

**PLANNING  
COMMITTEE**

**11<sup>th</sup> September 2025**

**Planning Application 25/00437/FUL**

**Installation of a 24m by 15m multi-use games area (MUGA) with 2m high fencing**

**Access At Morton Stanley Park, Windmill Drive, Redditch, Worcestershire,**

**Applicant: Mr Tom Holloway  
Ward: Webheath And Callow Hill**

**(see additional papers for site plan)**

The case officer of this application is Jonathan Pavey-Smith, Planning Officer (DM), who can be contacted on Tel: 01527 881689 EXT 1689 Email: jonathan.pavey-smith@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk for more information.

**Site Description**

The application site forms part of Morton Stanley Park, which is comprised of 95 acres of open space. The park was once a farm owned by William Morton Stanley who left the land in his will to the inhabitants of Redditch, to be used as a park. The park lies to the north of Callow Hill and is accessed off Windmill Drive to the east and Green Lane to the west. The site is allocated as Primarily Open Space under Policy 13 of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No4 (BoRLP4) The park is served by a car parking area; children play equipment and a recently installed café facility.

**Proposal Description**

The planning application relates to a proposed Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) sited immediately to the north of the main pathway which runs from Windmill Drive out to the west and Green Lane.

The MUGA would comprise a tarmac base which would be painted with coloured lined markings so that it could be used for a number of sports and games. The rectangular games area, measuring 24 metres by 15 metres, would be enclosed by a steel fence system which would be just above 2 metres in height along its lengths and just above 3 metres in height along most of its width. There would be four basketball/netball hoops located on each side of the rectangular games area. There would also be four mini recessed goals, and two larger recessed goals incorporated into the steel fence system that forms the walls of the games area. The enclosed games area can be accessed by entrance gaps within the steel fencing, which includes an access for disabled persons. The information provided with the application states that the games area can be used for a number of sports and activities including football, basketball and mini tennis, and is suitable for a wide age range. A single bench would also be located directly outside of the MUGA to the south.

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It should be noted that Schedule 2, Part 12, Class A of the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO) allows for development comprising small buildings, works or equipment on land belonging to a local authority, and implemented by them, without the need for planning permission. As one of these limitations prohibits buildings or equipment with a capacity over 200 cubic, and the capacity of the proposed MUGA would exceed this, the proposal requires express planning permission.

### **Relevant Policies:**

Borough of Redditch Local Plan No. 4  
Policy 1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development  
Policy 13: Primarily Open Space  
Policy 16: Natural Environment  
Policy 39: Built Environment  
Policy 40: High Quality Design and Safer Communities  
Policy 43: Leisure, Tourism and Abbey Stadium

Others

NPPF National Planning Policy Framework (2019)  
NPPG National Planning Practice Guidance

### **Relevant Planning History**

21/00228/FUL	Proposed Café, toilets, additional car parking and ancillary works	Approved	19.04.2021
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### **Consultations**

**Sports England:** The proposed development does not fall within either our statutory remit (Statutory Instrument 2015/595), or non-statutory remit (National Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) Par. 003 Ref. ID: 37-003-20140306) and, therefore, Sport England has not provided a detailed response in this case but would wish to give the following advice to aid the assessment of this application.

If the proposal involves the loss of any sports facility, then full consideration should be given to whether the proposal meets Par. 104 of National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is in accordance with local policies to protect social infrastructure and meets any approved Playing Pitch Strategy or Built Sports Facility Strategy that the local authority has in place.

**Leisure Services (Sports Provision/Facilities):** The Leisure Services team fully supports this application. We are committed to continuously enhancing our facilities to encourage residents to enjoy the outdoors and lead active lifestyles in our public open spaces. The addition of new amenities is expected to attract more park visitors and promote longer dwell times.

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The park currently features a children's play area (designed for those under 12), a skate park, and other play facilities aimed primarily at young teenagers. The proposed Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) is intended to complement these by providing a space suitable for a wider age range, helping to bridge the current gap in provision. The MUGA will accommodate multiple users simultaneously and support a range of activities for community enjoyment.

