

Planning Committee
Report of the Planning Manager (Development Management)

Planning Ref: 25/00897/FUL
Applicant: Sarah Beale
Ward: Ambien



Hinckley & Bosworth
Borough Council

Site: Village Hall, Hall Drive, Stoke Golding

Proposal: Proposed Multi Use Games Area (MUGA)

1. Recommendations

1.1. Grant planning permission subject to:

- Planning conditions outlined at the end of this report

2. Planning application description

- 2.1. This planning application seeks to erect a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) within the site boundaries of Village Hall, Hall Drive, Stoke Golding.
- 2.2. The Games Area is proposed with general dimensions of 20m x 10m and would have white football/basketball goals on either end, utilising an existing brick wall at its north boundary (resulting in a slightly deeper 22.2m overall depth).
- 2.3. The proposed area would also include cricket stumps and is covered with 14mm artificial grass with inlaid designs, is to be sited centrally to Stoke Golding Recreation Park, which features predominantly natural grass. The proposals also include a 2m high green metal mesh fence at the north and south boundaries of the area and the same style fence 1m high at the east and west boundaries. Four trees are proposed approximately 0.6m away from the east boundary of the area to offset any biodiversity loss.
- 2.4. The area would be sited to the northwest of the Village Hall/Recreation site boundary, approximately 19m from its west boundary and 35m from its north boundary.

3. Description of the site and surrounding area

- 3.1. The application site, which is sited at Stoke Golding Park and includes the Village Hall, covers an area of approximately 22,500m² with a perimeter of around 650m. The wider application site is located centrally to a predominantly residential setting and is accessed via Hall Drive (pedestrian only) and Arnold Road (vehicular and pedestrian), with a dedicated car park near the Village Hall entrance, at its northeast corner. It is located to the south and within the settlement boundary of Stoke Golding.
- 3.2. The northern section of the site includes the Village Hall and a children's playground, while the remainder consists of a large open grassed area suitable for sports and informal recreation. The site currently serves as a community space for leisure and events.
- 3.3. The site does is not within the Stoke Golding Conservation Area.

4. Relevant planning history

03/01471/FUL

- SINGLE STOREY SIDE EXTENSION AND ALTERATIONS TO HALL
- PER

- 06.02.2004

24/00318/FUL

- Extension of existing car park
- PER
- 03.06.2024

5. Publicity

- 5.1 The application has been publicised by sending out letters to local residents. A site notice was also posted within the vicinity of the site.
- 5.2 No responses have been received.

Consultation

- 6.1. The following consultees provided the following comments.

- Hinckley and Bosworth Pollution:

'I have some concerns regarding impact noise from balls hitting the fence (owing to adjacent residential). Further details are required on the fence structure as measures are usually taken by the supplier to reduce impact noise. It is also recommended that the targets on the fences are removed.'

In response to this, the Applicant provided further information regarding the specification and materials of the fence as follows:

"The play equipment company have confirmed they will be using an '868 rebound mesh fencing.' This is designed to absorb impact and rebound the ball appropriately and is specifically designed for sports purposes.

Further specs on the fence panels from the manufacturer are below:

*2030mm high x 2506mm long, Duex 868 mesh panels (Green)
Galvanised to BSEN ISO 1461
Polyester powder coated to BS EN 13438 : 2005 & BS 1722-16 : 2009 (excludes marine environment).*

The client has also confirmed they are happy to remove the target boards if these are seen as an issue."

This information was shared with HBBC Environmental Health, who confirmed that they have no further comments as a result.

- 6.2. The following consultees have no objections to the proposal:

- LCC Minerals
- LCC Ecology: No objection subject to conditions.
- Sport England:

“It is considered that the proposal to build an extended MUGA in this location would not prejudice the use for the remaining playing field to mark out pitches and that sufficient land remains to mark out playing pitches.

Based on the above, it is considered that the proposal would, on balance, meet exception 5 of Sport England’s Playing Fields Policy and the requirements of Paragraph 104 of the NPPF (2024) in that the proposed MUGA would be of sufficient benefit to the development of sport for the community as to outweigh the loss of this part of the playing field.

