

RECOMMENDATION FOR PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

APPROVAL

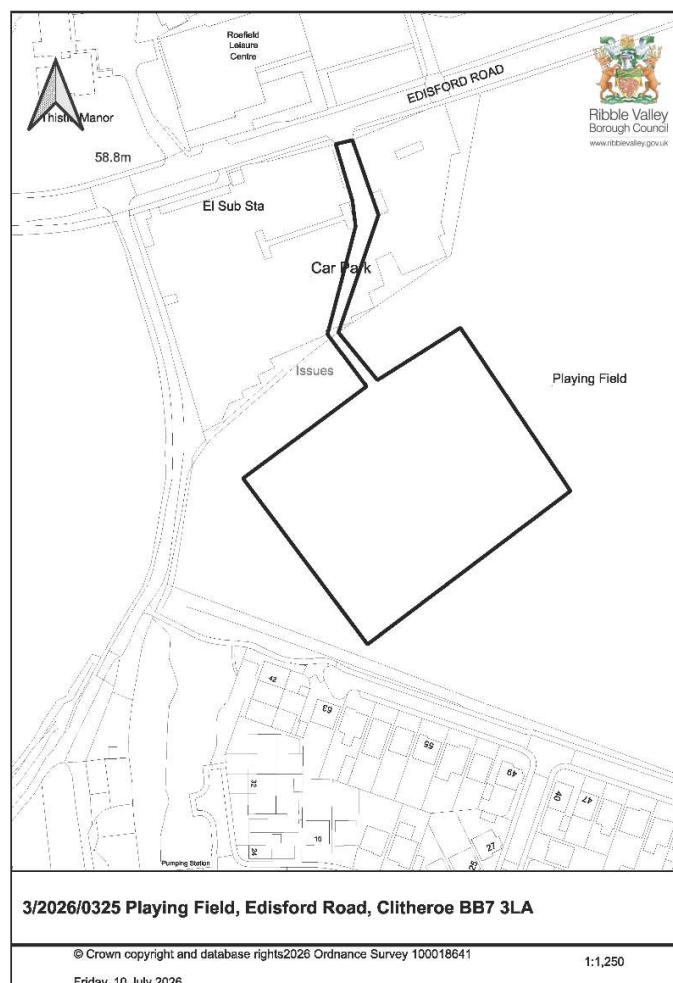
DATE: 23 JULY 2026
REF: MC
CHECKED BY: LH

APPLICATION REF: 3/2026/0419

GRID REF: SD 372910 441348

DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION:

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF WHEELED SPORTS FACILITY (PUMP TRACK) WITH ASSOCIATED DRAINAGE. FORMER PITCH AND PUTT FIELD AT EDISFORD ROAD, CLITHEROE, BB7 3LA



CONSULTEE RESPONSES/ REPRESENTATIONS MADE:

TOWN / PARISH COUNCIL:

No objection.

LOCAL HIGHWAYS AUTHORITY:

Lancashire County Council (LCC) Highways Department have made a number of comments on the scheme. They raise no concerns with regards to highway safety and consider that the proposal would not exacerbate the existing highway safety situation. They consider that the facility would predominantly attract local users with a proportion of trips likely to be undertaken on foot, by bicycle or by other sustainable modes.

The LHA is aware of ongoing parking concerns along unrestricted parts of Edisford Road and understands that parking has resulted in highway safety concerns, in particular at the junction of Vicarage Close, impacting the visibility of drivers exiting the junction onto Edisford Road, as well as other inconsiderate driver behaviour such as pavement parking. In an attempt to address these concerns as well as to ease traffic flows, the LHA requests that mitigation be provided through the pursuit of an extension to the existing Traffic Regulation Order (no waiting restriction). This proposal will require the applicant to enter into an appropriate legal agreement with Lancashire County Council and will be subject to the statutory Traffic Regulation Order process.

RVBC ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT:

The Environmental Health Officer is satisfied that no conditions are required in relation to noise and the lack of lighting proposals would help with antisocial noise in the winter months.

RVBC COUNTRYSIDE OFFICER:

The Countryside Officer considers that the statutory Biodiversity Net Gain condition and a landscape/ecological management plan should be included as a condition to any grant of permission to secure management of the habitat should be secured by way of condition.

