

Statement of Need

Prepared by Snitterfield Cricket Club and Snitterfield Parish Council

1. Summary

This application relates to the area of the pavilion on the Parish Council-owned playing field. The building is used primarily as a sports pavilion and also supports other village uses such as the Fete. It is in a very poor state of repair and in need of replacement.

The proposal is to replace the existing building on the Wolverton Road Playing Field with a new multi-purpose building, operating as a sports pavilion and capable of ancillary use by the local community. The building would be sited over the approximate footprint of the current building. The existing garage will be relocated further back towards the hedge, adjacent to the existing container. The existing car park would be improved and enlarged.

Benefits of the new building would include:

- securing the future of the cricket and football facilities
- providing a quality facility for use by other village groups such as the Fete
- improved stewardship of the building and field by having greater use
- complementing and inspiring further development of play facilities on the field

2. The Playing Field and its facilities

This proposal relates to the Wolverton Road playing field and pavilion (CV37 0HB). The field is approximately 6 acres in size and is owned by the Parish Council. The pavilion is sited next to the small car park in the south east corner of the site, and there is also small play area for young children on the southern boundary next to Hales Close. The Monarch's Way footpath runs along the western edge of the field.

The pavilion consists of two changing rooms, toilets, showers, a small kitchen and storage. Adjacent to this there is a shed for storing ground maintenance equipment, together with three mobile cricket pitch covers, a practice net and two sight screens.

The field has a small cricket square including an artificial wicket, and the field also accommodates football matches.

2.1 State of Pavilion

External issues

The pavilion/changing rooms are in very poor condition and rapidly reaching the end of their lives. The building is a pre-fabricated construction built in the early 1970s, with an estimated life of 30 years. The building has shallow foundations (approx. 6 inch depth) and consists of concrete pillars infilled with wooden slats. At this moment some of the pillars are beginning to crumble exposing rusty reinforcing wires. The wooden slatting is beginning to rot and has also warped in many places,

allowing water to seep into the building. Some of the slatting has been replaced over the years but this is proving expensive and futile. Owing to vandalism the windows in the kitchen area have recently been replaced, but the windows in both changing rooms are leaking. Much of the problem with water leaking into the building is due to the state of the guttering, much of which needs replacing. The external look of the building is not appealing to anyone looking to join a sports club.

Internal issues

The internal state of the pavilion is in equally poor condition; the walls are in a constantly damp state with mould and mildew growing in many areas. There is little ventilation, which presented a particular problem during the Covid pandemic; the building was unsafe to occupy.

There is no heating in the building so this problem is getting progressively worse. All of the pipework around the tank needs repair work or lagging which we have been advised would be futile due to the lack of insulation in the building. The electricity supply to the building is in urgent need of being upgraded; only a couple of appliances are able to be operated without the fuse tripping. Whilst some of the lighting in the pavilion has been upgraded most of the strip lighting is old and is high energy consumption.

There are four showers which run off a pressurised 100 litre tank. The tank takes four hours to heat up and is sometimes only used by a handful of people and, if the tank is not turned off, it can be very expensive. These issues, together with numerous minor problems, make the building in its present state unsuitable for further investment.

3. Cricket and football

Snitterfield Cricket Club traces its origins back to the mid-nineteenth century. It was disbanded in the 1970s but then re-formed in 2003, shortly followed by a junior football club. A new cricket square and two football pitches were created on the 6 acre Wolverton Road recreation field. The two clubs managed to refurbish the pavilion (formally the Youth Club) providing changing rooms and shower facilities.

Adult cricket matches (league and friendlies) take place throughout the Summer months. Each year the cricket club also runs weekly All Stars cricket sessions for around 60 children aged 4-11, which have proved very popular with local families. The long term aim is to reinstate a junior cricket team, so that All Stars participants can continue to enjoy the game once they reach secondary school age.

The cricket club also maintains the field on behalf of the parish council, with 1-2 cuts per week from Spring to Autumn, ensuring that it remains in a good condition for all users of the field.

3.1 Junior cricket

Three years ago the cricket club ran a junior cricket team plus regular coaching sessions throughout the summer months. As the facilities deteriorated it became increasingly more difficult to operate a junior cricket team. The team would play in the Warwickshire Youth League which meant the club had to maintain certain standards which became more difficult as time went on. The club's aspiration was to attain club mark status but considering the condition of the clubhouse we decided this would have to remain an aim for the future. The condition of the building and the facilities were found to be a big factor on parents not joining the cricket club

3.2 Junior football

Snitterfield used to have a thriving junior football club with six teams. The club has now ceased to operate. A key reason for in this decline has been the perception of safety for the girls and boys and the current facilities not keeping up with other local teams, with more parents taking their kids to clubs away from Snitterfield. Parents found it hard to enjoy the club house with their families with the separation of the main pitches and play area from the existing Sports Club. To play on the main field the kids had to cross the Wolverton Road and remain out of sight of their parents. The proposed building is likely to encourage the resumption of junior football on the field.

4. Other community uses

For more than 10 years the playing field and pavilion have hosted the largest fund-raising event in the village, the summer fete. The event has a considerable number of stands and activities and around 500 people attending. The kitchen and toilet facilities are woefully inadequate for this purpose, such as the lack of an accessible toilet. A lack of hot water and limited electricity supply also restrict the extent to which the building can support such events.

5. Traffic and parking

The existing car park can safely accommodate around 5 vehicles. This is sufficient for general use but when sports matches are taking place, there can be a parking requirement for 10-15 vehicles. Other sites, such as the Sports Club car park opposite, have been used for “overflow” historically but an increase in parking capacity would help to support activities on the field and minimise the risk of dangerous or inconvenient parking elsewhere.

See “Transport Statement” for further details.