

Application No: 21/5730M

Location: WILMSLOW PHOENIX SPORTS CLUB, STYAL ROAD, WILMSLOW, CHESHIRE, SK9 4HP

Proposal: Conversion of existing grass playing pitch to astroturf all weather surface with lighting and spectator stand and the conversion of existing overflow area to form associated formal parking

Applicant: Alan Murdoch, Wilmslow Phoenix Sports Club

Expiry Date: 12-Aug-2022

SUMMARY

The application site comprises Wilmslow Phoenix Sports Club which is designated as an existing open space within the Green Belt.

It is considered that the proposals for a replacement of a grass playing pitch with an Astro-turf, all weather surface pitch with associated fencing, lighting and formalising and extension of the overflow parking area, are in compliance with the aims of enhancing and protecting an existing outdoor sports venue with established on site associated infrastructure, within an existing open space. However the proposal does not preserve the openness of the Green Belt, and is therefore inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

Following revisions to the proposals during the course of the application and subject to the use of planning conditions to secure further details it is considered there are no significant adverse impacts in regard to design, heritage assets, highways, accessibility, public right of ways (PROWs), Network Rail infrastructure, Manchester Airport, ecology, trees, residential amenity, air quality, flood risk or contaminated land/pollution control.

It considered that the proposals would address the highlighted need for further all-weather, multi-sport, Astro-turf pitches within this area of Cheshire East to support the provision of outdoor sporting offer and promote healthy lifestyles for Cheshire East residents as per the Council's Playing Pitch Strategy document. This is considered to amount to the required very special circumstances to outweigh the identified harm to the Green Belt.

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

Approve subject to conditions.

REASON FOR REPORT

This application is presented before the committee as it meets the criteria set out within the Constitution. The application falls within the category of application proposals for Small Scale Major Development of '*retail or commercial/industrial or other floor space of between 5,000 and 9,999 square metres or 2-4ha*' which are to be determined by the Planning Committees.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT

The application site falls within the Wilmslow Phoenix Sports Club, which is located in the Styal area of Wilmslow, opposite the entrance to Quarry Bank Mill National Trust property and grounds. The site is located within the Green Belt. The wider site is an area of Existing Open Space within the Green Belt. The site is adjacent to the Styal Conservation Area boundary, which lies to the west of the site. To the south of the site is HMP Styal. Elsewhere on the site is a surface car park, club house with bar, lounge and dining (historically extended/altered), changing rooms and various sports playing fields for cricket, lacrosse, football, hockey etc. including natural turf pitches and enclosed all-weather pitch. The wider site overall comprises: 4no. grass lacrosse pitches, 1no. multi-Sport (predominantly hockey) All-Weather surface pitch and 1no. cricket square with outfield. An additional All-weather MUGA has also recently received planning permission (extant) to the south-west of the clubhouse. The overall sports club site covers an area of 3.14ha. The proposed development site currently comprises an existing grass pitch area with an informal overflow car parking area and associated access. There are approximately 98no. existing parking spaces near the existing clubhouse on a formal car park with 20no. overflow spaces to the north-east of the site close to the railway on informal gravel areas. Public Right of Way Footpaths (PROW) FP17 and FP20 run west to east and south-west to north-east respectively through the site. The site is used by Wilmslow Phoenix, Lindow Cricket Club and Wilmslow Lacrosse teams/groups to name a few, alongside being used for private hire by schools and other local groups. The site is owned by Cheshire East Council and has been leased since 1978, with the lease most recently updated and renewed in 2019 for a period of 99 years. The site access is owned by Cheshire East Council to which Wilmslow Albion Football Club located directly to the south has shared access rights over.

PROPOSAL

The proposed development description is 'Conversion of existing grass playing pitch to Astro-turf all weather surface with lighting and the conversion of existing overflow area to form associated formal parking'. It is proposed that the all-weather pitch would be for multi-sport usage would have steel mesh enclosures up to 4m in height in green to match the existing Astro turf pitch with 6.3m tall sections of these behind goal areas, with associated landscaping, block paving and 15m flood lighting masts. It is proposed that the formal overflow parking area to replace the informal overflow parking area would create an additional 41no. spaces bringing the total overflow parking number to 61no. As a result of the proposed works the total parking and split of type of parking for the development is as per the below table provided by the applicants, totalling 157no. spaces. Amendments to the existing formal car parking closest to the clubhouse are also planned with additional EV Charging, disabled and cycle parking bays.

WPSC Parking Allocation			
	Existing	Proposed	
Clubhouse Total Bays	98	96	
Clubhouse Disabled Bays	2	5	
Clubhouse EV Bays	0	4	
Clubhouse Standard Bays	96	85	
Cycle parking	0	10	
Overflow Total Bays	20	61	
Overflow Disabled Bays	0	2	
Overflow EV Bays	0	0	
Overflow Standard Bays	0	59	
Cycle Parking	0	10	

