

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

**SMD/2022/0459
VALID 21/09/2022**

**CRICKET GROUND AND
PAVILION, POST LANE,
STANLEY,
STAFFORDSHIRE, ST9 9DT**

**PROPOSED PRACTICE
FACILITY (FULL - MINOR)**

MAIN ISSUES

- **Principle of Development**
- **Design Considerations**
- **Impact upon Residential Amenity**
- **Highway Safety**

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The application site is Endon Cricket Club which lies within the Green Belt as defined by the Local Plan policies map. The site includes cricket pitch, pavilion and small store building, along with areas of hardstanding for parking. The site is a protected open space. The north and eastern roadside boundaries are well vegetated with mature vegetation. Mature vegetation is also located along with western site boundary. The site is located within the countryside and is adjoined by fields and residential properties.

PROPOSAL

This application proposes the construction of training nets which would be sited in the western corner of the site, adjacent to an existing store. The nets would be 32m in length and 7.3m in width, with a height of 4m. The installation would comprise tubular metal frame covered with cricket nets and batting sheets around the stumps end. two storey side extension. The surfacing would be a concrete base finished with astroturf.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (Adopted 2020)

SS1 Development Principles
SS10 Other Rural Areas Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations
DC3 Landscape and Settlement Setting
T1 Development and Sustainable Transport
C2 Sport Recreation and Open Space

Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents

Design Principles
Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide (2018)

National Planning Policy Framework

Section 8: Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities
Section 12: Achieving Well-designed Places
Section 13: Protecting Green Belt land
Section 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

SMD/2021/0470 – Lay new permeable hardstanding – Approved – 09/12/21

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 11/11/22
Neighbour consultation period ends: 11/11/22
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

Two representations of support received

Town / Parish Comments

None received

SCC Highways

No objection subject to condition

Severn Trent Water

No objection

Sport England (Final Response)

Does not wish to raise an objection to the application

SMDC Leisure and Recreation

The planning application has been submitted to improve the practice nets for Endon Cricket Club and as such this will encourage more members of the community, both young and old to take part in cricket.

The improved facilities at any sports ground help to not only retain the current members of the team but also to attract new members to join. Therefore we would support this application to improve the practice facilities at the site.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

Green Belt

The application site is located within the Green Belt, where development is strictly controlled. Policy SS10 states that development in the Green Belt will only be permitted where it is in accordance with national policy. The NPPF identifies that the construction of new buildings within the Green Belt will be considered to be inappropriate development and will only be allowed where it meets one of the exceptions identified within paragraph 149.

Criteria 149(b) allows for *“the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use) for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments; as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it”*.

The first consideration is therefore whether the proposals relate to an appropriate facility for outdoor sport and recreation. The application site relates to Endon Cricket Club which is an outdoor sports provider. The existing facility does not currently benefit from any training nets. Such provision will assist with training of all members of the club, whilst also ensuring the protection of the existing cricket pitch. The delivery of a training net facility is considered to be appropriate and clearly related to the existing use of the site.

The second test is whether the proposed facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt. By virtue of satisfying the test of being an appropriate facility, some loss of openness is considered to be deemed by its very nature. Openness is not defined but it is accepted that it has both visual and spatial components.

The nets would be sited towards the western corner of the site, adjacent to an existing store and site boundaries. The siting of development adjacent to a site boundary, and existing built form is considered to be an appropriate location which reduces the spatial and visual impact of the development on openness. Furthermore, the proposals are not for the construction of a building but a netted facility which, as such, would have a degree of transparency and would be less visually intrusive than a more robust solid structure.

Given the siting, scale and nature of the development, it is considered that openness would be preserved.

The NPPF identifies the purposes for including land within the Green Belt at paragraph 138. One such purpose is to safeguard the countryside from encroachment, which is considered to be the most relevant purpose in the

consideration of this application. The application proposals would be confined to the existing extent of the sports pitch and would not result in any wider encroachment beyond the planning unit. Furthermore, as observed above, the proposals would be appropriately sited in the context of existing built form and site boundaries. The proposals would not conflict with the purposes of including the land in the Green Belt.

It is therefore considered that the application proposals represent appropriate development within the Green Belt.

Impact on Planning pitches

Policy C2 states that the provision of high quality recreational open space by implementing and supporting schemes that will protect, provide and improve the quantity, quality and accessibility of open space will be promoted, and that existing areas of recreational land will be protected from development.

The application proposals would deliver a facility which is complementary to, and associated with, the existing use of land as a cricket pitch. The proposals would encourage further and more flexible participation in the use of the site, and would therefore help to improve the quality of recreational provision.

Concern was initially raised by Sport England with regard to the proximity of the net facility to the nearest wicket within the cricket square. Following further clarification and receipt of additional information identifying the proximity of development to the senior wickets Sport England have removed their concerns and have raised no objection to the proposals. It is therefore considered that the proposed development would not undermine the use of land or result in an unacceptable erosion of the playing field.

Design Considerations

Policy DC1 requires all development to be well designed and reinforce local distinctiveness by positively contributing to and complementing the special character and heritage of the area. Development should *“be of a high quality and add value to the local area”* and *“be designed to respect the site and its surroundings and promote a positive sense of place and identity through its scale, height, density, layout, siting, landscaping, character and appearance”*.

Policy DC3 states that development should protect and where possible enhance local landscape. Development which would lead to a prominent intrusion into the countryside should be resisted, while development which respects and enhances local landscape character should be supported.

The application proposes the erection of cricket training nets. The proposal would comprise metal tubular framing which is covered in netting. This would be on an Astroturf surfacing. The proposed cricket nets would be sited at the western corner of the application site which is the furthest distance from the public highway. This would be viewed in the context of an existing store and the site boundary. The proposals are lightweight in nature and would have a degree of openness in its

design. It is therefore considered that the design of the proposed development would not cause undue harm to the character and appearance of the landscape in this instance.

Amenity

Policy DC1 requires development to “*protect the amenity of the area, including creation of healthy active environments and residential amenity, in terms of satisfactory daylight, visual impact, sunlight, outlook, privacy, soft landscaping as well as noise, odour and light pollution*”.

The proposals are sited an appropriate distance from neighbouring dwellings to not cause harm through loss of daylight, overbearing, or outlook. The proposals are associated with the existing use of land and it is considered that the development would not give rise to an unacceptable level of noise and disturbance to nearby residents.

Highway Safety

The application site is appropriately serviced by off street parking which is sufficient to meet the demands of the development. SCC Highways have raised no objection to the proposals however they have recommended a condition for access works, required pursuant to planning permission SMD/2021/0470, to be carried out. It is not considered reasonable to attach such a condition to this application as it is not directly related to the development applied for. None compliance with a condition attached to a separate planning application would be a matter for planning enforcement.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

It is considered that the proposals would comply with the policies contained within the Development Plan and guidance within the NPPF, and as such it is recommended that the application be approved.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE

Case Officer: Declan Cleary

Recommendation Date: 09/12/2022

X 

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council

