

Design and Access Statement

For Application: Erection of three covered padel tennis courts and one open padel court; refurbishment and small extension to pavilion with additional car parking. Eastbourne Saffrons Sports Club, Compton Place, Eastbourne, BN21 1EA.

Design

Amount

The padel tennis centre at The saffrons Sports Club, Eastbourne is being created to help support the growth of padel tennis in the UK. The 4 courts (3 covered, 1 open) will be the first in the Eastbourne and Lewes District area and will be the only dedicated padel tennis centre along the South Coast of England. The nearest courts currently are a 1 court uncovered facility at Withdean, Brighton (45 minutes drive) and 1 covered court at Burgess Hill (55 minutes drive).

Padel Tennis is the fastest growing ball sport in Europe. It is growing at 50% per annum in Western Europe (France, Sweden, Holland, Belgium) and is now starting to expand rapidly in the UK. Padel is now the second largest sport (behind football) in Spain, Italy and Sweden. There are currently only 250 courts in the UK, compared to Spain: 20,000+, France 2,000+, Italy: 5,000+. Holland 1,000+ and Sweden: 4,000+.

See the attached report 'Background to padel tennis' attached to the application.

The Chairman of The Saffrons has explained the current situation below.

"The Eastbourne Saffrons Sports Club has rented the Saffrons site in Compton Place Road from the Duke of Devonshire for over 135 years. The lease is held by a registered charity which exists to promote community led sport on the site. It is the home of Eastbourne Town Football Club, Eastbourne Hockey Club, Eastbourne Cricket Club, Compton Croquet Club

and Cargo Gym. In addition it provides facilities on a free of charge basis to other sporting endeavours such as the local Stoolball league.

In recent years it has become apparent to the board of trustees that the club needs to look at additional activities if it is to sustain itself in an ever-changing world. Nationally, team sports are seeing an overall decline in participation rates as the younger generations have so many other options in terms of their free time. Consequently the club has been working on a development plan in recent years which has culminated in this planning application. It is vital that the club diversifies it's offering to some degree in order to sustain itself moving forwards. We hope to bring Padel Tennis on to the site as well as develop the existing clubhouse in order to increase spend and dwell time of users (new and existing). The clubhouse will have a refresh to the interior as well as a small extension which will create an additional space thereby increasing its ability to generate funds through functions and events.”

My client held an open evening to discuss their proposals. A summary is attached with the application.

Layout

A location close to the existing main club house has been chosen as the preferred location for the new building. This central location ensures it is well away from residential development that surrounds The Saffrons.

There is already a large car park located close to the pavilion.

It is intended to erect a light weight building which will cover three courts.

An open court will also be developed.

The new development will be linked to the club house, which will be refurbished and a small extension added to provide full facilities for users of the club.

Scale

The new Padel building measures 42mts x 25mts and will have a maximum height of 10.5mts.

Appearance

The main clubhouse at The Saffrons fell in to serious decline and considered to be unsafe and unsustainable around 2007. The decision was taken to relocate to a new building in its current location, this was opened later that year.

Pragmatism, expediency and budget limited the ambition of the new structure and it was due to the assistance of club members that a building of such quality resulted.

The relocation placed the clubhouse in a central location between the principle activities of Cricket, Hockey and Football. It has been the centre of the clubs regeneration to the stability that they currently enjoy following some years of uncertainty.

In an effort to further expand and secure a future with greater stability further initiatives have been explored to increase the membership by having greater community involvement and other facilities and attractions to raise the footfall and dwell times at the ground.

Padel tennis is a new movement, a variation of tennis that takes less site area and can be enjoyed by a greater number of players due to its innovative court enclosure and modified equipment.

A Padel centre operated by Padel 4 All will be a significant addition to the sports offered at The Saffrons creating a new section of membership that will also appeal to existing members of other sections.

See further details from the Architect attached to the application explaining the design.

Landscaping

The new development will be constructed mainly where there is currently open parking. No trees are effected by the development.

Access Component

Access to the site for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles is via the existing access to Saffrons Sports Club at Compton Place Road. Within Saffrons Sports Club, the existing access road is circa 4.5m wide and operates as a shared surface environment offering safe access for all users. This provides a direct route through Saffrons Sports Club towards the proposed development and the existing club house.

