

ITEM NO: 9

Application No.

21/00172/3

Site Address:

Ward:

Priestwood And Garth

Date Registered:

10 March 2021

Target Decision Date:

5 May 2021

**Braybrooke Recreation Ground Makepiece Road
Bracknell Berkshire**

Proposal:

Erection of 2no re-purposed wooden structures. One, a Scout Hut for a local Scout group and the other a classroom for Bracknell Town Council.

Applicant:

Lee Clark

Agent:

(There is no agent for this application)

Case Officer:

Olivia Jones, 01344 352000

development.control@bracknell-forest.gov.uk**Site Location Plan** (for identification purposes only, not to scale)

OFFICER REPORT

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 Full planning permission is sought for the erection of a detached Scout Hut and detached classroom building within Braybrooke Recreation Ground.
- 1.2 The development relates to a site within the settlement boundary. It is not considered that the development results in an adverse impact on the streetscene or the character and appearance of the area, trees, biodiversity or highway safety.

RECOMMENDATION
Planning permission be granted subject to conditions in Section 11 of this report

2. REASONS FOR REPORTING THE APPLICATION TO ADVISORY PLANNING COMMITTEE

- 2.1 The application has been reported to the Advisory Planning Committee as it is a scheme which the Director for Place, Planning and Regeneration is responsible for promoting.

3. PLANNING STATUS AND SITE DESCRIPTION

PLANNING STATUS
Within Defined Settlement
Public Open Space
Local Green Space (Bracknell Town Neighbourhood Plan)

- 3.1 Braybrooke Recreation Ground is a public open space managed by Bracknell Town Council. The proposed hut would be sited on the western side of the site, adjacent to junction between Makepiece Road and Quelm Lane, a public right of way (PROW).
- 3.2 The proposed site is not located within the Borough's defined employment areas. The recreation ground is designated as Local Green Spaces within Bracknell Town Neighbourhood Plan (draft).

4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 The relevant planning history is summarised as follows:

6393
Ablution building.
Approved 1960

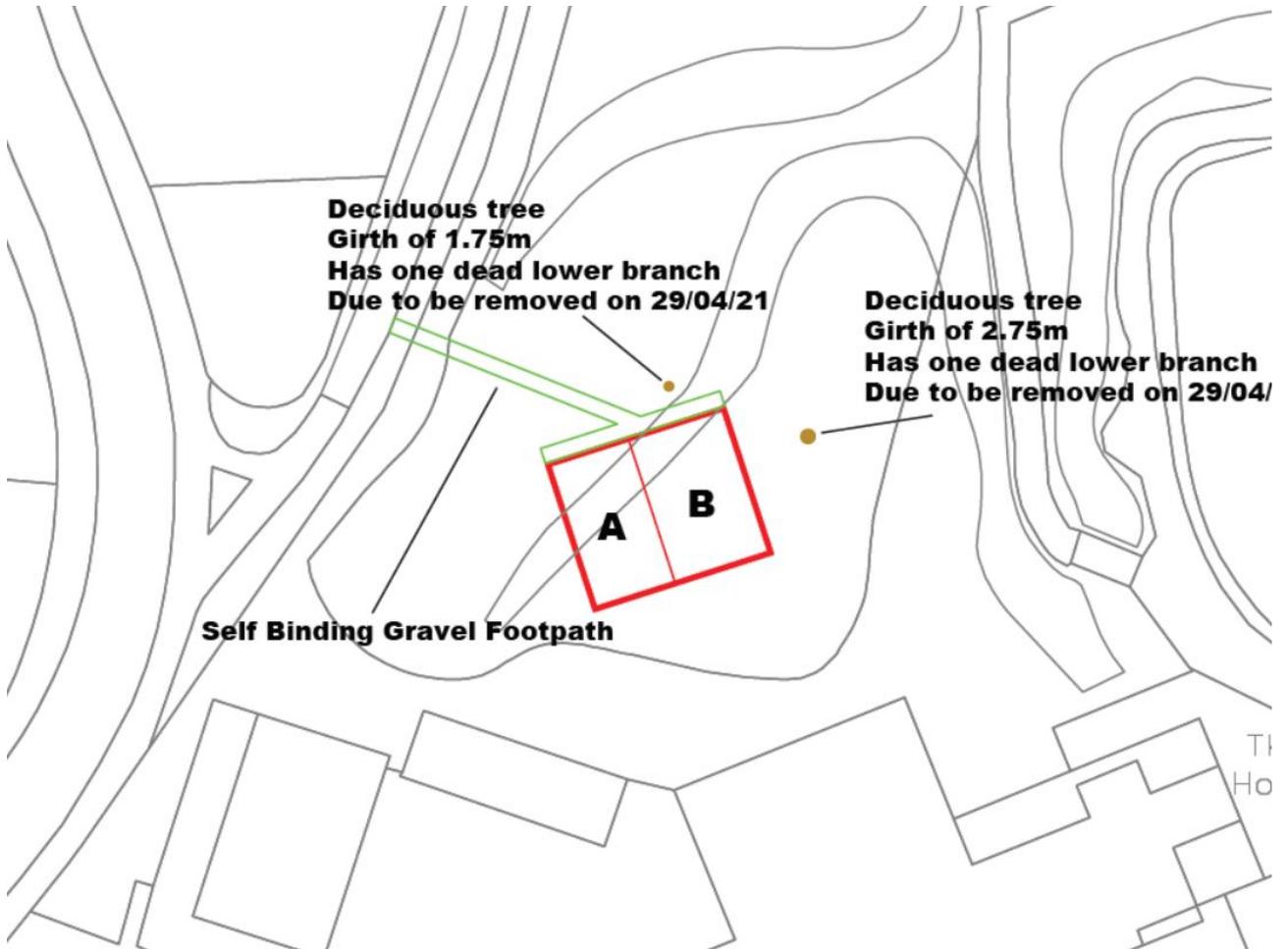
601166
Application for erection of pre-school playgroup building and outside play area.
Refused 1975

