

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Andrew Hunter.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
24/02650/FP	Installation of permanent toilet	Hitchin Cricket Ground Lucas Lane Hitchin Hertfordshire SG5 2JA

Submitted Plan Nos

Location Plan Mise en Plan KL2stn. + STK Location Plan

1.0 Policies

SP5	Countryside and Green Belt
SP9	Design and Sustainability
D1	Sustainable design
D3	Protecting living conditions
SECN12	Achieving well-designed places
SECN13	Protecting Green Belt Land

2.0 **Relevant Site History**

2.1 23/01144/FP - Erection of single storey cricket pavilion – Approved 06/07/21.

2.2 15/00192/1 - Development A) Outline application for erection of 27 dwellings with access from Lucas Lane - details of scale, layout, design and landscaping are reserved; Development B) Full planning application for the provision of all weather sports pitch with 8 x 15m floodlight columns, replacement clubhouse, scoreboard/implement shed with changing facilities, widened access from Gaping Lane and provision of additional parking – Approved 22/03/16.

3.0 **Representations**

3.1 **NHC Environmental Health Noise** – No objections.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

4.1.1 The site is at the southern end of a cricket pitch, which is part of wider complex Hitchin Cricket Club and Blueharts Hockey Club. The cricket pitch has mature trees around most of its perimeter, apart from its entrance on its south side that connects with the

main sports club house building. The site is near a new cricket pavilion completed following planning permission 23/01144/FP.

- 4.1.2 Dwellings are to the north of the pitch, open agricultural land is to the west and south-west, land to the east is undeveloped, and to the south and south-east is another cricket pitch. The site is on the west of Hitchin which has a character of low intensity sports and recreational use. The site is in the Green Belt.

4.2 **Proposal**

- 4.2.1 The erection of a permanent single detached toilet near the pavilion built under 23/01144/FP, which is to serve the needs of the pavilion.

4.3 **Key Issues**

- 4.3.1 The key material considerations are whether the proposal is acceptable in principle, design, and neighbour amenity.

Principle

- 4.3.2 The site is in the Green Belt. In the Green Belt, only certain types of development are acceptable in principle. If development is not acceptable in principle it will be inappropriate, and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

- 4.3.3 Policy SP5 refers to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which sets out exceptions to inappropriate development in the Green Belt in paragraphs 154 and 155 (December 2024 version). Para. 155 is not relevant, and 154 is:

154. Development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless one of the following exceptions applies:

a) buildings for agriculture and forestry;

b) the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use), including buildings, 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;

c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;

d) the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;

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e) limited infilling in villages;

f) limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the development plan (including policies for rural exception sites); and

g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land (including a material change of use to residential or mixed use including residential), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.

h) Other forms of development provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. These are:

i. mineral extraction;

ii. engineering operations;

iii. local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location;

iv. the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction;

v. material changes in the use of land (such as changes of use for outdoor sport or recreation, or for cemeteries and burial grounds); and

vi. development, including buildings, brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.

- 4.3.4 The proposal would result in the construction of a new building in the Green Belt. It's considered that the building would comply with b), i.e. that it would be an appropriate facility for outdoor sport. Being of a small size and being close to the pavilion on land used for sport, it's not considered that it would harm the openness of the Green Belt and would not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. The proposal is not considered inappropriate development in the Green Belt and complies with Policy SP5 of the Local Plan and Section 13 of the NPPF.

Design

- 4.3.5 The building would have a more unusual appearance as a single detached toilet with a rear vent, however it would be small and clad externally in wood which would be similar to the pavilion it would be in association with and sympathetic to the more rural and undeveloped character of the locality it is proposed to be within. The building would have limited to no visibility outside the wider Cricket Ground site and will not harm the locality. The proposal complies with Policy D1 of the Local Plan and Section 12 of the NPPF.

Neighbour amenity

- 4.3.6 The proposed building would be small, relatively remote from the closest dwellings to the east, obscured by trees, and will not generate harmful amounts of noise and other disturbance. Impacts on amenity are acceptable. The proposal complies with Policy D3 of the Local Plan.

4.4 **Conclusion**

4.4.4 In the absence of material planning reasons to the contrary it is my view that planning permission is **GRANTED**.

5.0 **Recommendation**

5.1 That planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out wholly in accordance with the details specified in the application and supporting approved documents and plans listed above.

Reason: To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with details which form the basis of this grant of permission.

Biodiversity Net Gain

This development is not subject to the statutory Biodiversity Gain Plan condition because it is considered exempt under the statutory exemptions (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain-exempt-developments>) or transitional arrangements in respect of the biodiversity gain condition.

Proactive Statement:

Planning permission has been granted for this proposal. Discussion with the applicant to seek an acceptable solution was not necessary in this instance. The Council has therefore acted proactively in line with the requirements of the Framework (paragraph 38) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

Signed  Anne McDonald	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Determining Officer Date: 22 January 2025	