*Given the above, Sport England raises **no objection** to the application which is considered, on balance, to accord with exception 5 of our playing fields policy and the requirements of paragraph 104(c) of the NPPF in that the proposal for a MUGA in this location would provide sufficient benefits to sport for the community and its proposed extension would not affect the quantity or quality of playing pitches at the site or otherwise adversely affect their use.”*

Policy

7.1. Stoke Golding Neighbourhood Plan 2020-2039

- Policy SG1: Decision-taking
- Policy SG9: Green Infrastructure
- Policy SG10: Public Rights of Way Network
- Policy SG15: Design
- Policy SG17: Community Services and Facilities
- Policy SG19: Infrastructure

7.2. Core Strategy (2009)

- Spatial Objective 7: Healthier Active Communities
- Policy 19: Green Space and Play Provision

7.3. Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD (2016)

- Policy DM6 Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geological Interest
- Policy DM7 Preventing Pollution and Flooding
- Policy DM8 Safeguarding Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities
- Policy DM9 Safeguarding Natural and Semi-Natural Open Spaces
- Policy DM10: Development and Design
- Policy DM18: Vehicle Parking Standards

7.4. National Planning Policies and Guidance

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024)
- Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

7.5. Other relevant guidance

- Good Design Guide (2020)
- National Design Guide (2019)
- Open Space and Recreation Study (2016)
- Planning for Sport Guidance (Sport England) (2024)

8. Appraisal

8.1. Key Issues

- Assessment against strategic planning policies
- Design and impact upon the character of the area
- Impact upon neighbouring residential amenity
- Impact upon highway safety
- Drainage
- Ecology and Biodiversity

Assessment against strategic planning policies

- 8.1. Policy SG1 (Decision-taking) of the Stoke Golding Neighbourhood Plan (Made 2024) states when determining a planning application, all the relevant policies of the Neighbourhood Plan will be applied.
- 8.2. Policy SG9 states, to be supported, development proposals must be located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the Green Infrastructure Network. Under Policy SG9, the development is located on existing managed open space and is unlikely to significantly impact the Green Infrastructure Network given that the proposed use of astroturf is permeable. To support this assessment, four trees are proposed 0.6m away from the east boundary and a Biodiversity Net Gain Metric has also been submitted in support of the application.
- 8.3. Policy SG10 states development proposals should protect and enhance public rights of way, including for their biodiversity value, and wherever possible create new links to the network including footpaths, bridleways and cycleways. The proposal does not obstruct existing routes and is sited nearby to the Arnold Road pedestrian pathway/cycleway.
- 8.4. Policy SG17 lists both the Stoke Golding Recreation Ground and Village Hall to be retained in accordance with Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD Policies DM8, DM22 and DM25. The proposed MUGA enhances their recreational value rather than displacing them.
- 8.5. Policy 19 of the Core Strategy (2009) states Outdoor Sports Provision should be provided at a minimum of 1.6 ha/1000 population. According to the Open Space Assessment, Stoke Golding has 2.48 hectares of current open space, per 1,000 population. Whilst the MUGA is modest in scale (0.02 ha) and does not provide any further open space to what currently exists, it contributes positively to meeting local demand for recreational sports facilities and complements the wider recreation ground provision.
- 8.6. Hall Drive Play Area and Recreation Ground is allocated as Open Space under Policy DM8 of the SADMP, which aims to safeguard sport and recreational facilities unless specific criteria are met.
- 8.7. Stoke Golding Recreation Ground is an area that is popularly used for recreational activities. On a site visit in October, removable football goals to the south of the site were present, and this suggests the use of the field as an informal football pitch (along with other sports). It is noted that the area is sited centrally to a popular pedestrian route, potentially used by pupils of the nearby St Martin's Academy. The proposals for a multi-use games area would not be out of context with how the area is used currently, would provide no amenity further harm and would enhance the use of the area. The proposals would not result in the loss of land or buildings in recreational sporting use, and would instead result in the enhancement of the existing recreational facility as a purpose built multi use area is proposed, whereas the current site includes only a single football goal post and rebound wall.
- 8.8. It is therefore regarded, that the proposal for a 10m by 20m Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) within the grounds of Stoke Golding Village Hall aligns broadly with both the

over-arching policies of the Stoke Golding Neighbourhood Plan and the Core Strategy.

- 8.9. Overall, the proposal is consistent with strategic and local policy aims, subject to further consideration upon the design and character of the area and impact upon residential amenity.