5. THE PROPOSAL

- 5.1 It is proposed to install two single storey buildings within Braybrooke Recreation Ground: a scout hut and a classroom. A footpath will be created to link the buildings to Quelm Lane.
- 5.2 The proposed Scout Hut would have a width of 9.3 metres, a depth of 6.7 metres and a height of 3.2 metres. An access ramp and stairs are proposed to the front. The building would be clad

with timber. The hut would be used for Scouting activities in the surrounding area, and for the collection of scouting uniforms.

5.3 The proposed classroom would have a width of 9 metres, a depth of 5.4 metres and a height of 3.65 metres. The building would be constructed of shiplap. The building would be used by Bracknell Town Council to teach children about vegetation, trees and wildlife within the park.



6. REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

Bracknell Town Council

6.1 No objection to the scheme. BTC has requested that an inscription is added to the buildings regarding the proposed use of the buildings.
[Officer Comment: It would not be reasonable to require this as a planning condition.]

Other Representations

6.2 One letter of representation has been received requesting that care is taken to ensure the surrounding trees are preserved.

7. SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Highway Authority

7.1 No objection

Tree Service

7.2 No objection

Biodiversity Officer

7.3 No objection

8. MAIN POLICIES AND OTHER DOCUMENTS RELEVANT TO THE DECISION

8.1 The key policies and associated guidance applying to the site are:

	Development Plan	NPPF
General policies	CS1 & CS2 of CSDPD	Consistent
Recreational Land	Policy CS8 of the CSDPD 'Saved' Policy SC3 of the BFBLP, Policy EV3 of the Draft Bracknell Town Neighbourhood Plan	Consistent
Design and Character	CS7 of CSDPD, Saved policy EN20 of BFBLP, Policy HO8 of the Draft Bracknell Town Neighbourhood Plan	Consistent
Residential Amenity	Saved policies EN1, EN2, EN20 and EN25 of BFBLP	Consistent
Highways	CS23 of CSDPD, Saved policy M9 of BFBLP	Consistent
Trees	'Saved' Policy EN1 of BFBLP, Policy EV4 of the Draft Bracknell Town Neighbourhood Plan	Consistent
Biodiversity	'Saved' Policy EN15 of BFBLP	Consistent
Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)		
Design (2017)		
Parking Standards (2016)		
Other publications		
National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF)		

9. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

9.1 The key issues for consideration are:

- (i) Principle of the Development
- (ii) Impact on the character and appearance of the area
- (iii) Impact on residential amenity
- (iv) Highway safety consideration
- (v) Impact on trees
- (vi) Impact on biodiversity

i. Principle of Development

9.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan,

unless material considerations indicate otherwise, which is supported by the NPPF (paragraph 2). Policy CS2 of the CSDPD states that development will be permitted within defined settlements. This is provided that the development is consistent with the character, accessibility and provision of infrastructure and services within that settlement. The above policy is considered to be consistent with the NPPF, and as a consequence is considered to carry significant weight.

