

Planning Applications Committee

*Section C*

21 August 2008

<b>Agenda Number:</b>	<b>C3</b>
<b>Section/Area: I</b>	OUTER
<b>Ward:</b>	EATON
<b>Officer:</b>	Rob Parkinson
<b>Valid Date:</b>	18 April 2008
<b>Application Number:</b>	08/00424/NF3
<b>Site Address :</b>	Eaton Park, South Park Avenue, Norwich. NR4 7AU
<b>Proposal:</b>	Proposed construction of wheeled (skate park) sports facility with floodlighting.
<b>Applicant:</b>	<b>Mr Bob Cronk</b>
<b>Agent:</b>	<b>Norwich City Council</b>

**THE SITE**

The application site is located within Eaton Park, a designated Historic Park, adjacent to the existing community centre to the south, and accessed via the public car park access road off South Park Avenue. The proposed site is approximately 1000sq.m, and is currently both a smaller existing skate park and a grassed area, both of which will form the main facility. The site is bordered by an east-west tree-lined footpath and grassed sports pitches to the north, sports pitches to the east and south, and the community centre and existing basketball/games area immediately to the west. The nearest residential properties are 100m away to the south on South Park Avenue. The existing car parking area is 100m to the north of the site.

## PLANNING HISTORY

The site has been part of the historic park since the 1930s and many applications relating to the wider park and its facilities have come forward for incremental alterations and improvements to on site facilities.

**4/2000/0058** - Demolition and rebuilding of yacht pond. (LBC - 19/04/2000)  
**4/2000/0654** - Construction of new walls within existing pond. (LBC - 12/09/2001)  
**4/2001/0639** - Condition 2: details of materials for previous permission  
4/2001/0209/F "Erection of building for model train shed". (APCON - 08/10/2001)  
**4/2002/0315** - Details of condition 03: landscaping for previous permission  
4/2001/0209/F 'erection of building for model train shed' (APPR - 10/04/2002)  
**4/1994/0322** - Rebuild bowls pavilion after fire damage. (APCON - 30/06/1994)  
**4/1995/0694** - Rebuild of bowls pavilion after fire damage. (APCON - 28/09/1995)  
**4/1996/0892** - Conversion to form youth hostel and associated car park (INSFEE - 27/03/1997)  
**4/1996/0893** - Alteration works to form youth hostel (WD - 27/03/1997)  
**4/1996/0894** - Alteration works to form childrens indoor play space and alterations to restaurant. (APCON - 14/07/1997)  
**03/00056/F** - Installation of CCTV system to car park, rose garden & quadrant pavilions & new gates & screens to yacht pavilion. (APPR - 27/10/2003)  
**03/00057/L** - Installation of CCTV cameras to quadrant pavilions & bandstand & new gates & screens to yacht pavilion (APPR - 27/10/2003)  
**07/00529/F** - Erection of 2 no. station canopies for miniature railway. (APPR - 14/06/2007)  
**07/00598/L** - Removal of 8 no. CCTV camera in roof of bandstand and replacment with 1 no. CCTV camera in central roof/ceiling location . (APPR - 19/09/2007)  
**08/00424/NF3** - Proposed construction of wheeled (skate park) sports facility with floodlighting. (PDE - )

## THE PROPOSAL

Proposed construction of wheeled (skate park) sports facility with floodlighting.

The general principle of the scheme is one of an east-west orientated facility that runs parallel to the existing footpath and which will incorporate the existing but modified skate park facility. The skatepark is made from a varied topography with many raised levels and hollowed-out bowls.

The external appearance is of a raised, curved mound of grassed earthworks encircling the site on all sides except the north face, which will front the footpath. This will rise to a maximum of 2m above grade at the south, and 1.5m to the east, and is intended to support and shield from view some larger pieces of equipment. A bowl towards the center of the facility will sink to a point nominally 1.2m below grade. The northern edge of the site will include a two access points from the path into a seating area. Paving is also suggested to meet the path in

two other locations on this side. The facility is proposed to be illuminated by raised floodlights around the entire perimeter of the site, though the exact proposal will have to be approved through planning condition.

The facility is intended to be used for large public events. However, a Design and Access Statement, or any other information, has not been submitted in support of the application, so the proposed car parking details are not known. However, it is understood that the Council's Green Spaces Department is undertaking a review of car parking provision at Eaton Park as a whole, and will be addressed as a separate corporate project.

## **CONSULTATIONS**

The application has been advertised on site, in the press and the adjacent occupiers have been notified.

### **Neighbours**

At the time of writing the report there had been no letters of objection to the application from neighbours. Letters were received from Eaton Park Community Association and Norwich Reformed Church, both users of the community centre adjacent to the site.

