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Design and Access Statement

Proposed New Padel courts at Batley

Project

To re-use an existing derelict Bowling Green and convert it to a pair of Padel Courts.

Site Description and Background

Acting on behalf of Padel & Co Club Ltd, we are submitting this application for the erection of two Padel tennis courts, with associated works on a derelict bowling green to the South of Batley ARLFC rugby ground.

This site has been derelict and unused for several years, this proposal would bring it back into use and enhance the facilities available on this site.

Please see photograph below which illustrates the location of the application site in red.



Currently, within the Surrounding site area there are:

- 2no. All Football Courts
- A Rugby Football Stadium
- A Cricket Pitch
- A Club House; and Multifunctional Bar

In relation to the wider site context, the site is situated to the South of Batley Town Centre. The area surrounding the site comprises a mix of different types of residential dwellings all at a considerable distance from the proposal.

The purpose of this Planning Statement is to address relevant considerations relating to the erection of the padel tennis structures on site.

Planning History

There are no recent applications of relevance to the site on Kirklees Council's online planning records.

Proposed Development

Padel tennis is a racquet sport that is essentially a mix between squash and tennis with the court area being around one third the size of a standard tennis court. The court is surrounded by walls of glass and metallic mesh. During the game the ball can be played off the glass walls like squash. Padel tennis is more accessible to those whose level of fitness, agility or skill makes conventional tennis or squash overly challenging and difficult to play. Given its attraction to a wider audience, it is also a social sport for those that play.

Padel tennis therefore offers significant general health and well-being benefits. This should be seen as a significant benefit of the proposal adding to facilities in Batley to encourage a healthy and active lifestyle and all the benefits that brings. Padel tennis is a fast-growing sport across Europe and in the UK.

The plans provided with this application have been listed below for ease:

1. Location Plan A/47-PL-00
2. Existing Plan A/47-PL-01
3. Proposed Plan A/47-PL-02
4. Padel Court Plan A/47-PL-03
5. Site Elevations. A4/7-PL-04
6. Lighting Details – UK, 8. LED SAMSUNG Spec Sheet and Fittings Sheet

The proposal relates to the erection of two padel courts on the southeast corner of the existing derelict bowling green. The site is fully fenced and surrounded by mature hedging it has existing toilet and changing facilities that are in poor condition but will be refurbished for use with this proposed facility.

The two padel courts will measure 20m x 10m x 4m, the playing surface will be a blue fibre grass construction. The courts are entirely enclosed, at the end walls plus the returns will be a 4m wall. The side walls will be 3m high, depending on the visual access the walls will vary from solid reinforced glass and rigid wire mesh panels, see proposed elevations.

Each court will have its own lighting, 8no light fittings on 4no lighting posts each 6m high, with LED angled fittings to direct light down into the court. The lighting and level of illumination is set out in the DIALux lighting design documents.

The site will have seating areas for visitors to watch the games in session, as it is often played as tournament games, all new paving will match the existing surface.

Planning Policy

National Planning Policy

At national level the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in December 2023, replacing the previous version. The NPPF sets out the governments guidance for policy making and decision making for England and how these are expected to be applied. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Within the NPPF is a set of core land-use planning principles that should underpin decision making and which planning should achieve. In accordance with paragraph 11 of the NPPF, for decision-taking, this means.

- Approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and
- 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.

Paragraph 90 states that planning policies and decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation.

Paragraph 96 indicates that planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which, amongst other things, promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other.

Paragraph 131 of the NPPF states that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process.

Planning Assessment

Principle of the proposed development

The application site was formerly used as a bowling green and consequently has been used for sporting activities in the past. The 'principle' of the use of the site for sporting activity is therefore established.

The proposal aims to convert the bowling green into two padel tennis courts, leaving the space available for a possible two additional courts in the future. As highlighted earlier, Padel Tennis is experiencing a rapid growth in popularity given the wide appeal it has in terms of ages and the level of fitness required to play sport and therefore wider reaching health benefits it can provide to participants.

