



NEW ROMNEY TOWN COUNCIL

CAPITAL PROJECTS REPORT – FULL COUNCIL MEETING 19TH JULY 2023

COMMUNITY HALL, SPORTS PAVILION AND NURSERY PROJECT

The revised Community Hall, Sports Pavilion and Nursery project design pack has been developed up to the level of detail required for the planning application submission and all necessary accompanying reports have been collated with the exception of the flood report which requires an update. This update is to be dealt with this week, completing all requirements for submission.

The Chairman of the Project Steering Group, together with the Chairman of the Planning Committee (and PSG Member), Town Clerk and project architect, engaged in a pre-application meeting with the FHDC Chief Planning Officer on 28th June 2023. The meeting was a very positive one and it was confirmed that there were no major concerns in regard to the application. A few very minor amendments to the general design were suggested to the architect who was agreeable to making the suggested adjustments prior to submission.

It was reported to the Chief Planning Officer that the previous design (pavilion element) had not actually met with the football club's intent but that this new design now has the full support of the club and, in fact, the nursery also.

The Chief Planning Officer view was that the new design did not represent any architectural compromise, advising that, in his opinion, it was another good design.

The requirement of a new s106 Agreement to link this application with the original and ensure release of the ring-fenced s106 funds was discussed and the Chief Planning Officer advised that this would simply need to be a Deed of Variation.

In terms of the viability of the new planning application, the Chief Planning Officer advised that the new application simply needs to evidence provision of a similar level of community benefit to the original – which, he agreed, it does. It was stated that it had been the view of the District Council, previously, that the new community building was required for New Romney and that this was still the case. It was again stated that this new design would not be viewed as any sort of compromise and he did not, therefore, foresee any reason for refusal on any planning grounds, adding that, in some ways, the new design has slightly more charm, in the context of New Romney, than the original design.

The Chief Planning Officer did not see any reason why this application would need to go to Committee, particularly since the precedent has already been set in approving the project for New Romney previously. However, it was confirmed that, should the application be put before the District Council Planning Committee for any reason, Councillor Thomas would step aside (being a Member of the FHDC Planning Committee) but would be permitted to speak in favour of the project as a Ward Member.

It was the view of the Chief Planning Officer that the District Council would like to see this project concluded and would, therefore, like to deal with the planning application as soon as possible.

A date has been set for submission of the planning application on 24th July 2023.

Town Clerk

12/07/23