

Name of Applicant Type of Certificate	Proposal	Map/Plan Policy	Plan Ref. Expiry Date
Mr. K. Williams 'B'	Erection of single storey changing room block, car park and access road for existing football pitches (as amended by drawing and information received 29.02.2012) - Land at Barnsley Hall Road, Bromsgrove	Green Belt	10/1103-MT 12.01.2010

RECOMMENDATION: that permission be **GRANTED**.

Consultations

WH	Revised comments in relation to amended application received 19.01.2012: No objection raised subject to conditions to secure the appropriate construction of the site access and the provision of disabled, cycle and motorcycle parking. Original Comments received 13.12.2010: Objection raised due to concerns over access design and lack of cycle parking.
ENG	Revised comments in relation to amended application received 19.01.2012: No objection raised subject to conditions to secure storm and foul drainage provisions. Original comments received 29.11.2010: No objections subject to the imposition of a condition to secure storm and foul drainage provisions.
Highways Agency	Original comments received 20.12.2010: No objection Re-consultation on amended application deemed unnecessary due to the nature of the amendments.
Sport England	Revised comments in relation to amended application received 18.01.2012: No objection Original comments received 08.12.2010: No objection
WWT	Revised comments in relation to amended application received 27.01.2012: No objection to the amended proposals subject to the guidance in the Tree Officer's response being followed Consulted on original application 29.11.2010: No comments received
Tree Officer	Revised Comments in relation to amended application received 11.01.2012: No objection subject to conditions to protect the existing trees and request the submission of a landscaping plan for consideration and approval.

Tree Officer Consulted on original application 29.11.2010: No comments received
(cont'd)
Publicity No adjoining occupiers

Site Notice in relation to amended application posted 10.01.2012
expires 31.01.2012: No representations received to date

Original Site Notice posted 09.12.2010 expired 30.12.2010:

6 objections received:

- concerns raised over the proposal causing anti-social behaviour;
- health issues;
- increased traffic;
- parking problems;
- an excessive provision of football playing fields in the District.

The site and its surroundings

The application site relates to an area of land adjacent to the existing playing fields located off Barnsley Hall Road. The fields have not however been used for some time and have become overgrown. The site currently comprises of an L shaped area of scrub and grass land. There are a number of trees of varying sizes in and around the site. The site is adjoined by the roundabout at Barnsley Hall Road to its south western boundary. The remainder of the site is surrounded by open fields. The M42 motorway lies some 70 metres to the north of the site and the modern Barnsley Hall housing development some 120 metres to the south. The site is located in the Green Belt as defined in the BDLP.

Proposal

The application proposes to erect a changing room building on the site along with 58 no. marked car parking spaces, 4 no. disabled spaces and a new access drive from Barnsley Hall Road. The proposed building would accommodate 2 no. team changing rooms each with shower and toilet facilities, 2 no. officials' changing rooms with toilets, an equipment store, a small kitchen, and toilet facilities for spectators. The changing room development would also involve an enclosed storage compound to the north elevation of the building. The proposed car park would comprise of a rectangular shaped area of hardstanding covering an area of 1,280m². The proposed access drive would link the proposed car park with the existing roundabout at Barnsley Hall Road. Access from the roundabout would be provided via a new pavement crossover.

This application is in an amended form. Members will note the initial objection from the Highways Authority in relation to the proposed access and a lack of cycle parking. The proposal has been revised in an attempt to address the concerns raised. The internal layout of the changing room building has also been revised to comply with Football Association (FA) specifications.

The facilities proposed by this application would be associated with the re-use of the adjoining Council owned playing fields. Members should be aware that the re-use of the playing fields and any associated equipment (i.e. goalposts) does not form part of this application. It is considered that the re-use of the playing fields would not require

planning permission as no material change of use would occur. The erection of goalposts on the land by the Council may represent permitted development under Part 12 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (Development by Local Authorities). It is important therefore for members to focus only on the facilities proposed by the application and not any matters associated with the reinstatement of the playing fields.

Relevant Policies

WMSS	QE3
WCSP	CTC.1, CTC.5, CTC.8, D.38, D.39, T.1, RST.1
BDLP	DS2, DS13, C17, RAT2, TR11, TR16, ES1
Draft CS2	CP3, CP10, CP22, CP23
Others	PPS1, PPG2, PPS9, PPG13, PPG17

Relevant Planning History

10/0635	Erection of single storey changing room block, car park and access road - Withdrawn
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Notes

Members should note the policy support for proposals of this nature within the adopted and emerging planning policy framework for the District. A stated objective of Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS1) is to support the promotion of health and well being by making provision for physical activity. Emerging national policy within the Draft National Planning Policy Framework seeks to ensure access to open spaces and recreational facilities that promote the health and well being of the community. Emerging local level policy within the Council's Draft Core Strategy 2 seeks to improve the health of those living in the District through the provision of outdoor sports facilities.

