
APPLICATION NO.	21/00267/FULLS
APPLICATION TYPE	FULL APPLICATION - SOUTH
REGISTERED	28.01.2021
APPLICANT	Mr Ken Jacobs
SITE	Romsey Town Football Club, Southampton Road, Romsey, SO51 8AF, ROMSEY EXTRA ROMSEY TOWN
PROPOSAL	Retention of 2 keep nets
AMENDMENTS	Removal of two advertisements located on eastern keep net - 8056/P06 E
CASE OFFICER	Mr Nathan Glasgow

Background paper (Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application is presented to the Southern Area Planning Committee at the request of a local Ward Member.

2.0 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 Romsey Town Football Club is located on the outskirts of Romsey to the south, directly north of the Romsey Rapids and adjacent Southampton Road upon its entrance to the town. The site is within the Romsey settlement boundary, but outside of any designations such as the Conservation Area or the Romsey Town Design Statement.

3.0 PROPOSAL

- 3.1 Retention of 2 keep nets.
- 3.2 The application has been made as a combined “1-App”, for both Full planning permission and advertisement. Advertisement Consent has been granted consent and therefore this is not for consideration – only the physical presence of the keep nets and those around the site.
- 3.3 The full planning application is solely for the installation/retention of the keep nets to the west and north boundaries of the football pitch.
- 3.4 For the avoidance of doubt, the previous decision to grant Advertisement Consent does not, and should not, imply that the structures on which they are displayed are acceptable in planning terms.

4.0 HISTORY

- 4.1 **21/00268/ADVS** – Retention of freestanding signage and signs fixed to fencing and keep net – *Consent April 2021*.

4.2 **21/00216/FULLS & 21/00217/LBWS** – Provision of food kiosk and merchandise outlet & Free standing adverts and kiosk adverts – *Permission/consent April 2021*

4.3 **14/02198/FULLS** – Retain roof over spectator stand and poles with netting behind stand for ball retention (retrospective) – *Permission*

5.0 **CONSULTATIONS**

5.1 **Conservation** – Comment

- Nets are not attractive, but functional

5.2 **HCC Highways** – No objection

5.3 **Landscape** – No objection to the proposed keep net

5.4 **Trees** – No objection

6.0 **REPRESENTATIONS** Expired 26.02.2021

6.1 **Romsey Town Council** – Objection

RTC has no objection to the keep nets but objects to the signs on them as they are inappropriate, overbearing and distracting to motorists. RTC has no objection to the hoardings on the sheds.

6.2 **Romsey Extra Parish Council** – Objection and No Objection

Objection to northern keep net and advertisements to the keep nets.

No objection to existing keep nets to east/west, or to the advertisements on the clubhouse.

6.3 **Romsey & District Society** – Comment

- Concerned re. cumulative effect of four applications will spread 'commercial' impact of the football club too much
- Potential to consolidate signs to smaller area

7.0 **POLICY**

7.1 Government Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

7.2 Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan (2016)(RLP)

COM2: Settlement Hierarchy

E1: High Quality Development in the Borough

E2: Protect, Conserve and Enhance the Landscape Character of the Borough

E5: Biodiversity

E9: Heritage

LHW4: Amenity

T1: Managing Movement

7.3 Other Relevant Policy Documents

Romsey Town Design Statement Supplementary Planning Document (Romsey TDS)

8.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

8.1 The main planning considerations are:

- Principle of development
- Impact on the character and appearance of the area
- Impact on protected trees/landscaping
- Impact on ecology
- Impact on residential amenity
- Impact on highway safety
- Impact on heritage assets

8.2 Principle of development

The application site is located within the settlement boundary of Romsey, as defined by Inset Map 3 of the Revised Local Plan. Development within the settlement is considered to be acceptable in principle under Policy COM2, provided the proposal is also in accordance with other relevant planning policy.

8.3 Impact on the character and appearance of the area

Policy E1 seeks to permit proposals which would integrate, respect and complement the character of the area, and would not detract from the dominance of, or interrupt, important views of key landmark buildings or features. In addition to this, development of poor design will not be permitted.

8.4 Romsey Town Football Club (RTFC) is located on the outskirts of Romsey, at the entrance to the town from Southampton Road. The area of the site is not located within the area defined by the Romsey TDS. It is sited at the junction/roundabout to the west of Southampton Road and south of the Bypass Road. The area south of the Bypass Road consists of the football ground and the Romsey Rapids to the south; this area, with the adjacent busy highways (Southampton and Bypass Roads) is not considered to be seen in the context of the town centre to the north, or the residential areas to the north-east.

