

**Application Number** Application submitted to and being processed by Lancashire County Council Reference LCC/2022/0048

**Address** Land at Woodcock Estate, Stanifield Lane, Farington

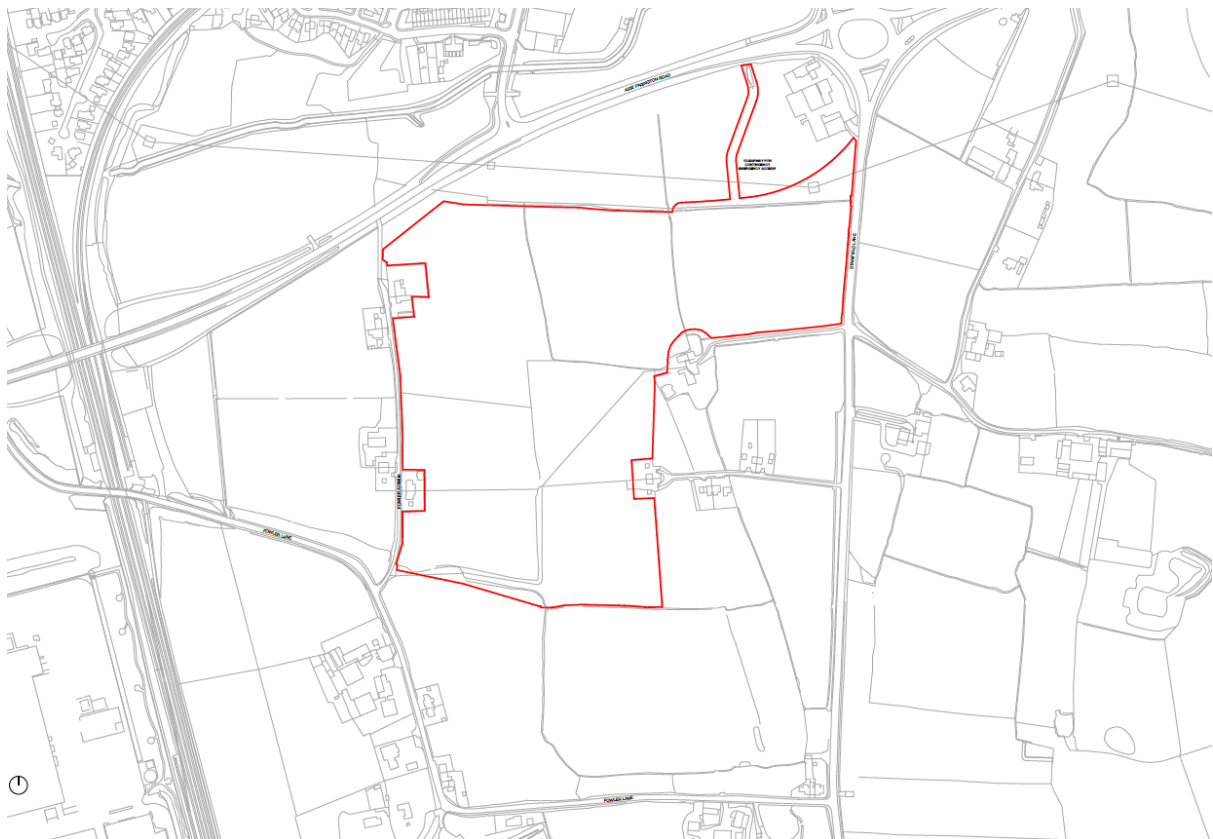
**Applicant** Lancashire County Council and Maple Grove Developments Ltd.

**Agent** Stantec  
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**Development** Proposed cricket facility comprising 2 no. cricket ovals and associated pavilion building and spectator seating, covered cricket nets, access, parking, landscaping and associated works (including temporary event overlay facilities on ticketed match days), realignment of public right of way Ref 9-12-FP 1, 7-4-FP 6, and public right of way Ref 9-12 FP 2, 7-4-FPS.

**Officer Recommendation** **The views set out in full in the recommendation section below be submitted to Lancashire County Council as the determining Authority**

**Location Plan**



## **1. Recommendation**

1.1 That Lancashire County Council be advised that South Ribble Borough Council would request that the following points are taken fully into account as part of the processing and determination of this application.

