

**Development Control Committee**  
Meeting to be held on 19 July 2023

Electoral Division affected:  
Lostock Hall and Bamber Bridge

**South Ribble Borough: application number: LCC/2022/0022**  
**Provision of a multi-use games area with associated perimeter fencing up to 2m high and connecting pathway**  
**Lostock Hall Community Primary School, Linden Drive, Lostock Hall**

Contact for further information:  
Helen Ashworth, 01772 530084,  
[Devman@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:Devman@lancashire.gov.uk)

### **Brief Summary**

Application - Provision of a multi-use games area with associated perimeter fencing up to 2m high and connecting pathway.

### **Recommendation – Summary**

That subject to the Secretary of State confirming that the application will not be called in for his own determination, that planning permission be **granted** subject to conditions controlling hours of use, floodlighting and materials.

### **Applicant's Proposal**

This application is for the provision of a multi-use games area (MUGA). The proposed multi-use games area would measure 24m by 16m and would be surrounded by wire mesh fencing coloured dark green. The fence would be 1m in height on the sides, and 2m high with indented goals to the ends. The multi-use games area would be surfaced in artificial grass.

Access to the multi-use games area would be from the existing playground to the north via a new pathway. Drainage to the pitch would be installed. No external floodlighting is proposed.

### **Description and Location of Site**

The proposed development would be located within the boundary of Lostock Hall Community Primary School. The school is located off Linden Drive, a residential street approximately 4km south of Preston city centre.

The school is bounded by houses to the west and south. To the east is further residential development and Lostock Hall Academy. To the north of the school are playing fields associated with Lostock Hall Academy. The proposed multi-use games area would be located on the southern playing field at the school, immediately adjacent to school buildings to the west and a hard surfaced playground area. There are a number of sporadically placed mature trees and shrubs along the school boundaries, and 2m high close boarded fencing along the boundary with residential properties.

## **History**

Planning permission for the construction of two canopies to cover external staircases to the rear elevation was granted in March 2022 (ref. LCC/2020/0005).

Planning permission for the variation of condition 4 of permission 07/07/0336 to remove the part c) requirement (flat top road humps which act as pedestrian crossing points) was granted in January 2010 (ref. 07/09/0715).

Planning permission for the enclosure of part of school grounds including playgrounds with 2.4m weld mesh fencing was granted in October 2009 (ref. 07/09/514).

Planning permission for the consolidation of nursery and infants' units by the construction of a single storey extension, associated play areas and provision of additional car parking was granted in September 2007 (ref. 07/07/0336).

## **Planning Policy**

*National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):*

Paragraphs 11-14, 95, 98-103 and 126-136 are relevant in terms of the presumption in favour of sustainable development, the requirement for educational development, protecting open spaces and the need for high standards of design.

*Central Lancashire Core Strategy (adopted 2012)*

Policy 1: Locating growth

Policy 24: Sport and Recreation

*South Ribble Local Plan (adopted 2015)*

Policy B1 Existing built up areas

Policy G7 Green Infrastructure

Policy G17 Design criteria for new development

## **Consultations**

South Ribble Council: Raise no objections to the proposals, however the Environmental Health officer has advised that the proposed development has the



potential to adversely affect the neighbouring properties during the construction phase and to be adversely affected by activities once developed. It is requested that a condition requiring a construction noise prevention plan should be submitted and approved before development commences. It is also requested that a condition preventing the use of floodlighting is imposed, that the hours of use are restricted to 9.00-17.00 Monday to Friday with no weekend use and that the fencing and the floor of the multi-use games area should be constructed to minimise noise from the site.

United Utilities (UU): Request that a condition is added requiring details of a sustainable surface water drainage scheme and foul water drainage scheme to be submitted and approved in writing prior to the commencement of development. It is also requested that a further condition is attached regarding a maintenance and management regime for any sustainable drainage system.

Sport England: Sport England object to the proposals as it is not considered to accord with any of the exceptions to Sport England's Playing Fields Policy, or Paragraph 99 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). They request that the applicant provides additional information in relation to the following matters:

- Evidence to demonstrate that the school has made all best endeavours to improve the drainage and playing surface to resolve problems with the existing playing field (including when the work was carried out and details why the improvements have failed).
- Site plans should be provided that clearly shows the existing and proposed summer and winter playing pitch provision and how the proposal would not impact on this playing pitch provision.
- Information about current community uses.
- Further technical information, including cross section drawings should be submitted detailing the proposed surface type.
- A supporting statement that clearly demonstrates the strategic need and sporting benefits of the proposal, in accordance with section 6.5 of Sport England's Playing Fields Policy.

They have also drawn attention to the continual erosion of the school playing field, with an enlarged adventure play area/trim trail within the southern playing field. These features further reduce the flexibility and capability of the playing field to accommodate a variety of playing pitches.

