

Report to: Planning Applications Committee
Date: 12 July 2023
Application No: LW/22/0739 and LW/22/0740
Location: Seaford Football Club, Bramber Road, Seaford BN25 1AE
Proposal: Amended description - Vary condition 1 of planning permission LW/10/0783 to permit up to 22 floodlit matches. Restriction on latest time of use to remain the same at 21:50 hours.

Applicant: T. Webster, Chairman, Seaford Town Football Club
Ward: Seaford South
Recommendation: Grant variation of condition.
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Site Location Plan



1.	Executive Summary
1.1	The proposal as amended to restrict the number of floodlight matches to a maximum of 22 rather than remove the restriction altogether, is considered to be an acceptable outcome that meets relevant national and local plan policies as well as allowing the club the flexibility it needs to facilitate projected need.
2.	Relevant Planning Policies
2.1	<u>National Planning Policy Framework</u> 4. Decision making 8. Promoting healthy and safe communities
2.2	<u>Lewes District Local Plan:</u> CP11 – Built and Historic Environment & Design, Amenity DM15 – Provision for Outdoor Playing Space DM25 – Design and Amenity
2.3	<u>Seaford Neighbourhood Plan:</u> Nothing specific to this proposal, although policy SEA7 seeks to protect open spaces and parks from development proposals.
3.	Site Description
3.3	The football ground is located on the eastern half of Crouch Gardens, a public park in Seaford, with access from Bramber Road. The park is surrounded by residential properties in Bramber Road (nos. 1-17, 29, 31-33, 37, The Gables, The Orchards), Mercread Road (nos. 17-22 consec), Diamond Jubilee Close (nos. 1-6 consec), Cornfield Road 1, 5-9, Stoneleigh), Bainbridge Close (1-6 consec.) and Heathfield Road (17-29).
3.4	The western half of the park includes Seaford Bowls Club, a play area and a community garden.
3.5	Seaford Town Council own the Park.
4.	Proposed Development
4.1	The club originally applied to vary condition 1 of LW/10/0783 to entirely remove the limit on the number of floodlit games but to retain the hours of use of the lights. This was not considered to be an acceptable arrangement, as this could result in unlimited use of the lights. The Club has now agreed to a maximum of 22 floodlit fixtures. However, it is anticipated that there will be fewer floodlit league matches than this, but

	it allows for the flexibility needed to accommodate cup competitions, which are of course an unknown quantity.
5.	Relevant Planning History:
5.1	LW/89/1175 - Erection of eight floodlight standards – approved 31 January 1990. Temporary permission until 31 December 1994.
	LW/02/0042 - Erection of flood lights, (eight columns) to football pitch – refused 13 March 2002 on grounds of amenity regarding light spillage, noise and disturbance arising from players and spectators.
5.2	LW/04/1355 - Erection of floodlights to football pitch – approved 20 October 2004, subject to conditions restricting number of floodlit games and latest time for use – up to 21:30 for matches, 21:00 for training, during which only 4 lights allowed to be used. No use on Sundays or public holidays.
5.3	<p>LW/10/0783 - Amend condition one of application LW/04/1355 to extend the maximum of five competitive evening games to twelve per football season and extend the period of illumination from 2130hrs to 2150hrs – approved 14 October 2010.</p> <p><i>Condition 1- The floodlights hereby approved shall be used for up to a maximum of twelve competitive evening games per football season (August - June). On each of those evenings when games are played the floodlights shall not be illuminated after 9.50pm. The Club shall provide advance written notification to the local planning authority of the dates when the 12 evening games are to be played.</i></p> <p><i>Condition 2 - The floodlights hereby approved shall not be used for any purpose on Sundays, Bank or Statutory Holidays.</i></p> <p><i>Condition 3 - A maximum of four floodlight columns only shall be used on training sessions. On each of those evenings when training takes place the floodlights shall not be illuminated after 9pm.</i></p>
6.	Consultations:
6.1	<p>Seaford Parish Council:</p> <p>In view of the Council's ownership of the Crouch and its involvement in the discussions leading up to the submission of the applications it would not be appropriate for the Council to make any formal response.</p>
6.2	<p>ESCC Highways:</p> <p>On this occasion I do not consider it necessary to provide formal Highway Authority comments and advise you to consult the minor planning</p>