The proposed development would facilitate the reinstatement of the playing fields and improve access to the facility. It is considered that this would contribute towards the policy objective of promoting health and well being and Members should be encouraged to support the concept of the development.

This policy support should however be considered within the context of Green Belt policy. Policy DS2 of the BDLP and the advice contained at paragraph 3.4 of PPG2 provide that essential facilities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation are not inappropriate development in the Green Belt. The main matter for consideration therefore is whether the proposed changing rooms, car park and driveway would represent essential facilities and thus appropriate development in the Green Belt.

Further to Green Belt considerations, regard should be paid to Policy RAT2 of the BDLP. This policy sets out a number of criteria to be applied to proposals involving the development of outdoor sport facilities. These are as follows:

1. the proposal must not include new building other than that genuinely required for essential facilities which must be solely related to the main outdoor sports use;

2. the proposed site should be within a reasonable walking distance of an existing public transport service;
3. the proposal should have a safe and convenient access and adequate car parking to the satisfaction of the highway authority;
4. the scale, design and visual appearance of the proposal should not have an adverse effect upon the character or amenities of the surrounding area;
5. there must be no adverse impact upon ecological, environmental or archaeological interests;
6. the proposal must not lead to the generation of excessive noise or other nuisance, such as lighting;
7. an unrelieved concentration of pitches should not be created.

The first of these criteria overlaps with the Green Belt provisions set out at policy DS2 of the BDLP and in PPG2 thus it will not be given separate consideration in this report. The final criterion is not of relevance to this application as no new areas for pitches are proposed. The remaining criteria will be considered in this report under the following headings; Public Transport; Parking and Access; Design/Character; Ecology/Environment; Environmental Nuisance.

The Green Belt

The main matter for consideration is whether the proposed changing rooms, car park and driveway would represent essential facilities and thus appropriate development in the Green Belt.

Policy RAT2 of the BDLP sets out detailed provisions in relation to outdoor sport facilities. With regard to new buildings, Policy RAT2 provides that outdoor sport uses should not include new building other than that genuinely required for essential facilities which must be solely related to the main outdoor sports use. With regard to this policy, changing rooms are considered to be essential for the effective use of the playing fields for team sports and no doubts are raised over the principle of this part of the development. It is noted that the outdoor sport use comprises 4 no. playing fields. The proposed building would involve 2 no. changing rooms that could be used by two teams which in normal circumstances would utilise one of the four pitches. It should be noted that, notwithstanding this, all four pitches would still be utilised at the same time but match kick off times would be staggered so to allow access to the changing rooms. It should also be noted that the playing fields would represent a youth facility and the majority of the age groups concerned would normally turn up already changed. On this basis, it is considered that the proposal would facilitate the efficient use of the playing fields whilst representing a small scale development that can clearly be justified as essential and commensurate with the scale of the existing outdoor sports use. The proposed changing rooms are therefore considered to represent essential facilities that are genuinely required in connection with the outdoor sport use. This part of the proposal would therefore represent an appropriate form of development in the Green Belt.

With regard to the proposed car park and access drive, these parts of the proposal would not involve the provision of new buildings. The laying down of hardstanding to create the driveway and car park would constitute an engineering operation. Policies DS2 and RAT2 of the BDLP and the advice contained within PPG2 do not specify whether or not engineering operations may fall within the scope of essential facilities for outdoor sport.

To provide clarity on this matter regard has been paid to a number of appeal decisions involving similar types of development. In a 2006 appeal relating to a proposed fisheries at land off Broome Lane, Clent (BDC application ref. B/2005/0763; PINS Appeal ref. APP/P1805/A/06/2012949/NWF) the Inspector opined that *"the provision of space for parking off the access road to cater for the traffic the fishery might attract can properly be regarded as a facility essential for the outdoor recreation use proposed."*

In a March 2011 appeal decision relating to a proposed cemetery within the West Yorkshire Green Belt (PINS Appeal ref. APP/F4410/A/10/2142687) the Inspector considered the proposed car park to be an essential component of the cemetery. Members should note that cemeteries would normally fall within the same category of 'appropriate' development listed at paragraph 3.4 of PPG2 thus the same policy tests would apply.

Having regard to these matters, it is considered that the principle of treating a car park as an essential facility has been established elsewhere.

When considering whether the proposed car park would represent an essential facility regard should be paid to Worcestershire County Council's Parking Standards and the views of the Highways Authority on the matter. The relevant parking standards for a D2 Use (Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) classification) comprising of a team game area are set out at Table 1 below.

