

Design and Access Statement

Proposed Enclosed Cricket Net Facility

Adastra Park, Hassocks

Applicant: Keymer and Hassocks Cricket Club

1. Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared to support a full planning application by Keymer and Hassocks Cricket Club (KHCC) for the installation of a new enclosed cricket net training facility at Adastra Park, Hassocks.

The purpose of this statement is to explain the design rationale, site context, access arrangements, and how the proposal responds to local and national planning policy, as required by Mid Sussex District Council's Local Validation Requirements.

The statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying application documents, including:

- Planning Statement
 - Site Location Plan and Proposed Layout
 - Acoustic Assessment
 - Arboricultural Assessment & Method Statement
 - Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment
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2. Site Context and Surroundings

Adastra Park is a large, well-used public open space located centrally between the villages of Hassocks and Keymer. Owned and managed by Hassocks Parish Council, the park accommodates a wide range of formal and informal recreation, including:

- cricket pitch and pavilion
- football pitches
- bowling green
- tennis courts
- skate park
- children's play areas
- formal garden areas
- adult fitness equipment

KHCC has been based at the park for over a century and is a long-standing, community-led organisation providing cricket opportunities to adults and a large and growing youth membership.

The application site is a small area of the south field, located near the eastern boundary of the park, set away from the main thoroughfares while remaining close to the existing cricket square and pavilion. This ensures its functionality for training while maintaining separation from other park users.

The boundary to the east comprises established hedgerow and tree cover, providing natural screening and an acoustic buffer to nearby residential properties.

3. The Proposed Development

The proposal seeks full planning permission for a two-lane enclosed permanent cricket net facility with the following key design elements:

- Two practice lanes in a slightly staggered layout measuring approx. 33m and 30m long
- Total width of 7.3m
- Enclosure formed by galvanised steel framework with green/black mesh fencing to a height of 4m
- Synthetic cricket surface with green carpet and blue border
- Integrated bowling-end shock pads
- Internal dividing curtain netting with galvanised poles
- A single gated access point at the northern end of the western elevation
- No external lighting
- Facility to be locked when not in use
- Exclusive use by KHCC members for supervised cricket training

The structure is intentionally modest, functional and sympathetic to the existing sporting context of the park.

4. Design Principles and Justification

4.1 Use

The siting and design meet KHCC's operational needs by providing a high-quality, modern training facility that replaces an outdated mobile net system. This will support youth development, increase participation and provide safer, more consistent practice conditions.

4.2 Amount

The proposal is limited to the minimum size required for two compliant cricket training lanes. The development occupies a very small proportion of the overall park (approximately 6.2ha).

4.3 Layout

The facility is positioned close to the cricket pavilion and existing cricket pitch, ensuring logical functional integration with the club's activities. Its placement near the eastern boundary keeps it away from main pedestrian routes and minimises disruption to other park users.

4.4 Scale

At 4m in height and with a single-storey profile, the development is small-scale and low-impact, and comfortably in keeping with other recreational structures such as tennis fencing and skate equipment.

4.5 Appearance

Materials have been selected to blend into the landscape and align with comparable sports infrastructure within the park:

- green/black mesh reduces visual prominence
- open, lightweight framework preserves openness
- synthetic surface colours are appropriate to sporting use

Overall, the appearance is functional, discreet and appropriate to its context.

4.6 Landscaping

No soft landscaping is proposed or required beyond retention of existing hedgerow and tree cover. The arboricultural assessment confirms no tree loss and demonstrates how root protection areas will be safeguarded during installation.

5. Access

5.1 Access to the Facility

The enclosure will be accessed via a locked gate on its western side. The proposal does not alter any existing public routes and has no impact on wider pedestrian access around the park.

5.2 Vehicle and Servicing Access

No vehicular access is required beyond temporary construction access. No parking changes or new hardstanding are proposed.

5.3 Inclusive and Safe Access

The design follows good practice for inclusive access:

- level access into the enclosure
- clear internal circulation
- secure supervised use by club members only

The location avoids conflict with public play areas or major pedestrian desire lines, maintaining safety for all park users.

6. Impact Considerations

6.1 Residential Amenity

An Acoustic Assessment concludes that noise from cricket training will remain within acceptable limits and will not result in significant adverse effects on nearby properties. The park already generates a baseline of recreational noise, and the hedgerow provides natural attenuation.

6.2 Trees

The Arboricultural Assessment confirms:

- no loss of trees
- no harmful encroachment into root protection areas
- suitable measures for protection during construction

The proposal complies fully with DP37.

6.3 Biodiversity

The BNG Assessment demonstrates that the proposal achieves the statutory 10% Biodiversity Net Gain requirement through on-site enhancements compatible with the Environment Act 2021 and DP38.

6.4 Archaeology

The site lies within an Archaeological Notification Area. The applicant accepts an archaeological discovery condition, in line with pre-application advice.

7. Planning Policy Compliance (Summary)

The development aligns with key policies of the Mid Sussex District Plan, including:

- DP24 – Leisure Facilities
Supports new and enhanced recreational facilities.
- DP26 – Character and Design
High-quality, context-appropriate and modest design.
- DP29 – Noise
Supported by acoustic assessment confirming acceptable noise levels.
- DP37 – Trees
Full protection of existing trees.
- DP38 – Biodiversity
Compliance with BNG requirements.

It also fully aligns with the NPPF, supporting healthy communities, sustainable development and enhanced opportunities for sport.

8. Conclusion

This proposal represents a well-designed, proportionate and policy-compliant enhancement to the existing sporting facilities at Adastra Park. It:

- supports local health, wellbeing and youth participation
- improves training provision for a long-established community cricket club
- respects the character of the park
- avoids unacceptable impacts on residents
- protects biodiversity and trees
- delivers high-quality, safe and accessible sporting infrastructure

For these reasons, the proposal is considered suitable for approval.

Prepared on behalf of Keymer & Hassocks Cricket Club.