Planning Registration Team
Wiltshire Council

Our reference: BOA1
21 October 2023

Dear Sir/ Madam

Full Planning Application: Bradford on Avon Cricket Club, Pound Lane, Bradford on Avon, BA15 1LF - Erection of two lane artificial cricket net facility and associated works

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Bradford on Avon Cricket Club are the leaseholders of the application site. The application is submitted in the joint names the BoA Cricket Club and site owner, BoA Town Council.

1.2 We submit a Full Planning Application for the erection of a 2-lane artificial cricket practice facility and associated works on part of the Recreational Ground, Bradford on Avon.

- Application form: BOA Cricket Club
- Application fee: £295.00
- Planning Cover Letter: BOA Cricket Club
- DAS: BoA Cricket Club
- Technical Drawing Pack (3 No. Drawings): Slatter Cricket & Play
- Site Plans: BOA Cricket Club
- Site Location Plan: BoA Cricket Club

2.0 Relevant Background Information

Background

2.1 Bradford on Avon Cricket Club have been based at Culver Close since 1962. The Club is popular and has two men's league teams, one ladies team, two 'friendlies' teams Wed/Sundays) and a thriving youth section with over 150 children (4-15yrs). The current provision struggles to meet demand of both teams and the general public. A new net facility will provide an additional practice facility.

Site Description

2.2 The application comprises of a 310 sqm site to the east of the Culver Close Playing Field in Bradford on Avon. The site is used and maintained by Bradford on Avon Cricket

Club and forms part of a wider recreational ground containing a Bowling Green and Pavilion, a cricket pitch, tennis courts and a seasonal junior sized football pitch. Further afield are two children's play areas, further football pitches and the Barton Farm Country Park and Tithe Barn, a popular recreational destination. The proposed 2-lane cricket practice facility will be located alongside the tennis courts in the 4th tennis court position.

2.3 The recreational ground is accessed by a footpath from Frome Road which meanders across the ground and joins another entrance off Pound Lane. A further footpath approaches the cricket ground from the west past the Bowling Green and links to a footpath which runs alongside the River Avon.

2.4 The ground is close to the centre of the town and benefits from regular bus services to Trowbridge, Bath and beyond, as well as a train station (400m walk) with frequent connections to Trowbridge, Westbury, Bath and Bristol. Nearby parking can be found along Pound Lane and in the Wiltshire Council's Pound Lane Car Park (15 bays) and Station Car Park (c160 bays).

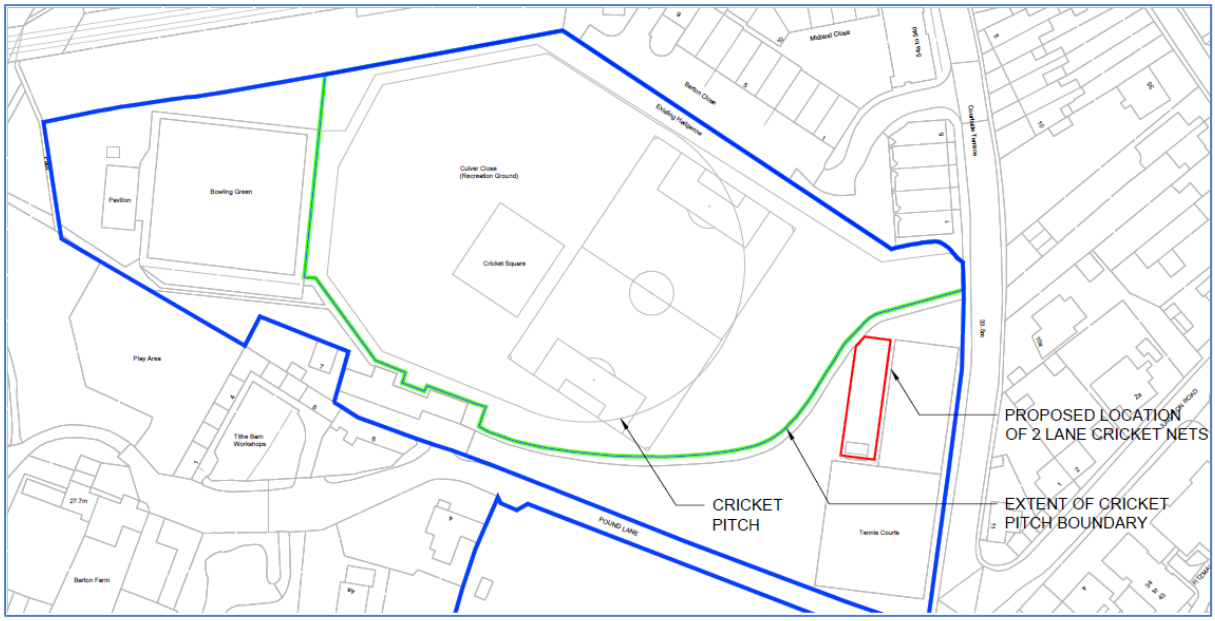

Fig.1: Extract of Site Location Plan showing the extent of the location of the site in relation to the existing recreational ground amenities.

