

Report to Planning applications committee
Date 7 August 2014
Report of Head of planning services
Subject 14/00713/NF3 Heartsease Towers Park Sale Road
Norwich

Item
4(4)

SUMMARY

Description:	Construction of new foot and cycle access route including associated landscaping, lighting and street furniture.
Reason for consideration at Committee:	Self-elected – Application made by the council
Recommendation:	Approve
Ward:	Crome
Contact Officer:	Mr Kian Saedi Planner 01603 212524
Valid Date:	23rd May 2014
Applicant:	Mr Jerry Massey
Agent:	Eleanor Hacon

INTRODUCTION

The Site

Location and Context

1. The application site comprises of a 0.4 hectare strip of the recreation ground running east-west between Sale Road and Munnings Road. The park is currently used for sport, leisure and recreation and has a range of associated facilities including formal areas for play, a skate ramp and earth bunds for BMX riding. A multi-use sports court is located alongside a club building to the north west corner of the site and informal football pitches are marked out on the central green space.
2. The site is a publicly accessible open green space as identified by saved policy SR3 of the adopted Local Plan.

Planning History

4/1988/1539 - Formation of play area. (APPR - 18/11/1992)

Equality and Diversity Issues

There are no significant equality or diversity issues. Level access will be provided from existing footpaths to the cycle/foot path and will enable access for wheelchair users and buggies/pushchairs.

The Proposal

3. It is proposed to construct a dual purpose foot/cycle access route across Heartsease

Towers Park including associated landscaping works, lighting and street furniture.

4. The proposals are part of a wider programme to improve a cycle route from Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital and UEA, through the city centre, to Heartsease and Broadland. The programme, referred to as 'push the pedalways' will see a series of programmes for improvements to the eight-mile pink pedalway and connections leading to it.

Representations Received

5. Advertised on site and in the press. Adjacent and neighbouring properties have been notified in writing. No letters of representation have been received.

Consultation Responses

6. Norfolk Constabulary – No comments to make.
7. Tree Protection Officer – Proposal is fine but any planning permission should be conditioned to ensure full compliance with the AIA.
8. Transportation – The proposed development is suitable in transportation terms as a contribution to the cycle network for the city. It would be preferable if there was a footway build-out to give cyclists more prominence and inter-visibility.
9. Environmental Protection Officer – No comments to make.
10. Landscaping – The proposals would improve the space by providing a strong structural element. This will bring visual enhancement and create more use. The lighting is likely to encourage use of the path which in turn will bring a greater sense of security. Kerb lines should be built out across the parking lay-by in order to prevent parked cars blocking cycle and wheelchair access.

ASSESSMENT OF PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Relevant Planning Policies

National Planning Policy Framework:

Section 4 – Promoting sustainable transport

Section 7 – Requiring good design

Section 8 – Promoting healthy communities

Section 11 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Relevant policies of the adopted Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk 2014:

Policy 2 – Promoting good design

Policy 12 – Remainder of Norwich area

Policy 6 – Access and transportation

Relevant saved policies of the adopted City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan 2004

NE3 - Tree protection, control of cutting and lopping

NE8 - Management of features of wildlife importance and biodiversity

NE9 - Comprehensive landscaping
HBE12 - High quality of design in new developments
SR3 – Criteria for development of Urban Greenspace and Recreational Open Space
TRA3 – Modal shift measures in support of NATS
TRA14 - Enhancement of the pedestrian environment and safe pedestrian routes
TRA15 - Cycle network and facilities

Other Material Considerations

Written Ministerial Statement: Planning for Growth March 2011

Emerging DM Policies (submitted for examination):

The Joint Core Strategy and Replacement Local Plan (RLP) have been adopted since the introduction of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act in 2004. With regard to paragraphs 211 and 215-216 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), both sets of policies have been subjected to a test of compliance with the NPPF. Both the 2011 JCS policies and the 2004 RLP policies above are considered to be compliant with the NPPF. The Council has now submitted the emerging Local Plan policies for examination and considers most of these to be wholly consistent with the NPPF. Weight must be given to the emerging Local Plan and relevant policies are listed below for context although none change the thrust of the current Local Plan policies discussed in the main body of this report:

DM1 Achieving and delivering sustainable development
DM2* Ensuring satisfactory living and working conditions
DM3* Delivering high quality design
DM9 Safeguarding Norwich's heritage
DM6* Protecting and enhancing the natural environment
DM8* Planning effectively for open space and recreation
DM28* Encouraging sustainable travel
DM30 *Access and highway safety

*This policy is currently subject to objections or issues being raised at pre-submission stage. Even where DM policies have been objected to, the objection may concern only one aspect of the policy and significant weight may be applied to that policy depending on what extent the objection relates to this proposal. For clarity, the level of weight that can be attributed to each DM policy has been indicated above.

