



**MINUTES OF THE PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION  
COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD AT 1:30PM, ON  
TUESDAY, 23 MARCH 2021  
HELD VIA ZOOM CONFERENCE ON YOUTUBE**

**Committee Members Present:** Harper (Chairman), Coles, Bond, Brown, Hussain, Hogg, Amjad Iqbal, Jones, Rush, Simons and Warren.

**Officers Present:** Nick Harding, Head of Planning Peterborough and Fenland  
Janet MacLennan, Principal Development Management Officer  
Daniel Kalley, Senior Democratic Services Officer  
Karen Dunleavy, Democratic Services Officer  
Stephen Turnbull, Planning Solicitor  
Nick Greaves, Principal Engineer

**43. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Casey and Hiller. Councillors Coles and Simons was in attendance as substitutes.

No apologies for absence were received.

**44. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**Agenda Item 5.1 - 19/00347/FUL - FERRY MEADOWS COUNTRY PARK HAM LANE  
ORTON WATERVILLE PETERBOROUGH.**

Councillor Rush declared non-pecuniary interest in that he was a member of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), but would remain open minded throughout decision-making process.

Councillor Jones declared a non-pecuniary interest in that that he held a parking pass for Ferry Meadows but would remain open minded throughout decision-making process.

**45. MEMBERS' DECLARATION OF INTENTION TO MAKE REPRESENTATIONS AS  
WARD COUNCILLOR**

There were no declarations to speak as Ward Councillor.

**46. MINUTES OF THE PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION  
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 26 JANUARY 2021 AND 23 FEBRUARY 2021**

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 January 2021 and 23 February 2021 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

The Planning Enforcement and Environmental Committee agreed that the speaking time would be extended to 30 minutes between objectors and supporters.

## **47. PLANNING AND ENFORCEMENT MATTERS**

### **47.1 19/00347/FUL - FERRY MEADOWS COUNTRY PARK HAM LANE ORTON WATERVILLE PETERBOROUGH.**

The Committee received a report, which sought permission for the erection of an indoor Lakeside Activity Centre (LAC), which would incorporate a one-storey activity centre approximately 14 metres in height with a 34.25 metre high tower to serve an Olympic standard climbing facility. The proposed building would have a footprint of 60 metres in length by 23 metres in width.

The building would have a total internal floor area of 1412m<sup>2</sup> (1,052 sqm ground with 360 sqm first floor) comprising 1261m<sup>2</sup> D2 (assembly and leisure) and 151m<sup>2</sup> (restaurant/Café) use.

The proposal would include the following: Internal Lead Climbing: - The centre would contain 50 lines which was desirable for a National Performance Centre; circa 14 would form the competition lead wall, with 8m overhang. A 15 metre Speed Wall with five degree gradient and width of six metre. The Canyon: Intermediate Lead Walls on both sides with viewing area on Level one mezzanine (utilising the building's six metre grid). Bouldering: - 11 metre of Competition Standard Bouldering Wall which would be extended to 30 metre for competitions. - Beginner Bouldering behind the Competition Lead Wall. Bouldering Cave on Level one Mezzanine: 34 metre of Wall Space. Clip 'n' Climb: Providing 25 to 30 pieces of equipment Children's Play Area and cafe: 25 to 30 pieces of equipment could be housed. Function Rooms, an office, training room, kitchen and changing rooms. External Lead Climbing at the northern elevation of the building: ranging from 7 to 11 metre with 12 lines. Viewing Area/Additional Cafe Seating: Located on the mezzanine; would enable parents to view their children on the Clip 'n Climb and climbers to view the 'The Canyon' Area. Competition Viewing Area: An area for spectators to view competitions. Access to the site would be via an existing access road leading from Ham Lane. A new car park was proposed to the south of site directly adjacent to the existing overflow car park. It would provide 225 standard car parking bays, six mini-bus parking bays and 10 accessible parking bays. An additional 10 accessible parking bays had also been proposed to the rear of the proposed climbing centre, within 50 metres of the main entrance. It was proposed that the climbing centre operated between the hours of 07:00am and 10:00pm Monday to Friday, 08:30am and 10:00pm Saturday, and 09:30am and 10:00 on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

The Head of Planning introduced the item and highlighted key information from the report and the update report. The Officer recommendation was for approval.

