

Area West Committee – 19<sup>th</sup> March 2014

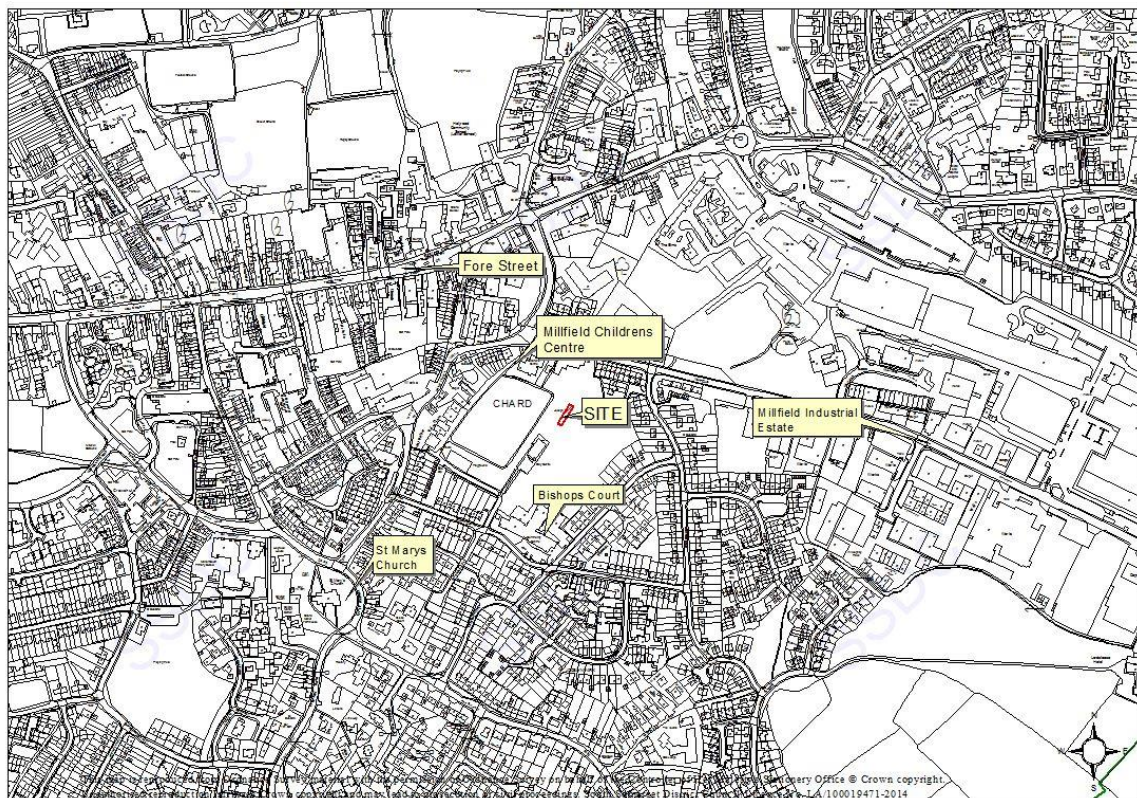
**Officer Report on Planning Application: 13/04962/FUL**

