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**Holy Trinity Recreation
Ground Ltd**

**54406 – Rookery Sports Club
PR9 7HR**

Transport Statement

August 2023



Contents

1. Introduction and Site Details.
2. Description of Area
3. Formal kerbside markings
4. Proposed Development
5. Planning Policy Background
6. Impact and Conclusions

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1. Introduction and Site Details

1.1 Holy Trinity Recreation Ground Ltd appointed CTS Traffic and Transportation to produce a Transport Statement to support the demolition of the fire-damaged clubhouse and its rebuilding at the Rookery Sports Centre, Roe Lane, Southport, PR9 7HR.

1.2 The Rookery Sports Centre is located on Roe Lane in Southport.

1.3 The clubhouse lies behind house 63 on Roe Lane taking a narrow access from Roe Lane that lies between 61 and 63 Roe Lane.

1.4 It services several varied sports pitches that lie in the area between Roe Lane, Hesketh Drive and Rookery Road

1.5 The site is long-established and has served the local community for a long time, with some comments saying over 100 years.

2. Description of area

2.1 Roe Lane is part of the A5267 which runs from the A565 north of Southport to the A570 leading southwards out of Southport, acting as a south-eastern by pass to the central area. Via the B5245 it links to the Promenade and central Southport. At this point the road runs west to east away from Southport.

2.2 This section of Roe Lane is residential with most houses being large detached properties.

2.3 Roe Lane has a 30mph speed limit and has good street lighting along its length. It has a marked centre line but apart from the advisory markings few other road signs or markings.

2.4 The road is about 10m wide with a 2m pavement either side with moderate length front gardens generally with low walls, railings and gate frontages. There are regular dropped kerbs providing access to off-street driveways (17 in total along the unrestricted section on the same side as the Ground). Many (in fact 9), but not all of these, have single white line advisory 'no parking' markings protecting the driveways although the size of the house frontages means there remains a good level of on-street parking legally available.

2.5 200m to the East lies Hesketh Drive which is in a 20mph zone and leads northwards towards the coast.

2.6 At the junction of Roe Lane and Hesketh Drive is a pair of blue cycle advisory route signs showing the Town Centre is a 12 minutes cycle ride to the north and the Coastal Path 18 mins north on Hesketh Drive.

2.7 The second sign points people via Wennington Road (opposite side of Roe Lane) on routes to an Industrial Estate (9 minutes), Kew (11 mins) and the hospital (14 mins). A further sign on the corner of Wennington Road and Roe Lane advises a route along Roe Lane eastwards to Churchtown (9 minutes).

2.8 Hesketh Drive has a priority junction with Roe Lane, staggered with Wennington Road. Hesketh Drive has been narrowed at its entrance and central refuge islands with bollards and lighting provided

2.9 Hesketh Drive is a 10m wide road, with a marked centre line and again generally detached housing with private drives and dropped kerbs. However, this road has no parking controls and no advisory white markings across drives.

2.10 250m north on Hesketh Drive is a junction with Rookery Road. This is a cul-de-sac of about 300m length, the last 100m of which sees the Sports Ground along its southern edge.

2.11 The junction of Hesketh Drive and Rookery Road has a number of shops including a post office and Garden Centre.

2.12 Rookery Road is a 7.5m road clearly marked as a no through route.

2.13 Rookery Road also has mainly large detached houses with private drives and dropped kerbs. Again there are no advisory white line markings in place. Pavements are about 1m wide with vehicles parking on the road tending to park partly on the pavement although most park on their own drives.

2.14 200m along Rookery Road it has a junction with Grove Park. This junction has no markings at all.

2.15 Grove Park has a 1m pavement on its western edge and a very narrow strip on its opposite side. It services several large houses at the far end of the cul-de-sac. Although there is no parking restriction, the road is narrow and any parking would narrow the access significantly.

2.16 The eastern side of Grove Park and the southern side of Rookery Road provide two of the boundaries to the pitch element of the Sports Club. The club has a low wall along both edges, with a double-gated entrance near the junction with Grove Park on Rookery Road and another smaller, single width gate half way along that section of Rookery Road.