Working closely with the appointed contractor, HAGS, we have identified the most appropriate location for the new facility. The proposed site offers easy access from the main footpath and provides a fully hardstanding surface, both inside and around the area. Its proximity to the main car park, café, and play area ensures excellent natural surveillance and encourages a shared space where families can enjoy multiple amenities in one area.

There is a small group of trees nearby that the Parks team can thin or remove if necessary to further enhance visibility and safety. Since the installation of the café, incident reporting has improved significantly, thanks to strong communication between park users, the parks team, and café tenants. We anticipate this positive trend will continue as the park's facilities expand.

The current design includes a few seating options, with final placements to be confirmed prior to installation. Multiple access points to the MUGA including both goal ends and a side entrance will improve accessibility and offer clear exit routes if required.

We believe this facility will be a valuable asset to the park and the wider community.

**Worcester Regulatory Services:** Regarding Noise - No Objections.

**Tree Officer:** No Objections

**Community Safety Officer:** This type of development can attract anti-social behaviour, and whilst this could be improved by good surveillance, the site does not offer alternative locations for the development where the situation would be improved. Although anti-social behaviour could be deterred to some extent by securing the facility, given that this is an open facility for the public to use, this would not be an option here either.

Community Safety would suggest that positioning is considered and suggest the facility is positioned with the improved opportunities for natural surveillance closer to the existing café.

**Worcester County Council Archaeology:** The proposed development for 'Installation of a 24m by 15m multi-use games area (MUGA) with 2m high fencing' is situated directly adjacent to the site of a potential medieval farmstead 'Upper Grinsty Farm' (demolished in the 19<sup>th</sup> century) and the course of the probable medieval routeway Lackmans Lane (WSM50179).

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A farmstead is located on the site of Upper Grinsty Farm on Blagrave's Map of Feckenham, dated 1591 (Copied in 1744 by John Doharty). Lackmans Lane is also named on the map, appearing as a substantial routeway linking Upper Grinsty Farm with traditional farmsteads Lower Grinsty Farm (labelled Grinsty on the 1840 tithe) and Greenlane Farm (labelled Green Lanes on the tithe) to the west, and Callow Hill Road. By the 1840 tithe Lackmans Lane is recorded as a footway. Both Lower Grinsty and Greenlane Farms appear to have been moated (WSM00775 and WSM00022).

There is high potential for Upper Grinsty Farm to have medieval origins. Earthworks of ridge and furrow are discernible on LiDAR on the opposite side of Lackmans Lane, an indicator of medieval farming (WSM41238 and WSM41239), while the Portable Antiquities Scheme records the discovery of a medieval coin on the western boundary of the 20<sup>th</sup> century park (WSM66061).

The proposed development area is directly adjacent to the site of a potential medieval farmstead and routeway, recorded on Blagrave's Map of Feckenham and therefore the application is judged to have moderate potential to impact heritage assets of local archaeological interest that would be significantly altered or lost through development. On this basis, should you be minded to grant planning permission for this scheme it is recommended that a programme of archaeological works should be secured and implemented by means of a suitably worded condition attached to any grant of planning permission. This would take the form of archaeological monitoring and recording (a watching brief) on groundworks.

*'Local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible. However, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted'. (NPPF Section 16, paragraph 218).*

In order to comply with policy, we recommend that a programme of archaeological works should be secured and implemented by means of a suitably worded condition attached to any grant of planning permission.

### **Public Consultation Response**

Site notice displayed expired 21.07.25

Twenty neighbour letters sent expired 20.07.25.

One letter of objection has been received which raises concerns that the proposed development would be subject to vandalism and would be misused after hours. It would also increase pressure for parking.

### **Assessment of Proposal**

Morton Stanley Park is designated as Primarily Open Space (POS) on the proposals map and therefore Policy 13 of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan no. 4 (BoRLP4) is most

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relevant when considering the principle of new development. The main aim of this policy is to ensure that designated POS is protected, and where appropriate, enhanced to improve its quality, value, multifunctionality and accessibility. Loss of POS is resisted unless a number of considerations are met.