1. The development should not result in inappropriate development within the Green Belt and consideration as to whether the pavilion would be exempt under NPPF and Local Plan policies.
2. Ensure the development preserves the openness of the Green Belt.
3. Raise objections to the Impact of the development to neighbouring amenity by means of overbearing, noise and disturbance.

## **2. Introduction**

2.1 Lancashire County Council are currently in the processes of considering a full application for a cricket facility comprising 2 no. cricket ovals and associated pavilion building and spectator seating, covered cricket nets, access, parking, landscaping and associated works.

2.2 As landowner, Lancashire County Council are utilising legislative powers (Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning (General Regulations) 1992, which requires them to determine the planning application as a consequence of the site being wholly under their control.

2.3 The views of South Ribble Borough Council as the authority in which the application site is located are being sought.

## **3. Site History**

3.1 The site adjoins a number of residential properties with planning histories not directly relevant to the application. To the east of the site a hybrid planning application (ref. 07/2017/0211/ORM) was permitted covering the wider Cuerden Strategic Site Local Plan allocation was approved by South Ribble Borough Council for the following:

*“Hybrid planning application comprising of Full and Outline development - Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) development Part 1 FULL - Retail floorspace (Use Classes A1 & A3) and associated car parking, site access, highway works, drainage and strategic landscaping; Part 2 OUT - Employment floorspace (Classes B1, B2 & B8), hotel (Class C1), health and fitness and leisure (Class D2), creche/nursery (Class D1), retail (Classes A1, A2, A3, A4 & A5), car showrooms (Use Class Sui Generis), residential (Classes C2/C3) and provision of associated car parking, access, public open space, landscaping and drainage (Access applied for) and affecting the setting of a Listed Building”*

3.2 A new application for the Cuerden Strategic site is currently being considered by the County Council for part of the site.

## **3. Planning Application**

### **3.1 Overview**

3.1.1 The application relates to 13.7 hectares land located Woodcock Estate, Farington sits to the south of the River Lostock and Farington Road (A582) a key east-west connection linking Farington Moss to the west, Lostock Hall to the north and Bamber Bridge to the east, and beyond through to the M6 and the national motorway network.

3.1.2 The proposed site is bounded by highways on all four sides; The major linkage of Farington Road (A582) to the north, a major north-south spur of Stanifield Lane to the east, and tributary roads of Fowler Lane and Fowler Avenue to the south and east.

3.1.3 The application proposed cricket facility comprising 2 no. cricket ovals and associated pavilion building and spectator seating, covered cricket nets, access, parking, landscaping and associated works (including temporary event overlay facilities on ticketed match days), realignment of public right of way.

3.1.4 The proposed principal site entrance would be located in the form of a new connection to Stanifield Lane to the east of the proposed site.

3.1.5 The application proposes two cricket ovals one with a diameter of 130 metres and the second of 150 metres. Surrounding both ovals are the land which is graded to face the centre of each oval for spectators. The pavilion is located to the west of the ovals, with seating to the front of the building to each of the ovals.

3.1.6 The Pavilion is designed as a two storey building, set into the topography of the existing landscape, with lower ground (circa 500sq.m) and upper ground (c.1,050sq.m) floor levels. The upper ground floor provides key functional adjacency and visibility of the two cricket pitches, while the lower ground level contains support accommodation, grounds maintenance, servicing and the staff and team entrance.

3.1.7 The practise nets would be located to the west of the pavilion building with car parking between. The practise nets are along the western boundary of the site, along Fowler Avenue. The practise net would be 29 metres in width and 93 metres in length, with boundary treatments ranging from 3.3 metres to 6.5 metres in height.

3.1.8 The proposed parking would be located near the proposed new access with 265 parking spaces formed by new hardstanding with an overflow parking of 235 spaces.

## **4. Material Considerations**

### **4.1 Site Allocation Consideration**

4.1.1 This application is to be determined by Lancashire County Council in accordance with the Policies in the South Ribble Local Plan and the Central Lancashire Core Strategy and also giving due consideration to the National Planning Policy Framework.

4.1.2 The site is identified as within the Green Belt under policy G1 of the Local Plan and Areas of Separation under G5 of the Local Plan.

### **4.2 Green Belt**

4.2.1 Policy G1 of the Local Plan states that as set out in the NPPF, planning permission will not be given for the construction of new buildings unless there are very special circumstances. Exceptions to this are:

b) provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation and for cemeteries, as long as it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;

4.2.2 While the two ovals and practise nets could fall within the exception above, the extent of the use of the pavilion building, beyond an ancillary building to the cricket ovals. The pavilion building may not fall within the above exception and therefore would need to demonstrate very special circumstance, in accordance with the NPPF.