The application form indicates that surface water will be disposed of via soakaway and mains sewer and that foul sewage arrangements are not required due to the nature of the development. The landscaping proposals include retaining the existing landscaping bunding to the north and east of the site between the proposals and residential properties to the north and railway lines to the east. The proposals also include the erection of a spectator stand within the new pitch enclosure to the north dimensioned 10.2m (l) x 2.9m (d) x 3.2m (h). The spectator stand would have a canopy cover over its proposed 75no. seats. 4no. floodlights aligned to the northern and southern boundaries of the pitch are proposed in a grey finish colour. It is proposed that the PROW FP20 would be gravelled and run alongside the amended access to the overflow parking area before crossing the existing bridge over the railway. Along the access driveway from Styal Road leading to both the overflow and clubhouse parking areas is the route of PROW FP17 where 2no. pedestrian refuges of 3m x 1.5m are proposed to allow pedestrians to pull in when vehicles are passing. It is proposed the hedgerow sections of these will be removed and replanted as part of landscaping to the northern overflow area. It is proposed that the enclosed pitch would be for a multi-sport use and would have the ability to be used in all weathers. Bollards are proposed to the car park area closest to the railway for safety reasons.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

20/3352M –Erection of a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) on our existing grounds. The MUGA will be 27m in length x 9m width with an astro cushioned carpet area surrounded by a supporting 3m sports fence and lit by 6 LED lights. There will be one double gate entrance at one end and a rebounder wall at the other built from concrete blocks, supported by several buttresses. The electric for the LED lights will be supplied from the main building. – approved with conditions – 25th May 2022

19/2801M - Proposal to erect a replacement spectator seating area to the all-weather sports pitch & adjust fence line to suit. The proposal is not designed to increase use of the overall facility. – approved with conditions – 20th August 2019

18/5799M - Proposal to change the fence line of the all-weather sports pitch to create a safe viewing area for spectators – approved with conditions – 1st February 2019

16/1875M – Extension of clubhouse to provide new entrance, toilets and storage facilities. – approved with conditions – 27th May 2016

07/2292P - single storey front extension to clubhouse, extension to store . installation of windows and doors to rear and insertion of solid metal roller shutters – approved with conditions – 3rd December 2007

03/0040P – installation of all-weather pitch – approved with conditions – 23rd April 2003

97/1658P - floodlit all-weather sports pitch – approved with conditions – 2nd February 1998

96/1461P – floodlit all-weather sports pitch – refused – 16th October 1996

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES, GUIDANCE AND LEGISLATION

Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (CELPS)

MP1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

PG1 Overall Development Strategy

PG2 Settlement Hierarchy

PG3 Green Belt

PG7 Spatial Distribution of Development

SD1 Sustainable Development in Cheshire East

SD2 Sustainable Development Principles

IN1 Infrastructure

IN2 Developer Contributions

SC1 Leisure and Recreation

SC2 Indoor and Outdoor Sports Facilities

SC3 Health and Well-being

SE1 Design

SE3 Biodiversity and Geodiversity

SE4 The Landscape

SE5 Trees, Hedgerows and Woodland

SE7 The Historic Environment

SE12 Pollution, Land Contamination and Land Instability

SE13 Flood Risk and Water Management

CO1 Sustainable Travel and Transport

Appendix C Parking Standards

Macclesfield Borough Local Plan 2004 (MBLP)

NE11 Nature Conservation

NE15 Habitat Enhancement

BE2 Historic Environment

GC1 Green Belt New Buildings

RT1 Protection of Open Spaces

RT5 Open Space Standards

RT6 Recreational/Open Space Provision
RT7 Cycleways, Bridleways and Footpaths
IMP3 Land Ownership
DC3 Amenity
DC6 Circulation and Access
DC8 Landscaping
DC9 Tree Protection
DC13 and DC14 Noise Generating Developments
DC15 and DC16 Provision of Facilities
DC17, DC19 and DC20 Water resources
DC33 Outdoor Commercial Recreation
DC63 Contaminated Land
DC64 Floodlighting

Emerging Cheshire East Site Allocations and Development Policies Document (“SADPD”).

The Revised Publication Draft SADPD was submitted to the Secretary of State on 29 April 2021. Following the examination hearings and report from the Inspector, Main Modifications were published for consultation between 19 April 2022 and 31 May 2022. The Council has recently published its report of consultation and the Inspector will take the representations into account in preparing his Examination report, which will be issued to the council in due course. The following policies are considered to carry moderate weight in the assessment of the application:

PG9 Settlement Boundaries
GEN1 Design principles
GEN5 Aerodrome safeguarding
GEN6 Airport public safety zone
ENV1 Ecological network
ENV2 Ecological implementation
ENV3 Landscape character
ENV5 Landscaping
ENV6 Trees, hedgerows and woodland implementation
ENV7 Climate Change
ENV12 Air quality
ENV14 Light pollution
ENV15 New development and existing uses
ENV16 Surface water management and flood risk
ENV17 Protecting water resources
HER1 Heritage assets
HER3 Conservation Areas
RUR6 Outdoor sport, leisure and recreation outside of settlement boundaries
HOU10 Amenity
INF1 Cycleways, bridleways and footpaths
INF3 Highways safety and access
INF6 Protection of existing and proposed infrastructure
INF9 Utilities
REC1 Green/open space protection
REC3 Green space implementation
REC5 Community facilities

National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF)
National Planning Practice Guidance
Cheshire East Borough Design Guide 2017 (CEDG)
Trees and Development SPD
Section 106/ Planning Obligations SPD (S016 SPD)
Open Space Assessment
Styal Conservation Area Appraisal SPD 2008
Cheshire East Playing Pitch Strategy June 2021 (CEPPS)
Cheshire East Landscape Character Assessment 2018 (CELCA)
Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and Guidance document

CONSULTATIONS (EXTERNAL TO PLANNING)

Manchester Airport – June 2022 - no objections subject to the use of conditions and informatives attached to any approval of the development as follows: conditions – construction management plan submission on prior to commencement basis to avoid bird attraction; external lighting capped horizontal with no upward light spill and informative – crane permit and radio frequencies

United Utilities – May 2022 - no objection subject to conditions and informatives covering the submission of detailed surface and foul water drainage scheme and that the drainage scheme be implemented on a prior to first use basis.