- 9.3 Policy CS8 of the CSDPD states that development will be permitted which retains, improves and maintains existing Recreational Facilities. The commentary to this policy states that this policy is intended to resist the loss of existing provision of recreational facilities and the protect them from pressures from development. 'Saved' Policy SC3 of the BFBLP states that development will only be acceptable where there is no loss of existing community facilities.
- 9.4 Paragraph 99 of the NPPF states that existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:
- a) an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
 - b) the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
 - c) the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use.
- 9.5 Paragraph 101 goes onto state that the designation of land as Local Green Space through local and neighbourhood plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them.
- 9.6 Paragraph 103 of the NPPF states that policies for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with those for Green Belts.
- 9.7 Policy EV3 of the Draft Bracknell Town Neighbourhood Plan designates both Braybrooke and The Elms Recreation Grounds as 'Local Green Spaces'. This policy states that new development on these local green spaces should only be permitted if they enhance the role and function of the space.
- 9.8 While this Neighbourhood Plan has not yet been ratified by referendum a decision statement has been issued by Bracknell Forest Council (as set out under Regulation 18 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012) and therefore the plan can be given significant weight in decision-making (paragraph 107 Planning Practice Guidance: Neighbourhood Planning).
- 9.9 The proposed buildings would be located on land designated as local green space where development is restricted unless it enhances the role and function of the space. Given the proposed buildings would be used primarily used in relation to the Green Space (the scout hut used for scouting activities around the green space, and the classroom used for teaching about the green space and ecology) it is considered the proposed buildings would be suitable for this location.

ii. Impact on Character and Appearance of Surrounding Area

- 9.10 'Saved' policy EN20 of the BFBLP states that development should be in sympathy with the appearance and character of the local environment and appropriate in scale, mass, design, materials etc. Policy CS7 of the CSDPD states that the council would require high quality design for all development in Bracknell Forest. Development proposals would be permitted which build on the urban local character, respecting local patterns of development. Section 12 of the NPPF emphasises the importance of good design as key to making places better

for people to live. Additionally, the NPPF states that the design of development should help improve the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.

9.11 Policy HO8 of the Draft Bracknell Town Neighbourhood Plan states that the design of new development should have regard to local character including the use of locally appropriate building materials.

9.12 The proposed hut would be a repurposed sales hut. The hut is single storey and has a flat roof which reduces the bulk of the building. The proposed classroom would be a single storey building with a pitched roof. Both buildings would be considered to appear modest in scale. The use of timber cladding for the buildings would be considered appropriate in a woodland setting.

9.13 The proposed siting within Braybrooke Recreation Ground would be between the existing Community Centre building and carpark. Given the single storey nature of the buildings they would not appear incongruous or overly prominent in this existing built up location. The view from outside the recreation ground would be screened by vegetation, and the surrounding mature trees would not be harmed by the proposal.

iii. Residential Amenity

9.14 'Saved' policy EN20 of the BFBLP states that development will not adversely affect the amenity of surrounding properties and adjoining area. Paragraph 130 of the NPPF states that the Local Planning Authority should ensure high quality amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.

9.15 The proposed buildings would be sited in an area that is currently used for internal and external recreational activities. It is not considered the provision of two buildings would intensify the use of the land to such an extent as to adversely impact the residential amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring dwellings.

iv. Transport and Highways Considerations

9.16 Policy CS23 of the CSDPD states that the council will use its planning and transport powers to reduce the need to travel, increase the safety of travel, promote alternative modes of travel and promote travel planning. 'Saved' policy M9 of the BFBLP states that development will not be permitted unless satisfactory parking provision is made for vehicles and cycles. This policy also states that the standards set out in the Bracknell Forest Borough Parking Standards, Supplementary Planning Document 2016 (SPD) must be adhered to.