Table 1: Worcestershire County Council Parking Standards - D2 Team Game Areas

Car Parking	Disabled Parking	Cycle Parking	Motorcycle Parking	Lorry / Coach Parking
1 space per 2 team members	1 space minimum 1 space per 20 car parking spaces	6 spaces minimum 1 space per 10 car parking spaces	1 space minimum 1 space per 20 car parking spaces	1 lorry space 1 coach space per team

The application proposes to create 58 no. car parking spaces, 4 no. disabled spaces and 1 no. coach parking space. The car parking provision has been calculated by the applicant having regard to the number of pitches, the number players that would use each pitch at any one time and the total number of players that would use the site at any one time. The figures put forward by the applicant are detailed at Table 2 below.

Table 2: Parking requirement Assessment

Pitch No.	Players/team	Substitutes/team	Total/team	Grand Total (team total x 2)
1*	7	3	10	20
2	11	5	16	32
3	11	5	16	32
4	11	5	16	32
Total number of players using the site at any one time =				116

**Pitch 1 refers to the small junior pitch in the north east corner of the site. Junior games are 7 aside.*

Having regard to the information contained at Table 2, the applicant has demonstrated that on match days a total of 116 team members would be using the site at any one time. Thus, in accordance with the relevant car parking standard of 1 space per 2 team members, a total of 58 spaces would be required, along with 4 disabled spaces. The level of car parking provision would therefore represent the minimum necessary for an outdoor sports use of this scale and it is considered that the proposed car park can be regarded as an essential facility for outdoor sport.

With regard to the proposed driveway, it has been considered whether or not there would be scope for relocating the car park closer to the highway thus eliminating the need for an access drive. Such actions would however create a sizeable gap between the car park and the pitches/changing room building which would have implications for disabled access. Furthermore, the area of the site close to the highway contains a row of trees. Locating a car park here would result in the loss of the trees which may result in ecological implications and harm to the natural, rural setting of the Green Belt. On the above basis, it is considered that the proposed driveway is essential for the proper functioning of the outdoor sport use.

Taking the above matters into consideration, the proposal is found to represent an appropriate form of development in the Green Belt in accordance with policy DS2 of the BDLP and the advice contained in PPG2. The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable in principle.

Public Transport

It is noted that there is a bus stop located on Stourbridge Road approximately 350 metres from the site. This provides regular services to and from a number of destinations around the local area including Bromsgrove town, Worcester, Kidderminster, Birmingham and Halesowen. The explanatory text to policy RAT2 refers to 400 metres as being a reasonable walking distance. The proposed development is therefore considered to be in accordance with this proviso.

Parking and Access

It is noted that no objection has been raised to the revised access by the Highways Authority. The proposal is therefore considered to incorporate a safe means of access.

Members will note the relevant parking standards set out at Table 1, and the onsite parking requirement assessment detailed at Table 2. It is demonstrated that the proposed car parking and disabled car parking provisions are in accordance with the relevant standards and no objection has been raised by the Highways Authority in relation to this matter. Members will however note that the proposed car park does not feature any provision for cycles and motorcycles. In accordance with the parking standards the site should provide 6 no. cycle parking spaces and 4 no. motorcycle spaces. Consultation with the applicant and the Highways Authority on this matter indicates that such provisions can be secured via a condition attached to any planning permission granted.

With regard to coach parking, Members will note from the application drawings that only one space is provided. Strict application of the parking standards in relation to this matter would however require 8 spaces. To justify this under provision, the applicant has advised that teams are not normally expected to arrive by coach and a lower amount of spaces has been provided accordingly. A retractable height restricting barrier is proposed to manage coach access. No objection has been raised to this matter by the Highways Authority.

Design/Character

The area surrounding the site is comprised of open fields within a designated Green Belt. It is considered that the character of the area could be described as semi-rural. The proposed changing room building is considered to be of a simple, modest design that is appropriate for its intended use. Small scale buildings providing essential facilities for outdoor sport are appropriate within the Green Belt and it is not considered that this part of the proposal would be incongruous with the character of the area. With regard to the proposed driveway and car park, whilst it is generally considered that these features would have an urbanising effect on the site thus detracting from the semi-rural character of the area, I am mindful of the essential nature of the facilities provided and their deemed 'appropriateness' in Green Belt terms. It would therefore be difficult to substantiate any impact related concerns into a reason for refusing the application.

Ecology/Environment

The site is comprised of rough scrub and grassland vegetation with hedgerows and a number of trees of varying sizes. The proposal would involve the removal of an L shaped area of scrub and grassland to accommodate the development. Although the plans indicate that no significant trees would be removed, the proximity of the development to these features may have implications for their health.

With regard to ecology, an extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey has been submitted with the application. This finds no evidence of protected species on the site but identifies that the scattered trees, hedgerows and scrub all have the potential to support nesting birds. To overcome any impacts on nesting birds the survey recommends that the vegetation removal is timed to occur outside of the nesting season. It is also recommended that the existing trees are protected during construction and that any lost trees/shrubs are replanted. Having regard to the findings of the Phase 1 Habitat survey, and the absence of an objection from Worcestershire Wildlife Trust (WWT) in relation to the proposal, it is considered that the development would have no adverse ecological implications. It is

advised that the recommendations made in the survey are imposed on the applicant as a condition attached to any planning permission granted.