Councillor Day, Ward Councillor, addressed the Committee and responded to questions from Members. In summary the key points highlighted included:

- Ferry Meadows held a special place in the hearts of residents.
- The application had frightened some local residents and it was not because they were against future growth of the City, but Ferry Meadows should be preserved as a quite haven for people and wildlife forever.
- The height of the proposed building had concerned residents as it would be a huge visual impact.
- The impact on the City's goal to be carbon neutral would be compromised in light of the Climate Emergency aims.
- Residents would like the climbing centre to be built in a different location in the City.
- Ferry Meadows was developed to create recreation opportunities for the City.

- The building was the right building, it was proposed in the wrong place.
- There would be an air pollution impact. Ferry Meadows had been known to close its car parks when pollution was high, and this proposal would make the issues being experienced worse.
  - During lockdown, people were advised to travel to Ferry Meadows on foot or by bicycle. Ferry Meadows should be the type of place where other vehicles were not permitted.
  - Oak Meadows was currently being used as an overflow car park and would be extended with this type of development.
  - What was once an unspoilt view when approaching from the railway bridge had also become heavily used by vehicles. Residents felt that the access road leading to Gunwade Lake, could become busier with traffic.
  - There was currently no bus service to Ferry Meadows and the use of an electric bus service was long overdue.
  - The application was out of keeping and would encourage visitors by car.
  - There had been increased parking on the residential streets near Ferry Meadows due to the charges implemented by the Nene Park Trust (NPT), this was creating distress and congestion. As a result, the LA had to introduce anti-social parking measures.
  - It was clear that a new travel infrastructure, which was mindful of the transport hierarchy and the Climate Emergency should be implemented.
  - Residents were right to fear that the application would attract increased motorised vehicles into the area. They feared that the air quality would be impacted along with the health of local residents and wildlife.
  - The Committee was asked to consider the concerns of local residents who had objected to the application and the impact that the increased traffic movement could have on the park and the surrounding areas given the City's climate change ambitions.
  - Ward Councillors had received a significant amount of emails objecting to the climbing wall proposal. However, there had been some residents living some distance from the park that had been in support.

Simon Martin, David Turnock, Michael Samways, Laurance Dobney, Andrea Lindley and Victoria Johnson, objectors, addressed the Committee and responded to questions from Members. In summary the key points highlighted included:

Simon Martin:

- It appeared that the Committee had made their viewpoints clear on the Nene ParkTrust site in favour of the application.
- There were 6,000 concerned local residents who had not been listened to.
- Market research had been used to justify the project and 250 individuals had commented, it was curious how many of them had been climbers.
- Most concerns centred on the location of the proposal. In January 2020 UK climbing featured an article that stated a more appropriate location ought to be arranged.
- There appeared to be a conflict of interest as it was believed that an individual involved in the project had been associated with many board discussions such as the New Towns Trust.
- The forecasting on visitor figures equated to 270 visitors every single day and it was asked how these numbers would be achieved given the demographic of Peterborough.

- Should the business fail as many had nationally, there was uncertainty as to who would be responsible for the management and the costs of removal and restoration of the area.
- The carbon impact had not appeared meet the Council's green credentials.
- The nearby laybys were already full of vehicles avoiding the car parking charges and there was little effort to improve the situation and avoid traffic congestion, including pollution in the area.
- Such a substantial structure would have a negative impact on the only natural green space in the City and the risks would be irreversible.
- A project of this type should only be considered on a Brown Field site with established robust infrastructure and transport links.
- There could be a reason why no other funding was being invested in the project other than from NPT, and it was thought that it was a vanity project.
- There should be an investigation undertaken about the conflict of interest by the Council and reconsideration should be given to constituents wishes.
- Members commented that no Council Member decision had been made on the proposed application.
- The Planning Lawyer advised that Mr Martin was referring to the applicant and there had been no conflict of interest for any Members of the Planning Committee.
- Mr Martin advised that it was apparent that it was a comment made on the Nene Park Trust site in relation to the Committee's support.
- The Planning Officer confirmed that the comments in question had been made in terms of the Council's officer recommendation. The Planning Committee could approve or go against any such recommendation as they saw fit.
- The NPT Chief Executive's activities in relation to the New Towns Fund had always been declared and had not taken part in any of the meetings where conversations were held about the current application.
- The Chairman reiterated that there was no predetermination issue in relation to the Members of the Planning and Environmental Protection Committee in relation to the current application being considered for the proposed climbing wall.

