning permission, 11/01125/FUL. That permission remains extant until October 2016 and in terms of assessing the impact of the current proposals, is a fall-back.

- 6.45** The existing permission is for a building designed for elite tennis. It is slightly lower than the sports hall currently proposed but wider. It has a barrel vaulted roof spanning east-west rather than north-south and has a different architectural design.
- 6.46** The existing buildings are set within spacious sports grounds. The site of the new sports hall is on the whole generally well self-contained. It is largely screened on its north side by a line of mature trees and hedgerow alongside the Honeybourne line, which shield the proposed sports hall from this direction. To the east from Malvern Road the new building would be masked by the existing sports hall and swimming pool buildings, located in between. To the west there is significant separation to the houses on Eldorado Crescent with some 220 metres or more of playing fields between the new sports hall and housing. To the south, there are medium distance views of the site from Christ Church Road although these are largely limited to within gaps between buildings.
- 6.47** The design of the new sports hall is largely influenced by function. It generally follows the linear form of the existing sports buildings and would physically link with the existing sports hall. Its barrel-vaulted roof has the same orientation as the swimming pool building to provide continuity. The new building is slightly lower than the existing sports hall. Its roof is quite utilitarian in appearance, metal clad and would have wind catchers to provide natural ventilation. The roof has been lowered in height during the pre-application consultation process and the number of wind catchers reduced – both these design changes are welcomed.
- 6.48** The building is to be faced in grey coated steel cladding with stone aggregate blockwork for the lower sections. It would have a pre-weathered aluminium standing seam roof. Windows would be powder coated aluminium. The architects say that there is a commitment to good quality materials throughout. A schedule of materials has been provided and it will be important to ensure that appropriate roof and facing materials are used. Samples can be secured by condition.
- 6.49** The massing of the building is broken up by a wrap-around lower section to the side of the building, which would be clad in the stone aggregate blockwork. This would help to give the building a more human scale and reduce its overall impact. It also provides visual connectivity with the existing sports hall with the wrap-around section extending in front of the existing sports hall. The visual cladding of the flank of the existing building is welcomed as this is currently not particularly attractive. The proposals would much improve the entrance to the new/existing sports hall buildings.
- 6.50** Aesthetically, the proposed building is not considered to be quite as attractive as the previous approved scheme. That scheme appeared lower and more streamlined with perhaps a more contemporary feel overall. The massing of the roof was not as great by reason of being lower but also because of its roof spanning east-west, thereby lessening its impact when viewed from Christ Church Road.
- 6.51** Nevertheless, the current proposal is considered to demonstrate good architectural design. Its increased height and mass and slightly more functional form are a result of the need to accommodate a range of different sports and leisure uses, rather than just tennis, which the previous building was tailored for. It is noteworthy that the new design has the support of the Architects Panel.
- 6.52** The key issue in terms of the impact on the Conservation Area is considered to be the impact on views from Christ Church Road to the south east. A number of local residents are particularly concerned about the massing and height of the building and the impact that it would have on the Conservation Area and long distance views of the Malvern Hills to the north. The Council's Landscape Architect shares some of these concerns. However, it is of note that the Conservation Officer is much less concerned and does not believe this to be a critical issue in terms of impact on the Conservation Area.

6.53 The Central Conservation Area is divided into a number of character areas. The site is within and adjacent the Eldorado and Lansdown character areas. The Eldorado Character Area Appraisal identifies a key view/vista across the site from Christ Church Road, near to the junction with Douro Road. This is through a small gap between buildings where the College's car park is located. Paragraph 5.27 states:

'The Ladies' College playing field occupies a large plot of land to the north of the Eldorado character area. The private playing field creates a sense of space, although it is generally well concealed from public views. Attractive long distance views of the countryside are permitted across the field through gaps between buildings and trees on Christ Church Road (in Lansdown character area) and Eldorado Crescent.'

6.54 "Action EL7" of the associated management plan confirms that the setting of the Eldorado character area is very important. Development should respect the important views within, into and from the character area. The Council will ensure that these are protected from inappropriate development and that due regard is paid to these views when public realm works are planned.