With regard to trees, I am mindful of the comments made by the Senior Tree Officer (STO) in relation to this matter. It is noted that there are a number of trees within the application site that are worthy of protection. No objection is raised to the proposal by the STO subject to conditions to protect the existing trees during development. It is also requested that a landscape plan is submitted to the Council for consideration. Having regard to the STOs comments, the proposal is found to have no unacceptable impact on trees.

Environmental Nuisance

The proposal would not involve floodlights or any other lighting that may present as a nuisance to nearby residents. The use of the pitches for team sports would clearly generate noise which may possibly to some extent be heard at the nearby residential properties. It is however understood that matches would take place during the day at times between 10:00 and 14:00. It is considered that, during these times, a certain amount of noise from public activity is acceptable. Moreover, it is important to be mindful of the fact that the playing fields are not part of this application but rather an existing facility that has been an established part of the area for some time. Any noise related concerns would be difficult to substantiate into a reason for refusing this application.

Other matters

I note the objections to the proposal from local residents. Concerns are raised over anti-social behaviour, health issues, increased traffic and parking problems. Concerns are also raised over there being a sufficient existing provision of football clubs in Bromsgrove. I will consider each of these matters below.

The concerns raised in relation to anti-social behaviour refer to what is perceived to be an existing problem associated with the existing play area located near the site. That facility is separate to the application site and any such concerns are not material in the assessment of this application.

Concerns have been raised over the health of people using the playing fields due to their proximity to the motorway. In response to these concerns it is noted that the site does not fall within a defined Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and there is no evidence to suggest that air quality on the playing fields is poor. Concerns in relation to air quality could not therefore be substantiated into a reason for refusing the application.

In response to the concerns raised over traffic, the proposal would inevitably result in additional vehicle movements, but this would be limited to match days only. Any disturbance created by vehicle movements would only be for a limited time on certain days of the week. Moreover, it is considered that the majority of visitors will access the site via Stourbridge Road. Any increased vehicle movements would not therefore be via the roads within the nearby Barnsley Hall housing estate and it is not considered that any loss of amenity would be caused to its residents.

In relation to parking, as demonstrated above the proposal would meet the relevant parking standards thus no concerns are raised in relation to this matter.

As previously discussed, any concerns over there already being a sufficient provision of football playing fields in the Bromsgrove District are not of relevance to this application as no new areas for pitches are proposed.

Conclusion

The proposal would represent the development of essential facilities for outdoor sport and as such it is considered to be appropriate within the Green Belt. The site is accessible by public transport and the development would provide a safe means of access and sufficient parking in accordance with the County Council's standards. The design and appearance of the changing room building and associated car park/driveway is considered to be acceptable within the context of the site. The application demonstrates that the proposal will have no adverse ecological impacts and no concerns are raised in relation to the natural environment of the area or any environmental nuisances. On this basis, the proposal is found to be in accordance with the relevant policies of the adopted Development Plan and it is recommended that planning permission is approved.

RECOMMENDATION: that permission be **GRANTED**.

Conditions:

1. C001 (time limit for implementation)
2. C003 (materials)
3. HC7 (Access Gates)
4. HC8 (Vehicle access construction)
5. HC14 (Driveway Gradient)
6. HC25 (Access, turning and parking)
7. HC30 (Disabled Parking Need)
8. HC35 A (Cycle Parking (Single Unit))
9. HC35 B (Cycle Parking (Single Unit))
10. C007 (disposal of storm and foul water)
11. C010 (landscaping scheme)
12. C013 - C019 (existing tree protection)
13. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the recommendations set out at Section 6 of the approved Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey conducted by

Middlemarch Environmental (received 17.11.2010) unless otherwise agreed in writing with the local planning authority.

Reason: To compensate for the loss of a potential bird nesting habitat in accordance with PPS9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation.

Notes

This decision has been taken having regard to the policies within the West Midlands Spatial Strategy, the Worcestershire County Structure Plan (WCSP) June 2001, the Bromsgrove District Local Plan January 2004 (BDLP), the Bromsgrove Draft Core Strategy 2 (2011) and other material considerations as summarised below:

WMSS	QE3
WCSP	CTC.1, CTC.5, CTC.8, D.38, D.39, T.1, RST.1
BDLP	DS2, DS13, C17, RAT2, TR11, TR16, ES1
Draft CS2	CP3, CP10, CP22, CP23
Others	PPS1, PPG2, PPS9, PPG13, PPG17

It is the Council's view that the proposed development complies with the provisions of the development plan and that, on balance, there are no justifiable reasons to refuse planning permission.