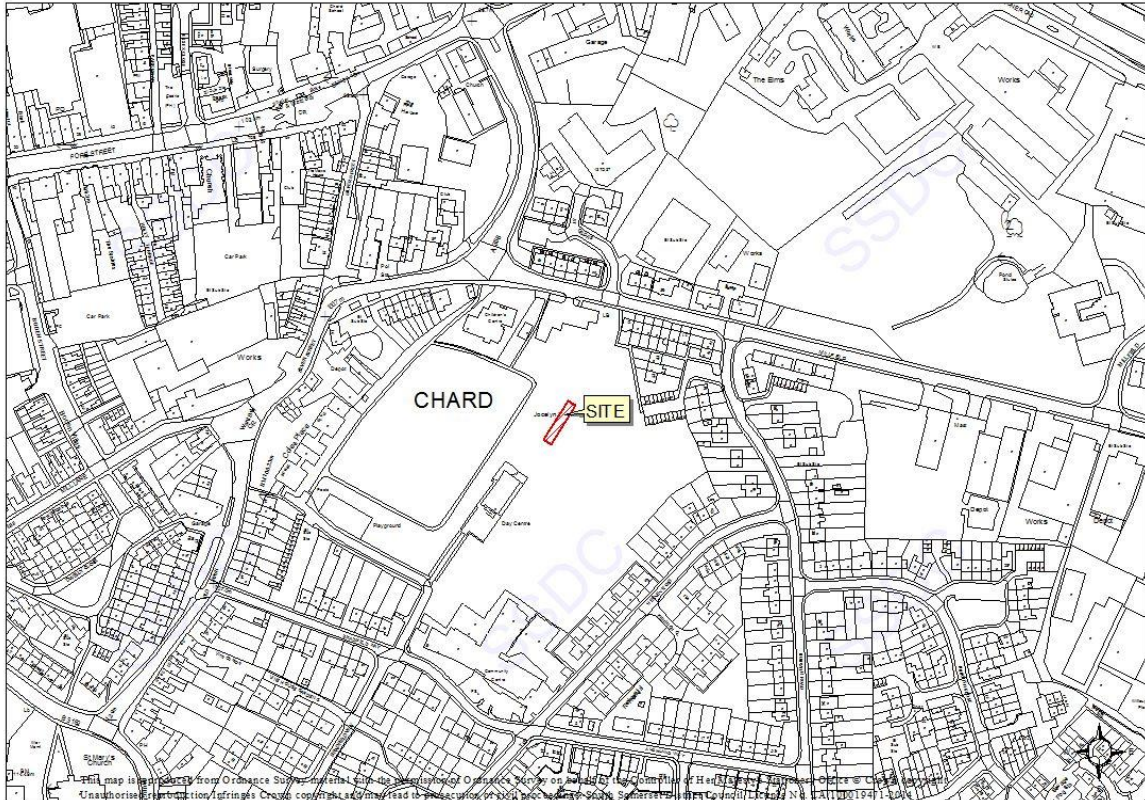
<b>Proposal:</b>	The siting of changing facilities to include shower and toilets. (GR 332613/108449)
<b>Site Address:</b>	Jocelyn Park Millfield Chard
<b>Parish:</b>	Chard
<b>JOCELYN (CHARD) Ward (SSDC Member)</b>	Cllr D M Bulmer
<b>Recommending Case Officer:</b>	Claire Alers-Hankey Tel: 01935 462015 Email: claire.alers-hankey@southsomerset.gov.uk
<b>Target date:</b>	31st January 2014
<b>Applicant:</b>	Chard Town Council
<b>Agent: (no agent if blank)</b>	Mr Scott Massey 36 Bubwith Road Chard Somerset TA20 2BN
<b>Application Type:</b>	Minor Other less than 1,000 sq.m or 1ha

**REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE**

This application is referred to the Area West Committee as the Ward Member has declared an interest in the application and the Area West Chair feels the decision should be made by the Committee as the applicant is Chard Town Council and there are objections from some members of public.

**SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSAL**





The site is located in the town of Chard, within the defined development area. The site is a recreation ground which is managed by Chard Town Council and accommodates, amongst other things, two football pitches.

This application seeks permission for the siting of two porta-cabin style units to provide changing room facilities to serve the two football pitches on the site. The units are anti-vandal and constructed from steel panels to be coloured brown. The proposed location within the park is between the MUGA and eastern playing pitch.

There are currently no on-site changing facilities to serve the football pitches.

The application has been amended following concerns raised by Chard Town Council and local residents. The amendment moves the changing rooms from the southern end of the site, close to Bishops Court, to a site more central between the two playing pitches.

Additional information has also been received from the secretary of Chard Utd FC, in response to the comments raised by the Football Association in the Sport England consultation response. The additional information confirms that there are no youth clubs involved with the teams that use the pitches and details the frequency that the pitches are used. It also confirms that Chard Utd and Chard Rangers have agreed 25 year leases with the Town Council to site the changing rooms and the expected lifespan of the proposed changing rooms is 20 years.

## HISTORY

Various planning history relating to the recreational park use.

## **POLICY**

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 repeats the duty imposed under S54A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and requires that decision must be made in accordance with relevant Development Plan Documents unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Saved policies of the South Somerset Local Plan:  
 Policy ST5 - General Principles of Development  
 Policy ST6 - The Quality of Development  
 Policy ST9 - Crime Prevention  
 Policy CR1 - Existing Playing Fields/Recreation Areas

National Planning Policy Guidance (March 2012):  
 Chapter 7 - Requiring Good Design  
 Chapter 8 - Promoting Healthy Communities

## **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

None required.