6.55 A similar key view/vista is shown in Lansdown Character Area Appraisal. Paragraph 2.7 notes that views of the Malvern Hills '*...presented from open gaps between buildings create a rural connection between the countryside and urban area. These long distant views of the far away hills in turn reinforce and enhance the spacious character of the area, and provide a rural backdrop for some of the set pieces of architecture such as the spire of Christ Church.*'

6.56 "Action LD7" of the documents management plans also refers to the importance of the setting of the Lansdown character area. Development should respect the important views within, into and from the Lansdown character area. The Council will protect these from inappropriate forms of development.

6.57 The proposed sports hall will have some impact on views of the Malvern Hills and wider countryside from the Conservation Area. This impact will be confined to a section of Christ Church Road of approximately 140 metres in length, broadly between Nos. 7 to 33 Christ Church Road.

6.58 Importantly, such views would largely be impacted by the sports hall already granted in 2011 were it to be built. The Council accepted then that such visual impact would be acceptable. The proposed sports hall would be 12 metres in height – around 2.3 metres taller than the previously approved scheme. The new sports hall would have a greater visual impact on long distant views – in some cases eliminating views of the Malvern Hills when it might have been possible to see glimpses of the top of them with the approved scheme. In other views, the building would reduce the level of visibility of the surrounding hills. The north-south orientation of the barrel vaulted roof would also have a greater visual impact than the approved scheme.

6.59 However, given the comparative large scale of the building and its significant distance from Christ Church Road at around 145 metres, the overall impact of the proposed building is unlikely to be substantially different than the approved scheme. Moreover, views from Church Road of the Malvern Hills and distant countryside tend only to be fleeting. No major public vistas would be affected. The impact of the proposed sports hall on the Conservation Area over and above the approved building would therefore be limited.

6.60 The proposals involve the removal of the 1970s squash court building, which is unattractive, dated and said to be in poor condition. The removal of this building is welcomed as it is currently seen in the foreground of the sports hall buildings when viewed

from Christ Church Road. The existing squash courts detract from views across the sports complex from Christ Church Road and in this regard the proposals would bring about a moderate improvement to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

6.61 Returning to the new sports hall, it is concluded that this would have a slight negative effect on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area by reason of interference with some limited long distant views of the Malvern Hills and surrounding countryside. This impact has to be weighed against the positive benefits that the sports hall would have for the College as set out previously.

6.62 When balancing these competing issues, it is considered that greater weight should be afforded to the marked benefits of the scheme to the College given the limited extent to which the building would impact overall on the Conservation Area.

6.63 It should be noted that during discussions, the applicant was asked to consider reducing the height of the building or lowering into the ground to address the long distance landscape concerns. However, the applicant says that they have reduced the height of the building as far as practicable. The height has already been reduced following concerns raised by local people at the pre-application stage. The applicant has ruled out lowering the building into the ground due to prohibitive costs and because it would significantly compromise the internal floor levels and disabled access.

6.64 The height of the sports hall is largely dictated by the requirement for minimum clearance of 9.0 metres above the net for tennis. This level of clearance is recommended by the British Lawn Tennis Association (10.67 metres is the standard for international tennis). The applicant confirms that the desire for an attractive building was also motivation for the height. If the requirement for tennis was removed then the building could theoretically be lowered and given a flat roof. However, the applicant wished to avoid a flat roofed industrial "shed" like building. They believe that the proposed design is aesthetically a much better solution.

ii) Landscaping changes

6.65 The proposed landscaping changes around the sports buildings will in the main not be visible from the public realm. The most publicly visible changes would be to the car park and widening of the entrance gate piers next to Malvern Road. The Conservation Officer is satisfied that the revised plans address their initial concerns about the prominence of bin storage by relocating bin storage to the existing bicycle storage building. In respect of these aspects of the proposals, the character and appearance of the Conservation Area would be preserved.

iii) Removal of laundry building

6.66 The existing laundry building is a later and unsympathetic addition to Glenlee. Its removal would be a heritage gain, improving the setting of Glenlee. It is important that exterior facing is made good following removal and this can be secured by condition. The character and appearance of the Conservation Area would be modestly enhanced.

iv) Floodlighting

6.67 The proposed floodlighting of the hockey pitch would have two principal impacts. Firstly, the physical impact of the lighting columns themselves. Secondly, the impact of actual illumination.