With regards to the current proposal, the MUGA scheme has been proposed in order to improve and enhance the current playing field provision. The development would allow a wide variety of activities and exercise to take place in the area and would be suitable to use in all weather conditions. The MUGA has been designed to be multi-functional but also suitable for a wide age range, as well as being accessible to individuals with disabilities. The site can be easily accessed by pedestrian footpaths and there is a vehicular access off Windmill Lane leading to the parking area of the café to the north of the site.

The proposal is therefore considered to clearly meet the aims of Policy 13 of the BoRLP4, and therefore the principle of development is supported. Furthermore Policy 43 of the BoRLP4 supports proposals relating to leisure facilities provided they are located within a sustainable location, which is accessible by a choice of transport.

Whilst the principle of development is considered acceptable it is still considered necessary to consider other material planning considerations.

### **Design and Safety**

Policy 39 of the BoRLP4 requires development to contribute positively to the local character of the area. Further to this, Policy 40 of the BoRLP4 seeks development of a good design including that which contributes to both public and private spaces.

In order to achieve this, Policy 40 expects proposals to be of a high-quality design which reflects or complements the local surroundings, is of an appropriate siting and layout, is accessible, and encourages community safety.

With regards to the above, the new MUGA would be sited close to the footpath so that it would be easily accessible during winter months. The MUGA would comprise of a coloured tarmac base and a high-quality steel enclosure made up of panels and posts. Some of the panels would be brightly coloured so that the facility was vibrant and attractive to users. The steel panel and post system would also provide a strong structure, which would make the facility vandalism proof and ensure that sports could be played safely. The vertical tubes which make up the panels would be positioned close together so that even small balls would not escape the MUGA. With regards to its siting, design and appearance, the proposed development is considered acceptable.

The Community Safety Officer has highlighted that this type of recreational development can attract issues with anti-social behaviour. Whilst this is noted, it is not considered that any improvements or relocation of the proposal could be made through amendments and

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these concerns have been balanced against the benefits of the proposed community facility, which include social benefits as well as benefits to health and wellbeing.

With regards to securing the facility, the applicant has stated that the MUGA is proposed to be an open facility for the public to use and it is not therefore intended that the MUGA would be locked. With regards to providing emergency contact details, this can be suggested to the applicant through an informative, however it is not considered that it would be reasonable to request this by planning condition. Notwithstanding these suggestions, it is noted that the MUGA would be sited in relatively close proximity to the existing cafe building, the car park and the footpath network, allowing some natural surveillance of the facility, which would assist in reducing the likelihood of anti-social behaviour occurring.

### **Residential Amenity**

In view of location of the MUGA, which is approximately 250 metres from any neighbouring dwellings (nearest to the south on Morton Lane), the development is not considered to cause any significant harm to residential amenity. Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) have reviewed the proposal and have raised no objections with regards to noise and nuisances. It has been clarified that no lighting is proposed as part of the MUGA scheme.

### **Trees and Ecology**

There are no trees to be removed as part of the development proposal and the Council's Tree Officer has confirmed that the proposal raises no tree related issues. Furthermore, given that the trees would not be affected and as the area of land that the MUGA would be sited on is well maintained, short grass, the installation of the MUGA raises no concerns in relation to ecology matters.

### **Biodiversity Net Gain**

In England, subject to some limited exceptions, biodiversity net gain is required under a statutory framework introduced by Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (inserted by the Environment Act 2021). This statutory framework is referred to as 'biodiversity net gain' (BNG) in Planning Practice Guidance to distinguish it from other or more general biodiversity gains or protections.

This objective is for development to deliver at least a 10% increase in biodiversity value relative to the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat and this applies in the case of this application. This increase can be achieved through onsite biodiversity gains, registered offsite biodiversity gains or statutory biodiversity credits.

