

### **3 DCCE2003/1716/F - CHANGE OF USE FROM AGRICULTURAL LAND TO VILLAGE PLAYING FIELD TO THE NORTH OF STALLS FARM & TO THE SOUTH OF THE A438, BARTESTREE, HEREFORD.**

**For: Bartestree with Lugwardine Group Parish Council**

**Date Received: 9th June 2003**

**Ward: Hagley**

**Grid Ref: 56017, 41086**

**Expiry Date: 4th August 2003**

Local Member: Councillor R.M. Wilson

#### **1. Site Description and Proposal**

- 1.1 The application site is located on the southern side of the A438 Hereford to Ledbury Road and to the east of the existing recreation land at Bartestree. Currently the site is in agricultural use and on inspection used as pasture for grazing purposes. To the south of the site is Stalls Farm which is accessed via a track linking to the A438 and in the north western corner are two properties Hagley Croft and Lingfield. The application site has a road frontage to the A438 and is clearly visible from the public highway.
- 1.2 The site has overhead electric lines crossing it in a east to west direction and is located in close proximity to the public footpath network.
- 1.3 It has been indicated in the application that the requirements of the field is to provide two additional junior size football pitches and the rest of the land will be for informal purposes. No hard surfaces on the application site are indicated or vehicle access or parking areas except that required for mowing and maintenance purposes. A gate access off Stalls Farm is to be provided.

#### **2. Policies**

##### **2.1 South Herefordshire District Local Plan:**

GD1	-	General Development Criteria
C1	-	Development Within Open Countryside
R1	-	Provision of New Recreational Facilities
R2	-	Shortfalls in Outdoor Playing Space

##### **2.2 Hereford Unitary Development Plan (Deposit Draft):**

S11	-	Community Facility and Service
RST1	-	Creation for Recreation, Sport, Tourism Development
RST5	-	New Open Space in/adjacent to Settlements

##### **2.3 Planning Policy Guidance:**

PPG17	-	Planning for Open Space, Sports and Recreation
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### 3. Planning History

3.1 There is no relevant planning history.

### 4. Consultation Summary

#### Statutory Consultations

4.1 Aquila draw the applicant's attention to the health and safety guidance note GC6 (Avoidance of Danger from Overhead Electric Lines Third Edition 1997). Aquila recommend that the lines should be underground to avoid any future problems. Overhead lines are wholly inappropriate for a playing field.

4.2 Sport England: Sport England is generally supportive of proposals for new playing fields, recognising the benefits of the increased opportunity for participating in sport. These are recognised in the objective of Planning Policy Guidance Note 17.

#### Internal Council Advice

4.3 Chief Forward Planning Officer: The proposal would appear to meet relevant policies within the Local Plan, particularly R1 and G1 and is therefore encouraged.

### 5. Representations

5.1 No adverse comments comes from Lugwardine Parish Council.

5.2 Seven letters have been received either objecting to the proposal or raising issues in respect of the scheme proposed; a petition of 15 signatures has also been received on behalf of residents opposite Hagley Orchard for the site to continue as agricultural land. The letters received are from Stalls Farm, Ashley House, Hagley Croft (x 2), Lingfield, Stalls Cottage, Hagley House and these are summarised as follows:

- There are already adequate sports and play facilities;
- Development will have a significant adverse affect on the privacy and outlook;
- The use will lead to nuisance with associated noise and litter;
- The proposal will have an adverse affect on the landscape in the heart of the village and would further destroy the rural feel to the village;
- The existing playing field suffers damage to the hedges and fences;
- Through use of the field there is damage to the trees;
- There is late night use of the current areas as a race track and this will only increase on to the farm drive;
- In five to ten years time there will be an escalation in the use due to the need of changing facilities, toilets and car parking;
- People from outside the village are brought in to play in the teams which will create urban sprawl;
- The use of the site for playing field purposes will have an impact on safety issues in respect of the road boundary;
- The application makes no reference to the means of access to the proposed site;
- No one is prepared to take responsibility for the existing facilities and children play football till late in the evening;
- If the proposed new field is needed for further football pitches no lights should be installed and the area should not be used for car boot sales etc.
- Access to the site should be via a kissing gate to deter access by bicycles;

- The privacy of Lingfield should be respected and safeguarded;
- 5.3 The full text of these letters can be inspected at Central Planning Services, Blueschool House, Blueschool Street, Hereford and prior to the Sub-Committee meeting.