9.17 It is proposed that visitors to the proposed buildings park in the car park associated with Braybrooke Recreation Ground. It is considered that the car park has the capacity to accommodate the visitors to the proposed buildings. A condition will be imposed requiring all activity to stop at the buildings at least 15 minutes before the closure of the car park, and start at least 15 minutes after the car park is open, to ensure safe access.

9.18 A footpath is proposed to link the buildings to Quelm Lane which will lead onto the car park, and the building will be provided with lighting to ensure safety when accessing the footpath.

v. Trees

9.19 'Saved' policy EN1 of the BFBLP states that planning permission will not be granted for development which would result in the destruction of trees and hedgerows. Trees and hedgerows are important to the retention of the character and appearance of the landscape or townscape of the area. Paragraph 131 of the NPPF states that trees make an important

contribution to the character and quality of urban environments. It goes on to state that planning decisions should ensure that [...] existing trees are retained wherever possible.

9.20 Policy EV4 of the Draft Bracknell Town Neighbourhood Plan states that development proposals are expected to retain all trees in good condition, and which possess amenity value.

9.21 The proposed buildings would be sited within an area of woodland. While this woodland is not covered by a Tree Preservation Order, the trees play an important role in the sylvan nature of the surrounding area and therefore any impact on these trees should be minimised.

9.22 Details of tree protection and construction mitigation have been submitted by the applicant and reviewed by the Tree Service. The Tree Service are satisfied that the submitted information is sufficient to ensure adequate protection for the trees, subject to suitable monitoring which would be secured by condition.

vi. Biodiversity Implications

9.23 Policy CS1 of the CSDPD states that development will be permitted which protects and enhances the quality of natural resources including biodiversity. Policy CS7 of the CSDPD states that development proposals will be permitted which promote biodiversity. 'Saved' policy EN15 of the BFBLP states that external lighting schemes will only be acceptable where they would have no adverse impact on wildlife. These policies are considered to be consistent with the NPPF which states that the planning system should contribute to, and enhance, the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on biodiversity.

9.24 Path surfacing – The ecological assessment section 1.4 suggests the access path to the buildings will be resin bound gravel whereas the amended block plan shows a self-binding gravel. The project manager has confirmed that a self-binding gravel will be used as this is more permeable and sensitive within the woodland environment.

9.25 Lighting – Lighting could have a significant impact within the woodland, deterring a range of nocturnal species most notably bats. As lighting is required a condition should be secured to sensitive lighting.

9.26 Woodland planting - Section 4.17 of the ecological assessment recommends new native understorey planting. The plan should improve its condition by removing of heaped soil areas, new understorey planting, creation of deadwood features, installing bird and bat boxes and reducing mowing regimes around woodland edges. This should be expanded and improved to compensate for the potential impacts of the new buildings and their use including increased human presence and impacts on woodland management for safety. There are three new planting areas within the woodland: a bare soil area northeast of the hut location and two 'clearings' on the north edge of the woodland. These total 1520 m² and will provide new woodland habitat to offset the impact of the proposed huts.

9.27 Woodland Management Plan – The ecological assessment indicates that the woodland is in poor condition due to the lack of understorey and the ground flora indicates previous use of the area for woodchip storage. Therefore, a woodland management plan should be secured by condition to provide biodiversity net gains from the proposals and ensure the success of any new planting.

9.28 Bird and bat boxes - Section 4.17 recommends the installation of a wooden bird and bat box on the new buildings. All bird and bat boxes should be of woodcrete or recycled plastic to ensure their longevity. A condition securing details of biodiversity enhancements should include these features.

9.29 Scout Activities – it is understood that the lease agreement for the scout group will specify that no fires will be lit. It should also be clear that no activities should be taken which change the woodland habitat unless they are in line with the woodland management plan.

9.30 Subject to suitable conditions it is considered the impact on the biodiversity within Braybrooke Recreation Grounds can be sufficiently mitigated.

10. CONCLUSIONS

10.1 It is considered that the development is acceptable in principle and does not result in an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, highway safety, trees, biodiversity or the residential amenities of the occupiers of the neighbouring properties. It is therefore considered that the development complies with 'Saved' policies of the BFBLP, Policies of the CSDPD, BFBC SPDs, Policies of the Draft Bracknell Town Neighbourhood Plan and the NPPF.

