

28 June 2020

Director of Economic Development and Planning
Ribble Valley Borough Council
Council Offices
Church Walk
Clitheroe
BB7 2RA

COPY

Application 3/2020/0315

Proposal: Construction of an all-weather football pitch with boundary fencing and floodlights and an extension of existing car park.

Location: Langho sports and social club Dewhurst Road Langho BB6 8AF

Dear Sir,

We write to request an extension to the deadline due to the COVID 19 lockdown and being unable to fully contest the proposal at this time.

Furthermore, we set out why the proposal should be rejected due to an increase in **light pollution, highway safety and noise disturbance.**

Summary

This document sets out the arguments against Planning Application **3/2020/0315** for an all-weather 3G football pitch area on The Rydings, Langho. We make reference to the **Ribble Valley Core Strategy 2008 – 2028** and the **Planning Statement** from Gary Hoerty Associates.

We value the existing sports facilities as important for the community and, as their immediate neighbours, have supported the football club both financially and in practical ways since 1999, when my 4 year old son joined, a total of 21 years.

This document is provided to set out the adverse effects of the proposed development on the wider community. The development would:

- Extend existing problems of **noise, highway safety, light pollution, access and parking**, currently mainly on weekday evenings, Sunday mornings and throughout the week.
- Create more frequent heavy **traffic** on weekdays and after dark, with conflicting traffic into and out of The Rydings with back-to-back football sessions, contrary to the Core Strategy.
- Adversely affect **wildlife species** protected by law contrary to the Core Strategy.
- Aggravate existing **road safety** concerns, particularly for children, particularly after dark. Improved parking makes the problems of traffic and road safety

worse. Thus the development does not comply with the Core Strategy and the requirement for safe and convenient access.

- Increase both the intensity of **noise** and its frequency and duration, contrary to policy of the Core Strategy.
- Lead to more **floodlights** for more hours on more days of the week, with implications for light pollution, and wildlife, affecting more people over a wide area, contrary to policies of the Core Strategy.
- Increase **flood risk** by risking an increased rate of flow of water, contrary to the policy of the Core Strategy.
- Create a loss of **green infrastructure** through a permanent loss of open green space for informal sports activities, contrary to the Core Strategy.
- Damage **amenity** for the neighbourhood in ways that are contrary to policies of the Core Strategy.
- Create risks to **biodiversity** of the Core Strategy.

We refer to the **Ribble Valley Core Strategy 2008 – 2028**
A Local Plan for Ribble Valley Adoption Version

Referring to 3.3

Many new residents to The Rydings since the core strategy was adopted have been influenced by the vision that the Borough is promoting and one which they pay council tax for the privilege knowing that the Borough has their best interests in mind.

3.3 To repeat, the Core Strategy vision is clearly related to the Sustainable Community Strategy, as it is important to ensure that, as the spatial interpretation of the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS), the Core Strategy incorporates the vision for the SCS. The agreed SCS vision is to attain:-

“An area with an exceptional environment and quality of life for all, sustained by vital and vibrant market towns and villages acting as thriving service centres, meeting the needs of residents, businesses and visitors”

Referring to POLICY DME3.

Bats, Badgers and Deer are regular visitors to the proposed area. We have bats roosting in the north side of our house which will be floodlit till 22:00 every night. The floodlighting will confuse and deter the current wildlife that is used to having the proposed area as a wildlife corridor alongside the busy A59 and the railway line. Ribble Valley Core Strategy POLICY DME3: site and species protection and conservation, the bats are a wildlife species protected by law

Policy DME3: site and species protection and conservation
10.14 development proposals that are likely to adversely affect the following will not be granted planning permission.

Referring to 2.22

The loss of the community open space to a locked and fenced area is in detriment to the residents' needs.

2.22 Open Space Assessments

Within the evidence base the Council has undertaken a number of surveys and assessments of open space to gain an understanding of our open space provision, facilities and ways in which residents' needs are met.

Referring to 3.19

Losing an area of grass to tarmac and synthetic surfaces is not mitigating against the impact of climate change.

3.19 Contribute to local, regional and wider sustainable development, including addressing and mitigating against the impacts of climate change.

Referring to KEY STATEMENT DMI2: TRANSPORT CONSIDERATIONS

The development will impact the local roads. Three groups of footballers on the proposed pitch and one group on the current pitch, a total of at least 15 people per group, 60 in total arriving in 50 vehicles. For an hours training from 18:00 to 22:00 that would mean 4 sessions of 240 people in 200 cars with 400 vehicle movements using the entrance and exit from the A59.

A pedestrian was struck and instantly killed by a vehicle on the junction of the A59 as recently as December 2019.

20:00 is a shift change time at Kemple View Hospital and there are 30 vehicle movements within a 20 minute period before 20:00 every night.