2.17 At the far end of Rookery Road is a pathway that leads through to Preston Road.

2.18 This section of Rookery Road has semi-detached houses on the northern side and the Sports Club on the southern side. It is about 7.5m wide and has no parking restrictions but a good number of dropped kerbs giving access to private driveways only a small number of which have garages. Some allow vehicles to leave in forward gear, but most residents would need to reverse out.

Public Transport

2.19 The nearest bus stops to the clubhouse are 150m to the stop away from Southport and 200m to the stop towards Southport. It is accepted that the towards Southport stop requires crossing of Roe Lane, but this road has good visibility and although an A road is not too busy. The 'from Southport' stop sign is mounted on a lamppost, whilst the 'to Southport' stop has its own separate sign and a small bench, but no shelter. Both stops have local standard bus timetable information in cases on the stop poles.

2.20 The service 49 runs from Woodvale to Birkdale, Southport, Roe Lane, Churchtown and terminates at Crossens. It runs four times per hour Monday-Friday daytimes, twice per hour evenings and Sundays and three times per hour on Saturdays. First buses are at 07:00 (08:00 Sundays) and last at 23:00, giving good coverage.

2.21 Connections to local and regional rail services are available at Southport.

2.22 Less frequent rail services are also available a 1km walk away at Meols Cop although that service is less likely to be used given the wider range of services and destinations available from the main Southport station.

Cycling

2.23 As noted above, there are advisory cycle routes in the area using blue finger posts at key junctions, although not covering the section of Roe Lane near the site. The principal route is along Hesketh Drive and Wennington Road and the part of Roe Lane east of this junction. No further details have been identified.

Collision Information

2.24 Using the Crashmap database, for the last five years available the nearest incidents was just one to the East of the site at 15:30 on Friday 31 August 2018. It involved a car slowing to turn into their private drive being hit by another car and a van with the female driver slightly injured.

2.25 The only other incidents were at the Norwood Avenue junction to the west, and at the Wennington Road junction to the east, not related to the site. There was one incident on Hesketh Drive, just south of Rookery Road, again not related to the site.

2.26 Notably, there were no incidents related to any activity at the site.

Other local facilities

2.27 The site is primarily within a residential area, providing a significant population nearby to attend and use the local facilities for sport. Given that most attendees will be principally coming to specific games, there is little other facility need for them. However, there is a small local set of shops at the Rookery Road / Hesketh Drive junctions which some may use to obtain refreshments on their way to or from events and some refreshments and toilet facilities are available on site.

3. Formal Kerbside markings

3.1 Roe Lane only has double yellow lines protecting the nearby junction at Norwood Avenue which has traffic signals. It also has a good number (9 on the northern side) of white advisory parking bars marked to protect private drives, although the gaps between houses mean there remains a good level of on-street parking available.

3.2 Neither Hesketh Drive nor Rookery Road have any restrictions on parking nor any advisory restrictions.

3.3 As already noted, Roe Lane has a 30mph speed limit whilst both Hesketh Drive and Rookery Road are in a 20mph zone.

3.4 All roads are well lit and have good and well-maintained pavements.

3.5 All roads principally have housing with private driveways minimising resident need to park on street.

3.6 It is estimated that the available kerb for parking on the northern side is 250m between the western double yellow lines and the eastern kerb bollarding. On the basis of 6m length being required for parking bays, this provides 41 potential car park bays on this side of the road adjacent to the Club. Taking away the 9 white bars and the 8 dropped kerbs suggests in the order of 24 parking spaces available. No estimate has been made for the opposite side of the road.

3.7 The section of Rookery Road adjacent to the northern side of the field up to the Grove Park junction is 148m long with no restrictions. This implies a further 24 car parking spaces readily available. This excludes any space available to the East of Grove Park or on the northern side of the road between the driveway dropped kerbs.

4. Proposed development

4.1 The current long-established clubhouse and tea room are located to the south east corner of the pitches.

4.2 The clubhouse needs replacement as the original was destroyed by fire.

4.3 The destroyed clubhouse was 328m² and provides four parking spaces and one disabled space within the curtilage of the site.

4.4 Information suggests the site supports:

- three cricket clubs with about 150 members
- a football club with about 350 members
- a tennis club (to the west of the site) with around 50 members.