	application guidance (2017) as we were not consulted on the original application.
6.3	ESCC Rights of Way: no response
6.4	Environmental Health Noise Pollution: no response
7.	Other Representations:
7.1	<p><u>Neighbour Representations:</u></p> <p>64 representations of support</p> <p>32 objections on the following issues: (Officer response – OR – in red)</p> <p>Lights often on until after 10pm</p> <p>OR – One complaint received by Planning Enforcement in August 2022, which resulted in this application. The timing condition will be retained on the new planning permission.</p> <p>Lights are intrusive to local residents.</p> <p>OR – The lights have been in place for over 19 years.</p> <p>Noise, bad language</p> <p>OR – This is a management issue for the club</p> <p>Parking, traffic generation</p> <p>OR - The increase in the permitted number of floodlit games is unlikely to increase the number of traffic movements.</p> <p>Site is open space not a football ground and should not be used exclusively for that purpose, club should move</p> <p>OR – The club has been established on this site for many years and plays an important role in the community.</p> <p>No requirement by the FA for the club to increase the number of evening fixtures</p> <p>OR – The recently established Under 23 league plays mid-week evenings, which is the key reason for the increase in number of floodlit matches. The club is bound by the rules of the Southern Combination Football League.</p> <p>Access to The Crouch is limited when matches are being played</p> <p>OR – This has always been the case. Access to the rest of the park will not be affected.</p> <p>Effect on wildlife, especially birds</p> <p>OR – As noted above, the floodlights have been in place for over 19 years.</p>
7.2	<u>Other Representations:</u>

	None.
8.	Appraisal:
8.1	The key consideration is the impact of the increase in the maximum number of games on the amenity of the residents who live close to the football ground.
8.2	<p>As noted in the planning history, the floodlights have, in one form or another, been in place at The Crouch since 1989, albeit restricted to a lower permitted number of matches.</p> <p>The type of bulb has been changed on a number of occasions, the latest being October 2019. Rear cowls were fitted to make the lighting more directional to the pitch.</p>
8.3	<p>The club has confirmed the following maximum number of floodlit matches required will be 22:</p> <p>Men's 1st Team - Most other league games with kick-off at 2pm to avoid use of floodlights, but last season, there were 2 floodlit matches .</p> <p>The team plays in 3 cup competitions, so there is a need to allow for floodlit cup matches. Anticipated number of evening fixtures 5.</p> <p>Women's Team – Team plays on Sunday afternoons, normally with 2pm kick-off However, the team folded this year but are regrouping for next season & the league normally has 7-8 opponents in it. Anticipated number of evening fixtures 2.</p> <p>Seaford Veterans – ad hoc use of The Crouch and normally play elsewhere. Anticipated number of evening fixtures 2.</p> <p>Under 18 team – no evening matches, only play Sunday with 11:00 kick-off.</p> <p>Under 23 league (formerly Reserve League which played on Saturdays). All home games played mid-week with floodlights. There are 10 league opponents and 2 cup competitions. Anticipated number of evening fixtures 13.</p>
8.4	<p>From the above, it is anticipated that floodlights will no longer be required for Saturday league games as the kick-off time is now 2pm during winter months. Only 3 midweek floodlit games were played in the last season.</p> <p>The main change has been the new under 23 league, which now plays mid-week.</p> <p>A maximum of 22 floodlit matches will accommodate all of the club's regular league requirements and includes flexibility for up matches.</p>
8.5	<u>Conclusions:</u>

	The proposal as amended at officer's request is considered to be acceptable and will allow the club to continue to function.
9.	Recommendations
9.1	Grant permission for the variation of condition 1 of planning permission LW/10/0783 to permit up to 22 floodlit matches. Restriction on latest time of use to remain the same at 21:50 hours.
10.	Conditions:
10.1	<p>The floodlights hereby approved shall be used for up to a maximum of twenty-two (22) competitive evening games per football season (August - June). On each of those evenings when games are played the floodlights shall not be illuminated after 9.50pm. The Club shall provide advance written notification to the local planning authority of the dates when the 22 evening games are to be played.</p> <p>Reason: To help safeguard nearby residential amenity, having regard to policies CP10 and DM25 of the Lewes District Local Plan and the NPPF.</p>
10.2	<p>The floodlights hereby approved shall not be used for any purpose on Sundays, Bank or Statutory Holidays.</p> <p>Reason: To help safeguard nearby residential amenity, having regard to policies CP10 and DM25 of the Lewes District Local Plan and the NPPF.</p>
10.3	<p>A maximum of four floodlight columns only shall be used on training sessions. On each of those evenings when training takes place the floodlights shall not be illuminated after 9pm.</p> <p>Reason: To help safeguard nearby residential amenity, having regard to policies CP10 and DM25 of the Lewes District Local Plan and the NPPF.</p>
11.	Plans:
11.1	This decision relates solely to the following plans:

<u>Plan Type</u>	<u>Date Received</u>	<u>Reference:</u>
Location Plan	3 November 2022	2201.LP01 - Site Location Plan
Existing Block Plan	3 November 2022	2201.BP01 - Existing Block Plan
Technical Report	13 March 2023	88 point lux level test
Photographs	13 March 2023	Photos of floodlights in operation
Technical Report	13 March 2023	Ground grading guidance handbook
Additional Documents	16 June 2023	Covering letter

12.	Appendices
12.1	None.
13.	Background Papers
13.1	None.