David Turnock:

- The Committee had a difficult decision to make against the potential harm that could be impacted on a public park.
- Out of the 12 areas of harm highlighted by officers in relation to the proposal, it had been commented that the harm outweighed the benefits from the proposed lakeside activity centre.
- The essential issue felt by the Civic Society was that there needed to be a true appreciation of the character of Ferry Meadows.
- Residents visited the rural setting of Ferry Meadows to relax from their everyday cares to find calm in a countryside location with a small range of amenities and to enjoy the wildlife and nature.
- The Covid 19 pandemic had seen many visitors to Ferry Meadows, who enjoyed activities such as cycling and exercise.
- The main issue was whether the proposed facility was in the right place. The sequential test reviewed the areas that were acceptable for such a tall structure and those in the City Centre were not. There had been little consideration to other location points around which would be more accessible from highway routes, such as the Ice Rink and Rugby Club.
- The report alluded to the site receiving up to 100,000 visits per year and would

equate to over 2,000 journeys per week and most would arrive by car along Ham Lane.

- The Civic Society had reviewed the impact on wildlife and found that the building could be iconic and oversized. Due to the increase in visits particularly by car, the site would not be compatible with the park and would damage an area that had operated well without such a sports facility.
- It was potentially a good building but was proposed for the wrong place.

#### Michael Samways

- The residents had valued Ferry Meadows and had invested in its future and were not NIMBY (not in my back yard) objectors.
- Some of the objections had included students from the Orton Longueville School.
- Several objections had been received from residents of Orton Waterville.
- The sequential tests for alternative sites had not been a convincing and had not demonstrated commercial preferable viability.
- There were other sites such as the Showground, Rowing Lake, Thorpe Wood and land in the Royal Estate which had assigned activity in their own master plans, and these had not been considered as preferable sites. Furthermore, these options would have less environmental impact or risk of flood.
- There would be a loss of amenity value as the site would not be easily accessible to residents with mobility issues.
- The pandemic had shown how important green spaces were to residents' well-being.
- The main mobility points raised was the loss of the shorefront parking particularly for viewing sailability sailors and this access should be maintained.
- Key environmental impacts should be considered such as bats, light pollution, impact carbon emissions and landscape.
- The parking charges had caused a huge issue due to visitors parking on side streets.
- Use of sustainable travel should be encouraged more especially for long distance users.
- Consultation had been undertaken by the objector using walk around visits and social media. There had been a variety of methods to speak to residents outside of using social media including talking face to face with residents where possible following the current Covid 19 guidelines.

#### Lawrance Dobney

- The Ferry Meadows Park had created a good outside area for residents to enjoy.
- Ferry Meadows was created to enjoy outdoor pursuits and in the last 12 months this had become most important.
- There were habitats created for the wildlife which would be impacted.
- The proposed 34 metres building would be an eyesore.
- No other structure would be permitted around a quarter of a mile in any other residential area, and it was questionable as to why this proposal should be.
- The increased traffic predicted for Ham Lane, including construction traffic would be overwhelming and there had been a concern for pedestrian safety, especially for children on bikes.
- Ferry Meadows was an outdoor pursuit which was free to use. There had been a concern that low-income parents could be pressurised by their children to join in the climbing wall activities, at a cost they could not easily afford.