6.68 The proposed floodlighting comprises six lighting columns. These would be regularly spaced, three each side of the hockey pitch at the corners and centre. The columns would

be 15 metres high when operational and would have an automated lowering mechanism that would reduce them to 4.5 metres in height when not in use.

6.69 The College is proposing to operate the lighting during the following hours only:

Monday to Friday	15:00	to	1900	hours
Saturday	15:00	to	18:00	hours

The floodlights will not be illuminated on Sundays or Bank/Public Holidays

6.70 Outside these hours, as well as when the floodlighting is not in use, the columns would be retracted to 4.5 metres. In practice, the floodlighting is likely to be mainly used between October and March.

6.71 When retracted, the impact of the columns on the Conservation Area will largely be limited. The lowered columns will be visible from within the College grounds and several adjacent properties on Christ Church Road. There may also be limited views of the columns from Christ Church Road between properties. When fully erected to 15 metres, the columns will be significantly more visible. Section drawings provided with the application show the columns to be taller than the adjacent dwellings, Nos. 15 and 17 Christ Church Road, which are themselves substantial townhouses.

6.72 This impact has to be set against the fact that the columns would be viewed in the context of the wider playing fields. In 1996, there was an appeal against the decision of the Council to refuse planning permission for floodlighting of the same hockey pitch including 8 no. retractable 12 metre columns (95/00342/PF). The Inspector raised no concerns on grounds of impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The Inspector stated: *'Having regard to the established use of the character of the college sports field, the character of surrounding land uses, the proposed positions of the floodlights and their height when extended and retracted, it is my opinion that the proposal is acceptable in terms of the character of the Conservation Area.'* Although the scheme physically differs from the appeal proposal by proposing 6 no. 15 metre columns (instead of 8 no. 12 metre columns), the Inspector's conclusions remain important.

6.73 As the Inspector pointed out, it would not be out of character to see floodlight in playing fields or school grounds. The columns will be fully erected for only part of the time – up to 4 hours on a weekday and three hours on a Saturday. The floodlighting will only be required during darker months, most likely between October and March.

6.74 The second issue is the impact of the illumination on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Again, having regard to the Inspector's conclusions, it would not be out of character for a sports field to be illuminated. The principle of illumination is not therefore considered to be a critical point. Instead, the key issue is the extent to which the illumination will affect the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. The College, with advice from its lighting consultants, has sought to limit the visual impact of the lighting insofar as possible. This point is considered in particular depth in the next section of this report. The technical information provided with the application, as accepted by the Council's Environmental Protection Officer, suggests that the visual impact would be contained within the sports ground and would not have a significant wider impact. The Inspector did not object to the appeal proposal on grounds of impact of the illumination on the Conservation Area and that was for a scheme with a larger number of floodlights.

6.75 It is again necessary to balance the competing issues. The lighting columns when fully erected and illuminated would have a negative impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The floodlighting would therefore fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. However, it is considered that the level of harm would not be significant and would be time limited. The impact would be

outweighed by the greater benefits of the floodlighting to the College. The effect of the floodlighting on the Conservation Area is therefore considered acceptable.

Setting of Christ Church and buildings of local importance

- 6.76** The proposed lighting columns, when fully erected, would impact on the setting of Christ Church, the impressive Grade II* Listed Church located to the east on the junction of Malvern Road with Overton Road. The columns would be seen in front of the Church in longer distance views from Eldorado Crescent.
- 6.77** However, these views of Christ Church are in the main restricted by a tall hedge on the boundary of Eldorado Crescent and College grounds. Therefore, it is considered that the impact of the extended lighting columns on public views of the Grade II* Listed Building would be limited. The benefits of the floodlighting are considered to outweigh the limited impact that the lighting would have on the setting of the Listed Building.
- 6.78** The rationalisation of bin storage at the frontage of the site with Malvern Road is welcomed and the removal of the modern laundry building would be an enhancement to the setting of Glenlee. In these respects, the proposals would have a positive effect on these buildings of local importance.