4.2.3 The NPPF and Policy G1 requires the proposal to preserve the openness of the Green Belt. Given the scale and siting of the proposal, and its sprawling nature across the site, with the car park to the northern corner and the pavilion and practise nets to the west, there is concern if the proposal would preserve the openness of the Green Belt.

4.2.4 Policy G5 (Areas of Separation) of the Local Plan seeks to protect land from inappropriate development in line with Policy G1 and the NPPF. If the development does not meet an exception under policy G1 or very special circumstance have not been demonstrated then the proposal would represent inappropriate development and would not accord with policy G5.

### **4.3 Public Benefits**

4.3.1 It is recognised that there would be wider public benefit for enhanced provision of cricket facilities within the borough. The proposal would provide world class sporting facilities, within the borough, for a sport with a strong history within Lancashire. In addition, there would be economic benefits to the borough resulting in additional jobs and supporting existing businesses.

### **4.4 Character, Design and Landscaping**

4.4.1 Policy G17: Design Criteria for New Development permits new development, including extensions and free standing structures, provided that, the proposal does not have a detrimental impact on the existing building, neighbouring buildings or on the street scene by virtue of its design, height, scale, orientation, plot density, massing, proximity, use of materials.

4.4.2 Notwithstanding the considerations on the impact of openness to the Green Belt. The design of the building is considered to be of a high quality and reflective of the use of the building.

### **4.5 Impact to neighbouring amenity**

4.5.1 Policy G17: Design Criteria for New Development states that the development should not cause harm to neighbouring property by leading to undue overlooking, overshadowing or have an overbearing effect.

4.5.2 There are several dwellings surrounding the site, along Stanfield Lane and Fowler Avenue. Officers have visited the site and neighbouring properties that would be impacted by the development. Cross sections have been provided of the proposal, with section across some of the points where the development would meet neighbouring dwellings. There is concern with the points where the proposal meets dwellings along the boundary and the potential for overlooking from the mound surrounding the ovals.

4.5.3 The proposed practise area and bin store would be located to the west of the site, within close proximity to a several dwellings along Fowler Avenue. To the east of the practise net would be the pavilion and parking area. There are concerns with the impact this element would have on to the dwellings on Fowler Avenue. The application proposes large fencing along the

boundary of the practise nets, which could have an overbearing impact to neighbouring dwelling. Furthermore, the noise resulting from the use of the area could also have a significant harmful impact to neighbouring amenity. It is not clear the justification of the practise nets in this location, close to neighbouring dwellings, when it appears it could be located elsewhere within the wider site to reduce the impact to neighbouring dwellings.

4.5.4 In addition to the practise nets, the pavilion would also be located close to dwellings along the western boundary. The application gives some details as to the use of the pavilion in connection with matches on the site, however, the Planning statement also advises that the building will also be available for hospitality events, including private here all year round. There is concerns of nose and distance this could have to neighbouring amenity.

4.5.5 Submitted plans show details of some external lighting, but the plans also detail 'temporary event infrastructure' with no information as to what this is. Given the close proximity of this 'infrastructure' to neighbouring dwelling this could have a negative to their amenity.

4.5.6 Officer therefore have significant concerns with the impact of the development to neighbouring amenity by means of overbearing, noise and disturbance.

#### **4.6 Highways**

4.6.1 A scheme of this nature will inevitably lead to increased traffic levels and a busier network in its vicinity. A Transport Assessment has been submitted in support of the application, scoped and undertaken in liaison with Highways England and the local highways authority.

4.6.2 In terms of traffic generation, we would seek assurances that the impact of the additional traffic and the impact on highway capacity/junction safety is fully considered.

#### **4.7 Other matters**

4.7.1 The councils Environmental Health officer notes that a Contaminated Land, Air Quality Review and Assessment, and Noise Impact has been submitted with the application. It expected a suitable qualified person will considered the reports prior to determination.

### **5. Conclusion**

5.1 This is an important proposal within South Ribble Borough that would bring significant public benefits to residents and businesses. Careful consideration however needs to be given as to how the impacts of the development can be mitigated and controlled. This report sets out the area's where this authority seeks clarification and further assurances. Following discussion at the Planning Committee these points and any additional matters raised by Members will be forwarded to Lancashire County Council for due consideration.