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**South  
Cambridgeshire**  
District Council

Peter Brunning  
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Our ref: PRE/0429/17  
Your ref:  
Date: 11/09/2017

Planning & New Communities  
Contact: Rebecca Ward  
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Dear Mr Brunning

### **Request for Pre-Application Advice**

**Proposal: Pump Mountain Bike Track**  
**Location: Recreation Ground, High Street, Great Abington**

Thank you for the above enquiry. This letter is a response to your pre-application enquiry dated 3 August 2017 seeking the pre-application views of the Local Planning Authority. The relevant information is set out below. Please be aware of the disclaimer at the end of this letter. If you have any questions relating to the advice given, please contact the case officer.

### **Recommendation**

In order to make a recommendation officers will require more information. Therefore currently the proposal cannot be supported. Notwithstanding this, I have proceed to make comments and provide guidance on the material planning considerations that will be taken into account on any formal application that is submitted to the Local Planning Authority.

### **Constraints**

The application site lies outside of the Great Abington village development framework. However, the site is within the Conservation Area. Adjacent to the recreation ground is St Marys Church is a Grade II\* Listed Building. A number of other listed buildings are also in the locality but mainly align the High Street.

Given the site is within the Conservation Area all the trees have a statutory protection. Tree Preservation Orders do exist on the site (ref:1/61). They both seek to protect Elms, Ash, Horse Chesnut and Sycamores.

The site is within a Flood Zone 3 as defined on the Environment Agency's Flood Maps.

### **Planning History**

None of relevance

## **Planning Assessment**

### *Permitted Development Rights*

The application seeks to introduce a new pump mountain bike track. The track will stretch along part of the southern boundary of the site. The area of which it would cover would roughly be 1500 square meters. The track will have a range of sculpted bumps and banked corners with a maximum height of 1m-1.5m. The track would be built by professional experts and will be aesthetically neutral.

In the first instance, I have considered the application under Part 12(a) of the Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development Order (2015) which allows Parish Councils to undertake certain types of development without the need for full planning permission. I have attached the regulations to this pre-application for reference.

The proposal is for the construction of a pump mountain bike track on land belonging to the Parish Council. The purpose of providing the track is to introduce a more diverse level of play equipment for local residents of all ages.

In accordance with the regulations, I consider the proposed development could fall within the scope of the Part 12(a) permitted development rights; however, it could not exceed a volume capacity of more than 200 cubic meters. Without having a detailed specification/model in front of me I cannot come to a conclusion in this regard. I have therefore set out the following comments in the event planning permission is needed.

### *Principal of development*

Policy DP/7 'village frameworks' of the adopted Local Development Framework supports development for outdoor recreational purposes outside of village frameworks. The track would fall within this category and would therefore be in an acceptable location in principle.

### *Impact to the setting of the Listed Building and Conservation Area*

The site lies within the Conservation Area and is directly adjacent to St Mary's church (Grade II\* Listed Building). I have therefore had an initial discussion with the Councils Listed Building Officer.

A planning application will need to be supported by a detailed 'Heritage Statement' which should describe the significance of these heritage assets, including the contribution made by their setting. The LPA have to pay 'special regard' to the preservation of both assets in the determination of a planning application. A detailed assessment as to why this specific area has been chosen should also be included. We would also like to see sectional and detailed landscape drawings to identify heights to fully assess the impact of the track on the listed building.

Notwithstanding this, the general location of the skate park is likely to cause some harm to the setting of the listed building given that its surroundings are currently flat and undeveloped. However, provide the track is set away from the church and subject to the track having a neutral appearance with enhanced landscaping, the harm it would cause is likely to be less than substantial. In this case the public benefit of bringing the

facility forward would need to be taken into account and weighed in favour of the proposal.

The retention of the three large trees closest to the listed building and any other trees worthy of retention will be important consideration and I have discussed this more below.

#### *Impact to trees*

There are various trees along the southern boundary that are at different stages of growth and maturity. Collectively they are considered to enhance the character and appearance of the area. The track in this location will inevitably impact on a lot of these trees. There is some concern that this will result in a number of them being removed.

The Tree Officer is unable to make a recommendation on the scheme at this stage and has requested that a Tree Consultant reviews the health/grade of the trees on the site. The retention of the larger trees will be important and the design of the track should ideally be taking them in account. Depending on the outcome of the review, officers would be happy to discuss further once it is known exactly what trees will need to go and whether or not the scheme could be supported. It might be that an alternative location needs to be considered.

Please note: The above information would still need to be supplied even if the track fits within permitted development rights as consent would still be required for the removal or pruning of any trees in this area.

#### *Other Matters*

Residential Amenity - Public consultation should be undertaken to ensure neighbouring residents have the opportunity to consider the proposals and provide comments to the parish council. Given that the closest house is plus 100m from the site, the track is not likely to cause a significant or adverse noise impact from users.

Flood Risk - The site lies within a Flood Zone 3. In accordance with the national planning guidance for 'water compatible' developments (such as recreational facilities) development is considered to be appropriate. Therefore a 'Flood Risk Assessment' is not required.

Ecology - The area is a rough scrub land that is overgrown. I have discussed the site with the Councils Ecology Officer and he does not consider a biodiversity assessment is necessary given its location adjacent to a recreational field that is well maintained.

If you have any further questions please contact me.

Kind Regards

*Rebecca Ward*

Rebecca Ward  
Principal Planning Officer

**Disclaimer:**

- The above advice is given for purposes relating to the Town and Country Planning Acts and for no other Council function
- The advice is given without reference to statutory or other consultees, except where stated. The comments of such consultees may affect the advice given.
- The advice is given on the basis of the information that you have supplied. The Local Planning Authority will not be responsible for any errors resulting from inaccuracies in that information.
- The Local Planning Authority is required to perform within government targets with respect to processing planning applications. You are therefore advised to conclude your pre-application discussions before submitting a planning application.
- The advice given may subsequently be affected by external factors (e.g. new government guidance, local appeal decisions) which could result in a different view being subsequently put forward
- Planning policies are periodically reviewed and updated. The advice given relates to the policy framework at the time the advice was given.
- The Local Planning Authority seeks to provide the best advice possible on any enquiry received. However, the advice given does not bind the authority to any particular decision on any planning application that may subsequently be submitted which will be the subject of the publicity and consultation.
- Planning permission does not override the need to obtain any necessary approvals under the Building Regulations, Party Wall Act or any other relevant legislation. Separate approval may also be required in other areas, for example, restrictive covenants, shared agreements, easements, rights of way etc.
- Any advice given in relation to the planning history of the site, planning constraints or statutory designations does not constitute a formal response under the provisions of the Local Land Charges Act 1975.
- The Council positively encourages applicants to enter into pre-application discussions but if a major or minor application is submitted without such discussions, the Council may determine the application as submitted without post-submission discussions.
- The provisions of The Freedom of Information Act bind the Council, as a public authority, and therefore it should be presumed that information supplied to the Council is likely to be disclosable under the above Act. If you want information to remain confidential, you should state clearly why. Information sent to the Council "in confidence" may still be disclosable under the above Act. Before sending such information you are advised to take legal advice if there are fears that disclosure would prejudice you in some commercial way.

## Appendix 1 - List of information required to validate an application

<b>Document</b>	<b>Required</b>
Application Form - Full Planning Permission	YES
Archaeology Assessment	YES
Drawings - Location Plan, block plan, Elevations, section drawings and site levels	YES
Design and Access Statement	YES
Heritage Statement - scale of development and proximity to listed buildings/conservation area	YES
Landscaping Details - details of new hedgerows, trees and plants	YES