6.79 Impact on trees

- 6.80** The Tree Officer offers no objection. The Tree Officer has recommended a condition requiring tree protection measures during construction and a condition is recommended in the event that planning permission is granted.

6.81 Impact on neighbouring property

New sports hall and landscaping proposals

- 6.82** The proposed sports hall and landscape changes around the swimming pool/sports hall will not adversely affect the living conditions of adjacent buildings and property. The sports hall would be too far away from neighbours at around 100 metres from the nearest residential houses on Christ Church Road. The proposed landscape alterations are by their nature relatively low impact.

6.83 Installation of floodlighting

- 6.84** The main issue with regard to impact on neighbouring property is the effect of the new floodlighting. There are three main issues to consider in this regard. Firstly, the impact of the lighting columns themselves on the amenities of local people – both when fully erected and retracted. Secondly, the impact of the illumination. Thirdly, the noise associated with the increased use of the hockey pitch during winter months as enabled by the new floodlighting.

Impact of the columns

- 6.85** As previously mentioned, the lighting columns will be 4.5 metres high when retracted and 15 metres when fully extended. There will be six lighting columns in total; four to each corner of the hockey pitch and two to either side of the centre of the pitch.
- 6.86** The hockey pitch is situated at the rear of a number of properties on Christ Church Road, located to the immediate south east. Those properties are on higher ground than the hockey pitch – the ground falls in a north westerly direction from Christ Church Road towards the site. The hockey pitch is then sunken slightly into the ground. The bottom of the columns will be set at the level of the pitch. The changes in levels and relationship

between Nos. 15/17, 23 and 29 Christ Church Road and the hockey pitch are shown in section form in drawing numbers 7554/SK065 and 7554/SK066.

- 6.87** The closest columns to the neighbouring properties will be the three columns on the south east side of the hockey pitch. The most north easterly column will be situated adjacent the end of the rear garden of No. 15 Christ Church Road, a private house. The central column on this same side of the pitch would be adjacent the rear of No. 23 Christ Church Road ("Roderic"), a College boarding house. The most south westerly column would be positioned next to the rear of No. 29 Christ Church Road, which is understood to be a preparatory boarding house (separate to the College).
- 6.88** Dealing with the columns retracted to 4.5 metres first. The impact of the retracted columns on Nos. 23 and No. 29 is not likely to be significant given their quasi residential/educational use. In the case of No. 29, there is a tall hedgerow/mature trees providing additional screening. No. 25, which is understood to comprise private flats, is off-set from the south western and central columns. The impact on No. 25 would also unlikely be significant.
- 6.89** The greatest impact would be on Nos. 15 and 17, a pair of semi-detached houses. These properties are situated closest to the north eastern column and, in the case of No. 17, the rear of the property would have a direct outlook towards this column. Objections have been received from both these neighbours. This column is likely to be an annoyance to these neighbours being only 5 metres from the boundary. Lighting columns are by their nature not attractive and collectively the columns would add a sense of visual clutter to the area. That being said, as previously been mentioned it would not be out of character for lighting columns and other such paraphernalia to be found at playing fields and sports pitches. Whilst it would certainly be preferable from an amenity point of view for the lighting columns not to be there, it is considered that the columns when retracted would not seriously affect the overall living conditions of these neighbours.
- 6.90** Drawing number 7554/SK065 shows the lighting columns when fully extended to 15 metres and the relationship with Nos. 15/17, 23 and 29. There is no doubt then when fully erected the height of the lighting columns will be substantial. The section drawings show that the columns would be higher than all of these buildings, including Nos. 15/17 which are the tallest of these adjacent buildings.
- 6.91** The extended columns would be visually unpleasant to the residential neighbours, Nos. 15 and 17. They would dominate the outlook from their rear gardens in very close proximity. The distance from the column to the end of the rear garden of No. 17 would be 5 metres. There would only be a 1.8 metre hedge/wall between the two. The distance to the rear of the house would be 25 metres.
- 6.92** This nearest column would have a significant impact on the amenity and outlook of Nos. 15 and 17. However, regard is had to the fact that the columns would not be permanently extended. The columns would only be permitted to be extended to full height between 15:00 and 19:00 hours during weekdays, until 18:00 hours on Saturdays and at no time on Sundays or Bank/Public Holidays. Even then the columns will only be extended and used during darker months, most likely between October and March.
- 6.93** Given that the amount of time that the columns would be extended would be limited, and bearing in mind the significant benefits that the lighting would bring to the College, it is considered that the benefits of the lighting would outweigh the temporary harm that the extended columns would have.