Highways – May 2022 - no objections.

Network Rail – May 2022 - no objection as there is a trespass proof fence insitu and the plans indicate 3m high fencing around the pitches plus proposed vehicle incursion bollards to the car park area. Condition these elements.

LLFA – April 2022 - no objection subject to the use of planning conditions: detailed surface water and foul drainage strategy including management/maintenance/boundary treatment plans and informatives: infiltration testing, CEC byelaws and works to ordinary watercourses.

Sport England – April 2022 - no objections subject to the use of planning conditions covering: hours of use Monday to Friday 09:00-21:30 and Saturday/Sunday 0900-2200; Phasing Plan prior to commencement; Construction Management Plan prior to commencement; Management/Maintenance Scheme submission for the new pitch prior to commencement. Sport England confirmed on 2nd February 2022 they wish the hours of use condition previously suggested to read as 0800 -2200 Monday to Friday and 0800-2000 Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays.

Public Right of Way – February 2022 object to the proposals summarised as follows:

- Potential increase in vehicular traffic along FP17 and FP20 if approved and this poses risk to members of the public and request further information on how this can be mitigated and to ensure public safety at all times.

- Proposed Gravel pathway is not suitable for all users and further consideration is needed for inclusivity and accessibility with permeable resin bound gravel or hop path a preferred surface.
- A diversion route may also address the objection.

Public Right of Way – July 2022 – withdrawn holding objection subject to the use of planning conditions to secure pedestrian refuges, signage and hardstanding materials relating to PROW's FP17 and FP20.

ANSA – April and June 2022 - made observation as follows:

- Queried site edge red for pull in for vehicles on access and if Sport England had been consulted.
- Queries what the playing surface specification will be.
- Queries shared access rights over track and impacts on Wilmslow Albion.

ANSA – July 2022 - withdrawn holding subject to the use of planning conditions as requested by Sport England Officers, landscaping details including hedgerow relocation/replacement to ensure no loss, drainage strategy and landscaping strategy to be interlinked with regards to SuDS for whole site.

Environmental Protection – December 2021 - no objection subject to conditions as follows: Hours of operations restricted to Monday to Friday 08:00-22:00, Saturday 08:00-20:00 and Sundays and Bank Holidays 08:00-20:00; Site specific dust management plan prior to commencement; 4no. electric vehicle charging points; Construction hours informative; previously undiscovered contamination reporting

Styal Parish Council – May 2022 - supports the application however raises the following comments:

- External lighting may be an issue only 30m away from local homes and therefore suggest an 8pm cut off on the closest pitch to residential properties should be enforced via suitable planning condition.
- Padded back goals should be in permanent use in respect to noise amenity considerations.
- Consideration should be given to the use of pitch 3 next to the clubhouse than the new pitch as this would address concerns raised from neighbours.

REPRESENTATIONS

7no. letters from the public have been received supporting the development summarised as follows:

- The additional formal parking is welcomed and will address congestion on match days utilising a space that doesn't have a significant weekday use.
- Enhancements to the access road would be beneficial.
- The Astro-turf pitch is welcome as it provides an additional facility for use and rent which will reduce journeys for sports clubs to other nearest suitable all-weather Astro-turf facilities in Wythenshawe, Stockport and Macclesfield which clubs have to utilise due to training and competition demand.

- The proposed new all-weather pitch will promote a multitude of sport and uptake of healthy lifestyles.

3no. letters from the public have been received objecting to the development summarised as follows:

- The doubled amount of floodlights much closer to residential properties Clarendon Cottages is unacceptable and will create light pollution.
- The development will introduce further noise disturbance from balls and sticks and speaking closer to residential properties such that it would worsen the existing situation to the detriment of residential amenity.
- The proposed additional landscaping planting to the bunding in the manner of trees could not be meaningfully done as it would cast shadows into neighbouring properties.
- Other areas of the site are suitable for the proposed use away from residential properties.
- The proposed hours of operation would not work as this is often exceeded to 10:30pm at night.
- The proposals would de-value Clarendon Cottages as a result of the proximity of overbearing development detrimental to residential amenity.

3no. letters from the public have been received making observation regarding the development summarised as follows:

- The closer proximity of the pitch may cause detrimental impacts on noise and light amenity of neighbouring residential properties of which training/matches can last until 10pm.
- Planning conditions should prevent the use of the second pitch after 6pm on any day.
- Planning conditions should include soft walls to absorb the impact of balls etc. hitting goals or sides of the enclosure.
- The existing access to the site and car park is problematic due to the narrow entrance way and this can cause backlogs onto Styal Road and if there is to be further development of a pitch and larger car park this needs improvement.
- Additional landscaping of tree planting will not mitigate floodlight impacts.

