

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

HPK/2023/0329
Valid 07/09/2023

SPORTS GROUND
CEMETERY ROAD
GLOSSOP

INSTALLATION OF EXTERNAL
STORAGE CONTAINER AND
ASSOCIATED TIMBER FENCE
SCREENING

(FULL - MINOR)

MAIN ISSUES

- Principle of Development
- Impact on Green Belt
- Design Character and Appearance

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The application relates to a small parcel of land that sits within a wider sports and recreational complex that was approved under HPK/2019/0273 and currently under construction.

The complex includes a number of football pitches, car park and main Clubhouse building, that is situated relatively centrally within the site, adjacent to Cemetery Road.

The site sits immediately adjacent to the Clubhouse building near to the south and western elevations, and with regards to the Local Development Plan lies within the open countryside and the North Derbyshire Green Belt.

PROPOSAL

The application seeks full planning permission for an external storage container and associated timber fence which would screen the container. The container is said to be required to secure maintenance and other equipment associated with the 2no. football pitches on site and would be situated on a steel base, having a simple rectangular form spanning a width of 2.4m and length of 6.0m, reaching a modest height of 2.59m.

The plans show the container to be surrounded by timber stained posts reaching a height of 2.50m.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Act 2004 requires proposals to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan taking into consideration any material considerations relevant to the determination of the application.

The Local Development Plan for this site comprises the High Peak Local Plan (2016). Adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance documents and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) are also material considerations in determining applications.

High Peak Local Plan 2016

- S1 Sustainable Development Principles
- S1a Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- EQ3 Rural Development
- EQ4 Green Belt Development
- EQ6 Design and Place Making

National Planning Policy Framework 2023

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------|
| Achieving Sustainable Development | Chapter 2 |
| Achieving Well Designed Places | Chapter 12 |
| Protecting Green Belt Land | Chapter 13 |

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| HPK/2019/0273 | Redevelopment of existing sports facilities including new changing facilities/clubhouse and associated car parking, full-size artificial pitch, 2no. grass pitches and relocation of vehicular access (Approved 5 th November 2019) |
| HPK/2020/0316 | Variation of condition 2 of application HPK/2019/0273 (Approved 10 th November 2020) |
| HPK/2020/0531 | Variation of condition 2 following grant of planning permission in relation to HPK/2020/0316 (Approved 25 th March 2021) |
| HPK/2023/0045 | Variation of Condition 14 in relation to HPK/2020/0531 to be amended in order to allow operations to take place on site away from the approved new access point (Approved 5 th May 2023) |
| HPK/2023/0347 | 2no. permanent, non-illuminated entrance signs to be located either side of the vehicular access road. 2000x800 signage boards mounted on 2no. 76mm grey highways grade steel posts. Signage boards fitted to steel posts with standard highways grade stainless steel signpost brackets (Pending) |

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 10th October 2023
Neighbour consultation period ends: 5th October 2023
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

2no. neutral comments have been received in connection with this application which both suggest that screening be planted along edge of football pitch facing Cherry Grove in the interests of visual amenity and environmental benefit.

Town / Parish Comments

N/A

Environmental Health

No comment to make

Derbyshire County Council Highways

No comments to make

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

The application seeks full planning permission for a storage container to be used for equipment associated with the 2no. football pitches that form part of the wider sports and recreational facility that is currently under construction.

The site lies within the open countryside and the North Derbyshire Green Belt and therefore any proposal must demonstrate compliance with LP Policies EQ3 and EQ4, and relevant restrictive national policies relating to the Green Belt contained within Chapter 13 of the NPPF.

LP Policy EQ3 refers to any development proposal within the open countryside and seeks to ensure that new development is strictly controlled in order to protect the landscape's intrinsic character and distinctiveness.

LP Policy EQ4 refers to Green Belt development and requires such proposals to be assessed and determined in line with relevant national planning policies.

The principle of development can thus only be supported where the application is judged to comply with the above local and national policies.

Impact on Green Belt

LP Policy EQ4 relates to Green Belt development and requires all development proposals in the Green Belt to be assessed in line with national policy.

Chapter 9 of the NPPF contains the relevant restrictive national policies relating to the protection of the Green Belt.