Planning History

2.5 Relevant planning history recorded on the Council's public access system for the recreational ground is set out below:

Reference	Description	Decision
PL/2021/06228	Erection of 3 lane artificial cricket net facility and associated works	Withdrawn 10.08.2021
19/00772/TCA	Work to Trees in a Cons Area	Approved 22.02.2019
19/06249/TCA	Work to Trees in a Cons Area	Approved 06.08.2019
19/06033/TPO	Work to TPO Trees	Approved 07.08.2019
19/01238/TCA	Work to Trees in a Cons Area	Approved 20.03.2019
W/13/00779/TCA	Thin re-growth of Lime Tree by 30%	Approved 28.05.2013
W/11/00097/TCA	Work to Trees in a Cons Area	Approved 22.02.2011

3.0 Summary of Application Proposal

3.1 The application proposal seeks permission to erect a 2-lane artificial net facility and associated works. The nets will be owned, administered and maintained by the Bradford on Avon Cricket Club and will be available to members of the club and wider public use through a booking system.

3.2 The proposed location for the Nets has been identified following consultation with the Town Council and wider public as part of the Culver Close Pavilion consultation exercise in 2021. The 4th tennis court location groups the practice facility within the tennis court area and maintains reasonable separation from Barton Close properties. Both nets will have a netted roof to prevent balls from leaving the practice area. The old tennis hut will be removed and the litter bin, bicycle racks and two adjacent public benches will be re-sited by BoA Town Council. The site will require levelling down and a retaining feature of railway sleepers to be installed to prevent damage to the higher tennis courts. A walkway will be maintained between the tennis courts and new cricket nets to permit collection of tennis balls and access to the tennis courts central entrance. The chosen location will also ensure that the playing field is not encroached upon and does not required diversion of existing footpaths.

3.3 The nets will consist of two lanes, each with a straw-colour woven synthetic playing surface with light green boarders. Each lane will be divided by a net allowing two practice sessions to take place at any one time. A lockable gate will be installed in the netting to allow access.

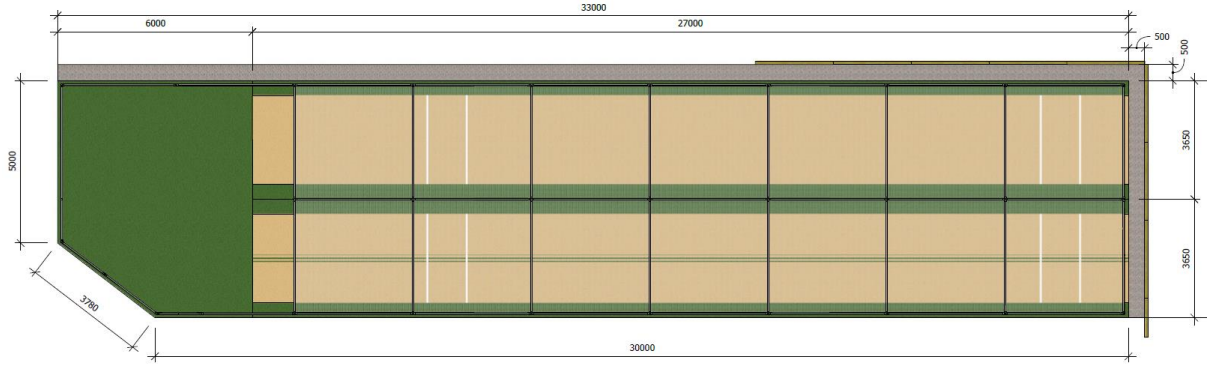

Fig. 2: Plan of proposed nets showing the two lanes and dimensions.



Fig. 3: 3D Image showing the nets with access gates.

4.0 Planning Policy

Statutory Development Plan

4.1 For the purposes of this application the development plan for the site comprises: the Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015); the Wiltshire Housing Site Allocation (2020) and the Bradford on Avon Neighbourhood Plan (2017).

