

Our Ref : Dewsbury Stadium
Your Ref : 2026/20832

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8 October 2026

Dear Kirsty

APPLICATION UNDER THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 FOR PROPOSED ALTERATIONS AT DEWSBURY STADIUM, OWL LANE, DEWSBURY, WF12 7RH
PLANNING PORTAL REFERENCE: PP-15267173

Please find enclosed our Application for Full Planning Permission (the 'Application') made under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 for proposed alterations to the Dewsbury Stadium located on Owl Lane, Dewsbury, WF12 7RH.

This Application is made subsequent to pre-application advice reference 2026/20832 which is gratefully received from the Council confirming that the following works constitutes development for which planning permission is required:

- Increase in Pitch Size
- Width Walkway on Western Side with Associated Retaining Walls and Fence Alterations
- Relocation of 4 Lighting Columns/ Lighting Lux to Increase
- Gantry Area on South Stand Roof with Walkway and Access Stairway/ Media Area
- Relocation and Replacement of Score Board with TV
- New disabled viewing shelter as required by Building Regulations

In addition to this covering letter which assesses the proposals, the completed Application Form and Notices, this Application comprises the following technical information and plans:

M3310-01 Rev F - Proposed Site Plan
M3310-2-100 Rev A - South Stand Existing General Arrangement Plans
M3310-2-101 - South Stand Existing Roof Plan
M3310-2-201 Rev B - South Stand Sky Gantry and Staircase
M3310-2-203 Rev D - South Stand Maximum Capacity Analysis
M3310-2-204 Rev B - South Stand Proposed Section
M3310-03 - Existing Site Location Plan

M3310-04 - Existing Site Plan
M3310-05 Rev A - Proposed Site Location Plan
M3310-08 Rev A - Flood Lighting Setting Out Plan
M3310-09 Rev A - South Stand Gantry Position
M3310-10 Rev A - Site Section
M3310-11 Rev A - Proposed Disabled Viewing Shelter
16438-BKP-XX-XX-DR-S-0500 - Drainage Details
Proposed Stadium Floodlighting Upgrade Brochure

Site Location and Description

Dewsbury Stadium is a rugby league stadium and is the longstanding home ground of the Dewsbury Rams rugby league club. From the 2027 season onwards, it is proposed that the Huddersfield Giants will also use the stadium. Car parking is contained within the curtilage of the wider stadium site, which also features two training grounds. The stadium is surrounded by a mixture of residential and commercial developments, with new housing being constructed to the east and existing housing located to the south. To the west, numerous commercial warehouses and employment space can be found. The boundary treatments across the site range from wooden fencing to thickets of mature trees which act as a privacy and visual buffer.

The red line site boundary depicted in the submission documents covering the proposed development which is subject to this Application measures 1130m².

Relevant Planning History

The planning history for the stadium is set out below:

90/04666 - Erection of rugby league stadium with grandstands, club rooms, spectator accommodation and car parking – Conditional Full Permission granted 14 July 1992

95/92277 - Erection of covered way to bar area – Conditional Full Permission granted 26 September 1995

Planning Policy Context

Section 38(6) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 identifies that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the statutory Development Plan unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations can include any Supplementary Planning Documents and site related technical issues.

In this case, the adopted Development Plan is provided by the Kirklees Local Plan adopted on 27 February 2019. Material considerations relevant to the determination of the Application include the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and relevant Supplementary Planning Documents.

Kirklees Local Plan

The stadium site is unallocated within the Kirklees Local Plan. It is within an area with a known presence of radon gas and identified by the Coal Authority as being at high risk of ground movement as a result of former mining activity. The site sits within 200m of a historic landfill.

The following policies are considered relevant in the determination of the Application:

- LP1 Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- LP2 Place shaping
- LP24 Design
- LP28 Drainage
- LP50 Sport and physical activity
- LP53 Contaminated and unstable land
- LP56 Facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation and cemeteries
- LP57 The extension, alteration or replacement of existing buildings

National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was first published on 27 March 2012 and has been updated several times since, most recently on 18 August 2026. It sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied.

The following chapters of the NPPF are considered applicable to the determination of this Application:

- Chapter 3 Decision Making Policies
- Chapter 4 Achieving Sustainable Development
- Chapter 5 Meeting the challenge of climate change
- Chapter 14 Achieving well designed places
- Chapter 15 Promoting sustainable transport
- Chapter 16 Promoting healthy communities
- Chapter 17 Pollution, public protection and security

The following specific policies from the NPPF are considered relevant:

Policy S3: Presumption in favour of sustainable development

Policy S4: Principle of development within settlements

Policy HC4: Proposals for new and improved community facilities, public service infrastructure and development providing public health benefits

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

Planning Applications Climate Change Guidance was adopted by Kirklees Council as an SPD in June 2021.

Planning Assessment

Principle of the development

The stadium site is unallocated within the Kirklees Local Plan and is within settlement as per the NPPF.

