EIA Quality Mark
Case Study

Cricket Field Grove

Key Issues –
The EIA case study will focus on the following key issues:

- Relationship with the wider redevelopment masterplan for Broadmoor Estate
- Potential impact on heritage assets in context of previous studies and the Site Allocation
- The need to deliver off-site associated sports pitches and Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG)
- The amount of SANG required to support the development proposals

Purpose of the project
Cricket Field Grove (CFG) is a residential scheme located in Bracknell Forest Council (BFC) administrative area. The site forms part of the overall redevelopment masterplan for Broadmoor Estate, which includes a replacement hospital, housing, and open space provision. The client for CFG is Barratt Homes and The West London Mental Health Trust.

Description of the project
Cricket Field Grove is located on the eastern edge of the village of Crowthorne, and adjacent to Broadmoor Hospital. A large part of CFG is laid out as sports pitches, and the site contains a number of buildings previously used for temporary staff accommodation and sports changing. The proposal is for up to 145 homes, comprising a mix of houses and apartments. Replacement sports pitch provision is proposed to offset the loss of existing pitches, along with an area of SANG to mitigate the impact of development on the Thames Basin Heaths SPA.
Lessons learnt

The proposed development forms part of the overall redevelopment masterplan for Broadmoor Estate, and an EIA had previously been prepared for the Replacement Hospital. This included a cumulative impact assessment of all anticipated developments within the Broadmoor Estate. The EIA for CFG had to carefully consider what existing survey and baseline information could be ‘re-used’ from earlier assessments, and where new/updated information was required. For example, a number of ecology surveys needed revisiting. The EIA for CFG also needed to carefully consider the scope of the cumulative impact assessment. In consultation with BFC, it was agreed that the projects identified as part of the redevelopment masterplan were either complete/under construction (and formed part of the baseline environment) or had no confirmed prospect of coming forward, as such, did not require further consideration.

A key component of the CFG EIA was the heritage impact assessment. The original Broadmoor Hospital contains a number of Listed Buildings and the Hospital Grounds – including the CFG Site – are designated as a Registered Park and Garden. While the CFG Site was already allocated from development, and the change to the historic environment already accepted, the heritage assessment was influential on the masterplan layout, and the treatment of the eastern edge of the site which adjoined the Hospital and form part of the historic approaches to the Hospital.

Lessons learnt cont. -

The ecological impact assessment – and an understanding of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (TBH SPA) - was also an important component of the EIA. Part of the CFG site falls within the 400m buffer zone to the TBH SPA which influenced the masterplan layout and distribution of open space. It was also necessarily to deliver bespoke Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to mitigate against new recreational pressure on the SPA. The SANG was located elsewhere within the Broadmoor Estate, alongside the relocated sport pitch provision, and the EIA had to consider separately and in combination, the effect of creating a new recreational zone within existing parkland. Potential effects on landscape, heritage, ecology resources were a key consideration and a scheme was designed that excluded lighting and limited changes to existing ground levels.

The proposed SANG was also designed to deliver the Natural England requirements for a 2.3km circular walk, and as a result, the size of the SANG far exceed requirements. Following on from the EIA and submission of the OPA, there were ongoing discussions about the long term ownership of the SANG and how additional capacity could be used to facilitate other developments in the local area, including other components of the overall redevelopment masterplan.

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