

Name of Applicant Type of Certificate	Proposal	Map/Plan Policy	Plan. Ref Expiry Date
Hagley Golf and Country Club 'A'	New Golf Range and Academy (as amended by plans dated 16.05.2007) - Hagley Golf and Country Club, Wassell, Grove Lane, Hagley	GB LPA	B/2007/0258 28.06.2007

RECOMMENDATION: that permission be **GRANTED**.

COMMITTEE SITE VISIT

Consultations

WCC(HP)	Consulted - No Objections 23.04.2007
Hagley PC	Consulted - OBJECT Site is within Greenbelt and Wassell Grove Lane already has a number of outdoor leisure developments in the form of sporting clubs. It is understood that this type of development may be acceptable in principle in the Greenbelt. On the other hand tennis courts, gyms and squash courts are not and this application falls between the two and therefore we consider this to be unacceptable development in the Greenbelt. Development is over 80m long and is a shed, this is too big. The floodlighting is unacceptable. Nights should be dark. The owners of the neighbouring kennels have been affected by floodlighting that has not allowed their dogs to settle at night. 24.04.2007
ENG	Consulted - no objections - suggest conditions. 24.04.2007
FC	Consulted - no objections. 11.04.2007
WCC (lighting eng)	Consulted - no objections - reduced scheme sent for consultation comments awaited
CEHO	Consulted
EAR	Consulted - no objections suggest conditions to protect ground water supply. 03.05.2007
Publicity	1 letter sent Site notice posted - 26.04.2007 - expires 17.05.2007 Press notice posted - 26.04.2007 - expires 17.05.2007 3 letters received Golf driving range has been recently approved in Stourbridge. Concerned about the impact of the development on local business especially given the restraints to improve existing facility. Unable to compete with large business who can afford to make improvements and undercut prices. 27.03.2007 Whilst I am not a resident in the area I take grass and machinery down the lane past the club. A driving range will make the traffic implication worse. Recently approved football pitches will make the Green Belt appear more like an airport. Concerned regarding the increase of traffic and noise during the dark hours.

Further buildings will destroy the open aspect of this land. With the recent football pitches there is no where for people to park. Floodlighting will affect the occupants of Clent Villa Farm with noise and light pollution. Had to put up with tipping when golf club damaged road and already golf driving range less than 2.5 miles from the club. What benefit is this to the community. 04.05.2007

The site and its surroundings

This particular site relates to a parcel of land that is situated on the southern side of Wassell Grove Lane as part of the existing Hagley Golf and Country Club. The entrance to the club is via a sweeping drive which has been planted and presently has landscape mound situated towards the entrance of the site. As the drive opens out towards the club house to the south, the car park is located to the front and to the west of the main building and extends right out to the first tee. An open practice ground is located to the east. It presently has a regular shape and is fairly level with trees marking the perimeter of the site and the ground cabins to the north. The practice green currently has a small bunded area where the members can practice shots before playing a round. The area is also marked with flags showing distances for practiced shots.

This practice green is the focus of this proposal. This land and the golf club are all located in confirmed Green Belt and within a landscape protection area.

Proposal

This proposal is a full application for the construction a new driving range. The building measures 70m x 5.6m, and is 4.1m high. The reduced facility now contains 20 driving bays. The range will also contain a ball wash and dispensing area, video room, small store and office, along with an additional teaching bay and video room. The building will have 5 floodlights on the roof, which are angled to the floor to allow players to view their shots and allow safe ball collection. The building has a brick base with timber cladding for the wall and a lightweight roofing material.

Relevant Policies

WMSS QE1, QE3
WCSP D.38, D.39, SD.2, RST.1, RST.13, T.1
BDLP DS2, DS13, RAT1, RAT2, C4, TR11
Others PPS1, PPG2, PPG17

Relevant Planning History

B/2001/0456 Works to burns and restate collapse bank - Granted 03.09.2001

Notes

Issues

Greenbelt

The main issue is to consider whether the proposed development represents appropriate development in the Greenbelt and, if not, whether there are any very special circumstances to overcome the harm.

Paragraphs 3.4 of PPG2 identifies development that may be considered appropriate in the Greenbelt. Essential facilities for outdoor sport and recreation is within this description. This is widened in paragraph 3.5 which considers the aspect of openness and considers possible examples of small changing rooms, spectator stands and stabling. I consider the principle of the development may fall within this policy remit and may be considered appropriate in the Greenbelt.

It is common to find golf facilities in the countryside given the amount of land required. Recreational policies in both the County Structure Plan and District Local Plan identify that facilities for outdoor sport may be considered favourably and RAT2 identifies the criteria for assessing these proposals. Sport England have raised no objections to the provision of this range in the Green belt. I consider the proposed driving range does comply with the principles of this policy and the provisions of PPG17.

Access / Highways

Highways have no objections to the proposal. Members will note the scheme has now been reduced from 24 bays to 20 bays and the additional parking area off the main drive has now been deleted from the proposal.

I am satisfied that this is acceptable without providing further parking via the removal of more landscaped area and consider this would comply with the provisions of policy T1 of the WCSP, TR11 of the BDLP and the provisions of PPG13.

I note the concerns in respect of parking; however, I understand the parking issues have not been due to the Golf Club but other activities on the land (in connection with football and car boot sales). The Local Authority cannot be held responsible for controlling the indiscriminate parking of vehicles in the highway, only over private land and the golf club has more than adequate provision. Members will note that the present car parking facilities extend to over 100 spaces and this is adequate to accommodate both the club and driving range.