The habitat lost because of the development is modified grassland and the submitted small sites metric (July 2024) shows a baseline position and the subsequent post development position. Onsite BNG uplift is not feasible due to the limited extent of the red line application site. The applicant has therefore stated that they wish to achieve the 10%

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uplift via an offsite biodiversity gain. This will need to be controlled through a legal agreement and the recommendation is drafted accordingly. Overall, the development is therefore acceptable regarding BNG.

### **Archaeology:**

The proposed development for 'Installation of a 24m by 15m multi-use games area (MUGA) with 2m high fencing' is situated directly adjacent to the site of a potential medieval farmstead 'Upper Grinsty Farm' (demolished in the 19<sup>th</sup> century) and the course of the probable medieval routeway Lackmans Lane (WSM50179).

Archaeology have stated no objection to the scheme subject to conditions relating to a Written Scheme of Investigation prior to the commencement of development.

### **Public Consultation**

One letter of objection has been received from a neighbour who lives on Fairburne Gardens. The letter raised concerns with regards to the potential of the proposal attracting anti-social behaviour, vandalism and increased parking pressure. As considered above, whilst it is possible that anti-social behaviour takes place at the site in the future, this should be weighed against the social, health and wellbeing benefits of providing a recreational facility in the area. The construction of the MUGA is strong and has been designed to prevent crack and breaks and to be resistant to vandalism. The seating is a single bench and as the community safety officer advised, this can encourage nuisance loitering. However this has to be weighed against the above listed benefits, whilst noting other seating areas already exist in the park.

Regarding the parking it is deemed unlikely that the MUGA will lead to any additional parking issues at Morton Stanley Park given the nature of the facility and compared to the facilities currently at the site (café and play area). It is likely that the park will be busy during children's holidays with or without the MUGA.

### **Conclusion**

The multi-use games area subject to this application would enhance and improve an existing area of POS, which provides a valued leisure facility for the local community. Given that the proposed development would attract a wide range of users, the proposal scores highly in relation to the social aspect of sustainable development. The siting, design and appearance of the development is considered acceptable, and given that no technical concerns have been raised by consultees, it is considered that the proposal is in accordance with the Development Plan and therefore it is recommended that planning permission is granted subject to conditions.

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### **RECOMMENDATION:**

That having regard to the development plan and to all other material considerations, authority be **DELEGATED** to the Assistant Director for Planning, Leisure and Culture Services to **GRANT** planning permission subject to:-

a) The satisfactory completion of a S106 planning obligation ensuring that:

- A suitable Biodiversity Net Gain Plan is submitted and implemented
- suitable management and monitoring of the Biodiversity Net Gain Plan
- S106 monitoring fee/s are paid to the Borough Council

and

b) The conditions as listed below:

### **Conditions:**

1) The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of the grant of this permission.

Reason: - In accordance with the requirements of Section 91(1) 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 approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following plans and drawings:

Layout Plan Q-33171-Q7Y9-C-1 Dated 23/06/2025  
Elevations Q-33171-Q7Y9-ELEVATIONS Dated 23/06/2025  
Site Layout: Q-33171-Q7Y9-PP-A1 Dated 23/06/2025

Reason: To provide certainty to the extent of the development hereby approved in the interests of proper planning.

3) Prior to its first use, the frame of the multi-use games area hereby approved shall be finished in powder coated paint in colour RAL 6005 green.

Reason: To protect the visual amenity of the area and to ensure that the frame is damage resistant.

4) No development shall take place until a programme of archaeological work including a Written Scheme of Investigation, has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing. The scheme shall include an assessment of significance and research questions; and:



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- a. The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording.
- b. The programme for post investigation assessment.
- c. Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording.
- d. Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation
- e. Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation
- f. Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the Written Scheme of Investigation.

Reason: In accordance with the requirements of paragraph 218 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

5) The development shall not be occupied until the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition (4) and the provision made for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition has been secured.

Reason: In accordance with the requirements of paragraph 218 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

### **Informative**

The applicant is advised to erect signage on or near the site which provides emergency contact details.

### **Procedural matters**

This application is being reported to the Planning Committee because the applicant is Redditch Borough Council. As such the application falls outside the scheme of delegation to Officers.