- The proposed climbing wall area should be kept accessible for people with health issues such as obesity.
- The development would spoil the surrounding natural beauty.

Andrea Lindley

- A petition had been delivered to the Council with over 1,100 signatures of objection to the proposal back in 2019, and this had included visitors from outside of the City as well as local residents that had visited Ferry Meadows.
- Ferry Meadows was given to the people of Peterborough by the Development Corporation and Nene Park were responsible for the management and care of it on behalf of residents. The landowners of Ferry Meadows were Peterborough City Council.
- Ferry Meadows was a well-known country park locally and nationally and was awarded the green flag in 2019, attracting nearly 2 million visitors.
- Country parks on the Local Plan were deemed to provide play and recreational areas and other outdoor pursuits such as running and walking.
- Ferry Meadows had been removed from the LP in 2019, under section policy 25 which sought to minimise development contrary to the purpose and pursuits of country parks.
- The Council whilst considering recreation in areas around the Nene Valley had clearly stated that due regard to the natural environment should be maintained. Policy 24 had outlined that activities should be low key in the Nene Valley, moving more formal recreation to urban areas of the City. There also appeared to be a lack of clarity or determination in LP 24 as to the transition of informal activities to formal activities from rural to urban areas.
- Ferry Meadows was a country park which allowed residents and visitors access to green open spaces, wildlife, and nature in a rural landscape. The Nene Valley was a rural area and therefore, the proposed development was not appropriate in this type of country park.
- The mechanisms of development had been passed to the NPT, which was a non-statutory body, however there was reference within the 2017 master plan and that these should be low key in Ferry Meadows country park.
- Ferry Meadows was located within the Nene Valley and consideration for development should be dealt with under section 27 of the LP. Therefore proposed largescale building and car park would not conserve or enhance the landscape in a rural country park.
- It was questioned how the best interests of the City's residents and countryside visitors would be protected if the proposal was approved.
- There had been no objection to NPT organising the fireworks display or kite flying events, however the proposed application was for a more permanent event.
- There were no concerns about how the NPT stewardship of the land had been conducted. However, it was not a private country park it was for all to enjoy.
- The centre could have an immediate draw to it; however, similar climbing walls had been subject to liquidation.
- The petition was started in 2019 for a two-week period and conducted in the City Centre and at Ferry Meadows. The petition concluded that there seemed to be a lack of understanding about the proposed climbing wall.
- The fireworks, running, and other ad Hoc events were one off events, whereas the climbing wall was a permanent structure.
- If the petition time could have been extended, then it was anticipated that more people would have signed it.

- The parking charge increase of 5% and had created a parking issue in nearby streets and the additional car parking proposed would not alleviate the issues.

Victoria Johnson

- The heart of the park where the climbing wall was proposed for erection had provided the best views, especially over the Hanglands.
- Public users with mobility issues would be encouraged to travel further up the valley if the proposal was approved.
- The only way to access the park was on Oundle Road and on the busiest days, the pollution was very unpleasant.
- Climbers would need vehicles to transport their equipment, which would increase pollution.
- Many disabled people using the park were fearful of losing the access point. Some also commented that they could also not afford the access fees.
- Car parking charges had been £1.80 for an hour and a balance needed to be found to increase visitors, however, a climbing wall was not the right facility for that.

3:10pm – At this point the Committee took a short break.

Cllr Fitzgerald, Jackie Bland, Ian Forsythe, Mark Woods and Rob Grover, supporters addressed the Committee and responded to questions from Members. In summary the key points highlighted included:

Councillor Fitzgerald:

- There had been much opposition, however it was questioned whether how many of them lived in the City.
- The silent majority appeared to be in favour of the proposals.
- There was an ambition to increase economic growth opportunities as well as sports opportunities for Peterborough to promote healthier lifestyle choices, therefore the application seemed to meet that ambition.
- Growth should link with local plans and policies and be in sync with the Council's green aspirations and safeguard the environment.
- The site could be deemed iconic once built.
- The height and location had been raised as a concern; however, this was subjective.
- There were many buildings that had been constructed in places that were out of character, however, those buildings such as Peterborough Cathedral and the Shard in London had become iconic.
- The concerns raised by wildlife, flora and fauna had been mitigated and covered within the report.
- As people move away from using petrol or diesel vehicles the carbon emission impact would be less in the future.
- Oundle Road could be a busy road at peak hours however, allowances had been made in relation to those issues. Peterborough was renowned for the best highway's network with the fastest travel route compared to another City's such as Manchester.
- The business case was not relevant to the Planning application. The finances in relation to the NPT charity was available to the public had someone wished to

scrutinise how efficiently it was being operated. The positives of the proposal outweighed the negatives, and these were covered in the report.

- The number of people that were usually in support were mainly silent. There had been significant canvassing undertaken who were in support.

Jackie Bland

- The speaker was a supporter and had lived locally and had enjoyed many of the facilities.
- The supporter had been a Chief Executive Officer of the County Sports Partnership and two national disability charities based in Peterborough.
- The supporter was speaking as Chairperson of the NPT Board.
- A great deal of work had been involved by many to deliver the proposal which had captured the needs of many stakeholders.
- Central to the Nene Park's mission was to support healthy lifestyles and this was conducted in many ways through the provision of leisure and recreational facilities in what was regarded as a peri-urban park within an urban area.
- NPT operated a honeypot approach which provided some areas for activities, socialising, eating and other areas for peaceful enjoyment.
- The team consulted widely across the City on its Master Plan to determine ways in which the NPT could provide a greater impact on improving mental and physical health. It was identified through the consultation that there needed to be a wider range of activities on offer, which could be accessed all year round and during poor weather.
- It was also important that activities would be accessible to users of all ages and abilities and to families with young children.
- The lakeside area of Ferry Meadows was already a busy hub which included existing large buildings, car parks and outdoor pursuits.
- The site was missing indoor activities and on inclement weather, the car parks would be empty.
- Families and schools would be attracted to the indoor facility offering a wide range of activities in the winter months, such as the nature-based toddler area, clip and climb and the café which would offer a place to socialise, whilst providing magnificent views across the lakes.
- The landmark building would be located in a beautiful, landscaped area which would offer improved disabled access, with new areas to view the lake by car, improve environmental impact and wildlife diversity.
- The NPT was dedicated to nature, wildlife and climate change mitigation and there was an ongoing commitment in these areas.
- In 2017 when the NPT was considering its options for new recreational initiatives, the association of British Climbing walls had recorded one million visits in the UK, with an estimated 20% annual income increase.
- Climbing had been known to improve physical, mental health and was inclusive for people with disabilities.
- The applicant had proposed an Olympic standard facility to allow people to fulfil goals and dreams to become a potential Olympic competitor from Peterborough.
- The NPT was proud of what they had achieved on the waters of the park and hoped to replicate the success on the walls of a lakeside activity centre, by becoming a regional and national centre for climbing and para-climbing.



- There would be provision for car park areas where people with disabilities could drive up to the lake to enjoy the views. The car parks would provide a better view across the lake currently offered.
- The entire area surrounding area would be made accessible for disabled people and offered a café which had views across the lake.
- Many people would want to take up the opportunity as a form of entertainment.
- The offer was meant to reach out to a broader range of people and provide a choice. It was not just the offer a building with a climbing wall.
- The intension was to offer the opportunity for people to meet and to provide activities for young people and young adults.
- The term honeypot was meant to attract people to make use of other activities the park had to offer.
- The NPT was charitable organisation and not a commercial venture.
- There were currently over 5,5k visitors to NPT a day and the proposal would only increase that figure by a few hundred more per day. There would not be a huge impact on the park. The proposal had also been heavily scrutinized by the NPT trustee board.
- The hub was a contained area of activity, however the NPT would always look to increase the variety of activities, but these would not trickle into other areas of the park.
- The new car park was to address the issues being experienced with the current car park in that it was an inefficient use of space and had been prone to drainage issues.
- The NPT were working with the Council to address the issues of parking on the neighbouring streets. It was also felt that the issues had exacerbated over the Covid-19 pandemic period.
- The new car park would operate on the same camera and payment system as the current car park.
- Most visitors had used the car parking instead of street parking. There had been incentives introduced such as charges on weekends only and there had been transport improvements to be undertaken by the Council. Charging points for electric vehicles were available and free to use.
- It was likely that there would be a beneficial parking offer for those using the climbing wall and sign up to annual passes.