Impact of the illumination

- 6.94** The second issue relates to the effect of the actual illumination on the amenities of neighbouring property. It is considered that the properties most susceptible to impact are Nos. 9, 11, 15, 17 and 25 Christ Church Road.
- 6.95** As mentioned, planning permission was refused at appeal for floodlighting of the same hockey pitch in 1996. Some of the objections specifically refer to this appeal.
- 6.96** The 1990s scheme differed from the current proposal in proposing illumination up to 20:30 on weekdays, 20:00 on Saturdays and 19:00 on Sundays. Eight lighting columns were proposed at a height of 12 metres (instead of six columns at 15 metres proposed by the current application).
- 6.97** In dismissing the appeal, the Inspector noted that: *'Whilst I accept that the intervening trees and rear boundary hedge would likely reduce the effect of light spillage, it is my opinion, however, that even with an average of 4.5 lux in close proximity to the dwellings, the rear gardens and rear elevations of the nearest properties in Christ Church Road would be subject to a noticeable increase in the level of illumination when compared with the present levels in the rear elevations, including bedrooms on upper floor, the 8 floodlights around the hockey pitch would create an illuminated background of considerable length and height, despite the trees and hedges near the pitch. Accordingly, I consider that the living conditions at present enjoyed by the occupiers of these properties in Christ Church Road would be significantly and adversely affected.'* (par. 11, Inspectors decision).
- 6.98** The Inspector was also concerned about noise: *'Furthermore, this increase in the hockey playing period, of the order of 33 hours, would extend into the hours of darkness on winter evenings. As pointed out by the Council, training and competitive matches generate a high level of verbal noise, with spectators, coaches and other players watching the match in progress, in addition to noise generated by the teams using the pitch. I consider, therefore, that the increase in the playing field hours on the hockey pitch which would be permitted by the proposed floodlights on winter evenings would result in significant disturbance due to noise for residents in properties in Christ Church Road adjoining the college sports field, particularly in those properties near to the hockey pitch.'*
- 6.99** The current application is supported by a Lighting Impact Study, prepared by a specialist lighting consultant on behalf of the College. The Study takes a precautionary approach, categorising the site as Zone E2rural, despite its urban environment. This is because of the relatively low current level of illuminance of the area.
- 6.100** The proposed lights are designed to reduce upward waste light and overspill. Additional spill screening is to be provided to control rear scatter. The lighting contours indicate the maximum vertical illuminance projected towards the nearest residential property is below 5 Lux. The Study concludes that the lighting will fully comply with the Institute of Lighting Professional's recommendations for a rural environmental Zone E2 for both maximum vertical illuminance and source intensity.
- 6.101** The Council's Environmental Protection team has considered the proposals and offers no objection to the application. It raises no concerns about the conclusions of the Lighting Impact Study. When comparing the current proposal with the 1990s scheme, it is important that the operating hours of the floodlighting have been reduced. The new cut-off period is 19:00 hours on weekdays (and 18:00 hours on Saturdays) with no floodlighting on Sundays. In relative terms, this is considered to be a marked reduction from the operating hours proposed by the 1990s application. With the floodlighting restricted to 19:00 during the week, activities would cease early evening and would not continue until mid-evening. The proposed operating hours are not considered to be anti-social. The number of lighting columns has also reduced from eight to six.

6.102 Having regard to the technical information provided with the application and the advice from the Environmental Protection team, it is concluded that the impact of the illumination would not be significant. Regard is had to the benefits of the floodlighting as put forward by the College. In considering these issues in the round, it is concluded that the proposed floodlighting would be acceptable.