Principle of Development

Policy Considerations

11. Saved policy SR3 of the adopted Local Plan seeks to retain sports pitches, sporting and recreational facilities. The proposal involves the creation of a cycle/foot path through the centre of the path with associated landscaping works and installation of street furniture. The proposal does not involve the loss of any recreational space, but rather provides infrastructure that will encourage greater use of an existing recreational space.
12. Heartsease Towers Park can be said to be lacking somewhat in identity and a sense of place, which may account for a relative under-use of the recreational asset. The proposal will provide a strong structural element, visually enhance the park through the planting of trees and the provision of a dedicated and well lit cycle/foot path will encourage greater use of the path which in turn will create a greater sense of security. The proposal will not only retain valuable recreational space but will enhance the quality of this space at the

benefit of the local community.

13. The proposed route for the cycle/foot path runs between two football pitches used by Heartsease Youth Football Club and representatives from the Christian League. Consultation has taken place with both of these parties in order to design out any potential conflict between the proposed route and the clubs requirements for space. It was agreed that whilst the football pitches would require relocation, there would be no overall loss to the provision of space and facilities. It is proposed to relocate two 7-a-side football; pitches north of the path and for an 11-a-side pitch to be located south of the path.
14. The proposal will not only retain the recreational space of the park but will generate a greater identity for it, encourage the use of it and enhance the appearance and security of it.

Design

15. The route of the path has been designed to achieve the most direct and convenient connection with the junction at Lishman Road and Munnings Road via the existing footpath running alongside Compass Tower. Part of the proposal will involve minor highway improvements to the Munnings Road and Sale Road connection points in order to make the route fit for purpose and this will also carry the benefit of enhancing the appearance of the route and encouraging its use.
16. The cycle/foot path has been designed to provide level access from the existing footpaths and foot traffic and cyclists have been segregated in order to avoid conflict between users. The paths will incorporate ground level symbols and textured surfacing to indicate the use of the intended facility.
17. An avenue of trees is proposed both through the middle and on either side of the path and street furniture and lighting will also be provided along the route. Slightly different materials have been proposed for the surfacing of the paths in order to disaggregate the cycle path from the foot path but further details will be conditioned in order to ensure a satisfactory appearance.
18. Lighting columns are also proposed along the route which will both encourage use of the route and enhance the sense of security at the park as a whole.
19. The proposal will provide a greater identity for the park and enhance the appearance of the area in accordance with saved policy HBE12 of the adopted Local Plan.

Transport and Access

20. The push the pedalways programme aimed at improving links between major development sites in the city to the cycle network and encouraging more people to travel by bicycle in a safe environment. In this respect the proposal will chime positively with the Norwich Area Transport Strategy (NATS), part of which seeks to provide new links to help to improve pedestrian and cycle environment.
21. Saved policy TRA3 of the adopted Local Plan seeks to encourage a modal shift from car use to walking and cycling. The proposal would enhance both the pedestrian and cycling environment connecting the park to the surrounding area. It is hoped that as part of the wider 'push the pedalways' project, this will encourage more people to adopt cycling as a mode of transport, which in turn will carry benefits for health, the environment and the economy.

22. The proposal will improve the quality of both the pedestrian and cycling environment in accordance with TRA14 and TRA15 of the adopted Local Plan.
23. The proposal will incorporate bike locking facilities and this will make it easier for people to cycle to and make use of the park in a safe and secure manner. The lay-by at the entrance to Munnings Road is to be reduced and the pavement built-out in order to prevent vehicles from parking in front of the entrance to the park and to assist cyclist access and inter-visibility with the highway.