Considering the existing use of the application site and wider sports club site, along with supporting facilities including changing rooms/showers and nearby clubhouse facilities, it is considered the 'principle' of the proposed use is acceptable in this location.

In relation to the 'location' of the proposed development, the NPPF highlights the preferred location of 'main town centre uses' as being within existing centres. Main town centre uses includes leisure, entertainment and more intensive sport and recreation uses such as cinemas, restaurants, drive-throughs, health & fitness centres, bars and pubs, nightclubs, indoor bowling centres and bingo halls. Such uses differ from typical outdoor sport and recreation uses such as tennis, hockey and outdoor padel tennis which require outdoor court facilities as is the case with the application proposals.

Notwithstanding the above, the application site is located within the defined Batley Town centre boundary and therefore falls within the defined main 'centre' within the district.

Policy LP47 states that leisure facilities should be directed to locations within centres, taking advantage of existing services and high levels of accessibility.

Policy LP50 (Sports and Physical Activity) seeks to secure good quality, well maintained leisure, recreation and open space facilities to meet the needs of local communities. Key measures to achieve this include encouraging the co-location of leisure facilities so different types of open space, sport and recreation can be located next to each other and near other community facilities for education and health.

The proposed padel tennis will form part of the wider leisure offer at the Batley Complex, improving choice of sporting activities at the club. The site is accessible by choice of transport mode with good bus services operating along Mount Pleasant (250m away 10 Mins Walking) from the sports club. Surrounding residential areas are also within easy walking distance.

Considering the above, we consider the proposals to be in an appropriate location for the form of leisure use provided and would help deliver more sustainable and healthy local communities in Batley in accordance with relevant development plan policies.

The proposal will improve facilities at the club and enhance the diversity of sport available at the club which will in turn be of benefit to the community. Therefore, the development is supported by Policy LP50, with the development improving existing facilities within a Sports Club.

It should also be clarified that the bowling green within the application site is currently derelict and has been for some years.

We therefore conclude the 'principle' of development is acceptable on site.

Design and amenity impact of the development

The proposed development is located within the existing Batley Complex, with several different types of sports pitches established around the wider site, for example, the football pitches to the northwest of the site. The existing pitches have a range of associated infrastructure, such as enclosures, stands changing rooms and lighting columns. Therefore, the courts will be of a design appropriate to the wider sports facilities.

The materials used within the construction of the two padel tennis court enclosures are to be a combination of mesh infill aluminium fencing and 10-12mm tempered glass panels. This is an appropriate use for an outdoor sports pitch, particularly in this location where the use of materials for the existing parking arrangement to the north is an area of hardstanding.

The proposed materials would be appropriate for the Sports Club location with the plans showing a design and scale that is proportionate to the host development and fits comfortably within the character of the wider area.

The proposed structures of the padel tennis courts are located towards the southeastern boundary of the Complex which neighbours the Purlwell Hall Road residential properties along (9 to 17) Back Purlwell Hall Road. The courts would be located within an existing sports club, and they would be used within reasonable operating hours.

The proposed development is not considered intrusive on residential amenity of the residential properties with the nearest proposed court 290m away from the nearest sensitive receptors at (9 to 17) Back Purlwell Hall Road, having no associated structures proposed.

The height of the glazed panels and metal mesh panels around the padel tennis courts will only result in an overall height of 4 metres, most with the glazed panels being around 3 metres in parts. Given the limited height of the enclosures and proximity to residential properties off site, there will be no adverse impact on residential amenity of nearby properties with its views to and from the properties.

Neither would material harm arise in the context of lighting impacts. The proposed padel tennis courts would be set away from the residential boundary and whilst having some directional floodlights on the edge of the courts, they would be just over 290 metres away from the façade of the existing residential properties bordering the site.

It should be noted there are existing large flood lights on the rugby football pitch on the adjacent site.

The proposed development is considered to be appropriate in design, scale, and character for this location within a wider sports facility.

Against this background we consider the proposed conversion of the practice bowling green to provide two padel tennis courts, would not have a significant detrimental impact on amenity of nearby residential properties and in that context would not give rise to material conflict with adopted Policy LP50.