Safe and suitable access is available for future users of the padel tennis facility. The existing Saffrons Sports Club access points will be utilised to facilitate safe pedestrian, cyclist and vehicle movements. The access will also be used for construction access and further details of this will be covered as part of a CMP. The proposed development includes the provision of 24 additional car parking spaces, for use by the existing sports club users and people using the new padel tennis facility.

See full Transport report attached to the application, including provision of a temporary access for construction traffic.

Noise assessment

The new padel courts are being located in the centre of The Saffrons, well away from existing residential dwellings. The current sports facilities generate certain noise levels depending on the sport, from football to hockey to cricket. It is not considered the new use for padel tennis will increase the noise to an unacceptable level.

Planning statement

The most relevant up to date document is the Eastbourne Core Strategy Local Plan published in February 2013. The relevant Policies are considered to be:-

Policy C10: Summerdown & Saffrons Neighbourhood Policy

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The vision for Summerdown and Saffrons neighbourhood will be promoted by:

Redeveloping the Dental Practice Board site to provide a mix of health uses, as well as some residential, employment and community uses;

Providing new residential units, mainly through conversions of existing properties;

Increasing the provision of affordable housing in the neighbourhood;

Defending the historic environment from inappropriate development;

Protecting and enhancing facilities at the Saffrons Sports Ground;

Enhancing access to the South Downs National Park whilst preventing inappropriate development on the boundary; and

Delivering opportunities for sustainable travel through the provision of cycle routes

This development will protect and enhance the current sports facilities at The Saffrons.

Policy D1: Sustainable Development

There is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. All new development should be sustainable and be well designed and constructed and demonstrate that it has taken account of the principles of sustainable development by:

Delivering economic, social and environmental well-being;

Enhancing the natural and built environment;

Conserving scarce resources, making efficient use of land and infrastructure;

Ensuring a balanced mix of uses that work together encouraging sustainable living;

Utilising sustainable construction techniques;

Being easily accessible to all users;

Ensuring good connections to public transport , community facilities and services;

and Reducing the opportunities for crime and the fear of crime using Secured by Design principles.

This development follows the sustainable principles.

Policy D2: Economy

Job growth and economic prosperity in Eastbourne will be supported. This will enable the achievement of a sustainable economy and a town where people want to live and work.

The development will provide employment for one full time worker and four part time employees.

Policy D3: Tourism and Culture

The importance of the entertainment, cultural and sports facilities to the economic prosperity of Eastbourne is recognised. The Council will support the preservation and enhancement of these through the following measures:

- Resist the loss of visitor accommodation through the retention of a tourist accommodation area and protection policy;
- Support the appropriate upgrading of existing hotels and holiday accommodation to provide improved facilities for visitors as well as supporting proposals for additional accommodation in the sustainable centres;
- Support new entertainment, cultural and sporting facilities in Eastbourne, where appropriate.
- Recognise the value of the South Downs National Park as a visitor and recreation asset and work with the Park Authority, to protect the area from development which would damage or adversely affect its character and/or appearance;
- Support the retention and enhancement of the entertainment, cultural and sports facilities in Eastbourne through development management measures resisting changes which would lead to a downgrading in the town's cultural integrity and/or appearance;**
- Prepare a strategy for the future of the seafront area through the production of a Seafront Area Action Plan;
- and Promote the development of the Wish Tower restaurant to provide an enhanced asset for the benefit of residents and visitors

The proposed development will support the retention of the existing sporting activities at The Saffrons. The proposed changes will enhance the sports facilities at The Saffrons.

Policy D7: Community, Sport and Health

To enhance community and sports facilities, additional provision, including enhancements to existing facilities, will be sought in neighbourhoods where there are identified deficiencies. This will ensure that acceptable standards of provision, and local need are achieved. For outdoor sports facilities, additional provision and enhancements will be assessed on an Eastbourne-wide basis to meet overall demand.

The introduction of Padel Tennis will provide additional provision of a new facility which will be added to the existing sports played at The Saffrons.

It is considered the proposed padel tennis fully complies with the relevant Policies in the Local Plan.

15/02/2023

D.D.Collins