## **CONSULTATIONS**

### **Town Council:**

No comment as have an interest in the site.

### **County Highway Authority:**

No observations.

### **SSDC Leisure Policy Coordinator:**

Is supportive of the need to provide new changing rooms at Jocelyn Park. Notes that in 2009 the Council updated the local needs assessment for pitches and identified a major shortfall of all types of pitches and associated changing facilities in Chard. The site currently provides the only community pitches in the town, however there are no changing facilities at the site and the two senior clubs playing at these pitches are using changing rooms at other venues within the town, and having to walk through town to play football. The rules of the local League state that changing facilities must be within 250m of the playing pitches, and may not allow the current situation to continue. The lack of changing rooms is therefore having an impact on the usage of the pitches, and the membership of the teams who currently use these pitches. New changing rooms will secure the future of these pitches and the teams for Chard. Comments that the letter from Sport England raises concerns from the FA with regards to current usage of the site, proposals for youth football and the layout and quality of the proposed changing rooms. The pitches at Jocelyn Park are used by senior clubs and it is understood there is no intention for youth football to be played at the site. In terms of layout and quality, it is considered the changing rooms proposed will meet the current need and that the priority is to provide changing facilities as soon as possible.

### **Sport England:**

Raise no objection to the proposal. Comment that they have also consulted with the FA for their input on the proposal. Confirms the FA is supportive of the provision of changing

rooms and the benefits they will bring the sport, although they have the following concerns:

- Query over what pitch provision is available at the site
- Concern over the quality of the temporary buildings and how long they will last
- The proposed layout does not meet current technical specifications for youth football
- Spectator toilet provision and a kitchen could be provided to create an income stream on match days

## **REPRESENTATIONS**

TWO LETTERS OF OBJECTION AND A PETITION WERE RECEIVED - Raising concern over the original application for the following reasons:

- People will park on Bradfield Way causing congestion and a road safety hazard to children using the park
- Site is too close to Bishops Court and the area of land they have secured as an amenity area
- Site is too close to the children's park, where bad language from the players will travel
- Potential for antisocial behaviour

## **CONSIDERATIONS**

### **Need**

At the moment the playing pitches at the recreation ground are not served by any changing room facilities, meaning that players have to change at a different site within Chard and then walk through town to get to the pitches. This situation is far from ideal and therefore it is considered there is an appropriate need for changing room facilities in this location. Policy CR1 of the South Somerset Local Plan is supportive of planning proposals that will enhance existing recreation facilities, and accordingly it is considered this application complies with this policy.

### **Impact upon Amenity**

The Town Council and Football Club have been in discussions with the local Planning Authority for a long time, and have considered many different sites within the recreation ground. The site submitted for consideration under this application is the one that is thought to be the best in terms of minimising the impacts upon visual and residential amenity, and the most functional in terms of proximity to the playing pitches. The units are proposed to be located adjacent to the MUGA between the two playing pitches. The site is located well away from residential properties and accordingly the impact upon residential amenity would be minimal. Other sites within the park that were considered were either closer to residential properties or cost prohibitive in terms of connecting with water and electricity supplies.

### **Other Issues**

Originally objections were received in relation to the siting of the changing rooms being so close to Bishops Court, the play area and congested parking areas. The amended plans addressed these concerns by revising the location of the changing rooms further away from these neighbouring areas, and no further objections have been received following re-consultation on the amended plans.

**Conclusion**

It is considered there is a justified need for the changing room facilities proposed, and following the submission of amended plans the impact upon local visual and residential amenity is considered to be minimal.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Permission be granted.

01. It is considered there is a justified need for the changing room facilities proposed, and following the submission of amended plans the impact upon local visual and residential amenity is considered to be minimal. Therefore the proposal is considered to comply with policies ST5, ST6 and CR1 of the South Somerset Local Plan.

**SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING:**

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

Reason: In accordance with the provisions of Section 91 Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51(1) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

02. Only those materials specified in the application shall be used in carrying out the development hereby permitted unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect the character and appearance of the existing building in accordance with ST6 of the South Somerset Local Plan.

03. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Elevations Rev B, Floor Plan Rev B, Extract from Block Plan Rev B, Site Location Plan Rev B.

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

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