4.5 Current pitch provision is as follows:

- Senior 11-a-side 100m by 64m football pitch
- 9-a-side 73m by 45m football pitch
- 7-a-side 55m by 36m football pitch
- a Senior 24m by 24m cricket square
- a 40m by 24m cricket square
- five tennis courts and associated pavilion (outside the blue line of this application)

All the above are contained within the current Playing Pitch and Open Space Strategy

4.6 There are also:

- a youth 11-a-side 91m by 55m football pitch
- a 5-a-side 36m by 27m football pitch

4.7 However, the Sefton Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy is under draft by the Council consultants. The above noted strategy is over five years old and should no longer be used as an evidence base although it does provide some record of provision as noted above.

4.8 The present and future sites gain access from Roe Lane using a long-established 3m width vehicular and pedestrian access some 42m long. This restriction has been reinforced over the years by both adjacent properties (61 and 63 Roe Lane) building to their full boundary either side of the access.

4.9 Operation of the site has always been within the confines of this access – with any deliveries required always made by vehicles able to enter, turn round and leave using the access.

4.10 With the site also bounded by Rookery Road and part of Grove Park, and within the residential fabric, there are two pedestrian only entrances provided off Rookery Road. The eastern most entrance is a double gate whilst the western most is a single gate. No other parking has ever been provided.

4.11 The current users told us the site is mainly used on Saturdays and Sundays in Winter, but much more in Summer as might be expected. There are three cricket clubs, and an early evening Junior club. Football games only attract a low number of spectators, with a good proportion using bus if they do not walk in. No more than 20 cars are understood to be used.

4.12 Current practice is that visiting clubs arrive by minibus which parks near to the club house.

4.13 Football is within the Preston league

4.14 Cricket is in the Liverpool league.

4.15 The walking distance from the double gates on Rookery Road to the clubhouse is under 200m, with the distance from the further single gate to clubhouse no more than 250m. The direct access from Roe Lane is about 60m from pavement to clubhouse along the principal access, which is provided with a dropped kerb shared with 61 and 63 Roe Lane.

4.16 This Transport Statement is provided in support of the Planning Statement. Both are supporting the rebuild of the clubhouse to modern standards, providing a 374m² facility alongside the retained tea room and providing five disabled parking spaces, two standard spaces and place to ensure vehicles can turn and leave in forward gear. A 'Minimum Accessibility Standard Assessment' (MASA) and Travel Plan are also required. The new building is stated as having a 72-seat capacity beyond the changing rooms and other ancillary facilities.

4.17 Discussion of the implications of this development in transport terms is provided below.

4.18 It is understood that football usage is restricted to Saturdays and Sundays only, with usage between 10:00 and 16:00. There are four different age groups and each has two teams, hence a total of 8 teams based here. However, on any particular weekend only half the teams will play at this site as the half the teams will be playing away games.

4.18 For football, younger players tend to be brought by an adult who usually stays to watch play.

4.19 Older players tend to come themselves and rarely have spectators

4.20 Younger players now tend to arrive at site in kit and return home to change, whereas adults tend to bring kit and need to change on site.

4.19 The four football age groups and their team sizes are:

- 7-11 Eight players
- 9-10 Eleven players
- 11-12 Twelve players
- 13-18 Sixteen players

4.20 There are also two adult teams.

4.23 Each game has on average two managers and three playing officials present.

4.24 Only the younger three groups tend to have spectators, generally being the responsible adults that have brought them.

4.25 Football games occur on Saturdays and Sundays only

4.26 Cricket usage covers more days but tends only to operate from mid April until mid September when light is available, covering at most 22 weeks of the year.

4.27 The summary below gives the cricket usage for active weeks.

4.28 Friday is the busiest weekday evening with up to 62 young people brought by up to 55 responsible adults on average.

4.29 Saturdays adult matches tend to see up to 44 players and 80 spectators, although few spectators stay all day.

4.30 Sunday sees morning youth matches and an afternoon adult fixture.

4.31 Combination of activities suggests that Saturday will be the busiest day for the site.

4.32 At this level, any matches, either football or cricket, that are not played or that are abandoned due to weather or other circumstances, are not replayed apart from in exceptional circumstances, which we understand have not occurred in recent years.