### **English Heritage**

No concerns were raised by English Heritage.

### **Eaton Park Community Association**

Long-standing concerns have been raised around the shortage of public car parking and public conveniences at this end of the park. The arrangements for adequate emergency access and noise reduction measures should also be demonstrated in the plans. Questions were also raised as to the provision of public insurance at the facility, but this last issue is not a planning matter.

### **Norwich Reformed Church**

The Church, which meets at the adjacent Community Centre, raised concerns about the noise generated from the site as well as concerns for the shortage of car parking and public toilet provision. A request is included for further consultation with the community before construction works begin.

## **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

### **Relevant National Planning Policy:**

PPS1	Delivering Sustainable Development
PPG15	Planning and the Historic Environment
PPG17	Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation

### **Relevant Local Plan Policies:**

City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan (2004)

NE1 – Protection of environmental assets from inappropriate development  
HBE12 – High quality of design, with special attention to height, scale, massing and form of development  
EP22 – High standard of amenity for residential occupiers  
TVA1 – Proposals for new visitor attractions – access  
SR8 – Protection of historic parks and gardens

## **Policy Discussion**

The main policy relevant to this site in the Replacement Local Plan is SR8. It protects the character and historic form of the historic parks from any development that would adversely affect their character. Development will only be permitted where it increases community use and biodiversity, whilst not adversely affecting the character. In addition, policy NE1 requires that in parklands that form a green wedge, development must be for essential facilities for outdoor sport and recreation and must not damage the environmental quality or landscape character.

Therefore the policies are permissive of recreational and sports development in the park, providing that they can demonstrate that they will not detract from its historic character.

## **Design and the Historic Park**

Concerns have been raised that the layout and orientation of the facility may not relate ideally well to its surroundings, and would perhaps appear less intrusive if it were orientated north-south instead. However, the raised mounds will help to screen the facility, and the raised landscaped earthwork external surfaces will be grassed to help it integrate into the landscape. Although the organic shape is perhaps at odds to the formal framework of the rest of the park, this is in a developed part of the park and reflects a modern proposal, the finer details of which can still be finalized by planning condition. The facilities height above grade can be restricted by planning condition; this would help the facility be better integrated into the surrounding parkland.

The application has not been supported by a detailed plan for the precise facilities and type of equipment to be provided within the skatepark as it is understood that these are intended to be finalised by a commissioned project. The plans within the application are indicative principles only and will have to be approved in detail by planning condition. This would have to include the materials, landscaping, lighting, and boundary treatment proposals.

Given the above, the design of the scheme will have to be approved in greater detail to accord with policies NE1, HBE12 and SR8.

## **Trees and Landscaping**

The formal avenue across the north of the site is proposed to be breached in four places, with two for access to the seating area. It is considered that this aspect will have to be subject to revised designs that account for the protection of existing trees. This can be provided by planning condition, as final designs are confirmed, to require the submission of a tree survey and arboricultural impact assessment and arboricultural method statement.

## **Transport**

The facility is currently served by a regular bus service in the locality, and the existing car park for the wider Eaton Park. However, the car park is regularly full and the facility is expected to attract many visitors to large organised events. Many users will also arrive by cycle. Whilst there has been no information supplied concerning the car parking, it is expected that a review of the whole park will help manage shortages in the near future, including the appropriate access for emergency vehicles. Planning conditions can require the designs to include cycle parking facilities on site.

## **Amenity**

Concerns have been raised that the facility will increase levels of noise disturbance in the area. This can be addressed by careful designs of the equipment and landscaping or screening that minimise noise leakage. Additional concerns have been raised about the need for toilets in the area, which may be more pertinent for managing large events. Otherwise, toilets already exist in the park. Lighting specifications will also need to be resolved by planning condition.

## **CONCLUSION**

In terms of the principle of development and the siting of the facility, the scheme will provide an essential recreation and outdoor sports facility that will encourage more people to use the park. Subject to further submission and approval of detailed plans in accordance with the planning conditions listed below, set out to preserve the character of the historic park and its landscape features, the proposal represents an acceptable principle of development that will enhance recreational facilities for the city as a whole.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

