

Code No. and Date Received	Name and Address of Applicant	Description and Location of Proposed Development
15/0924/FULL 26.10.2015	Mr N Carter 10 Farraday Drive Penpedairheol Hengoed CF82 8BJ	Carry out improvements to the facilities at Bargoed RFC pitch including additional spectator stands, and ancillary portable buildings Bargoed RFC Bargoed Park Park Drive Bargoed

**APPLICATION TYPE:** Full Application

SITE AND DEVELOPMENT

Location: The application site is situated to the south of Moorland Road and to the north of Park Drive.

Site description: The application site encompasses two separate parcels of land within the wider Bargoed Park. It relates to the main rugby field and surrounding athletics track together with the existing car park immediately to the north as well as a further car park on land adjacent to the playground in the south east corner of the park. The rugby pitch includes the field which has a running track surrounding it with a long jump and water jump at the northern end. It also has a stand on the western side of the track with a fence separating the track from the surrounding land. Underneath the stand are the existing changing rooms with further changing rooms and storage containers being sited to the west of the running track.

The car park immediately to the north is an irregularly shaped parcel of land which is sited on an elevated plateau above the surrounding park and enclosed by a bund. The car park to the south is also irregularly shaped and is hard surfaced. The main access to the ground is via a gated entrance into the park from Moorland Road with access to the southern car park being via an existing access onto Park Drive.

Development: The application seeks full planning consent for the erection of a new stand and spectator terraces within the site together with other storage buildings.

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Application No. 15/0924/FULL Continued

The new stand is to be located to the north of the rugby field and inside the running track where the long jump is currently located and will be a 75 seat stand with four rows of seats and space for disabled people. It is a pre-fabricated structure of metal frame with a profile sheeting rear wall and canopy roof. There will be nine new spectator stands each accommodating 110 persons with two being sited either side of the proposed stand, three to the south of the existing stand but on the outside lanes of the running track and four to the north of the existing stand, also on the outside lanes of the running track.

Consent is also sought for the erection of two containers to the west of the existing stand to provide storage facilities and a new physio/press room. A new score board is also proposed on the eastern side of the playing field.

The application also proposes the creation of improved and new parking areas in the existing car parks referred to above. The submitted plans suggest that a total of 84 parking spaces will be provided whilst buses would be parked at Heolddu School during matches.

Dimensions: The stand measures 29.49m wide by 2.94m deep by 3.1m high. The terraces each measure 9.83m wide by 2.94m deep by 3.1m high. The containers each measure 6.326m long by 2.438m wide by 2.502m high.

Materials: The stands are finished in profile metal sheeting as are the containers.

Ancillary development, e.g. parking: None.

#### PLANNING HISTORY 2005 TO PRESENT

No previous planning history.

#### POLICY

Local Development Plan: Within settlement limits.

#### Policies

Local Development Plan: SP5 (Settlement Boundaries), SP6 (Place Making), SP21 (Protection of Strategic Leisure Network), CW2 (Amenity), CW3 (Design Considerations: Highways), CW8 (Protection of Community and Leisure Facilities) and CW15 (General Locational Constraints).

Supplementary Planning Guidance LDP 5 Car Parking Standards sets out parking requirements for all developments.

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Application No. 15/0924/FULL Continued

National Policy: Paragraph 4.11.9 of Planning Policy Wales (2012) states: - "The visual appearance of proposed development, its scale and its relationship to its surroundings and context are material planning considerations. Local planning authorities should reject poor building and contextual designs. However, they should not attempt to impose a particular architectural taste or style arbitrarily and should avoid inhibiting opportunities for innovative design solutions."

Para 11.1.12 states: - "All playing fields whether owned by public, private or voluntary organisations, should be protected from development except where:-

- facilities can best be retained and enhanced through the redevelopment of a small part of the site;
- alternative provision of equivalent community benefit is made available;
- or
- there is an excess of such provision in the area."

National Planning Guidance contained in Technical Advice Notes 12 - Design and 16 - Sport, Recreation and Open Space.

### CONSULTATION

The Coal Authority - No objection subject to a condition relating to the provision of a ground report.

Police Architectural Liaison Officer - No objection.

Transportation Engineering Manager - Initially raised an objection to the application on highway safety grounds, which are discussed in the report, but subsequent discussions, have overcome those concerns also detailed below.

Senior Engineer (Land Drainage) - No objection subject to a condition relating to drainage.

Outdoor Leisure Development Officer - No objection subject to a condition relating to refuse bins within the site.

Parks And Open Spaces - Raises objection to the creation of disabled parking spaces on the running track but raises no objection to the remainder of the proposal.

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Application No. 15/0924/FULL Continued

## ADVERTISEMENT

Extent of advertisement: The application was advertised by means of a site notice and neighbour letters.