Paragraph 138 sets out the five purposes of the Green Belt:

- a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- d) to prevent the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land

Paragraph 147 of the NPPF states that Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

Paragraph 148 of the NPPF goes on to state that local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

Paragraphs 149 of the NPPF contains a list of exceptions whereby new buildings are not inappropriate in the Green Belt. One such exception is:

- b) 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*
- g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development...*

The proposed development amounts to necessary infrastructure to facilitate the approved sports and recreation development, and given that the development has lawfully commenced, the site amounts to previously developed land.

Case law has confirmed that openness has two main aspects: (i) spatially; and (ii) visual. Spatially, the proposed building would be read in context with the much larger Clubhouse building immediately adjacent and within the centre of a large sports complex development. Visually, the proposed building is of an extremely modest scale and height, and whilst visible from the public footpath that runs through the site, would not dominate existing structures within the complex, and would be read in conjunction with other development.

Turning to the purposes of the Green Belt, the site forms part of a much wider sports and recreation complex, and as such the development would not result in any encroachment into countryside or indeed conflict with any other purpose set out under Paragraph 138 of the NPPF.

For the above reasons, it is considered that the proposed building accords with the two relevant exceptions under Paragraph 149 of the NPPF and would not harm the

openness of the Green Belt or indeed the purposes of including land within it, thereby according with LP Policy EQ4 and relevant paragraphs under Chapter 13 of the NPPF.

Design, Character and Appearance

LP Policy S1 sets out a number of sustainability principles which all new development proposals should incorporate in order to make a positive contribution towards the sustainability of communities and to protect, and where possible enhance the environment.

LP Policy EQ3 refers to rural development proposals which lie outside of the defined built-up area boundaries and seeks to ensure that new development is strictly controlled in order to protect the landscape's intrinsic character and distinctiveness.

LP Policy EQ6 states that all development should be well designed to respect and contribute positively to the character, identity and context of High Peak's townscapes, having regard to matters of scale, height, density, layout, appearance and materials.

The site comprises a very modest area of land within a wider sports complex within close proximity to the main Clubhouse building and associated car park. The proposed storage container is modest in both scale and height and would be screened by a timber fence.

From the nearest public vantage point – the diverted public footpath that runs around the most southerly football pitch and parallel with the eastern boundary, the proposed container and screen would be read within the context of the car park and Clubhouse building and would have no meaningful impact on either the immediate or wider rural landscape character.

Given the modest scale and height of the proposed container, the sympathetic timber screening, and the context in which it would be situated, it is considered that the introduction of this structure is appropriate for its context, and would not be detrimental to the immediate or wider rural landscape character, in accordance with LP Policies S1, EQ3 and EQ6, and relevant paragraphs under Chapter 12 of the NPPF.

Resident comments are noted, however, it is considered that the proposed fence will provide sufficient screening for the container and provision of screen planting to the wider site would not be related to the development in hand and would not therefore pass the tests for a further condition.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

LP Policy S1a reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained within the National Planning Policy Framework. It states that planning applications that accord with relevant policies in the Local Plan will be approved without delay.

Paragraph 11 of the NPPF sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision taking, this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or, where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission, unless:

- the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
- any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

The application seeks full planning permission for a storage container and associated timber screening, to provide storage for equipment including maintenance equipment associated with 2no. football pitches that form part of the wider Cemetery Road sports complex that is currently under construction.

An assessment has found that the proposed development complies with exceptions set out under Paragraph 149(b) and (g) of the NPPF, does not amount to inappropriate development in the Green Belt and is thus acceptable in principle. Moreover, due to its modest scale and height, and its siting in a central location within a wider complex, which would be read in connection with the immediately adjacent main Clubhouse building and associated Car Park, the proposed container would not give rise to any adverse impacts to either the immediate or wider landscape rural character.

In conclusion, the application is found to comply with all relevant Local Development Plan policies, and other material considerations including the NPPF, and constitutes a sustainable form of development. In line with LP Policy S1a and paragraph 11 of the NPPF, the application is recommended for approval subject to appropriate conditions.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : Approve with Conditions

Case Officer: James Stannard

Recommendation Date: 30th October 2023

X 

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of High Peak Borough Council