OFFICER APPRAISAL

The following appraisal is based on the revised submission as received during April and June 2022.

Principle of the development

The site is located within existing open space within the Green Belt. The most applicable policies to consider are MP1, PG2, PG3, SD1, SD2, SC1 and SC2 of the CELPS, GC1 of the MBLP, PG9, RUR6, REC1, REC3 and REC5 of the emerging SADPD and the CEPPS.

Green Belt

Policy PG3 of the CELPS states *'Green Belt is a designation for land around large built-up areas, which aims to keep land permanently open or largely undeveloped.*

1. The purposes of the Green Belt are to:

- i. check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up area;*
- ii. prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another;*
- iii. safeguard the countryside from encroachment;*

- iv. preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and*
- v. assist urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.*
- 2. Within the Green Belt, planning permission will not be granted for inappropriate development, except in very special circumstances, in accordance with national policy.*
- 3. The construction of new building is inappropriate in Green Belt. Exceptions to this are:*
 - ii. 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.'*

Policy GC1 of the MBLP states '*Within the Green Belt approval will not be given, except in very special circumstances, for the construction of new buildings unless it is for the following purposes:*

2. Essential facilities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation, for cemeteries, and for other uses of land which preserve the openness of the Green Belt and which do not conflict with the purposes of including land in it.'

The proposed development involves an existing sports facility within existing open space set within the Green Belt. The existing facility has 3no. grass lacrosse pitches, 1no. cricket square and 1no. all-weather multi-sport pitch (predominantly used for hockey). As part of the proposals an existing grass pitch without fenced boundaries or floodlighting will be replaced with an all-year, multi-sport, all-weather sports playing surface with fencing and floodlighting alongside the formalisation and expansion of the car parking overflow with associated SUDS and tree protection.

The proposed all-weather pitch will provide a permanent developed feature in place of the existing open playing field and whilst the fencing would be lightweight, and the spectator stand relatively small-scale, when taken as a whole with the proposed extended parking area, when having regard to its scale, and associated level of activity compared to the existing, the visual and spatial aspects of openness would not be preserved. Whilst the proposal would extend the developed area of the existing sports club, it would be entirely within the curtilage of the club, replacing an existing grass pitch and informal parking area, and would not amount to encroachment into the countryside. No conflict with any of the purposes of Green Belt is therefore identified. However, due to openness not being preserved, the proposal is considered to be inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

Principle of replacement pitch / additional facilities

Policy SC1 of the CELPS states '*In order to provide appropriate leisure and recreational facilities for the communities of Cheshire East, the council will:*

Seek to protect and enhance existing leisure and recreation facilities, unless a needs assessment has clearly proven them to be surplus to the requirements to local community needs or unless alternative provision, of equivalent or better quality, is to be made.

3. Support proposals for facilities that would not be appropriate to be located in or adjacent to centres, provided they are highly accessible by a choice of transport, do not harm the character, amenity, or biodiversity value of the area, and satisfy the following criteria:

i. The proposal is a facility that:

a. supports a business use;

b. is appropriate in an employment area; or

c. supports an outdoor sports facility, education or related community/visitor facility; or

d. supports the visitor economy and is based on local cultural or existing visitor attractions.

4. Work with agencies services and businesses responsible for providing facilities to make sure that the needs and demands of communities are met.

5. Make sure that appropriate developments contribute, through land assembly and financial contributions, to new or improved facilities where development will increase demand and/pr there is a recognised shortage of local leisure, community and recreation facilities.'

Policy SC2 of the CELPS states 'In order to provide appropriate sports facilities for the communities of Cheshire East, the Council will:

1. Protect existing indoor and outdoor sports facilities, unless:

Either:

i. They are proven to be surplus to need (47); or

ii. Improved alternative provision (48) will be created in a location well related to the functional requirements of the relocated use and its existing and future users.

And in all cases:

iii. The proposal would not result in the loss of an area important for its amenity or contribution to the character of the area in general: and

2. Support new indoor and outdoor sports facilities where:

i. They are readily accessible by public transport, walking and cycling; and

ii. The proposed facilities are of a type and scale appropriate to the size of the settlement; and

iii. Where they are listed in an action plan in any emerging or subsequently adopted Sports Strategy.'

As the proposals would result in a loss of a grass pitch and erection of an all-weather Astro-turf pitch both Sport England and ANSA Greenspace officers were consulted on the proposals.

Following the provision of additional information Sport England do not object to the development. Sport England noted in their response that the second Astro-turf pitch for hockey would meet exception 5 of their Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and Guidance document policy which states '*the proposed development is for an indoor or outdoor facility for sport, the provision of which would be of sufficient benefit to the development of sport as to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss, or prejudice to the use, of the area of playing field.*' Sport England consider this is met as it will provide a second Astro-turf all-weather pitch, in a logical area, which will reduce existing demand on the existing pitch, which will assist in meeting hockey club training needs on the one site reducing reliance on other pitches on different sites, proposed in a manner to meet England Hockey technical requirements with regard to surfacing, fencing and floodlighting.