Ian Forsythe

- Concerns were felt about the future and rising costs for the park. Ferry Meadows had introduced car parking fees, but with a sympathetic mind to the people who lived locally.
- The supporter was the Director of Opportunity Peterborough, which had supported economic generation and jobs for the City.
- The supporter had visited a climbing wall and had experienced a venue that was a vibrant environment full of engagement for people with different abilities, therefore the application for the same venue for Peterborough was welcomed.
- If growth for Peterborough was sustained, the City would attract professional employees to help build the vibrance of the City.
- Fletton Quays had changed the perception of Peterborough.
- Architecture divided people; however, the climbing wall proposal would provide a

venue for the City to enjoy.

- The climbing wall proposal was great offer for Peterborough and there could be other opportunity to expand to other activity centres, such as a snowdome.

#### Mark Woods

- The supporter was a CEO for Cambridgeshire Meridian Academies trust and was representing the views Nene Park and West Town Academy.
- The proposed climbing wall would provide and enhanced facility accessible in all weathers for students, families and the wider community.
- Nene Park Academy prided themselves on offering a challenging and broad curriculum with unique and exciting opportunities for students to take advantage of to develop physically and mentally healthy individuals.
- Students had already been offered outdoor adventure opportunities with bodies such as the outward-bound trust and visits to local cultural and heritage sites. There had been no climbing facility. Students recent feedback was that they would like to have experienced climbing at these outdoor adventures.
- The climbing wall proposal would enhance activities on offer through the school for students and families on an everyday basis.
- Students could also continue the climbing activities during the weekend with their families.
- The schools were looking forward to taking students to the park with a climbing facility and providing taster sessions to encourage them to engage in a new activity.
- Climbing had an advantage as a sport which was accessible to all with varied abilities and cultures.
- The Nene Part Academy Principal had worked at a previous school that had a climbing wall and some students had gone on to pursue their new skills at a higher level.
- There was an opportunity for students to develop a passion for their local park. There was a gap between when young people stop being taken to Ferry Meadows and start taking their parents themselves, therefore the proposal provided a great opportunity for young people to continue to enjoy the park.
- It also provided a positive place for young people and would encourage them to stay in Peterborough in the future.
- If the proposal was approved the schools would ensure they utilised it.
- There was an issue of users parking in neighbouring streets, which unfortunately occurred at other places of interest, and it was unfortunate that people had not realised that the parking charges were paying for the activity they had travelled to join. Schools also experienced the same parking issues.
- The curriculum benefits of a climbing wall would provide students with the opportunity to experience things they would not necessarily be fortunate to enjoy. Once students showed an interest in particular activities, after school clubs were formed and the climbing wall would provide this opportunity. The proposed facility could also develop a student's skill set further towards international level.
- The climbing wall proposed was not a standard centre it would provide a centre of excellence. It would also draw people to that part of the park.

Lynette Swinburne, Andrew MacDermott and Matthew Bradbury, The Agent and

applicant addressed the Committee and responded to questions from Members. In summary the key points highlighted included:

- The application had been through a rigorous scrutinising process, which involved an Environmental Impact Assessment opinion ratified by the secretary of state.
- The application was recommended for approval by officers and consultees.
- A comment had been received from statutory consultees that the proposal would amount to a net gain in relation to bio-diversity.
- Electric Vehicles and bikes including charging points had already existed at Ferry Meadows Park, however, there had been power issues which the trust planned to rectify with the climbing wall proposal. The building would be low energy use.
- Semi permeable surroundings around the building would be in relation to the car parking surface and it was proposed to use a system of gravel and mesh. There would also be some hard standing and it was important to avoid tarmac.
- Events would be planned to avoid using overflow parking.
- Future proofing of charging points and using the current system was being considered.
- The colour scheme had been chosen because of the material proposed, which had dictated the choices available. Cladding would be considered with officers following planning permission to ensure the right decisions were being made.
- The schedule monument artifact findings were in a far-ranging area and the site proposed had a low archaeological impact following assessments. There were some signs of archology activity around the proposed site however these had been protected overtime by the clay and water forming a film of alluvium layer over the area.
- It was not anticipated that there would be significant adverse effect with wind flow for sailing once the proposed building was erected.