Policy LP1 of the Kirklees Local Plan states that when considering development proposals, the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in chapter 2 of the NPPF. NPPF Policy S3 states that decisions on development proposals should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Policy S4 of the NPPF should be applied when considering development proposals within settlements.

Policy LP2 of the Kirklees Local Plan sets out that all development proposals should seek to build on the strengths, opportunities and help address challenges identified in the Local Plan.

Policy LP24 of the Kirklees Local Plan states that “good design should be at the core of all proposals in the district”.

Policy HC4 of the NPPF states that:

“1. Substantial weight should be given to the benefits where:

a. New or improved public service infrastructure or community facilities would be provided; and
b. Development proposals would make a demonstrable contribution towards promoting good health, preventing ill-health, reducing health inequalities or supporting social interaction in the local community (such as, but not limited to, the provision of new recreation facilities, meeting places and opportunities to grow or purchase healthier food).

2. Local planning authorities, developers and public service providers should collaborate in a positive and proactive manner to identify and resolve key planning issues before applications for community facilities and public services infrastructure are submitted. Where appropriate local communities should be engaged in the design of proposals, including children and families where new or improved facilities for play are involved so that developments are inclusive and reflect user needs”.

Both the Kirklees Local Plan and the NPPF policies are highly supportive of the proposed development which represents improvements to an existing sports stadium that is located within settlement and in a sustainable, accessible location. It is considered that the principle of the development is acceptable subject to other material considerations set out below.

Visual Amenity

Kirklees Local Plan Policies LP1, LP2 and LP24 all seek to achieve good quality design that retains a sense of local identity, which is in keeping with the scale of development in the local area and is visually attractive. Chapter 14 of the NPPF sets out the objective to promote high quality, healthy, inclusive and sustainable places.

The Application site is surrounded by a mix of uses including existing housing, a business park and the residential development site ‘Lockwood Fields’ (currently under construction), and so the potential impact of each element of the proposed development upon visual amenity both individually and cumulatively is a material consideration.

a) Increase in Pitch Size

It is proposed to increase the pitch size by approximately 3m in width 3m and 4m in length. The current width measures 65.6 metres which will be increased to 68.6 metres (4.4% increase) and the current length measures 108.5 metres which will be increased to 112.5 metres (3.6% increase).

The proposed increase in the size of the pitch will not result in alterations to the position of existing spectator stands and associated structures, other than the lighting columns which will need to be repositioned as dealt with below.

Given the extent of the existing pitch already it is not considered that the increases proposed to the width and length which equate to less than 5% each would result in the pitch being of any greater visual prominence when viewed from outside the stadium.

b) Walkway on Western Side with Associated Retaining Walls and Fence Alterations

The Application includes scaled plans and elevations clearly showing the location, dimensions and external appearance, along with details of materials for the proposed additional structures on the western elevation of the stadium.

c) Relocation of the existing lighting Columns and replacement with higher lighting lux levels

The proposed lighting scheme is intended to upgrade the existing floodlighting to meet modern operational and broadcasting requirements. The existing lighting columns will be relocated and replaced with higher lux levels increasing from 300 lux to 1200 lux. Given the proximity of residential properties to the south and east of the site, a detailed lighting assessment prepared by A F Connells has been provided which provides full details of the proposed lighting including lighting lux levels and spill to demonstrate that the proposals will not be detrimental to visual amenity when in use.

d) Gantry Area on South Stand Roof with Walkway and Access Stairway/ Media Area

The proposed sky gantry on the southern elevation of the stadium measures 4.2 m deep and 15 m in length. Details of the proposed external materials, finishes and colour scheme are provided on the submitted plans as part of this Application.

Given its position on the southern elevation, facing towards the existing training pitch, together with the separation distance from the site boundary and the residential properties at Hawthorn Close and Amberwood Chase, it is considered that the proposed sky gantry is unlikely to result in an unacceptable visual impact.

e) Relocation and Replacement of Score Board with TV Screen

It is proposed to relocate the existing scoreboard and replace it with a digital TV/video screen with a brightness level of 0-7000 based on screen specifications. The screen will face into the pitch and the hours of operation will be matchdays from opening to 30 mins after the final whistle. As the screen will be located within the stadium and facing the pitch it will not be visible from outside the stadium except from the back of the screen but this will appear as the existing scoreboard does now albeit slightly larger.

f) New viewing shelter as required by Building Regulations

As required by Building Regulations a new shelter is required which will accommodate 8 no. disabled spaces and 8 no. fixed seats for companions. Each space has to measure 1400mm x 1400mm within a covered shelter. It is considered that the scale of the shelter will not have a

detrimental impact on visual amenity as it will be viewed within the context of the larger stadium setting.

Residential Amenity

Policy LP24 of the Kirklees Local Plan and policies within Chapter 17 of the NPPF seeks to ensure development has an acceptable impact upon the amenity of neighbouring occupiers. Of particular relevance is part (b) of Policy LP24 of the Kirklees Local Plan.