Sport England state their support for the proposals is subject to the use of planning conditions to ensure appropriate phasing in retaining the operations of the pitches insitu and the bringing into use the new all-weather pitch to ensure no loss of sports ground offer at the site. In addition they seek the provision of a management plan, hours of operation and submission of a construction management plan again to ensure ongoing outdoor sport/recreation at the site for lacrosse, hockey and cricket both during construction and post development and to ensure that amenity of immediate residents is not impacted by the proposals. It is considered that the existing clubhouse facilities are sufficient.

Whilst it is acknowledged that the proposals are in compliance with the aims of enhancing and protecting an existing outdoor sports venue with established on site associated infrastructure,

within an existing open space, the proposal does not preserve the openness of the Green Belt and is therefore inappropriate development.

Paragraphs 147 and 148 of the NPPF state that Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Substantial weight should be 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 resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations. This is explored further below.

Design, Character and Designated Heritage Assets

The most applicable policies and guidance to consider are policies SD1, SD2, SE1 and SE7 of the CELPS, BE2 of the MBLP, GEN1, ENV7, HER1 and HER3 of the emerging SADPD and the CEDG and Styal Conservation Area Appraisal.

Between them these policies and guidance seek that new development is of an appropriate size, scale and design that is commensurate to the character of the area in which it would be situated, whilst championing higher quality design to enhance and improve the wider borough alongside the immediate area of Styal and Wilmslow. These policies and guidance also seek to conserve, enhance and protect designated heritage assets.

The site is located adjacent to the Styal Conservation Area and opposite National Trust site Quarry Bank Mill which are considered under policy SE7 of the CELPS to form designated heritage assets. During the course of the application the Conservation Officer provided comment and did not object to the development on the whole due to the distance from the setting of the designated heritage assets. With this said, they did raise concern at the site being illuminated by floodlighting and that this may detract from the otherwise rural and open character facing the designated heritage assets and sought use of planning conditions (notwithstanding relevant amenity considerations) in respect of the use of external lighting, so as to avoid unnecessary spill. In regard to the design of the enclosure the proposals are almost identical to that on the existing all-weather pitch, proposed in appropriate green, light weight, permeable fencing. In respect of the car parking appropriate breaking up of the hard surfacing is planned and it is considered that all other surfacing aspects can be confirmed via carefully worded materials conditions. It is considered subject to the use of conditions that the development is in compliance with policies and guidance regarding design, local character and designated heritage assets.

Amenity, contaminated land and pollution control

The most applicable policies and guidance to consider are policies SD1, SD2, SE1, SE12 and SE13 of the CELPS, policies DC3, DC13, DC14, DC33, DC38 and DC64 of the MBLP and emerging policies ENV7, ENV12, ENV14, ENV15, ENV16, ENV17, HOU10 and INF9 of the SADPD.

Between them these policies seek to ensure all development is located and designed so as not to result in a harmful or cumulative impact upon air quality, surface water and groundwater, noise, smell, dust, vibration, soil contamination, light pollution or any other pollution which would unacceptably affect the natural and built environment, or detrimentally affect amenity or cause harm. Developers will be expected to minimise and mitigate the effects of possible pollution arising from the development itself, or as a result of the development (including additional traffic)

during both the construction and the life of the development. Where adequate mitigation cannot be provided, development will not normally be permitted.

During the course of the development concern was raised at the proximity of the enclosure closer to residential properties to the north, the hours of operation, the method of construction of the enclosure with regards to noise of objects hitting the sides, the noise from people playing/spectating sports and light pollution from the floodlighting proposed.

The proposals have been reviewed by the Environmental Health Officers who raise no objection to the development subject to the use of planning conditions to restrict the hours of operations of the new pitch (pitch 02) to Monday to Friday 08:00-22:00, Saturday 08:00-20:00 and Sundays and Bank Holidays 08:00-20:00 with respect to residential amenity protection of immediate neighbouring properties, provision of a Site specific dust management plan prior to commencement to prevent dust pollution into the wider area and the provision of 4no. electric vehicle charging points with submission of location and specification. In addition, they recommended the use of construction hours and previously undiscovered contamination reporting via informatives attached to any decision notice produced.

Sport England also consider that the recommended planning conditions be used to restrict the hours of operation of the development to those as stated by the Environmental Health Officers are appropriate. As the hours proposed are within non-sensitive hours considering the proximity of residential properties to the north it is considered that there would not be detrimental impacts on amenity with regards to noise or other disturbance as result of playing or spectating sport. In addition, a condition is recommended to dampen the noise of balls and equipment hitting the sides of the enclosure and to provide specifications of noise dampening pads to all sides and goals to be used on a permanent basis. No issue was raised at the proposed external lighting which again will be controlled by planning condition including their hours of operation, noting the spill pattern is away from these properties. Further to this a Construction Management Plan to protect amenity and the provision of sports facilities on an ongoing basis was also recommended by Sport England. Taking these points into account and subject to the use of conditions and informatives it is considered that the development is in compliance with policies and guidance covering amenity and pollution protection.

Highway safety, parking and Public Rights of Way

The most applicable policies and guidance to consider are SD1, SD2, IN1, IN2, SC1, SC2, SE1, CO1 and Appendix C of the CELPS, policies RT7, DC6 and DC33 of the MBLP and emerging policies GEN1, ENV12, ENV15, RUR6, HOU10, INF1, INF3, INF6 and the CEDG.