Design and impact upon the character of the area

- 8.10. Policy SG15 of the Stoke Golding Neighbourhood Plan (Made 2024) states development should take advantage of existing topography, landscape features (including water courses), wildlife habitats, existing buildings, site orientation and microclimates.
- 8.11. Policy DM10 of the SADMP (2016) states development should complement or enhances the character of the surrounding area with regard to scale, layout, density, mass, design, materials and architectural features; The use and application of building materials respects the materials of existing, adjoining/neighbouring buildings and the local area generally; It incorporates a high standard of landscaping where this would add to the quality of the design and siting.
- 8.12. Although the development does not explicitly detail how it takes advantage of the local existing topography, it is noted, that the application site lacks topographical variety. Since the proposals cover only a small portion of the land (approximately 0.89%) for a Multi-Use Games Area on an already level surface and make use of an existing walled structure, it is unreasonable to require this the MUGA to be designed in a way that would incorporate the topography further.
- 8.13. The green mesh fence is seen to be consistent in colour and will be obscured by then the proposed astroturf and natural grass and would provide minimal colour contrast. In addition, there is an existing playground only 20m from the proposed games area, with a similar shade green metal fence which forms further design consistency
- 8.14. The documentation visuals provided by 'Creative Play' state that the proposed structures will incorporate a range of high-quality, durable materials to ensure safety, functionality, durability and strong design. No timber is used as part of the proposals.
- 8.15. Given that there are no outbuildings as part of the proposals there are largely no design considerations to made. The most prominent visual aspect of the proposals are for both basketball/football goals at either end of the area and the 2m high green mesh fence. Given there are no football goals in the immediate area, the fence would be the only aspect that is comparable to the local area. There are no green mesh fences within the residential area of Hall Drive or Arnold Road and therefore the green mesh fence poses a design inconsistency. This green mesh fence, however, absorbs sound and is specifically designed for children's play areas and to absorb the sound of balls hitting the fence etc. Therefore, providing a more design consistent fence would be at the detriment of nearby residents amenity and is therefore considered to be acceptable.
- 8.16. It is considered that the proposal complies with Policy DM10 of the SADMP (2016) and Policy SG15 of the Stoke Golding Neighbourhood Plan (2024).

Impact upon neighbouring residential amenity

- 8.17. Policy DM10 of the SADMP (2016) states developments will be permitted providing that the development would not have a significant adverse effect on the privacy and amenity of nearby residents and occupiers of adjacent buildings, including matters of lighting, air quality (including odour), noise, vibration and visual intrusion and the

amenity of occupiers of the proposed development would not be adversely affected by activities in the vicinity of the site.

- 8.18. Consultation comments suggested that noise reduction measures should be implemented by the suppliers of the green mesh fences. This has been detailed within the submitted sales document/visuals from 'Creative Play'. Comments also recommended the removal of red/white ball targets at either end of the area to aid in reducing impact noise from balls. These targets have been removed since the originally submitted plans, to aid in noise reduction. It is therefore considered that sufficient measures have been undertaken to reduce noise impact from the proposals.
- 8.19. The play equipment company ('Creative Play') has confirmed that the proposed installation will use '868 rebound' mesh fencing, a specification designed specifically for sports applications. This fencing system is engineered to absorb impact and effectively rebound balls, ensuring durability and performance for multi-use games areas. The manufacturer's specifications for the panels are as follows: each panel measures 2030mm in height and 2506mm in length, constructed from 'Duex 868' mesh panels in green finish. The panels are galvanised to BSEN ISO 1461 standards and finished with a polyester powder coating compliant with BS EN 13438:2005 and BS 1722-16:2009. It is regarded that these mesh fence panels provide a robust and noise impact absorbing solution for the likely use of the games area, and following the submission of these details and specifications, the concerns previously raised by the Environmental Health Team have been addressed.
- 8.20. The closest dwelling to the proposed MUGA is No. 33 Arnold Road, which lies approximately 22m to the western boundary of the MUGA at its closest point. It is acknowledged that the introduction of a MUGA and the associated mesh fence will lead to an increase in general noise and activity in this area. However, due to the use of specialised noise absorbing fencing, and acknowledging that the Environmental health Team has no concerns from a noise and disturbance perspective, Officers consider on balance that the proposal would not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of neighbouring dwellings, including the closest neighbour at No. 33 Arnold Road.
- 8.21. The Good Design Guide recommends that a principal window to a habitable room should ideally be no less than 8m from the blank side of a single storey neighbouring property, rising to 14m for a two-storey property. In addition, the separation distance between two principal windows to habitable windows should be a minimum of 21m. Although the Multi-Use Games Area is not a residential property, we can use the guidance as set out to aid in the whether or not the development would be acceptable. The nearest residential dwelling (33 Arnold Road) is 22m away from the proposed site, is unlikely to result in loss of privacy for the occupiers of this property. As such, the development is in compliance with the separations distances as outlined in the Good Design Guide.
- 8.22. Building upon this, although the MUGA does not represent built form, the height of the fence panels (1m and 2m) will not result in overdevelopment given their modest height, distance from the site boundary and its mesh material.
- 8.23. It is therefore considered that the proposals comply with DM10 of the SADMP (2016) and the guidance as set out in the Good Design Guide.