Noise impacts during illumination

6.103 The floodlighting would allow the hockey pitch to be used for sporting activities by the College during darker months and not just during the summer and lighter periods of the year. The proposal would not substantially change the nature of activity other than the fact that activities would be able to take place all-year around rather than limited to the summer and other times of the year when there is sufficient natural light to use the hockey pitch. The more limited hours of use proposed by the current application are considered to address the concerns about noise raised by the Inspector in the 1996 decision.

6.104 The playing fields and pitches are for school use although it is understood that there is occasional use by non-school groups, particularly over the summer. The Environmental Protection Officer would prefer the use of the hockey pitch (when illuminated) to be limited to College use only as activities are likely to be better managed. It should be made clear to Members that the proposal before the Council is for floodlighting and not for a change of use of the hockey pitch beyond school use. Nevertheless, the applicant would accept a condition to prevent use of the hockey pitch when illuminated for non-school uses. It would be unreasonable to extend this to periods when the hockey pitch is not illuminated because this would fetter the College's existing limited rights for wider use beyond school-use.

6.105 Some local residents have expressed concerns about noise from hockey balls hitting the back boards on the perimeter of the hockey pitch. The applicant has agreed to implement sound-proofing to deaden the noise from impact. This can be secured by means of condition and would be a gain all-year around, and not just during winter months.

6.106 Access and transportation

6.107 The Highway Authority offers no objection to the proposals. The new sports hall is intended for use by the College only and additional traffic would likely be minimal. The means of access to the site is considered acceptable and the widening of the access onto Malvern Road should improve highway safety.

6.108 The applicant confirms that the Transport Assessment which supports the application considers peak traffic flows. The proposals will not themselves affect peak traffic flows and no significant concerns are identified by the report.

6.109 Further to its original consultation response, the Highway Authority has agreed to lower the requirement for on-site covered bicycle parking from 60 spaces to 40 spaces. The applicant has agreed to this level of provision and a condition is recommended to secure these facilities where planning permission is granted.

6.110 No severe highway impacts are identified.

6.111 Drainage

6.112 Gloucestershire County Council (as lead local flood authority) offers no objection on drainage grounds following the submission of further information from the applicant. The detailed drainage proposals should be secured by condition.

6.113 Ecology

6.114 No harmful impacts on ecology are identified.

6.115 Other matters

6.116 A resident is concerned that the proposals would breach their human rights, namely Articles 1 and 8 of Protocol 1 of the Human Rights Act 1998. The planning system is very much about balancing public and private interests. An interference with human rights is permissible by law where intervention is proportionate to the harm caused. In the case of the proposals, it is considered that the benefits to the College outweigh the limited impact that the proposals would have on the amenities of local people. Therefore, it is considered that the granting of planning permission would not conflict with the Human Rights Act.

6.117 In response to objectors concerns that the lighting would not be fit for purpose, the applicant has confirmed that the proposed level of illuminance of 300 lux complies with the latest standards for hockey and other sports. According to the applicant, the provision of asymmetrical lighting is not an issue and is typically used for televised sports, including sports at Wembley stadium, the Millennium Stadium and World Cup soccer.

7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1** The proposals include the provision of a new sports hall and floodlighting of a second hockey pitch for Cheltenham Ladies College. The College has clearly set out why they are requirement. The proposals would have significant benefits to the College including the enhancement of teachings facilities, promoting the health and welfare of its pupils, and supporting the viability of the College into the future.
- 7.2** The new sports hall and floodlighting will impact on local heritage assets. The site is within the Central Conservation Area. The floodlighting would have a limited impact on the setting of Christ Church – a Grade II* Listed Building – and would enhance the setting of two local important buildings belonging to the College.
- 7.3** The new sports hall is sizeable but its wider impact would be limited because of its location and spacious setting of the College grounds. The sports hall would diminish some long distance views of the Malvern Hills from Christ Church Road. However, these views are limited from the public realm and are glimpses between buildings rather than affecting major public vistas. These impacts have to be weighed against the significant benefits that the sports hall would have for the College. The overall impact on the Conservation Area would be limited and would be outweighed by the overriding benefits to the College.
- 7.4** The new floodlighting would have some adverse impact on the Conservation Area. The 15 metre lighting columns when fully erected would be substantial and, together with their illumination, would likely have some negative effect on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. However, the applicant has sought to reduce these impacts as far as possible and they would likely be limited. Again, the benefits of the proposal are considered to outweigh the impacts.
- 7.5** The lighting columns when fully erected would be visually harmful to the amenities and outlook of the nearest residents, principally Nos. 15 and 17 Christ Church Road. However, the times in which the columns can be fully erected would be limited, both in terms of hours of operation and seasonality. When considered in the context of the benefits of the floodlighting to the school, the impact is considered acceptable.