Between them these policies seek to deliver safe, sustainable, high quality, integrated transport systems that encourage a modal shift away from car travel to public transport, cycling and walking; supportive of the needs of residents and businesses and preparing for carbon free modes of transport.

During the course of the development concern was raised at the access to the site for vehicles, the proposed lay-by close to the Wilmslow Albion Football Club and the proximity of the car parking to Network Rail infrastructure. Within the lifespan of the application the proposals have been amended to no longer include a vehicular lay-by within the site access from Styal Road due to ongoing discussions with neighbouring landowners. In addition, a series of protective bollards are now proposed closest to the north- eastern boundary of the sites proposed

additional car parking area nearest network rail infrastructure, to respond to Network Rail officer concerns about the potential for vehicles impacting the metal fenced boundaries or entering the railway line. Network Rail do not object to the proposals on the basis that the bollards are secured via the use of planning conditions attached to any approval of the development. As the site would utilise an existing access track from Styal Road leading to the existing car park and as additional parking would be provided, that would assist in alleviating cars waiting on the wider highways on busy match or training days, the Highways Officers have raised no objection to the development. They also note that the proposals would provide permanent parking on the current informal overflow car parking area. Additional cycle parking is also proposed as 2no. 10 bay secure cycle storage areas, to which no issue is raised at the number of bays to be provided however further detail as to siting, elevation and materials/construction details is required, which can also be dealt with by condition.

Notwithstanding the Highways Officers comments, it is considered that there would be some uplift in vehicle trips as a result of the creation of further formalised overflow parking and that pedestrian refuges to the northern side of the access would assist in providing a better shared surface arrangement and enhance the PROW offer across the site. This would also complement policies seeking improved access to the countryside. PROW Officers originally objected to the proposals due to the impact that the proposed car parking and amended access to the site would have on FP20 running off FP17 to the north and east of the site heading to the railway. They were concerned about the impact on the PROWs during the construction period, arrangements for diversions, long term management and that the proposed surfacing materials of gravel were inappropriate as this would discourage access for all public including those with disabilities where new development should protect and enhance existing PROW offers. Further to discussion with the applicants they have revised the scheme to provide 2no. pedestrian refuges along PROW FP17 which is also the access driveway for vehicles leading to both car parks. The pedestrian refuges in places are dimensioned 3m x 1.5m which the PROW officer considers acceptable. It is however noted that suitable signage will require installation associated with these to make them known to both pedestrians and vehicle users in the interests of highways safety. Gravel hardstanding is proposed to PROW FP20 as indicated on the plans however further discussion as to other types of permeable hardstanding for this aspect is required which is considered can be appropriately managed via the use of planning condition. It is also noted from discussion with the PROW officer there are occasions of water pooling to the existing FP20 as such a drainage scheme and hardstanding materials scheme for this will need to incorporate both elements to allow continued, protected and enhanced footpaths offer of these existing PROW's on site, via suitable planning condition.

Planning conditions will be used secure the parking and access arrangements be implemented in accordance with the submitted Site Plan, secure cycle parking storage details, protective bollards provision and electric vehicle charging points for the new development in line with policies and guidance.

Biodiversity and nature conservation

The most applicable policies and guidance to consider are SD1, SD2, IN1, IN2 and SE3 of the CELPS, policies NE11 and NE15 of the MBLP, emerging policies GEN1, ENV1, ENV2 and ENV7 of the SADPD and the CEDG.

Between them these policies and guidance seek that all development must aim to positively contribute to the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity and geodiversity and should

not negatively affect these interests, instead planning for net gains. Where appropriate, conditions will be put in place to make sure appropriate monitoring is undertaken and make sure mitigation, compensation and offsetting is effective.

The proposals have been reviewed by the Nature Conservation Officer who raised no objection to the proposals. They noted that the habitat to be lost to development is a managed sports field unlikely to offer much value to biodiversity. However, with this said they noted that as the area is natural green field and will be replaced with an artificial pitch, there will still be a net loss of biodiversity. To compensate for this the Nature Conservation Officer considers it important that through use of planning condition attached to any approval of the development that a designated narrow area of unmanaged semi-natural habitat along a section of the vegetated margin of the wider field is allocated alongside appropriate management of this. It is considered that there would be space sufficient enough and appropriately located for this to be executed and as such, subject to the use of conditions it is considered that the development is in compliance with policies and guidance on biodiversity and nature conservation.

Trees, hedgerows and landscape character

The most applicable policies and guidance to consider are SD1, SD2, SE1, SE4, SE5 of the CELPS, policies DC8, DC9 and DC33 of the MBLP, emerging policies GEN1, ENV3, ENV5, ENV6 and ENV7 of the SADPD, the CEDG and Trees and Development SPD.

Between them these policies seek to protect the continued health and life expectancy of trees, hedgerows or woodlands and where loss of or threat to them is proposed development will not normally be permitted unless there are clear overriding reasons for allowing development and that there are no suitable alternatives. These policies and guidance also seek to protect and enhance landscape character. Where such impacts are unavoidable, development proposals must satisfactorily demonstrate a new environmental gain by appropriate mitigation, compensation or offsetting.

