

PLANNING STATEMENT

NEW FENCING

GREENMOUNT CRICKET CLUB, BRANDLESHOLME ROAD, GREENMOUNT

Introduction

The ground of Greenmount Cricket Club is situated on the south west side of Brandlesholme Road (B6215) with a long boundary to the road. It is proposed to erect a 1.2 metre high white, picket fence along the side of the road. In addition, 1.2 metre high, green mesh fences are to be erected on the north east boundary of the site and to separate the car park from the cricket field.

Fences up to 2 metres high are “permitted development” but any fence over 1 metre high that abuts a highway, as in this instance, requires planning permission.

Greenmount Cricket Club has been established at its present ground since 1872. The club is now in the Lancashire League, the highest status league in this area. It has proved necessary to improve and extend the club’s facilities for this rise in status and to cater for existing and future members and increased numbers of spectators. There are 3 men’s teams and junior teams from under 9s upwards. Women’s cricket is expanding and there are also rounders teams.

Planning permission (number 66895) was granted in July 2021 for extensions and alterations to the buildings and improvements to the car park. The work is likely to be carried out in the next cricket close season.

The new fences are part of the general upgrading of the facilities. It is hoped that they will be in place for the start of this year’s cricket season, depending on how long it takes for the planning application to be decided.

Planning Policy

The cricket ground is in the Green Belt as defined in the Bury Unitary Development Plan, which was adopted as long ago as 1997. Policy OL1/2 states that “the construction of new buildings inside the Green Belt is inappropriate development” with exceptions that include “essential facilities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreationwhich preserve the openness of the Green Belt and which do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it”.

Current guidance is contained in the National Planning Policy Framework which was issued in revised form in July 2021. Paragraph 149 states that “a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt” with exceptions that include “the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use) for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation....as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it”.

The NPPF guidance is more relevant to buildings rather than fences but the development is undoubtedly an appropriate facility in connection with the existing use for outdoor sport and will preserve the openness of the Green Belt.

Justification

At present, the frontage to Brandlesholme Road is marked by concrete posts approximately 0.9 metres high and linked together by a single chain. Orange plastic mesh below the chain is, somewhat hopefully, intended to stop cricket balls being hit onto the highway. The current arrangement is unsightly and does little to deter unwelcome visitors, including spectators avoiding entry payment on match days.

A 1.0 metre high picket fence would not require planning permission. A 1.2 metre high fence will have no significant additional visual impact. It will stop any errant cricket balls and is just high enough to prevent people stepping over it.

The fence will be maintenance free. Its traditional design is entirely appropriate for a village cricket club. It will not obstruct views from the road over the open countryside to the west. It is an essential and appropriate facility for sport and recreation which will preserve the openness of the Green Belt.