- 7.6 The applicant has provided technical evidence to demonstrate that the illumination will not harm the living conditions of nearby residents. The Environmental Protection team has considered this evidence and offers no objection to the proposal on amenity grounds.
- 7.7 In conclusion, this application presents a number of competing issues that have to be balanced against each other. For the reasons set out in the report it is considered that benefits of the proposals outweigh the limited likely negative impacts.
- 7.8 Delegated authority is sought to approve the application with conditions.

8. CONDITIONS / INFORMATIVES

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of five years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To accord with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with drawing numbers 7554/SK06, 7554/SK08, 7554/SK012 G, 7554/SK046, 7554/SK047, 7554/SK048, 7554/SK049 received on 06 July 2015; drawing number 7554/SK064 received on 11 August 2015; drawing numbers 7554 SK005 C (site location plan) received on 26 August 2015; drawing numbers 7554/SK010 I, 7554/SK020 G, 7554/SK021 F, 7554/SK022 F, 7554/SK029 A, 7554/L(9)040, 7554/SK065 A and 7554/SK066 A received on 07 September 2015; and drawing numbers 7554/SK011 H, 7554/SK012 H received on 10 September 2015.

Reason: To ensure the development is carried out in strict accordance with the approved drawings.

- 3 The floodlighting hereby approved shall not be installed unless in accordance with drawing number SP1048/2 (Abacus 15m Telescopic Mast) received on 08 July 2015 and shall be retained as such at all times.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of the area, having regard to Policies CP3, CP4 and CP7 of the Cheltenham Borough Local Plan (adopted 2006).

- 4 The vertical illuminance when the floodlights hereby approved are in use shall not exceed 5 lux measured on the façade of any residential property adjacent the application site (excluding garages or outbuildings).

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of the area, having regard to Policies CP3, CP4 and CP7 of the Cheltenham Borough Local Plan (adopted 2006).

- 5 The floodlighting hereby approved shall not be illuminated outside the following hours:

Monday to Friday 15:00 to 1900 hours

Saturday 15:00 to 18:00 hours

The floodlights shall not be illuminated on Sundays or Bank/Public Holidays.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of the area, having regard to Policies CP3, CP4 and CP7 of the Cheltenham Borough Local Plan (adopted 2006).

- 6 Outside the hours of use specified by condition , as well as whenever not illuminated, the lighting columns shall be reduced to 4.5 metres in height as shown on drawing number SP1048/2 (Abacus 15m Telescopic Mast).

Reason: In the interests of the character and appearance of the area, the setting of Christ Church (a Grade II* Listed Building) and the residential amenities of the area, having regard to Policies CP4 and CP7 of the Cheltenham Borough Local Plan (adopted 2006).

- 7 When the floodlighting hereby approved is illuminated the old astro turf hockey pitch shall not be used other by Cheltenham Ladies College staff, pupils and/or visiting school teams only.

Reason: The floodlighting has only been found to be acceptable for school use because of the special requirements of by Cheltenham Ladies College and in the interests of the amenities of the area, having regard to Policies CP3, CP4 and CP7 of the Cheltenham Borough Local Plan (adopted 2006).

- 8 The floodlighting hereby approved shall not be illuminated unless a scheme for soundproofing the existing back boards surrounding the hockey pitch have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The floodlighting shall not be illuminated until the approved scheme has been implemented and shall be retained as such at all times.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of the area, having regard to Policy CP4 of the Cheltenham Borough Local Plan (adopted 2006).