The proposals indicate that the existing bunding and boundary landscaping to the northern and eastern elements of the site beyond the pitch enclosure are to be enhanced to provide further screening with other landscaping and tree/hedgerow retention to the eastern boundaries near the new car park planned. The application is supported by an Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) which confirms that all tree life within site as existing is to be retained without pruning with aspects where access and parking hard surfacing planned to have no-dig solutions attributed to them. The AIA also provides information as to the Tree Protection Plan for during the construction of the development such as fencing protection and cellweb system protection of trees and hedgerows. It is considered that the information within the AIA provides a clear indication that the development will protect the longevity of trees and hedgerows on site during the construction period and that the development is mostly placed away from RPA's of trees and hedgerows or otherwise where there is encroachment there can be effective no-dig solutions. Whilst only indicative landscaping is proposed it is considered that an appropriate landscaping scheme can be prepared that re-inforces the open and minimalistic natural landscape aesthetic whilst combining the need to create biodiversity gains as aforementioned. Further to this to create the 2no. pedestrian refuges along PROW FP17 which is also the access driveway, small sections of hedgerow will require removal, however it is noted on supporting plans that these sections will be replanted to the northern overflow car park as part of landscaping, i.e.. translocation. Conditions requesting a detailed landscaping scheme including soft and hard landscaping with planting plans including size, amount, spacing and age, general

specification and colour with no dig solutions where appropriate, details of pedestrian refuges construction with appropriate signage (for highways general safety) and hedgerow translocation and to include boundary treatments are recommended to be attached to any approval of the development. A Landscaping Management and Maintenance Plan by condition would also be required. Subject to conditions and informatives it is considered that the development is in compliance with listed policies and guidance regarding trees, hedgerows and landscape character.

Flood risk and water management

The most applicable policies and guidance to consider are SD1, SD2, SE1, SE12 and SE13 of the CELPS, policies DC15, DC16, DC17, DC19, DC20 and DC33 of the MBLP and emerging policies GEN1, ENV15, ENV16, ENV17 and INF9 of the SADPD.

Between them these policies seek to ensure that developments must integrate measures for sustainable water management to reduce flood risk, avoid an impact on water quality and quantity within the borough and provide opportunities to enhance biodiversity, health and recreation. New development must be designed to be safe, taking into account the lifetime of the development and the need to adapt to climate change, seeking improvements to current surface water drainage network and be designed to manage surface water noting it is not sustainable to drain surface water to public sewers. New development should incorporate water efficiency measures.

During the course of the application the United Utilities and Floods Officers originally objected to the development due to the surface water flood risk and water run off being unknown and requiring addressing due to the removal of grass and installation of man-made surfacing. As a result, a Flood Risk Assessment was produced by the applicants to support the application which confirms that as the site and what will surround it will be largely retained as green field with green-field run off rates and that hard surfacing will be permeable with run-off rates appropriate and capable of being attenuated without impacting flood risk elsewhere. The FRA also confirmed the site to be located in flood zone 1, however with a surface water flood risk to the eastern boundary, as such it advises that boundary drains/treatments be installed to prevent transfer of surface water between the development site and third-party land. The United Utilities and Floods Officers no longer object subject to the use of planning conditions to secure detailed surface and foul water drainage schemes, management/maintenance and boundary treatment plans and verification of implementation. The Floods Officer notes that infiltration testing would be required as part of this noting NPPG hierarchy for drainage and to provide evidence that ground conditions onsite are suitable. In addition as part of these planning conditions evidence would be required of hydraulic modelling onsite to calculate the volume of attenuation storage required to accommodate all surface water flows up to 1 in 100 year event plus 40% Climate Change allowance also restricted to the existing green field rate. They also recommend the attachment of informatives to cover infiltration testing, CEC byelaws and works to ordinary watercourses. Subject to the use of conditions and informatives it is considered that the development would be in compliance with policies and guidance covering flood risk and water management.

Manchester airport operations

The site is located within the operational area of Manchester airport. The most applicable emerging policies to consider are GEN5, GEN6 and ENV14 of the SADPD. During the course of the application Manchester Airport were consulted on the proposals and confirm that they

raise no objections to the development subject to the external lighting scheme being implemented on site in accordance with the details supporting the application with no upward light spill. This is sought for execution via planning condition as any upward light pollution has the potential to present ocular hazard to pilots of aircraft within the approach zone of Manchester airport runway operations as such requires careful control. In addition to this as the information has not been presented within the application Manchester Airport also seek that Construction Management and Water Management schemes be submitted for approval on a prior to commencement basis. This request was made as disturbance to the ground or pooling of water during the construction period of a development can encourage birds and other wildlife that can cause obstruction to aircraft and increase bird strike risk which must be avoided to ensure the ongoing safe operations of the airport. Subject to the use of conditions and informatives, it is considered that the development would not implicate the safe operations of Manchester Airport.

Other matters

During the course of the application comments from residential neighbours to the development were received raising concern that the proximity of the proposals closer to residential properties would impact the re-sale value as a result. Whilst these comments are noted, this is not a matter that can be considered within the scope of the determination of planning applications.