Design, Scale, Massing

The range is a basic lightweight building measuring 70m x 5.6m x 4.1m. The range now has 20 driving bays, each are a set size in line with the current size guidelines to ensure safety of the users of the range. I appreciate the comments from the Parish Council but Members will note the scheme has now been reduced and all non-essential facilities; that is, those not connected with the range, have been left out and ancillary features will be provided direct from the main club house which is nearby.

I note the Parish Council's concerns, however I consider the building has been thoughtfully sited and will not in itself be visually intrusive, being adjacent to the clubhouse and, whilst I appreciate the building is long, it is single storey and has narrow form which again reduces any visual bulk. The planted areas and grounds cabin effectively shield the building from the nearest neighbouring property (Clent Villa Farm) and will not be readily visible from the road.

Size of Proposal in Context to Surrounding Similar Facilities

There are other golf driving ranges and golf courses in the district. One direct comparison may be found at Bromsgrove Golf Club. This has both the 18 hole course and driving range. The driving range has 41 bays and is a large complex; the site is also within confirmed Green Belt. The comparison of these two is that they are both near large urban areas. Driving ranges can also be found near Halesowen, at Woodcote, Dodford, and at Becketts Farm in Wythall. These ranges vary in size from 16 down to 10 (Dodford). Again, I do not find it unreasonable to provide the size of facility that has been proposed in this location. Comments have been made in relation to facilities at Stourbridge but the recently approved site has range of 3. This club is also constrained by the local highway networks and proximity to neighbouring properties. Again I find this aspect acceptable.

Lighting

The proposal does contain a proposal for low intensity floodlighting. The County Council's Lighting Engineer has commented on the scheme and considers that the range may be adequately controlled by the imposition of conditions in respect of both the floodlights and the hours of use. The location of the range is situated behind the grounds cabins and landscape bund which should also provide a protective screen.

The five lights are on top of the building and are 4m high which projects out in a horizontal direction from the range into the field. This scheme will reduce sky glow and light scatter due to horizontal light beams dispersing out 250 yards compared to football pitches with light from 6m high, as light tends to bounce back and cause night glow.

Given the location of the range, I do not consider it will cause any issues in respect of local highway users or, in fact, to the neighbouring kennels. I am satisfied that adequate control may be available via conditions to ensure the lighting does not generate any adverse amenity issues.

Landscaping

There is currently a boundary of mature trees to the north and east of the practice pitch. The proposal is to retain this and provide additional planting between the range, the northern boundary, the neighbouring paddock and footpath (to the east). The area is not on a prominent ridge or slope.

A condition may adequately ensure that this planting is secured. The trees that line the present boundary between the practice area and car park are also to be retained which will help ensure softening of the overall resulting scheme.

Amenity

As noted previously, the main issues in regard to neighbouring properties is the parking and highways issue, light and noise from the use.

As noted previously, the golf club has adequate parking for both the driving range and course. I understand the concerns in respect of parking; however, I am not aware that any of the previous parking issues were in connection with the users of the club.

The type and location of the lighting can, and will, be controlled by the imposition of conditions and, whilst the Environmental Health Officer has not raised any particular issues in respect to noise, I am satisfied that this may be adequately controlled by conditions to restrict use after 10.00 p.m. to ensure that no complaints do occur.

RECOMMENDATION: that permission be **GRANTED**.

1. CO99
2. C9
3. C10
4. C11
5. C12
6. C13
7. C14
8. C15
9. C16
10. C19
11. C18
12. C19
13. C39
14. If, during development, contamination not previously identified is found to be present at the site, then no further development (unless otherwise agreed with the Local Planning Authority) shall be carried out until the developer has submitted, and obtained, written approval from the Local Planning Authority for an addendum to the Method Statement. This addendum to the Method Statement must detail how this unsuspected contamination shall be dealt with and, from the date of approval, the addendum shall form part of the Method Statement. REASON: to ensure that the development complies with approved details in the interests of protection of the environment and harm to human health.
15. Soakaways shall only be used on areas on the site where they would not present a risk to groundwater. If permitted, their location must be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. REASON: to prevent pollution of controlled waters.
16. No development approved by this permission shall be commenced until a scheme for the provision of surface water drainage works has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The drainage works shall be completed in accordance with the details and timetable agreed. REASON: to prevent the increased risk of flooding by ensuring the provision of a satisfactory means of surface water disposal.

17. No development approved by this permission shall be commenced until a scheme for the provision of surface water run off limitation has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The drainage works shall be completed in accordance with the details and timetable agreed. REASON: to prevent the increased risk of flooding.
18. Floodlights shall comply with the recommendation contained in CIBSE Sports Lighting Guidance LG4 and the Institute of Lighting Engineers Guidance notes for the Reduction of Light Pollution. Levels of illumination should not exceed 1.0 Lux (vertical) on the window on any adjacent residential property or 5 Lux (horizontal) on any adjacent highway. REASON: to ensure the amenity of neighbouring properties and the safety of highway users.
19. The driving range shall not be open for use by customers between the hours of 22.00 hrs. and 07.00 hrs. on any given day including Bank Holidays and weekends. REASON: to protect the amenity of neighbouring properties.

This decision has been taken having regard to the policies within the Worcestershire County Structure Plan (WCSP) June 2001 and the Bromsgrove District Local Plan January 2004 and other material considerations as summarised below:

RSS QE1, QE3
WCSP D38, D38, RST12, RST13, CTC1, T1
BDLP DS2, DS13, RAT2, C4, TR11
Others PPS1, PPG2, 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.