County Councillor Jeff Couperthwaite: No comments received.

Representations – The application has been advertised by site notice and neighbouring residents informed by individual letter. No representations have been received.



## Advice

Lostock Hall Community Primary School is a community school for children aged 3-11. There are 432 pupils on roll.

The proposal is for the creation of a multi-use games area measuring 24m by 16m. The multi-use games area (MUGA) would be surfaced with an artificial grass surface and enclosed by wire mesh fencing coloured dark green. The fence would be 1m in height on the sides, and 2m high with indented goals to the ends.

The applicant has provided the following information in support of the proposals:

- The area where the multi-use games area is to be situated is very boggy and only useable for two months of the year. Land drainage has been tried but not worked.
- The grounds are known to be boggy throughout the whole area, so much so that some of the recent works to the school have piled foundations.
- There will still be space next to the multi-use games area for another football pitch, plus the school has additional playing fields.
- The surfacing will be 3G synthetic turf. Netball provision will be met by portable goals.
- The multi-use games area will be available for use by the community at weekends.
- The multi-use games area will allow more PE sessions and extra-curricular clubs to be delivered outside and in all weathers.
- A local football team will use the facility on Thursdays (4-6pm) and at weekends, no changing facilities are required. The field has been available for use for the local community club for over eight years with no complaints.

### *Loss of playing field*

The main issue relates to the objection from Sport England in relation to the loss of the playing field.

The South Ribble Local Plan identifies the application site as land within the built-up area. Policy G7 of the Local Plan states that development proposals should seek to protect and enhance existing Green Infrastructure. Playing fields are included within the definition of Green Infrastructure in the Local Plan. Development which would involve the loss of Green Infrastructure will not be permitted unless alternative provision can be made; or the site is not required to meet a local need; and the development would not affect the amenity value of the site.

Paragraph 99 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that existing open space, sports and recreational grounds should not be built on unless an assessment has identified that the open space is surplus to requirements, the loss would be replaced, or the development is for alternative sports and recreation provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use.



Sport England have a statutory remit to protect playing fields. Sport England's policy is to oppose the granting of planning permission for any development which would lead to the loss of, or prejudice the use of, all/part of a playing field, unless it meets a number of exceptions. Sport England have indicated that they consider policy exception E5 to be the most pertinent to this proposal:

'E5 - The proposed development is for an indoor or outdoor sports facility, the provision of which would be of sufficient benefit to the development of sport as to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss of the playing field or playing fields'.

However, Sport England do not consider that the applicant has presented sufficient information to demonstrate that this exemption applies and therefore object to the application.

The proposed development would result in the loss of part of the grass playing field. Other areas of outdoor space, including grassed areas would remain available and unimpacted by the proposal. It is acknowledged that due to the expansion of the school, and the provision of additional facilities, such as the trim trail, that the amount of playing field available for use has reduced in size over the years.

It should be noted that a football pitch of the dimensions suggested as appropriate by Sport England and the Football Foundation for 7v7 play (55 x 37 m, 61 x 43m including the required safety 3m run-off areas) could not be accommodated on the existing playing field now, prior to the construction of the proposed multi use games area. The applicant has moved the proposed multi use games area as close to the existing hard surfaced playground as is practicable, in order to minimise encroachment into the grass playing field and provided a plan to demonstrate that the proposed multi use games area and a 35m running track (that is presently marked out on the field) could still both be accommodated on the field.

In respect of the drainage issues the applicant has provided a photograph to indicate the condition of the field. No further technical information has been made available; however, it is noted that in the application for the extension to the buildings in 2007 (ref. 07/2007/0336) concerns were raised regarding surface water drainage issues by neighbouring residents. Based on the evidence available it appears likely that there are problems arising with waterlogging of the playing field currently, resulting in periods when it is unavailable for use.

It is considered that, on balance, the particular circumstances of this application, and in particular the increased opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation that this proposal would provide for the pupils of the school, that the proposal complies with the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Policy G7 of the Local Plan. It would be possible to still accommodate the majority of activities that take place on the grass playing pitch presently. Furthermore, the proposal would accord with wider aims of inclusivity, health and wellbeing, and increasing opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation for all, which outweigh the loss of a



part of the existing grass playing field.

As Sport England have maintained their objection to the proposals the application must be referred to the Secretary of State, should the Committee resolve to approve the application.

### *Impact on Neighbour Amenity*

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that developments should provide a high standard of amenity for existing and future users. Policy G17 of the South Ribble Local Plan states that new development will be permitted provided that the proposal does not have a detrimental impact on the neighbouring buildings by virtue of its design, height, scale, orientation, plot density, massing, proximity or use. Development should not cause harm to neighbouring property by leading to undue overlooking, overshadowing or having an overbearing impact.