The A59 junction is a high-risk right-hand turn for the majority of the football club attendees. The Rydings does not have a signed speed limit.

The access to The Rydings will be by vehicle; any other forms of transport are very restricted and hazardous.

Public transport provision is very poor and is served by bus route number 25, the last bus to The Rydings is 19:14 with no service on Sundays. Walking from the west to The Rydings requires crossing over the A59 which is the main route across the Borough from the west coast through to the east, linking directly to the M6 and serving access routes to the M65 motorway. There are no provisions for a cycle lane on the A59 to The Rydings. Walking from Langho village to The Rydings is either over a railway line across fields or on a road without a footpath or lighting.

KEY STATEMENT DMI2: TRANSPORT CONSIDERATIONS

New development should be located to minimise the need to travel. Also, it should incorporate good access by foot and cycle and have convenient links to public transport to reduce the need for travel by private car.

Referring to Policy DMG1: General considerations & POLICY

The proposed planning statement does not provide sufficient detail or reasons to comply with the general considerations.

POLICY DMG1: 10.4 I

Use sustainable construction techniques where possible and provide **evidence that energy efficiency**, as described within policy DME5, has been incorporated into schemes where possible.

Access: Consider the **potential traffic and car parking** implications.

Ensure safe access can be provided which is suitable to accommodate the scale and type of traffic likely to be generated.

Amenity: **Not adversely affect the amenities** of the surrounding area.

Not result in the net loss of important open space, including public and private playing fields without a robust assessment.

Referring to DME6: WATER MANAGEMENT & POLICY

Reduction in water absorption from reduced grassland will add to the flooding problem at the junction of the A59. This junction and an area 100m to the west is prone to flooding and causes heavy tailbacks on the very busy A59.

POLICY DME6: WATER MANAGEMENT

10.17 development will **not be permitted** where the proposal would be at an **unacceptable risk of flooding** or exacerbate flooding elsewhere.

Referring to DMB3:

The proposal is contrary to the policy and causes a serious traffic safety issue.

DMB3: RECREATION AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT & POLICY

The development should not undermine the character, quality or visual amenities of the plan area by virtue of its scale, siting, materials or design;

The proposals should be well related to the existing highway network. It should not generate additional traffic movements of a scale and type likely to cause undue problems or disturbance. Where possible the proposals should be well related to the public transport policy dmb4: open space provision

Referring to DMB4: OPEN SPACE PROVISION

The proposal is contrary to the policy and we will lose public open space.

The Borough Council will refuse development proposals which involve the loss of existing public open space, including private playing fields which are in recreational use. It is important to protect existing recreational areas from development. Within defined settlements public recreational land will be identified on the proposals map.

Furthermore, we refer to the Planning statement for Langho Football Club prepared by Gary Hoerty Associates.

Referring to 1.3

Sustainable development of the site is not fully explained either from promoting ethnic minority involvement, low income family support and transport links. The site and club caters for a white male, higher than average income with vehicle use to access the site which is contrary to policies of the Core Strategy.

Referring to 4.2

What need and what continued development does Langho Football Club propose for the future, we require full disclosure.

Referring to 4.5 and Langho Football Club's published information.

In summer 2015 in partnership with the football foundation and private member funding, nearly £200,000 was spent improving the drainage on the pitches. Today these improvements have lengthened the playing season and enabled more games through the winter period.

The money provided by the football foundation and generous donations from club members less than 5 years ago to improve the drainage will be utterly wasted. This position is in conflict with the current well drained pitch that has lower than average cancellations.

Referring to 5.5

The development will impact the local roads. Three groups of footballers on the proposed pitch and one group on the current pitch, a total of at least 15 people per group, 60 in total arriving in 50 vehicles. For an hours training from 18:00 to 22:00 that would mean 4 sessions of 240 people in 200 cars with 400 vehicle movements using the entrance and exit from the A59.

A pedestrian was struck and instantly killed by a vehicle on the junction of the A59. 20:00 is a shift change time at Kemple View Hospital and there are 30 vehicle movements within a 20 minute period before 20:00 every night.

The A59 junction is a high risk right hand turn for the majority of the football club attendees. The Rydings does not have a signed speed limit.

Reduction in water absorption from reduced grassland will add to the flooding problem at the junction of the A59. This junction and an area 100m to the west is prone to flooding and causes heavy tailbacks on the very busy A59.

The access to The Rydings will be by vehicle; any other forms of transport are very restricted and hazardous.

Public transport provision is very poor and is served by bus route number 25, the last bus to The Rydings is 19:14 with no service on Sundays. Walking from the west to The Rydings requires crossing over the A59 which is the main route across the Borough from the west coast through to the east, linking directly to the M6 and serving access routes to the M65 motorway. There are no provisions for a cycle lane on the A59 to The Rydings. Walking from Langho village to The Rydings is either over a railway line across fields or on a road without a footpath or lighting.