8.5 The immediate surrounding area is characterised by its out-of-town setting, with Romsey Rapids dominating to the south and areas of car parking acting as frontages (Bypass and Southampton Roads and Southampton Road for Romsey Rapids). To the north of Bypass Road is a row of large trees providing a landscape buffer to the town centre and houses beyond; to the immediate east is the Romsey allotments. To the west is a public footpath.

8.6 The proposal seeks permission for additional keep nets around the football ground.

8.7 Keep Nets

The eastern keep net was granted planning permission in 2014, and a further two have been installed to the west and northern boundaries of the pitch, which are the subject of this application. The purpose of the nets is to ensure safety and for functional reasons for the club. Such nets are not uncommon at football grounds and pitches. The nets, which are to be retained in white, are of a type and design such that there is considered to have a minimal visual impact upon the street scene, and are seen in the context of the wider sports facilities. Keep nets of this size and scale are not uncommon at football clubs such as this and in the context of residents and visitors being able to see them from the public domain they will be appreciated in a formal sporting setting which includes the floodlighting, ancillary buildings and related structures. The proposal is considered to result in a neutral impact upon the character of the area, and in accordance with Policy E1 of the Revised Local Plan as the proposal does not result in harm to the character and appearance of the area.

8.8 Impact on protected trees/landscaping

An area TPO exists that protects the trees located along the west boundary, where the public footpath takes pedestrians from Bypass Road into the Romsey Rapids. The Tree Officer has confirmed that the keep net in this location would not cause any harm to these protected trees. Furthermore, the Landscape Officer has assessed that the netting erected on the western end of the pitch is recessed within the site such that it does not appear overly dominant within the wider landscape. This is considered to reduce the visual impact of the keep net, and the proposal is considered to accord with Policy E2 of the Revised Local Plan.

8.9 Impact on ecology

The development is not considered to result in harm to protected species and/or habitat and is therefore in accordance with Policy E5 of the Revised Local Plan.

8.10 Impact on neighbouring amenity

The nearest residential properties are located to the north of the football ground, approximately 87m away. The busy Bypass Road and a rows of trees on both frontages of Bypass Road act as a buffer between the football club and the nearest residential properties. The proposed nets would not impact the amenity of residents in the local area. The proposal accords with Policy LHW4 of the Revised Local Plan.

8.11 Impact on highway safety

The keep nets provide an important safety function, in retaining balls that could be kicked from the football pitch into the surrounding areas, predominantly footpaths and roads. The retention of these keep nets, which are common at football grounds, is considered important for public and highway safety. . Hampshire's Highway Officer raises no objection to the proposal, which is considered to comply with Policy T1 of the Revised Local Plan.

8.12 Impact on heritage assets

The application site is located outside of the Romsey Conservation Area and is not in close proximity to any listed buildings. Due to this, it is considered that there is no harm to any heritage assets in the southern area of Romsey, and the proposal accords with Policy E9 of the Revised Local Plan.

8.13 Other matters - advertisements

Members will note that many third party comments relate to the provision of advertisements on the keep nets. These adverts are not relevant to the determination of the current application which is, as discussed, above, simply for the keep nets. The acceptability of the advertisements have been determined previously. The comments and objections received by Romsey Town Council, Romsey Extra Parish Council and the Romsey & District Society are noted but they are not relevant to the determination of this application. .

8.14 The Romsey & District Society have commented on the proposals, stating their concern about the cumulative impact of the four applications (two planning applications and two associated advertisement applications). However, the applications referred to are all assessed individually and on each's own individual merits, as part of this consideration previous planning permission are considered and in this circumstance it is considered that there is not a "cumulative" impact that would warrant a reason for refusal.

9.0 **CONCLUSION**

9.1 The application is not considered to result in harm to the character of the area, the wider conservation area or provide harm to pedestrians and highway users. Therefore, the proposal is considered to accord with the Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan (2016) and is therefore acceptable.

10.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

PERMISSION subject to:

1. **The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out except in complete accordance with the details shown on the submitted plan numbers:**

Site Location Plan - 8056/P01 B

Signage Plan - 8056/P02 C

Advertisements 1-6 - 8056/P03

Advertisements 7-11 & 14 - 8056/P04 C

Site Plan - 8056/P05 A

Keep Nets - 8056/P06 E

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

Note to applicant:

1. **In reaching this decision Test Valley Borough Council (TVBC) has had regard to the National Planning Policy Framework and takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions. TVBC work with applicants and their agents in a positive and proactive manner offering a pre-application advice service and updating applicants/agents of issues that may arise in dealing with the application and where possible suggesting solutions.**
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