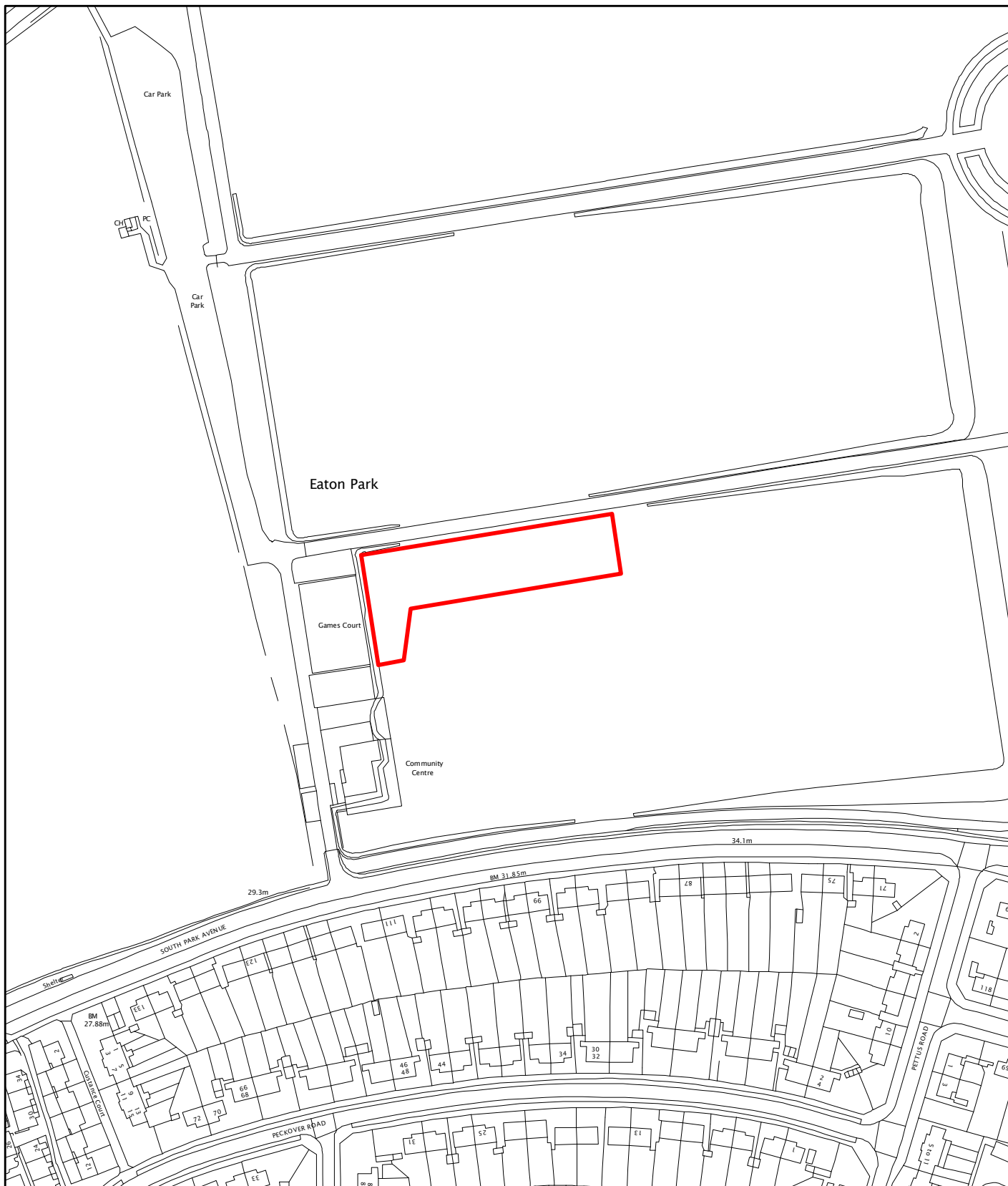
GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION subject to the following conditions:

- 1) Commencement within 3 years;

- 2) Submission of detailed scheme for finalised designs of site facilities and materials to be used prior to commencement of development;
- 3) Restricted height of facility above grade;
- 4) Boundary treatment;
- 5) Surface water disposal;
- 6) Surface water drainage;
- 7) Cycle parking details;
- 8) Tree survey information;
- 9) Tree protection measures;
- 10) Landscaping planting and site treatment scheme;
- 11) Maintenance of landscaping;
- 12) Details of external lighting;
- 13) Details of car parking and events management.

## REASONS FOR APPROVAL

The proposal would result in an appropriate and satisfactory form of development that would further enhance recreational and outdoor sporting facilities within the historic park. The siting of the facility would create an acceptable relationship to its surroundings and the scheme would preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the overall park setting. As such, the proposal would comply with Policies NE1, HBE12, EP22, TVA1 and SR8 of the City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan Adopted Version, November 2004.



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Site Address - Eaton Park, South Park Avenue

Scale - 1:2000



**NORWICH**  
City Council

DIRECTORATE OF REGENERATION  
AND DEVELOPMENT