Referring to 5.6

Which businesses and services will benefit from the proposal?

Referring to 5.13

The current 3G pitch is further away than the proposed and yet we can hear plainly here the footballers constantly swearing, shouting and clapping whilst they play on the pitch. Once the session is over there is at the most 30 minutes and at least 20 minutes of swearing, shouting and car doors slamming; certainly, a detrimental

impact to our need for a quiet environment after 22:00. The current situation is not acceptable and an increase in the amount of noise generated by at least 22 more men will adversely affect the amenities of the surrounding area.

The development must not adversely affect the amenities of the surrounding area.

Referring to 5.16

Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations

The development should be essential to the local economy or social well-being of the area.

We say “The proposal is not essential to the local economy and reduces the social wellbeing of the area.”

The development is for small scale tourism or recreational developments appropriate to a rural area.

We say “The rural area is more than accommodated for recreational facilities; the proposal of a 3g football pitch will not generate tourism.”

The development is for small scale uses appropriate to a rural area where a local need or benefit can be demonstrated.

We say “240 people in three groups of footballers on the proposed pitch and one group on the current pitch, a total of at least 15 people per group, 60 in total arriving in 50 vehicles. For an hours training from 18:00 to 22:00 that would mean 4 sessions of 240 people in 200 cars with 400 vehicle movements using the entrance and exit from the A59.”

Referring to 5.18

In keeping with the current open grassed areas does not include 6 metre (19.5 feet) wire fencing and 15 metre (52.5 feet) high towers with floodlights. The average house is 7.5 metres (25 feet) high.

This proposed plan would increase the current use of the club, it's facilities and with it more car journeys to a housing estate. Currently the club has two senior men's and eighteen junior boys teams, a Ladies team and seven girls teams playing football across six different leagues in the region. Weekend football is played on both Saturday's and Sunday's with the Accrington and District Junior Football League also hiring the club's mini soccer 3G pitch for their development football games on a Saturday morning.

We conclude our objections by asking you to consider two points that are noteworthy. First, the volume of proposed users from outside The Rydings underlines the increase in traffic which the proposal would generate. Second, **based on letters of support and objection, opinion in The Rydings is running against the proposal. The Localism Act 2011 emphasises that heavy weight should to be given to the views of the people with a detailed understanding of the situation on the ground, i.e. the local people themselves.**

SCALE AND CHARACTER. The proposed development is unsuitable not because sport is out of place in The Rydings (far from it) but because its inherent scale outstrips the absorptive capacity of The Rydings in terms of access, parking and traffic, and hence of road safety, with particular concerns after dark, and hence is **contrary to policy of the Core Strategy**. A development involving 2 acres, fence, floodlights and considerable traffic flows cannot be described as small; and, mitigations are not a solution.

The development is inappropriate in a housing estate we urge that the proposal is rejected.

Yours faithfully,

A large, irregular black redaction mark covering the signature and any text that might have been present below the closing.

28 June 2020


4 The Rydings
Langho
BB6 8BQ


Woodhaven
2 Station Road
Rimington
BB7 4DR

Copies sent to Councillors

(4 in total - Brown Sherras Astri Baxter)

Application 3/2020/0315

Proposal: Construction of an all-weather football pitch with boundary fencing and floodlights and an extension of existing car park.

Location: Langho sports and social club Dewhurst Road Langho BB6 8AF

Dear Councillor Sherras,

Please find enclosed our letter of objection to the above proposal because light pollution, highway safety and noise disturbance will be increased to an unacceptable level for us as neighbours.

The letter sets out our arguments against Planning Application 3/2020/0315 by making reference to the **Ribble Valley Core Strategy 2008 – 2028** and the **Planning Statement** from Gary Hoerty Associates.

We value the existing sports facilities as important for the community and, as their immediate neighbours, have supported the football club both financially and in practical ways since 1999, when my 4 year old son joined, a total of 21 years.

The level of noise from the existing 3G pitch is such that we can hear swearing, shouting and clapping whilst inside our house. We are very concerned that the increased level of attendance of at least 240 people up till 10pm every night nearer to our house will be unbearable.

We conclude our letter by asking the planning committee to consider two points that are noteworthy. First, the volume of proposed users from outside The Rydings underlines the increase in traffic which the proposal would generate. Second, based on letters of support and objection, opinion in The Rydings is running against the proposal. The Localism Act 2011 emphasises that heavy weight should be given to the views of the people with a detailed understanding of the situation on the ground.

I trust that you consider our situation that we oppose the development as inappropriate in a housing estate and we urge that the proposal is rejected.

Yours sincerely,