The site lies just outside the defined settlement boundary of Bradford on Avon, within the Conservation Area and Green Belt, and just outside the Cotswold AONB. Several listed buildings are nearby, including the Monastic Grange at Barton Farm (List Entry 1014183). The site falls within Flood Zone 1.

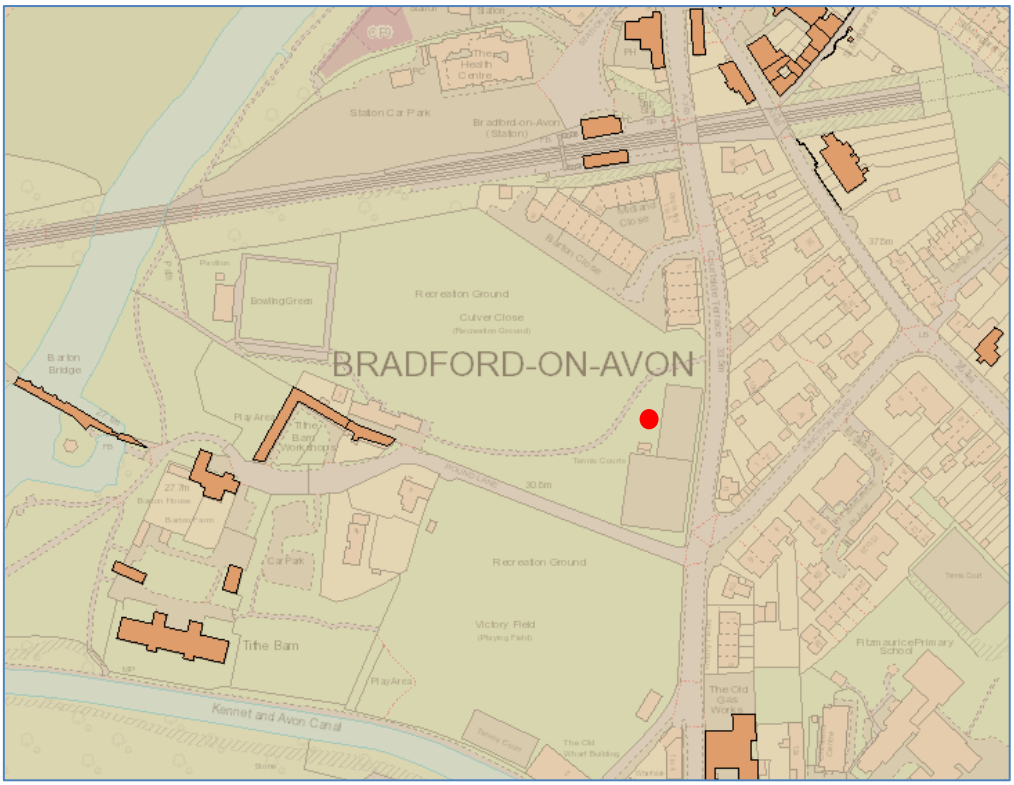

Fig. 4: Extract from Wiltshire Council Core Strategy Policy Map showing the location of the site in relation to the listed buildings (outlined with brown wash) and the Monastic Grange at Barton Farm (washed Brown)

Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015)

4.2 The Wiltshire Core Strategy was adopted in January 2015 and covers the period up until 2026. The following Core Strategy Policies are relevant to the proposals:

- Core Policy 1 – Settlement Strategy
- Core Policy 2 – Delivery Strategy
- Core Policy 3 – Infrastructure Requirements
- Core Policy 7 – Spatial Strategy: Bradford on Avon Community Area
- Core Policy 38 – Retail and Leisure
- Core Policy 48 – Supporting Rural Life
- Core Policy 49 – Protection of Rural Services and Community Facilities
- Core Policy 52 – Green Infrastructure

Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan (2020)

4.3 The settlement boundary of Bradford on Avon was not reviewed as part of the WHSAP because of the adoption of the Bradford on Avon Neighbourhood Plan. There are no relevant policies in the WHSAP relating to the application proposal.