The proposed multi-use games area would be located approximately 19m from the nearest residential property to the east on Southlands Avenue. No external lighting is proposed. In respect of community use of the proposed facility it is noted that the school have indicated that there is an existing community football group that uses the existing playing field and that is expected that this will continue. The aspirations of Sport England to expand community use of such facilities is noted, however this must also be balanced against the concerns that the Environmental Health Officer has raised regarding the potential for additional noise and disturbance for local residents to arise as a result of such activities. The school has indicated that they are happy to agree to the proposed conditions of the Environmental Health Officer, although it is noted that the existing community uses extend slightly beyond the times suggested by the Environmental Health Officer. It is recommended that the hours of use are secured by condition restricting use to between 08:00-19:00 Monday to Friday and 08:00–13:00 on Saturdays, with no use on Sundays. These are slightly longer hours than recommended by the Environmental Health Officer to allow for existing users to make use of the new facility, but to still prevent use at times neighbouring residents may reasonably expect to have peaceful enjoyment of their homes. The times are also consistent with those imposed on other schools within Lancashire.

It is considered that the proposed development would be unlikely to give rise to any significant increase in vehicle movements to and from the application site that would cause any undue increase in the level of noise and disturbance experienced by neighbouring residents, beyond that which already arises from the school.

The proposal would be likely to result in a more intensive use of this part of the playing field by pupils of the school than is presently the case. However, it is important to note that the playing field can already be used by the school at any time. No objections to the proposals have been received from neighbouring residents.



The size, scale and appearance of the proposed multi-use games area is considered to be in keeping with the existing use of the site as a school. There would be some limited screening of views from the adjacent residential properties afforded by existing boundary treatments and planting. The proposal would be clearly visible from a number of adjacent properties but would be viewed against the existing backdrop of school buildings and would not appear so visually incongruous or prominent as to warrant refusal of the proposals. There would be very limited views of the proposed facility from Linden Drive scene, and it would not appear as an incongruous feature.

The proposed development is therefore acceptable in terms of visual and residential amenity in accordance with the Framework and Policy G17 of the Local Plan.

### *Drainage*

The application site is not within an area at risk from flooding. United Utilities (UU) have not raised any objections to the proposals and have recommended that conditions are imposed regarding the submission and implementation of a surface water drainage system. The applicant has proposed that the site be drained via the use of 100mm diameter perforated land drainage pipe, laid within a trench that will be lined with geotextile membrane. The drainage pipes will discharge the collected water into the lower ground. The access path would also be surfaced in artificial grass. A condition is recommended regarding the drainage from the multi-use games area (MUGA) area itself.

### **Conclusions**

Subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions the proposal would not give rise to any undue loss of amenity for neighbouring residents and would enhance the quality and availability of open space at the school. The proposal would also have benefits for sport and recreation at this school which would outweigh any loss of grass playing field. The proposal is accordingly recommended for approval. However, as Sport England have maintained their objections to the proposals the application must be referred to the Secretary of State under the Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2021 so that the Secretary of State may consider using the power to call in the application.

In view of the size, scale and nature of the proposals it is considered that no Convention Rights set out in the Human Rights Act 1998 would be affected.

### **Recommendation**

That planning permission be **granted** subject to the following conditions:



## **Time Limits**

1. The development shall commence not later than three years from the date of this permission.

*Reason: Imposed pursuant to Section 91 (1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.*

## **Working Programme**

2. The development shall be carried out, (except where modified by the conditions to this permission), in accordance with the following documents:
  - a) The Planning Application and supporting statement received by the County Planning Authority on 5 May 2022.
  - b) Submitted Plans and documents:  
Plan ref. 12650/RBW Rev B Proposed Plans  
Location Plan received 10/07/2023

*Reason: To minimise the impact of the development on the amenities of the area and to conform with Policy G17 of the South Ribble Local Plan.*

3. No floodlighting shall be erected to illuminate the multi-use games area (MUGA).

*Reason: To minimise the impact on local amenity and to comply with Policy G17 of the South Ribble Local Plan.*

4. The multi-use games area (MUGA) area shall only be used between the hours of 08.00-19.00 hours Mondays to Fridays and 08:00-13:00 Saturdays.

*Reason: In the interests of local amenity and to conform with Policy G17 of the South Ribble Local Plan.*

## **Safeguarding of Watercourses and Drainage**

5. The drainage of the proposed development shall be carried out in accordance with the details as set out in the design and access statement (received 27/04/2022). The drainage measures shall be retained thereafter for the lifetime of the development.

*Reason: To promote sustainable development, secure proper drainage and to manage the risk of flooding and pollution.*





**Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985**  
**List of Background Papers**

Paper	Date	Contact/Directorate/Ext
LCC/2022/0022	July 2023	Helen Ashworth Planning and Environment 01772 530084

Reason for Inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A