Trees and Landscaping

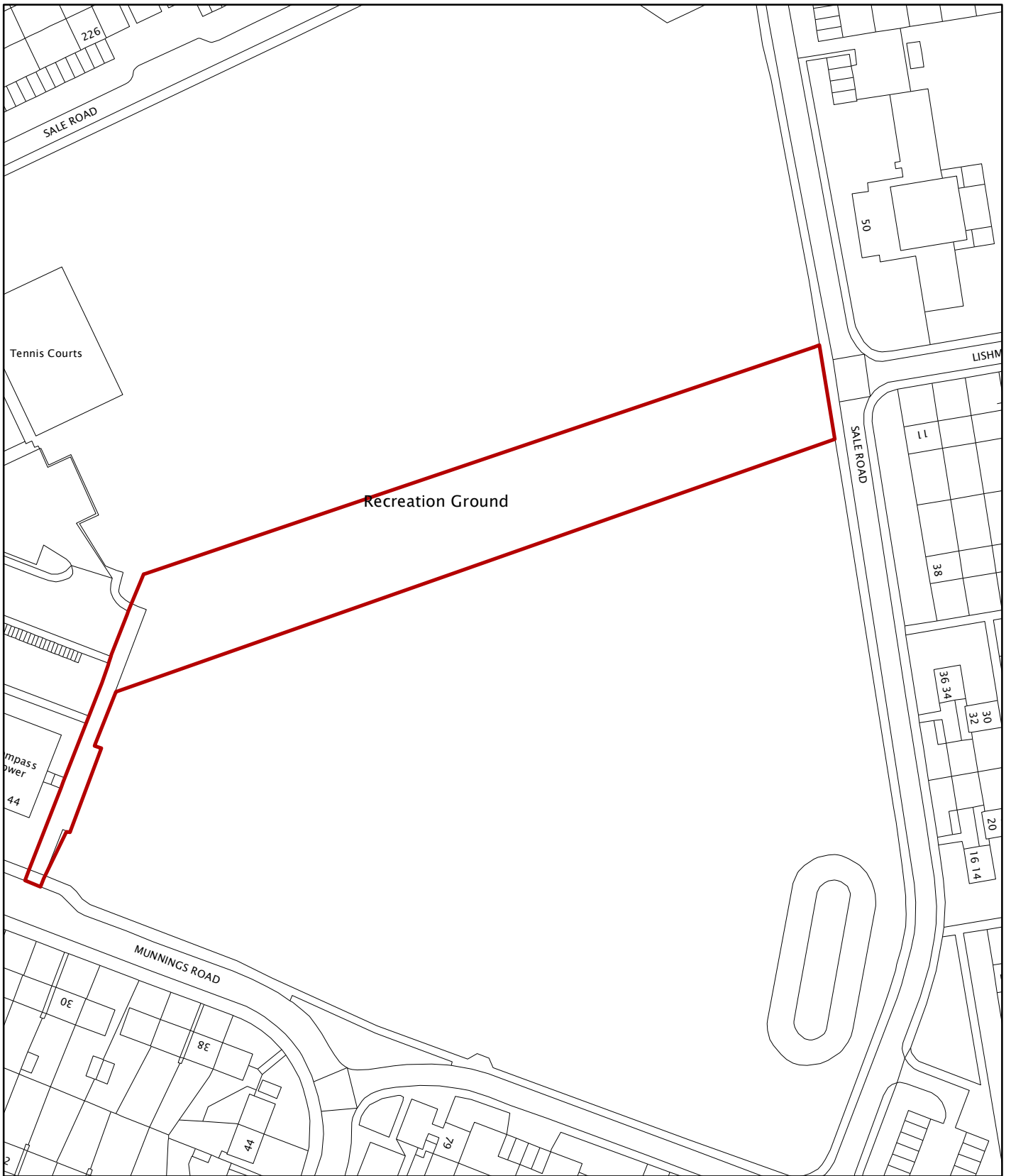
24. Several trees are to be removed in order to facilitate the development. The loss of these trees. The loss of trees will be mitigated by the planting of trees along the cycle route. The Council's Tree Protection Officer has expressed satisfaction with the proposal provided that planning permission is conditioned to require full compliance with the AIA submitted with the application.

Conclusions

25. The proposed cycle/foot path will contribute to the wider 'push the pedalways' project aimed at improving the cycle route from Norfolk and Norwich Hospital and UEA, to Heartsease and Broadland. The new and improved cycle and pedestrian links will encourage a greater number of people to travel by bicycle rather than less sustainable modes of transport. More locally, the proposal will provide the park with a stronger identity and provide a direct and convenient connection to the surrounding area. The landscaping works will enhance the appearance of the park and encourage a greater number of people to use the recreational public space. Subject to conditions the proposal is acceptable and in accordance with Sections 4, 7, 8 and 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2012), policies 2, 6 and 12 of the Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich or South Norfolk (2014), saved policies NE3, NE8, NE9, HBE12, SR3, TRA3, TRA14 and TRA15 of the City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan (2004), relevant policies of the Development Management Policies Development Plan Document – Pre submission (April 2013) and all other material considerations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) Standard time limit
- 2) Development in accordance with approved plans
- 3) Landscaping (to include details of paving material and 'conservation cut')
- 4) Development in accordance with the AIA



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Planning Application No 14/00713/NF3

Site Address Towers Park Heartsease

Scale 1:1,250



NORWICH
City Council

PLANNING SERVICES