PLANNING BALANCE & CONCLUSIONS

The proposed development is an inappropriate form of development in the Green Belt. Substantial weight is afforded to this identified harm.

Following revisions to the proposals during the course of the application and subject to the use of planning conditions to secure further details it is considered there are no significant adverse impacts in regard to design, heritage assets, highways, accessibility, public right of ways (PROWs), Network Rail infrastructure, Manchester Airport, ecology, trees, residential amenity, air quality, flood risk or contaminated land/pollution control.

Balanced against the identified harm is the fact that the proposals are in compliance with the aims of enhancing and protecting an existing outdoor sports venue with established on site associated infrastructure. Sport England also support the proposal and advise that a second Astro-turf all-weather pitch, will reduce existing demand on the existing pitch, will assist in meeting hockey club training needs on the one site reducing reliance on other pitches on different sites, and in a manner that will meet England Hockey technical requirements with regard to surfacing, fencing and floodlighting.

Further to this, the supporting Design and Access Statement provides details on the history of the site and club and the reasons as to why the proposals are sought for approval summarised as follows:

The site is owned by Cheshire East Council and has been leased since 1978, with the lease most recently updated and renewed in 2019. At the time of the application it is stated that the Club had hockey teams comprising 5no. senior men's and ladies teams respectively playing regularly on a Saturday with Under 11's, 13's and 15's junior teams, veteran and mixed teams. The total membership number is approximately 242 persons. The club is also said to have 3no. semi-professional coaches and have training sessions most week-nights. In addition, Wilmslow Lacrosse Club runs 2no. senior men's teams, 1no. senior ladies team and 3no. juniors teams

play at the club, albeit mostly on the grass pitches. The applicant notes that as Lacrosse is unplayable on grass in winter months of January and February this is also said to place further pressure on the existing Astro-turf pitch usage, which is unavailable to them for home matches, as such they have to travel to Greater Manchester for them. It is stated however that the Lacrosse teams do regularly use the existing Astro pitch for evening training. The site has also hosted the British National Championships for Lacrosse. The Astro pitch is also used by Wilmslow Junior Football Club, Premier League Sports 5 a side and hired by Wilmslow Preparatory School and Alderley Edge School for girls. Until recently the Wilmslow Wayfarers Cricket Club also played at the site until moving to Lindow Cricket Club, though still utilise the facilities at this site.

They state that as a result of improvements to the club grounds, such as, the astroturf pitches, supporter stands, club house extensions etc. that this has resulted in an increase of site users and numbers of teams and their playing standards improving with the club hosting North-West league hockey games. In the Design and Access Statement it also states that the club has submitted its Development Strategy and Recruitment Plan 2020-25 to England Hockey and it identifies that when the next band of juniors come into seniors the club will need more teams to accommodate them, resulting in an increased need for pitch time. They note that the need is heightened given that all league hockey is being played on the Astro turf pitches and as such growth is required. It is stated that home matches take place on the Astro-turf pitch with 2 hours between each match with start times of 10:30am, 12:30am, 2:30pm and 4:30pm. The earliest match time conflicts with the opening of the social club between 1:00pm and 8:30pm which is said to cause issue with attachment to the club's other facilities. It is noted that the Cheshire East Playing Pitch Strategy (CEPPS) identifies the need for an additional Astroturf pitch in the Wilmslow area and that it is England Hockey's preferred approach for a new pitch to be placed in Wilmslow area also. It is for these reasons it is stated that there is a demand for a second Astro-turf pitch at the site in line with identified needs within the CEPPS. The placement of the second pitch is considered to be the most logical location and would not impact the existing 3 lacrosse pitches, cricket square or outfield. It is stated that with the new pitch and spectators stand that the existing club house and changing facilities can be managed effectively as they are insitu to support the current proposals, with eventual aims to further improve or extend these should demand prompt this (subject to future separate planning permissions).

This information that the facilities at the club are very well used and form a valuable sporting facility for the local community, and having regard to the identified need, the details above are considered to amount to the very special circumstances required to outweigh the identified harm to the Green Belt. Accordingly, the application is recommended for approval subject to conditions.

In order to give proper effect to the Committee's intent and without changing the substance of its decision, authority is delegated to the Head of Planning in consultation with the Chair (or in their absence the Vice Chair) to correct any technical slip or omission in the resolution, before issue of the decision notice.

Application for Full Planning

RECOMMENDATION: Approve subject to following conditions

1. A03FP - Commencement of development (3 years)
2. A01AP - Development in accord with approved plans
3. A06EX - Materials as application
4. A02LS - Submission of landscaping scheme
5. A04LS - Landscaping (implementation)
6. NPPF - NPPF informative
7. tree protection
8. tree works
9. external lighting
10. external lighting caps
11. Construction management plan
12. Parking
13. hours of operation
14. noise dampening pads
15. drainage scheme
16. drainage implementation scheme
17. drainage verification
18. SE PHASING
19. SE CONSTRUCTION MAN
20. SE PITCH MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE
21. site specific dust management plan
22. electric vehicle charging points
23. external lighting
24. crane permit
25. construction hours
26. previously undiscovered contamination
27. infiltration testing
28. ordinary watercourses
29. cec byelaw
30. extent of approved development
31. radio frequency

32. secure cycle parking

33. pedestrian refuge signage