- 9 The external facing materials used in the construction of the new sports hall shall not be implemented unless in accordance with a sample panel, which shall have first been constructed on site and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The sample panel shall show the type, size, colour, bond, pointing, coursing, jointing, profile and texture of the facing materials including coping bricks/stones (if applicable).

The approved sample panel shall be retained on site and made available for inspection by the Local Planning Authority for the duration of the construction works.

Reason: In the interests of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, having regard to Policy CP7 of the Cheltenham Borough Local Plan (adopted 2006).

- 10 The external roofing materials used in the construction of the new sports hall shall not be implemented unless in accordance with samples, which shall have first been provided on site and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The samples shall show the type, size, colour, bond, pointing, coursing, jointing, profile and texture of the roofing materials.

The approved samples shall be retained on site and made available for inspection by the Local Planning Authority for the duration of the construction works.

Reason: In the interests of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, having regard to Policy CP7 of the Cheltenham Borough Local Plan (adopted 2006).

- 11 Within three months of the removal of the laundry building as shown in the approved plans, all disturbed surfaces shall be made good using materials to match the existing materials, composition, form, finish and colour of the existing building.

Reason: In the interests of the setting of Glenlee, a building of local importance, having regard to Policy BE11 of the Cheltenham Borough Local Plan (adopted 2006).

- 12 No development (other than site clearance, site preparation, demolition and the formation of foundations and trenches) shall commence in relation to the new sports hall unless a hard and soft landscaping scheme has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include details of all walls, fences, trees, hedgerows and other planting which are to be retained; details of all new walls, fences, other boundary treatment and finished ground levels; details of the hard surface treatment of open parts of the site which shall be permeable or drained to a permeable area; a planting specification to include species, size, position and method of planting of all new trees and shrubs; and a programme of implementation.

All hard and soft landscaping works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. The works shall be carried out prior to the occupation of any part of the development unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Any trees or plants indicated on the approved scheme which, within a period of five years from the date of planting, die, are removed or become seriously damaged, diseased or dying shall be replaced during the next planting season with other trees or plants of a location, species and size to be first approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of the character and appearance of the area, having regard to Policies CP1 and CP7 of the Cheltenham Borough Local Plan (adopted 2006). Approval is required upfront because the landscaping is an integral part of the development and its acceptability.

- 13 Tree protection shall be installed in accordance with the specifications set out within the Arboricultural Report reference Cheltenham Ladies College Sports Centre and the Tree Protection Plan Drawing Number 12974/49433 dated July 2015. The tree protection shall be erected/installed, inspected and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of any works on site (including demolition and site clearance) and shall remain in place until the completion of the construction process.

Reason: In the interests of local amenity, in accordance with Local Plan Policies GE5 and GE6 relating to the retention, protection and replacement of trees.

- 14 Notwithstanding the submitted details, the sports hall hereby approved shall not be occupied or used for education purposes until cycle storage for a minimum of 40 bicycles has been provided in accordance with the approved plans. The cycle storage shall be retained as such at all times.

Reason: To off-set the requirement for additional car parking and to promote sustainable transport, having regard to Policies TP1, TP2 and TP6 of the Cheltenham Borough Local Plan (adopted 2006).

- 15 The sports hall hereby approved shall not be occupied or operated until the parking, turning and loading areas have been provided in accordance with drawing number 7554/SK010 I received on 07 September 2015 the approved plans. Such areas shall not be used for any purpose other than the parking and turning of vehicles and shall remain free of obstruction for such use at all times.

Reason: To ensure adequate car parking within the site, having regard to Policies TP1 and TP6 of the Cheltenham Borough Local Plan (adopted 2006).

- 16 No development shall be carried out in relation to construction of the sports hall until details of a surface water drainage scheme, to incorporate sustainable drainage principles as well as attenuation and storage, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The volume balance requirements should be reviewed to reflect actual development proposal, agreed discharge rate and the extent of impermeable areas and runoff to be generated. The sports hall shall not be occupied until the scheme has been implemented in full.

Reason: To ensure appropriate drainage of the development, having regard to Policy UI3 of the Cheltenham Borough Local Plan (adopted 2006). It is important that these details are agreed prior to the commencement of development as any works on site could have implications for drainage in the locality.