

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

26 JULY 2022

Present: Councillor Martins (Chair)
Councillors Bell, Khan, Kloss, Pattinson, A Saffery and
G Saffery

Also present: Peter Marks, Night Club Management Company
David Minnis, Developer

Officers: Head of Planning and Development
Strategic Applications Manager
Democratic Services Officer (BR)
Democratic Services Officer (IS)

Conduct of the meeting

The committee will take items in the following order:

1. All items where people wish to speak and have registered with Democratic Services.
2. Any remaining items the committee agrees can be determined without further debate.
3. Those applications which the committee wishes to discuss in detail.

7

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were two changes in membership for this meeting: Councillor Kloss replaced Councillor Jeffree, and Councillor Khan replaced Councillor Trebar.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Smith.

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DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Councillor Pattinson declared that she had been in communication with a Mr Laird who was acting on behalf of the applicant for minute number 10. Whilst she had spoken to him this had not influenced her opinions on the matter. Councillors Martins and Watkin declared they had received similar communications from the same individual but had not pre-judged the committee's decision.

9

MINUTES

The minutes from the meeting on 7 June 2022 were approved and signed.

10

**22/00506/FULM - 125-133 THE PARADE, HIGH STREET, WATFORD, WD17
1NA**

**22/00506/FULM - 125-133 The Parade, High Street, Watford, WD17
1NA**

The Strategic Applications Manager delivered the report and gave a brief history of the application.

The Chair then invited Mr Marks to address the committee.

Mr Marks spoke in opposition of the plans, highlighting the nightclub's history. He believed that the opinions given in the early hours of the morning by club goers should be given serious consideration as they were the affected demographic. He wanted to add a fourth point in relation to planning policy, national policy framework and planning practice guidance paragraph 86, highlighting the importance of the role of the town centre in a community and supporting growth, management and adaptation with paragraph 93 providing for the protection of social and recreational facilities. He went on to give details of Watford and his personal long history with nightclubs, pointing out Watford had the second oldest club in the country. They were now in recovery from COVID, it was a relevant business, with over 100 employees and central to the Watford night time economy. In his opinion Watford was in danger of becoming a small and insignificant town in terms of its night economy; the club was integral to the night economy.

The Chair thanked Mr Marks for his contribution and invited the speaker in support of the application to speak.

Mr Minnis spoke in favour of the development. He began by giving a history of the business and the project and introduced himself as the design lead. He stated that they had reviewed and listened to feedback since the start of the project and had worked with the council and the project had been broadly welcomed and supported. He pointed out that the proposed movement of block B and the tree felling was in response to a request from council officers.

Following the planning application in April the applicant worked in consultation with council officers, but an agreement could not be reached. The applicant had expressed willingness to provide new plans to address all the issues taking into account the officer's recommendations.

Mr Minnis sought to defer the application to allow time to work with officers on a mutually agreeable solution.

The Chair thanked Mr Minnis, and reminded the committee that preserving the nightclub could not be a consideration in the decision by this committee. He then invited the Strategic Application Manager to respond to comments from the speakers.

The Strategic Application Manager appreciated the comments from Mr Marks and noted the many objections received in respect of retaining the nightclub. She did, however, remind the committee that the planning process could not determine who occupied premises. It was identified that, in respect of the land use, various uses were suitable in the town centre to provide commercial, social and economic functions and there was no local or national planning policy that would specifically seek the retention of the nightclub use at this site. The Strategic Applications Manager also added that the site has been allocated in the emerging Local Plan for mixed use redevelopment. This emerging plan was robustly scrutinised by an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State under hearings held in January 2022 and the Inspector had not raised any objection in respect of the site allocation.

In relation to Mr Minnis' comments, she acknowledged that whilst improvements had been made they still failed to tackle the issues that had been raised through the lengthy pre-application process. The amendments foreseen to be required to address these issues would not be minor and would not be appropriate to undertake at this late stage. The Strategic Application Manager, added that the council would be willing to work in partnership with the applicant on a revised scheme under further pre-application advice prior to a resubmission. The Chair thanked the Strategic Application Manager and invited the committee to comment.

The majority of the committee made comments. Overall they raised issues around the poor appearance of Block B of the development, the unwelcome loss of trees, local impact on neighbouring properties and lack of affordable housing. Disappointment was raised in respect of the poor quality of the homes proposed, noting that lack of suitable amenity space, light and outlook would be harmful to the health and wellbeing of future occupiers. They also noted a decision must be made based on the current plans not any plans submitted in the future.

The committee felt that the site visit allowed them to visualise the issues; some councillors expressed recent veiled threats from the developers.

The Chair concluded by stating that he was also disappointed in the proposed plan and invited the committee to vote on the officer's recommendation.

RESOLVED –

On being put to the committee the application was REFUSED.

11

22/00583/FUL - EVERETT ROVERS FC DODD ROAD WD24 5FS

11. 22/00583/FUL - Everett Rovers FC Dodd Road WD24 5FS

The Strategic Application Manager delivered the report.

There being no speakers the Chair invited the committee to discuss the application.

Overall the committee was very favourable towards the proposal, the main area of concern was around parking and a question was asked in relation to the times of operation of the floodlighting. Officers explained that it related to the hours of use as applied for plus additional time to vacate the site after use, noting that the applicants would need to apply to the council to vary these hours if needed in the future.

The Chair moved the officer's recommendation.

RESOLVED –

That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:

Conditions

1. The development to which this permission relates shall be begun within a period of three years commencing on the date of this permission.
2. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following drawings, unless otherwise approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The following drawings are hereby approved:
 - Drawing Number: S21-331 DWG 0002.01
 - Drawing Number: S21-331 DWG 0003.01
 - Drawing Number: S21-331 DWG 0004.01
 - Drawing Number: S21-331 DWG 0005.01
 - Drawing Number: S21-331 DWG 0006.01
 - Drawing Number: S21-331 DWG 0007.01
 - Drawing Number: S21-331 DWG 0008.01
 - Drawing Number: S21-331 DWG 0009.01
 - Drawing Number: S21-331 DWG 0010.01
 - Drawing Number: S21-331 DWG 0011.01
 - Drawing Number: S21-331 DWG 0012.01
 - Design and Access Statement: S21-331

3. Use of the artificial grass pitch shall not commence until:
 - (a) Certification that the Artificial Grass Pitch hereby permitted has met the FIFA Quality accreditation or equivalent International Artificial Turf Standard (fA TS); and
 - (b) Confirmation that the facility has been registered on the Football Association's Register of Football Turf Pitches; have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
4. The artificial lighting units shall not be operated until they are installed in accordance with the approved drawings and the lighting report by Phillips Lighting B.V. (Ref. HLS3337 dated 12 April 2022). The lights shall only be operational between the times of 08:00 – 22:10 Monday to Friday and 08:00 – 18:10 on weekends.

1. The applicant is advised that the pitch should be tested every three years by an accredited testing laboratory in order to achieve and maintain FIFA Quality accreditation. Conditions
 1. The development to which this permission relates shall be begun within a period of three years commencing on the date of this permission.

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

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Informatives

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Chair

The Meeting started at Time Not Specified hours
and finished at 2015 hours