The Planning and Environmental Protection Committee debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- Members were advised that there had been a highways time limiting condition for events to prevent parking on the street.
- The traffic on Oundle Road was captured and monitored regularly and the proposal was acceptable subject to the imposition of conditions.
- Other sites for the proposal had been explored; however, they were identified for housing or industrial use or were too small to accommodate the building structure. The showground location would not satisfy policy as it was not central enough.
- It was immaterial where the representations had been raised irrespective of where they lived.
- Members were advised that there had been late representations of objection received since the update report was published and the concerns outline included: the trust representation to committee and that change.org petition should be ignored; NPT was encouraging letters of support to be sent to the Committee; there was a conflict of interest for the CEO of NPT; not enough information had been provided about other sites evaluated for the proposal; NPT had not undertaken a wider consultation; the proposal was unattractive; the proposal would conflict with the Council's policies and the Local Plan.
- Members were also advised that late letters of support were received about the proposal, which included: the climbing wall would be a valuable asset; employment opportunities would increase; the proposed facility would be a significant recreation resource and attract significant income for the City.
- Members commented that the proposal would generate income for the park

- rather than relying on grants.
- Members commented that the proposal would make good use of a car park that currently flooded on a regular basis.
  - Members felt that the proposal was not overbearing in size.
  - The proposal was attractive and a good business opportunity for Peterborough and growth.
  - Nene Park Trust had undertaken some positive projects to attract residents to the park.
  - Sympathy was felt for local residents that were against the proposal.
  - The proposal was divisive however, it was a fantastic opportunity for schools and children.
  - The proposed climbing wall would attract people throughout the year.
  - Members commented that the concerns in relation to use of the site for people with disabilities had been clarified and was acceptable.
  - Members were concerned about traffic and parking; however, mitigation measures were being explored by NPT and the Council.
  - Although an alternative location would be preferred, the appropriate level of assessments had been carried out by the planning officer to demonstrate that there was no other alternative.
  - Members felt that the honey pot would attract income to Ferry Meadows Park and the City.
  - Some Members felt that there had been concerns raised by residents, the civic society and parish council, which had not seemed to be answered.
  - Some Members felt that Ferry Meadows was a very important place in residents lives that should be protected.
  - The time permitted for the petition to be signed should have been increased.
  - There seemed to be an issue the proposal location and whether it was for the right area.
  - Some Members felt that it would be an injustice to the people of Peterborough if the proposal was not supported.
  - Ferry Meadows held many events such fireworks and Cancer runs events, which had reduced in participation numbers over the years and the proposal seemed to be replacing these events.
  - The congestion issues would be short term, and this had been confirmed by Highways and therefore was acceptable.
  - The construction management plan would be agreed to control location, noise and dust following approval of application.

#### **RESOLVED:**

The Planning Environment Protection Committee considered the report and representations. A motion was proposed and seconded to **GRANT** the application. The Committee **RESOLVED** (10 For, 1 Against) to **GRANT** the planning permission subject to relevant conditions delegated to officers.