Response: Three letters of objection together with a number of comments via the Council's Twitter feed have been received.

### Summary of observations:

1. Works have already commenced on site.
2. The Design and Access Statement define the track as unused. This is clearly not the case as it is used by Rhymney Valley Athletic Club and Islwyn Running Club.
3. Has alternative Athletics provision been made?
4. Policy CW8 states that Community and Leisure facilities should be protected unless they are surplus to requirements or a replacement facility is provided.
5. A technical area has been provided on the running track that does not form part of the application. This prevents any use of the running track.

## SECTION 17 CRIME AND DISORDER ACT

What is the likely effect of the determination of this application on the need for the Local Planning Authority to do all it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area? None.

## EU HABITATS DIRECTIVE

Does the development affect any protected wildlife species? No, but as the site is in an area that has excellent bat and bird foraging habitats bat enhancement measures are considered to be prudent in this instance.

Is this development Community Infrastructure Levy liable? No.

## ANALYSIS

Policies: The application has been considered in accordance with national guidance, local plan policy and supplementary planning guidance. Having considered the objections raised it is clear that the main issues in the determination of this application are the loss of the running track and highway safety concerns.

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Application No. 15/0924/FULL Continued

With regard to the first matter it should be noted that Policy CW8 of the Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan up to 2021 - Adopted November 2010 and Paragraph 11.1.12 of Planning Policy Wales state that community and leisure facilities should be protected unless they are either surplus to requirements or that a suitable replacement facility is provided elsewhere. The Design and Access Statement submitted with the application contains statements that suggest that the running track is no longer in use and as such it is surplus to requirements and the proposal complies with Policy CW8. The objections raised by the public make it clear that this is not the case. Whilst it is clear that the poor state of repair of the running track makes it difficult for the athletics and running clubs to use it is still clear that it is used.

However, this development does not entirely take away the ability to use parts of the track as the structures applied for only use the outer lanes. The original proposal included for the provision of disabled parking bays on the water jump part of the track but this has now been removed. It was also noted that a technical area has been created on the straight in front of the existing stand but this does not form part of the application. It would be for the Council's Parks Section to decide whether this should be retained and take this matter up with the applicant.

It should also be noted that the stands provide improved community/leisure facilities for patrons of the rugby club wishing to watch matches at the ground. Again it is considered that it is for the Parks Section to determine where preference should be given between the competing users of the site. It is for the Local Planning Authority to ensure that a community facility is not lost as a result of the proposal. In that regard it should also be noted that alternative provision in the form of a 200m running track marked on the 3G surface, is to be provided at the new Islwyn West school which is currently under construction at Oakdale. Whilst this does not provide a 400m running track it is considered that the improved quality of the surface means that the new provision is at least equivalent if not better than the existing track. A similar provision is also proposed at Y Gwindy School in Caerphilly.

With the above in mind it is considered that the proposal complies with Policy CW8 of the Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan up to 2021 - Adopted November 2010 in that the community/leisure facility will not be totally lost and that adequate provision is made elsewhere that local clubs can seek to use.

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Application No. 15/0924/FULL Continued

With regard to highway safety concerns it should be noted that the Transportation Engineering Manager has raised an objection to the application. The application proposes the provision of an additional capacity for 1200 supporters on top of the existing 300 seat capacity of the existing stand. A total capacity of 1500 requires the provision of 100 parking spaces within the site and these need to be readily accessible to the main ground. The plans submitted with the application suggest that a total of 86 parking spaces can be provided within the two car parks at the site. However, this layout does not comply with the Council's Adopted Design Guidance and it is considered that the figure that can actually be provided would be closer to 71 spaces. This is considered to be a significant shortfall in the number of spaces required leading to on street parking in the vicinity of the site to the detriment of highway safety and to the amenity of neighbouring landowners. It should also be noted that the largest bulk of those parking spaces is to be provided in the car park to the south of the park. The access to this car park is not possible from the main access into the park meaning that supporters would be expected to make a journey of over a mile from the main park gates in order to park. The parking area is then also 250m from the playing pitch meaning that this parking area is not well related to the main playing area and as such is unlikely to be used by patrons.

The developer has suggested that overspill parking could be provided at Heolddu School. However, as this site is over 900m away from the application site is not considered that this parking could be considered as acceptable as it is not well related to the application site. It should also be noted that the School also encompasses the leisure centre and as such the parking there would also be in use by patrons of that establishment at times when rugby matches are likely to be played (i.e. weekends and evenings) and as such use of this parking by rugby supporters would displace the parking of leisure centre users.

It is also considered that the existing access from Moorland Road is unsuitable to serve the development by virtue of its narrow width and lack of segregated pedestrian facilities.