In addition, we consider the proposed design of the courts and associated enclosure would be in keeping with the general character of the area as a sports club. We conclude the proposal would satisfy the design criteria set out within the NPPF (2023) and the development plan policies including Policy LP50 of the adopted Local Plan.

Transport Considerations

The site is in a sustainable location being near existing public transport routes with bus services operating along Mount Pleasant (250m away 10 Mins Walking) connecting to the wider Town Centre and other areas of Batley. The location of the sports club near surrounding residential areas also would enable those using the facilities to walk or cycle to the site.

Existing car parking to the North of the bowling green and to the side of the clubhouse serves the variety of sporting activities that take place on the wider site throughout the week and the existing level of car parking provision is considered appropriate to continue to serve the club with the conversion of the derelict bowling green to padel tennis. In light of this, we conclude no material conflict with Policy LP19.

Policy LP20 relates to sustainable transport within new developments. Criterion of the policy states that development should be located where it can be served by alternative modes of transport. As stated above, the site is located near multiple bus stops and is easily accessible via different methods sustainable of transport due to the site being located within the Wakefield City Centre.

Therefore, it is considered the development complies with Policy SP19 and LP20 of the Kirklees Local Plan, with the site residing within an accessible location.

Conclusions

This Planning Statement is submitted in support of a planning application for the erection of two padel tennis courts on the existing derelict bowling green at Batley Sports Complex, Heritage Road, Batley, WF17 7NZ.

Our assessment above concludes the development is appropriate within the application site and it would not materially conflict with relevant policies in the adopted development plan for the area. The proposal will deliver several benefits including general health benefits in providing a facility that would be more accessible to a broader range of people encouraging others a healthier lifestyle.

We conclude that a decision in accordance with the development plan would lead to the grant of planning permission and we conclude there are no material considerations that would indicate a decision otherwise.

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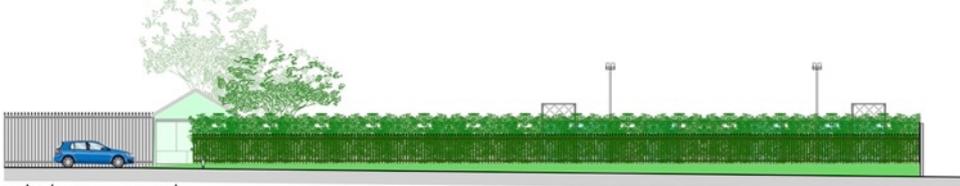
Front Elevation - Existing



Side Elevation - Existing



Front Elevation - Proposed



Side Elevation - Proposed

Title:- Padel Courts Elevations & Existing & Proposed Scale:- 1:200@A3 Dwg N:- A/47-PL-04

Flood map for planning

Your reference
Batley

Location (easting/northing)
424337/423409

Created
18 Feb 2025 11:21

Your selected location is in flood zone 1, an area with a low probability of flooding.

You will need to do a flood risk assessment if your site is **any of the following:**

- bigger than 1 hectare (ha)
- In an area with critical drainage problems as notified by the Environment Agency
- identified as being at increased flood risk in future by the local authority's strategic flood risk assessment
- at risk from other sources of flooding (such as surface water or reservoirs) and its development would increase the vulnerability of its use (such as constructing an office on an undeveloped site or converting a shop to a dwelling)

Notes

The flood map for planning shows river and sea flooding data only. It doesn't include other sources of flooding. It is for use in development planning and flood risk assessments.

This information relates to the selected location and is not specific to any property within it. The map is updated regularly and is correct at the time of printing.

Flood risk data is covered by the Open Government Licence **which** sets out the terms and conditions for using government data. <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/>

Use of the address and mapping data is subject to Ordnance Survey public viewing terms under Crown copyright and database rights 2024 OS AC0000807064. <https://flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk/os-terms>



Flood map for planning

Your reference

Batley

Location (easting/northing)

424337/423409

Scale

1:2500

Created

18 Feb 2025 11:21

-  Selected area
-  Flood zone 3
-  Flood zone 2
-  Flood zone 1
-  Flood defence
-  Main river
-  Water storage area