Ecology and Biodiversity

- 8.24. Policy DM6 seeks to ensure that on site features are retained or included which safeguard and enhance biodiversity.

- 8.25. The site meets the de minimis threshold for Biodiversity Net gain, which is achievable on site with 29.81%. LCC Ecology have confirmed that the proposed planting of 4 trees does count as significant according to the definitions, however monitoring 4 trees for 30 years is disproportionate to the application. Therefore, does not require securing or production of a HMMP. A Biodiversity Gain Plan is secured by condition.
- 8.26. LCC ecology have also stated that although the site has limited ecological, there is a GCN positive pond within 130m of the application site and several more GCN positive ponds in the area. The site does not have suitable GCN terrestrial habitat present and the connective habitat between the application site and pond is considered poor. However, a working method statement will be required to ensure no GCN are harmed during construction.
- 8.27. In summary, subject to conditions, the proposal complies with Policy DM6 of the SADMP and Paragraph 193 of the NPPF.

Equality implications

- 8.28. **Where No Known Implications** Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 created the public sector equality duty. Section 149 states:-
- (1) A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
 - (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 8.29. Officers have taken this into account and given due regard to this statutory duty in the consideration of this application. The Committee must also ensure the same when determining this planning application.
- 8.30. There are no known equality implications arising directly from this development.

9. Conclusion

- 9.1 Taking into consideration national and local strategic policies, the proposal for a multi-use games area within the site boundary of Stoke Golding Village Hall is acceptable and in accordance with the relevant policies of the Development Plan. Therefore, it is recommended that planning permission be granted.

10. Recommendation

10.1 Grant planning permission subject to:

- Planning conditions outlined at the end of this report.

10.2 Conditions and Reasons

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

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

2. The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out otherwise than in complete accordance with the submitted application details received by the Local Planning Authority as follows:

- Application Form (received by the Local Planning Authority on 22/09/25)
- MUGA Visuals V2 - Quote Ref. No. 314/08 (07/11/25) Rev 1 DO (received by the Local Planning Authority on 07/11/25)
- Proposed Site Plan, Fence Elevations, Drg No. 25/59 01 Rev A (received by the Local Planning Authority on 22/09/25)
- Site Location Plan, Drg No. 25/59 02 (received by the Local Planning Authority on 22/09/25)
- BNG Metric (received by the Local Planning Authority on 3/09/25)

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory form of development in accordance with Policies DM1 and DM10 of the adopted Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (2016).

3. Prior to the commencement of development, a Non-Licensed Method Statement (NLMS) for Great Crested Newts must be prepared and submitted to the Local Planning Authority for written approval. The approved NLMS shall then be adhered to throughout the development process to ensure compliance.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory form of development in accordance with Policy DM6 of the adopted Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (2016).

10.3 Notes to applicant

1. The approved development may require Building Regulations Approval, for further information please contact the Building Control team via e-mail at building.control@blaby.gov.uk or call 0116 272 7533.
2. Your attention is drawn to the Biodiversity Net Gain note within the Decision Notice. The development is subject to the Biodiversity Gain Condition. A Biodiversity Gain Plan needs to be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority prior to commencement of development. The application can be made online here: https://www.hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk/info/200249/view_planning_applications_and_decisions/1476/does_the_property_comply_with_planning_conditions.