11. RECOMMENDATION

11.1 That the Assistant Director: Planning be recommended to **APPROVE** application 21/00172/3 subject to the following conditions amended, added to or deleted as the Assistant Director: Planning considers necessary:

01. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

REASON: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

02. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out only in accordance with the following approved plans and other submitted details:

Site Plan – Received 17.03.21

Block Plan – Received 30.04.21

Scout Hut Floor Plans (18101.02) – Received 17.03.21

Scout Hut Elevations and Section (18101.03) – Received 17.03.21

Classroom Floor Plan – Received 17.03.21

Classroom Elevations – Received 17.03.21

Classroom Section – Received 17.03.21

Classroom Specifications – Received 17.03.21

Tree Report – Received 30.04.21

Ecological Assessment – Received 15.06.21

Service Excavation Method Statement – Received 05.08.21

REASON: To ensure that the development is carried out only as approved by the Local Planning Authority.

03. The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the buildings hereby permitted shall be similar in appearance to those shown on the approved plans.

REASON: In the interests of the visual amenities of the area.

[Relevant Policies: BFBLP EN20, CSDPD CS7]

04. The hours of operation for the facilities hereby approved shall be restricted to no earlier than 15 minutes after the opening of Braybrooke Park Carpark, and no later than 15 minutes before the closure of Braybrooke Park Carpark.

REASON: In order to ensure safe access to the car park.

05. The access path to the buildings shall be constructed of self-binding gravel and shall be created prior to the occupation of the buildings hereby approved.

REASON: In the interests of nature conservation, the character of the area and pedestrian safety.

06. The development hereby permitted shall not be begun until a scheme has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority for external site lighting including details of the lighting units, levels of illumination and hours of use. No lighting shall be provided at the site other than in accordance with the approved scheme.

The external lighting shall be installed in accordance with the approved scheme prior to the occupation of any building hereby approved.

REASON: In the interests of nature conservation and the pedestrian safety

07. The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until a Woodland Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This scheme shall include details of new woodland planting and all outside activities to be undertaken in relation to the proposed development. No outside activity should occur, including the lighting of fires, unless it is specified in the Woodland Management Plan.

REASON: In the interests of nature conservation

08. The development hereby permitted shall not be begun until a scheme for the provision of biodiversity enhancements (not mitigation), including a plan or drawing showing the location of these enhancements, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

The approved scheme shall be performed, observed and complied with.

REASON: In the interests of nature conservation

09. The protective measures shown on the approved plans shall be installed within the application site prior to the commencement of development, including any initial site clearance, and shall be maintained fully intact and (in the case of fencing) upright until the completion of all building operations on the site.

REASON: In order to safeguard trees and other vegetation considered to be worthy of retention in the interests of the visual amenity of the area.

[Relevant Policies: BFBLP EN1 and EN20, CSDPD CS7]

10. All excavation works shall comply with the approved Service Excavation Method Statement.

REASON: In order to safeguard trees and other vegetation considered to be worthy of retention in the interests of the visual amenity of the area.

[Relevant Policies: BFBLP EN1 and EN20, CSDPD CS7]

11. Photographs should be provided to the LPA for the following stages of construction:

- The commencement of works on site
- The formation of the fencing compound
- The laying of ground protection
- The excavation works

Photographs should be taken and sent at least 3 working days before any of these stages begin, taken and sent during the installation itself, and taken and sent no more than 3 working days after the stage is completed.

REASON: In order to safeguard trees and other vegetation considered to be worthy of retention in the interests of the visual amenity of the area.

[Relevant Policies: BFBLP EN1 and EN20, CSDPD CS7]

Informative(s):

01. The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.
02. No details are required to be submitted in relation to the following conditions; however they are required to be complied with:
 - (1) Commencement
 - (2) Approved plans
 - (3) Materials
 - (4) Hours of operation
 - (5) Access path
 - (9) Tree protection
 - (10) Excavation method statement

The applicant is advised that the following conditions require discharging prior to the commencement/occupation of development:

 - (6) External lighting scheme
 - (7) Woodland management plan
 - (8) Biodiversity enhancements scheme
 - (11) Photographs
03. The applicant should note that this permission does not convey any authorisation to enter onto land or to carry out works on land not within the applicant's ownership.
04. This is a planning permission. Before beginning any development you may also need separate permission(s) under Building Regulations or other legislation. It is your responsibility to check that there are no covenants or other restrictions that apply to your property.