The use of the stadium is presently by Dewsbury Rams and it is proposed that from the 2027 season the Huddersfield Giants will also play at the stadium. The opening hours on matchdays would be broadly as per the Dewsbury Rams matchdays in that both Giants and Dewsbury games last 80 minute plus half time. Opening pre-game for the Giants for general admissions is likely to be 2 hours before kick off as opposed to the Rams 1 hour. There may also be double header games from time to time – usually Women's or Junior games prior to Giants Super League games. There is no guarantee that Dewsbury and Giants would be alternate weekends given the RFL issue fixtures but by and large that's a likely scenario.

As a result of changes to the amount and type of seating at the stadium, which the Council has confirmed does not require planning permission, and as a result of the pitch changes, which necessitates that four standing terrace areas are also to be removed, there will be an overall reduction in capacity at the stadium.

In general, there should not be any perceived change to the existing impacts on residential amenity on match days when the number of matchdays increase and the use of the stadium remains the same. The specific development proposed by this Application for which planning permission is sought is assessed below:

a) Relocation of 4 Lighting Columns and replacement with higher Lux levels

As outlined above, a Lighting Assessment has been submitted with this Application which considers the potential impacts of the relocation of the columns and any increase in lighting levels on the amenity of nearby residential occupiers. In terms of operating hours, these will be used on match days covering the hours when the stadium is in use which for general admissions is likely to be 2 hours before kick off and 30 minutes after the final whistle. The information provided includes lux levels and spill to demonstrate that the proposals will not cause disturbance to neighbouring properties when in use.

b) Relocation and Replacement of Score Board with TV Screen

The details of the TV Screen are set out above and the hours of use will be the same as the lighting.

Drainage

In accordance with Policy LP28 of the Kirklees Local Plan in relation to drainage, this Application is accompanied by a Drainage Plan prepared by Booth King which outlines the drainage strategy for the proposed development. It is intended that where the surface water manhole is within the run off area, it is proposed to cap it off and add a new manhole on the line of the existing surface water run. This should not be classed as a new connection as there is no change in discharge, it's more of a new access point.

Sustainability and Climate Change

Chapter 5 of the NPPF sets out policies relating to meeting the challenge of climate change. The objective of the policies in chapter 5 are details as being to support the transition to net zero by 2050 and to shape places in ways which are more resilient to the effects of climate change. It does this by setting out policies to shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the full range of current and potential impacts of climate change, by minimising vulnerability and improving resilience. The Council has declared a climate emergency and the Local Plan together with the adopted Climate Change SPD seeks for new development to contribute to the climate change agenda.

The most significant sources of GHG emissions in relation to the stadium will be:

Construction (qualitative) - Direct sources of GHG emissions associated with vehicle and plant movements and function.

Occupiers (Transport) - User behaviour during the operational phase, including heavy duty vehicles (HDV's) associated with general functionality.

Transport - User travel, commuting and other vehicular trips that start or end within the Site.

As the stadium use already exists the main mitigation measures will be during construction, when measures to reduce GHG emissions from material use and waste, where feasible, could include:

- The sustainable reuse of soil and aggregate materials won from excavation;
- The reuse, where possible of off cuts and waste materials generated from construction works to reduce deliveries to site;
- The use of materials with lower embodied carbon, such as those with a higher recycled content;
- Procuring locally sourced materials where reasonably practicable; and
- Careful consideration of material quantity requirements to avoid over-ordering and generation of waste materials, while also reducing transportation-related emissions.

The appointed contractor will develop and implement a plan to reduce energy consumption and GHG emissions throughout construction, including, for example:

- Monitoring of fuel use on site including energy such as gas, water and electricity;
- Training of plant operatives in fuel efficient driving techniques;
- Consideration of renewable/ and or low carbon energy sources.
- Design and Construct for a Low Carbon Future:
- Design Efficiently – prioritise efficient building design, logistics, use of materials.
- Promote sustainable transport measures for users e.g vehicle sharing where possible
- Specify Low Embodied Carbon – prioritise sustainable aggregates, reuse of materials, locally sourced materials.
- Only use fossil fuels where essential to project delivery.

LED lighting and a Central Management System (CMS) for the lighting is proposed. The CMS would be capable of dimming parts of the site independently from other parts as usage changes through the day and to allow for seasonal variations in the operation of external lighting. The planning submission is accompanied by a Lighting Brochure which sets out the key principles of the lighting proposals. The lighting strategy also aims to reduce energy consumption through the use of LED technology.

Ground Conditions

At the pre-application stage Council Officer's raised that as the site is situated over a historic landfill site, any planning permission would be subject to conditions regarding ground conditions. The Applicant confirms that suitably worded conditions would be acceptable.

Conclusions

Based on the information provided within this Application, it is considered that the proposed works, comprising the development described in the submission, is acceptable in principle in accordance with the Development Plan and the NPPF which gives substantial weight to development proposals which promote good health and social interaction within the community.

It has been demonstrated that there are no technical reasons or material considerations to indicate that planning permission should not be granted.

We therefore respectfully request that the Application is approved without delay given that the works need to be completed by late January in time for the start of the 2027 season.

Yours sincerely

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Simon Marshall
CEO of Marshall Holdings