#### **REASON FOR THE DECISION:**

Subject to the imposition of the attached conditions, the proposal was acceptable having been assessed in the light of all material considerations, including weighing against relevant policies of the development plan and specifically:

- The proposal would enhance the recreational offer within the Nene Valley, bring recognisable benefits to the local economy as well as promoting active and healthy lifestyles and would accord with policies LP7 and LP24 of the Adopted Peterborough Local Plan (2019) and paragraphs 91 and 92 of the National

Planning Policy (NPPF);

- A sequential approach to site selection had been undertaken which demonstrated there were no sequentially preferable sites which could accommodate the development in accordance with policies LP12, LP24 and LP30 of the Adopted Peterborough Local Plan (2019) and paragraphs 86, 87, 89, of the NPPF (2019);
- The proposal had demonstrated that there were no sequentially preferable sites available at a lesser risk of flooding and that the development would be safe for its lifetime and would not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.
- In applying the exception test, the proposal had demonstrated that it would provide wider sustainability benefit to the community and the development would be safe for its lifetime and would not increase flood risk elsewhere and 91 DCCORPT\_2018-04-04 68 accorded with policies LP24 and LP32 of the Adopted Peterborough Local Plan (2019) and paragraphs 155, 158, 159, 160 and 161 of the NPPF (2019).
- The proposal had demonstrated that the site could be suitably drained, would incorporate SuDS into the proposal to reduce surface water run-off and adequate foul water treatment and disposal could be achieved. The proposal therefore accorded with policy LP32 of the Adopted Peterborough Local Plan (2019) and paras. 163 and 165 of the NPPF (2019).
- The proposal would have a negligible impact on the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas identified. The proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to Lynch Farm Complex (SM); a 'strip, map and record' mitigation strategy was proposed. The public benefits of the proposal would outweigh the less than substantial harm, hence the proposal would accord with policy LP19 of the Adopted Peterborough Local Plan (2019) and paragraphs 189, 190, 193, 194 and 196 of the NPPF (2019).
- The visual harm caused by the building to the wider landscape was outweighed by the enhancement of the recreational and leisure benefits of the proposal ensuring Ferry Meadows Country Park as a major destination in line with the overall landscape strategy for the 'Ferry Meadows Corridor' LCA Sub-Area. The proposal therefore accorded with policy LP27 of the Adopted Peterborough Local Plan (2019).
- The proposal would avoid any adverse impact on the biodiversity within the site, including protected species and biodiversity enhancements would be provided. Hence the proposal accorded with policies LP24, LP28 of the Adopted Peterborough Local Plan (2019) and para 175 of the NPPF (2019).
- The proposal would provide a building of high quality, innovative design which would be sympathetic to the surrounding context, and which had the potential to enhance the setting of the park, add to the local distinctiveness of the area and create a sense of place. Hence the proposal accorded with policies LP16 and LP31 of the Adopted Peterborough Local Plan (2019) and paragraphs 124, 127 and 131 of the NPPF.
- The proposal had appropriately considered the tree stock within the site and the impact of the development on existing trees and where trees were to be removed a significant number of new trees planted would be secured. Hence the proposal accorded with policy LP29 of the Adopted Peterborough Local Plan (2019).
- The loss of open space would be outweighed by the benefits of the proposal and the provision of enhanced facilities serving the community; the loss of grassland

and habitat would not result in an adverse impact on the biodiversity of the site; and the proposal would not impact on the character of the area or heritage asset to an unacceptable degree. Hence the proposal accorded with policy LP23 of the Adopted Peterborough Local Plan (2019) and para 97 of the NPPF (2019).

- The proposal would not unduly impact on the surrounding highway network. The site was accessible by a choice of means of transport the proposal would ensure that a safe and convenient access for all users would be available. Hence the proposal would accord with policy LP13 of the Adopted Peterborough Local Plan (2019) and paragraphs 102 and 108 of the NPPF.
- The proposal would not result in any adverse impact on neighbouring occupiers and therefore accorded with policy LP17 of the Adopted Peterborough Local Plan in respect of neighbouring amenity.
- The proposal would not result in an unacceptable level of pollution in terms of air quality, noise and lighting. The proposal included measures to encourage sustainable travel, measures to enhance and protect ecology, and measure to reduce energy demand and promoting energy efficiency. Hence the proposal would accord with policy LP31 of the Adopted Peterborough Local Plan (2019).

CHAIRMAN  
1:30PM – 5:03PM