4.33 This implies that the site usage will tend to be less than the maximum allowed for so any impacts will also be lower than expected.

4.34 For a recent pair of cricket matches (after three weeks when play had not been possible due to rain), two games occurred on a Saturday in late July 2023. There were four teams of 13 players each plus six officials. These were supplemented by between 22 and 32 spectators maximum over the course of the day.

4.35 Record was made of the maximum number of cars nearby. On street on Roe Lane were 20 cars, on Rookery Road were 7 cars. This means there were 27 cars in the minimum of 48 available spaces, a parking stress level of 56% overall, although higher on Roe Lane (83%) and lower on Rookery Road (29%).

4.36 Over time, users have ensured they do not cause any obstruction to local residents.

5. Planning Policy Background

5.1 The overall planning policy background to the proposed development is provided in the Planning Statement for the development. This has been reiterated in the pre-application advice for the site.

5.2 The policy background is within the wider remit of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which is a living document that is developed and explained by detailed and local documents as appropriate and as determined by each local planning authority.

5.3 Sefton Council has a Supplementary Planning Document "Sustainable Travel and Development" adopted in June 2018.

5.4 The standards determined say that for 'row 27' levels of all parking including cycling and disabled spaces should be determined by a Transport Assessment. No specifics are provided.

5.6 The SPD also outlines the content of the MASA and Travel Plan documents required.

5.7 The site is also impacted by the requirements of Sport England, particularly its current local Playing Pitch and Open Place Strategy.

5.8 Discussion with Sport England confirmed that any planning application for ancillary facilities, as this is, would have to accord with Exception 2 of the Sport England Playing Field Policy "the proposed development is for ancillary facilities supporting the principal use of the site as a playing field, and does not affect the quantity or quality of playing pitches or otherwise adversely affect their use".

5.9 The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 defines a playing field as "the whole of a site which encompasses at least one playing pitch". Sport England's policy to protect playing fields covers the entire playing field site and not just the areas currently marked out with pitches. It is taken that other parts of a field are a resource for the pitches which may be needed, now or in the future, to be marked out or pitches changed from one pitch sport type to another to meet new demand, or to allow areas of the field to rest from active play. It also allows for non-pitch sports such as athletics to be marked out.

5.10 Sport England advised us that they would not support any reduction or imposition on the playing field at this site at all. To be specific, they would not support any addition of pathways on the site that infringed on the playing field. They also advised us that in their experience on-site parking for cricket sites was actually never used as people were very aware and wary of such parking and the high potential for vehicle damage from cricket balls.

5.10 Comment from the local highway authority suggested need to provide more on-site car parking and to ensure that any arrivals from Rookery Road would have hard paths to use to access the club house.

5.11 The issues of the apparent clash between Sport England and highway requirements is further discussed below.

6. Impact and Conclusions

6.1 Current planning policy encourages minimising any formal need for parking provision particularly where there is a strong likelihood that people could be using sustainable transport rather than owning a car.

6.2 Further, the current very good potential for use of the local public transport network as well as potential for walking and cycling, already minimises use of cars to and from the site. This is already assisted by visiting teams arriving in minibuses and a modest level of car-sharing, not the least because many players are brought by responsible adults who usually stay to watch.

6.3 There is currently provision of five parking spaces accessed off Roe Lane. The proposal sees this expanded to six spaces including provision for disability spaces and an area to ensure all vehicles leave in forward gear.

6.4 The size and use of the current site, and Sport England guidance, preclude any provision either of further parking on-site or hard paths between pedestrian entrances and the club house facility. Further, on a practical nature, even were parking provided within the current boundary it would not be used given patrons fear of damage from cricket balls.

6.5 Current and present usage sees sufficient parking spaces available on street even on peak operating days (principally Saturday), with both Roe Lane and Rookery Road having sufficient spaces to ensure opportunity to cause issue to residents is minimised.

6.6 A recent Saturday example found parking stress 83% at worst on Roe Lane, not allowing for any use of parking on the opposite side of that road, a robust assessment of the present situation.

6.7 A current MASA analysis and Travel Plan are also provided.