## **6. Officers Appraisal**

- 6.1 The main issues to be considered are the loss of agricultural land, visual impact, compliance with planning policy and highway safety.
- 6.2 In relation to loss of agricultural land clearly the site is currently in active agricultural use and represents a parcel of land which is bounded to the east and west by access tracks to Stalls Farm and Hagley Court, Court Close and East Hagley Court, and to the north by the A438. In the north western corner two residential properties are located, Hagley Croft and Lingfield. To the southern boundary of the site a public footpath runs in close proximity together with the Stalls Farm complex. The Parish Council has been asked the question what would be the extent of any remaining land in the same tenancy/ownership or holding. The comments received were that the site does form part of Stalls Farm and detail the remaining area of the farm is substantial. From the Officers knowledge of this general area there is a large supply of agricultural land and it is considered that the removal of the parcel proposed would not have such an impact on agricultural land supply that would be detrimental to the viability of the adjoining agricultural holding.
- 6.3 Turning to visual impact the site, currently it is used for grazing and the proposal is to use the site for two additional junior sized football pitches and no other form of sports uses are planned currently for the site. The provision of such facility would have the impact of four goalposts being erected on the site with the general area being mown and manicured to the level required for footballing purposes. The Local Planning Authority could impose a planning condition requiring the applicant to provide details of the position of pitches so that the Local Planning Authority retains control over the location of such therefore ensuring that the amenities of adjoining residential properties is protected.
- 6.4 It is clear that the adjoining residential properties of Hagley Croft, Lingfield and Stalls Farm would benefit from some landscape margins similar to those carried out when the existing recreation facilities were laid out. Once again such protection can be controlled through a landscaping condition. For those properties located with views of the application site clearly when the site is being used for recreational purposes the general appearance of the site will change through the presence of people, however for the level of pitches proposed this will be of a low key nature and will retain its open characteristic.
- 6.5 The South Herefordshire Local Plan emphasises the importance of outdoor playing space through Policy R2 (Shortfalls in Outdoor Playing Space) and it states that the identification and rectification in shortfalls in outdoor playing space will be sought, within or adjacent to housing areas and settlements. Land has been identified as proposal sites for such usage, to help rectify known shortfalls. PPG17 – Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation seeks the provision as being supportive of a ‘rural renewal’ and promoting social exclusion, community cohesion and sustainable development. The Local Plan makes the point that outdoor playing space provision in Bartestree should be in the region of 2.25 hectares. The area that has been set aside for this purpose is 3.7 hectares and does not include the site subject to the application.

- 6.6 Bartestree has already been allocated the amount of outdoor playing space required for a village of its size, according to the criteria used in the Local Plan, However, the site in question is outside the settlement boundary and is subject to the provisions of Policy C1, which permits development of land for recreational purposes in such locations. Having regard to Adopted Development Plan policy the proposal would meet other relevant policies within the Local Plan, particularly R1 and GD1 and therefore the conflict with policy would not be substantially robust to warrant refusal on this ground.
- 6.7 In respect of highway issues no car parking provision is proposed for the application site and once again this matter can be controlled through a planning condition. The only access required to the site would be that for maintenance purposes and pedestrian access. It is the Officers opinion that pedestrian access should be via the existing recreation field across the private tracks serving Stalls Farm onto the application site. As summarised in Section 5 in this report the provision of a kissing gate type facility would also have the benefit of restricting access to the site of bicycles and motorbikes. Clearly along this boundary an access point large enough to take a tractor and mowing equipment will be required and details of this can be requested through a condition and ensure it is used for these purposes only. The applicant has detailed no new access from the A438 would be needed together with no additional parking facilities as the existing car parking provided around the existing village hall is adequate and the number of teams would never expand above the present situation, as all age ranges are already covered and the catchment area is limited. Following inspection of the site it is considered that secure cycle parking should be provided to allow a choice of modes of transport having regard to the safe links to the main heart of the village located on the northern side of the A438 via the existing traffic light crossing. This cycle parking provision should be located adjacent to the village hall.
- 6.8 Having regard to the above issues raised and those brought to the attention of the Local Planning Authority through the letters of representation it is your Officer's opinion that although the application site is not allocated for recreation purposes there are wider benefits which are supported through PPG17 and Local Plan policy. Having regard to the details of the scheme and the level of activity proposed it is concluded that the visual impact is acceptable, the scheme complies with Policies R1 and GD1 of the South Herefordshire District Local Plan and would not represent a danger to highway safety.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:**

**1 A01 (Time limit for commencement (full permission))**

**Reason: Required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.**

**2 G04 (Landscaping scheme (general))**

**Reason: In order to protect the visual amenities of the area.**

**3 G05 (Implementation of landscaping scheme (general))**

**Reason: In order to protect the visual amenities of the area.**

**4 G01 (Details of boundary treatments)**

**Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to ensure dwellings have satisfactory privacy.**

**5 No works shall take place on the site or use commenced until the overhead electric lines crossing the site have been put under ground in accordance with the specification to be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.**

**Reason: In the interests of public safety.**

**6 No development approved by this permission shall be commenced until a scheme detailing the position of formal sports pitches have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans and the position of the approved pitches shall not be moved unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority or additional pitches added.**

**Reason: In order to protect the visual amenity of the area and to ensure that adjoining dwellings have satisfactory privacy.**

**7 No hard surfaces shall be provided on the application site nor shall the application site be used for the parking of any vehicles at any time.**

**Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and highway safety.**

**8 No development approved by this permission shall be commenced until pedestrian access and maintenance access points to the application site have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and remain as approved thereafter.**

**Reason: To ensure adjoining dwellings have satisfactory privacy and in the interests of highway safety.**

**9 H29 (Secure cycle parking provision)**

**Reason: To ensure that there is adequate provision for secure cycle accommodation within the application site, encouraging alternative modes of transport in accordance with both local and national planning policy.**

**10 No floodlighting or external lighting shall be provided on the site at any time.**

**Reason: To safeguard local amenities.**

**Notes to Applicant:**

**1 HN01 - Mud on highway**

**2 N03 - Adjoining property rights**

**3 N04 - Rights of way**

**4 N11 - Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981**

Decision: .....

Notes: .....

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**Background Papers**

Internal departmental consultation replies..