Bradford on Avon Neighbourhood Plan (2017)

4.4 The application site lies within the Plan Area as shown in Map 1 of the BOANP. The following BoANP policies relate to the provision of community facilities:

> ***Policy C2*** *– Proposals for new or improved community facilities will be supported provided that:*
>
> - *The proposal would not harm the character or amenity of the local environment including the Green belt*
> - *The proposal is well located for the population it serves without the need to drive and would not have an unacceptable impact on the local road network*
> - *The proposal would not have significant harmful impacts on the amenities of surrounding residents*
>
> ***Policy E2*** *– Proposals for the development of recreational, cultural, arts and tourist facilities will be supported, provided that the scale, siting and design of such developments conserve the natural and historic environment and make a positive contribution to the locality in which they are sited, and on the overall infrastructure of the town.*

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

4.5 National planning policy is set out in the NPPF (September 2023) and web-based guidance in the NPPG (from 2014). A summary of the applicable NPPF policies is set out below:

- Section 2: Achieving sustainable development
- Section 4: Decision taking
- Section 8: Promoting healthy and safe communities
- Section 13: Protecting Green Belt Land

The following paragraphs are applicable:

> ***92****. Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which:*
>
> …
>
> *(c)* ***enable and support healthy lifestyles,*** *especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure,* ***sports facilities****, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.*
>
> *93****. To provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs****, planning policies and decisions should:*
>
> *(a) plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places,* ***sports venues****, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places*

of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments;
(b) take into account and support the delivery of local strategies ***to improve health, social and cultural well-being*** *for all sections of the community;*
(c) guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs;
(d) ensure that established shops, ***facilities and services are able to develop and modernise****, and are retained for the benefit of the community; and*
(e) ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.

149. *A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. Exceptions to this are:*

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*;

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

4.6 National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) in the form of web-based information was published on 6th March 2014. NPPG contains further information and guidance on a number of technical matters and best practice relevant to climate change, design, environmental impact assessment, natural environment, noise, open space, planning obligations, rural housing, transport assessments and viability.

Other relevant guidance

4.7 The following technical guidance is applicable to the proposals:

- ECB: Technical Guidance for Pavilions and Club Houses (Version 2009)
- Sport England: DEI: Design Examples Cricket Site Layout (2013)
- Sport England: Policy on planning applications for development on playing fields

4.8 Sport England's Policy E2 states:

E2 *– The proposed development is ancillary to the principal use of the site as a playing field or playing fields, and does not affect the quantity or quality of pitches or adversely affect their use.*

E2.1 *– Reason: Sport England would not normally object to the provision of new/improved changing accommodation and related facilities of an appropriate scale, providing that any detrimental effect on the principle use is not significant.*

5.0 Planning Assessment

5.1 Section 38 (6) of the Town and Country Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires local planning authorities to determine planning applications in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

5.2 The application site lies within an established recreational ground, within the plan area of the BOANP. It is located in the Bradford on Avon Conservation Area and the Green Belt, but lies outside of the Cotswold AONB.

Principle of development

5.3 There is a clear need for this facility, which will help meet a growing demand for leisure (as demonstrated in the DAS). The proposal will accord with applicable WCS polies, policies C2 and E2 of the Bradford on Avon Local Plan, and NPPF paragraphs 91 & 92.

5.4 The proposal also accords with applicable ECB and Sport England guidance.

Heritage impact

5.5 There are several listed properties and structures within a 300m radius, including the Monastic Grange at Barton Farm. However, the views of both listed buildings and the wider landscape setting are interrupted by existing buildings and vegetation. The proposed cricket nets will be viewed within the context of the Recreation Ground alongside the existing tennis courts and other existing cricket facilities and would not be visually incongruous in this context. On this basis the proposals will preserve the character of the BoA conservation area.

Green Belt impact

5.6 The proposal constitutes 'appropriate development' for the purposes of NPPF:149 and will not materially impact upon the openness of this part of the Green Belt.

Accessibility

5.5 The proposed crickets nets will be based at the cricket ground, a relatively central location within the town and benefitting from regular bus and train options.

Siting and amenity considerations

5.6 The location of the facility within the recreation ground has been positioned alongside the existing tennis courts fitting into the 4th tennis court position. This also meets with the manufacturer's recommendations, and ECB and Sport England guidance.

5.7 The nearest residential properties are located to the north and east of the site at Barton Close and on Frome Road. The nearest residential gardens are separated by an existing mature hedgerow and internal access road. Having regard to this spatial arrangement, and other activity taking place on the wider Recreation Ground, and presence of background noise from the main road, the noise impact associated with the use of the facility will not adversely affect the amenity of existing residents. Furthermore, the proposed facility will be appropriately managed and supervised by the Club.

6.0 Conclusion

6.1 On this basis the proposal is clearly needed to sustain the future of the club, and will increase participation in cricket, and accords with applicable development plan policies, the Council is respectfully requested to grant planning permission.

Yours faithfully

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Youth Coordinator

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