The applicants have advised that the following arrangements would be put in place to accommodate parking:

- Parking at Heolddu School (75 spaces) would be available.
- Premiership teams have played at Bargoed without causing complaints about parking and traffic.
- The capacity at the northern car park accessed from Moorland Road would not be increased and so there would be no additional traffic using that entrance.

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Application No. 15/0924/FULL Continued

- Coaches will drop passengers at Moorland Road and park in the Heolddu school bus bay.
- Traffic flow co-ordinators would be employed near the Moorland Road entrance restricting traffic into the park and preventing potential conflict with pedestrians.
- Supporters would be bussed from the school car park to the Moorland Road entrance.
- Most supporters will approach from the south and will use the southern car park or be re-directed to Heolddu School by the co-ordinators.
- Local supporters use the various footpaths into the park.
- The club will provide any additional signage required.
- There would be 15 home fixtures in the calendar year, and although the WRU requires facilities for 1500 spectators, not even the best supported club in Wales - Pontypridd gets that number. The overwhelming majority average less than 350.

It is considered that these proposals would form the basis of an events management strategy similar to what was accepted in support of the Council's own sports facility at Ystrad Mynach where stands accommodating 3000 spectators are served by 171 parking spaces. On balance it is considered that planning permission should be granted.

Comments from consultees: The comments of the Transportation Engineering Manager have been addressed above. No other objections have been raised.

Comments from public: The majority of objections raised by members of the public are addressed above. With regard to the commencement of works prior to the determination of any application it should be noted that this is not a reason in itself to warrant refusal of any planning application. However the applicant has been advised that such works should not have taken place and that any that have been carried are done so at the applicant's risk. The land is also still in the control of the Council's Parks Section and they have also taken this matter up with the applicant.

Other material considerations: None.

RECOMMENDATION that Permission be GRANTED

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Application No. 15/0924/FULL Continued

This permission is subject to the following condition(s)

- 01) The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of five years from the date of this permission.  
REASON: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
- 02) Prior to the first use of the stands hereby approved the parking areas shown on drawing numbers 10184/04 and 10184/05 shall be marked out in accordance with revised layout plans that shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.  
REASON: To ensure the provision of adequate parking facilities.
- 03) Prior to the commencement of works on site a scheme for the drainage of land and surface water shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. All works that form part of the agreed scheme shall be carried out before any part of the development to which they relate is occupied.  
REASON: To ensure the adequate drainage of the site.
- 04) Details of any lighting associated with the development hereby approved and its hours of operation shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority prior to its installation.  
REASON: In the interests of visual and residential amenity.
- 05) Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved details of the materials to be used in the finishing of any external surfaces shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed details.  
REASON: In the interests of visual amenity.
- 06) Prior to August 2016 an events management strategy based on the e-mail dated 26 November 2015 from Mr. Robert Butcher to the Local Planning Authority shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. The strategy shall include provisions for its review. Thereafter the strategy shall be implemented as agreed.  
REASON: To minimise the impact of vehicular traffic on the surrounding road network.

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Application No. 15/0924/FULL Continued

- 07) Subject to the requirements of Condition 02 this development shall be carried out in accordance with drawing numbers 10184/3/B, 10184/04, 10184/5, ST-110, LTSUPER75/EX201, ST2108NOIA, OP2108NOZA and 2986.  
REASON: For the avoidance of doubt as to the extent of this consent.
- 08) Prior to the commencement of any works associated with the development hereby approved, a plan showing details of the provision of roots and a means of access for bats in each of the new stands and ancillary buildings at Bargoed Park, shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval. The approved details shall be implemented before the new stands and ancillary buildings hereby approved are first occupied.  
REASON: To provide additional roosting for bats as a biodiversity enhancement, in accordance with Section 40 Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, and policy contained in Welsh Assembly Government's Planning Policy Wales and Tan 5 Nature Conservation and Planning.
- 09) Prior to the commencement of any works on site, details of the provision of nesting sites for bird species (House sparrow, House martin, Starling, Swallow and Swift) in each of the new stands and ancillary buildings at Bargoed Park, shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval. The approved details shall be implemented before the new stands and ancillary buildings hereby approved are first occupied.  
REASON: To provide additional roosting for bats as a biodiversity enhancement, in accordance with Section 40 Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, Planning Policy Wales and paragraph 1.4.3 of TAN 5 Nature Conservation and Planning.
- 10) Prior to the commencement of development a scheme of intrusive site investigations for the mine entries, the shallow coal workings, a report of the findings and the necessary treatment and remedial works shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed scheme.  
REASON: To ensure the proper treatment of coal mining features.

Advisory Note(s)

The following policies of Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan up to 2021 - November 2010 are relevant to this consent: policies CW2, CW3 and CW4.

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Application No. 15/0924/FULL Continued

Please find attached the comments of Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water and Senior Engineer (Land Drainage).

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