ADDITIONAL REPRESENTATIONS:

31 Letters of support have been received from 30 households (15 from Clitheroe and 16 from the surrounding area) raising the following comments:

- The development would provide a valuable recreational facility for children, teenagers and adults
- The proposal would encourage physical activity and outdoor recreation
- There are limited provision in the area for this type of activity
- The additional planting will help biodiversity
- It is not likely the development would result in harm to amenity
- It would provide opportunities for local businesses by encouraging more visitors
- Toilet and drinking water facilities should be provided

1. **Introduction**

- 1.1 Members will note that the application is being brought before Committee given the application is made on behalf of Ribble Valley Borough Council with the land to which the application relates also falling within the ownership of the authority.

2. **Site Description and Surrounding Area**

- 2.1 The application site relates to an open recreational field which was formerly a Pitch and Putt Course, located to the western edge of Clitheroe. The site is owned by the Council and is designated as Open Space within the Ribble Valley Core Strategy. The piece of land is located approximately 112m to the south-east of Edisford Bridge which is a scheduled ancient monument and is located over 120m to the south of the Grade II Thistle Manor which is located on the opposite side of Edisford Road to the north of the application site. Given the separation distances, it is not considered that the development is within the setting of these heritage assets.
- 2.2 There are a number of mature trees within the wider site and the River Ribble lies approximately 95m to the west of the site. The site is located outside of Flood Zones 2 and 3 however a small part of the site is at risk of surface water flooding.
- 2.3 It should be noted that a section of hedgerow has been removed from the private road to the east of the site.

3. **Proposed Development for which consent is sought**

- 3.1 The application seeks consent for the construction of a pump track on 1,700 sq.m of the recreation field to the south of where works have commenced for the construction of a new playground, recently granted under planning ref: 3/2025/0996. The works required include excavation of the area and formation of track bumps and banked turns of between 0.4m and 1.3m in height. The track will be a minimum of 2m in width and surfaced with asphalt with safety line painting in red. Between the tracks there would be grassland with some additional grassland planting to satisfy Biodiversity Net Gain with wildflower planting. Surface water from the tracks would be managed by a series of inlets with silt traps, with culverts piping excess water away from the track into soakaways. No external light is proposed as part of the development.

4. **Relevant Planning History**

3/2025/0996: Proposed supply and installation of play equipment, forming a new play area - supply and installation of associated surfacing using wet pour safety surfacing and grass matting. Approved with Conditions

3/2007/0224: Refurbishment and alterations to existing cafe. Re-submission. Approved with Conditions

3/2006/0274: Refurbishment of existing cafe. Approved with Conditions

3/2006/0973: An extension and alterations to existing cafe. Approved with Conditions

5. **Relevant Policies**

Ribble Valley Core Strategy (Adopted Version)

Key Statement DS1 – Development Strategy

Key Statement DS2 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Key Statement EN4 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Key Statement DMI2 – Transport Considerations

Policy DMG1 – General Considerations

Policy DMG2 – Strategic Considerations

Policy DMB3 – Recreation and Tourism Development

Policy DMB4 – Open Space Provision

Policy DMG3: Transport & Mobility

Policy DME1: Protecting Trees and Woodlands

Policy DME3: Site and Species Protection and Conservation

Policy DME6 – Water Management

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

National Planning Practice Guide (NPPG)

6. **Assessment of Proposed Development**

6.1 **Principle of Development:**

6.1.1 The site is identified as a protected area of open space. Policy DMB4 of the Core Strategy protects open space and playing field provision. Policy DMG1 requires that development proposals must not result in the net loss of important open space, including public and private playing fields, without a robust assessment that sites are surplus to need. In assessing this, regard must be had to the level of provision and standard of public open space in the area [and] the importance of playing fields. Regard will also be had to the landscape or townscape of an area and the importance the open space has on this.

6.1.2 Paragraph 103 of the NPPF is relevant, which states:-

Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

- a) an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
- b) the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or

- c) the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use.

6.1.3 Whilst the proposal would involve the development of a small area of the existing public recreation ground, it makes provision for an alternative leisure facility for the community and so its use remains entirely compatible with the recreation ground use. In addition, the land where the pump track is proposed is not used for sporting pitch facility and as such, the development does not impact on any existing pitch facilities. Having regard to the above, the proposal is considered to comply with Policy DMB4 and paragraph 104 of the NPPF.

6.1.4 Whilst the proposed facility has been designed to meet the needs of local residents, given the lack of other nearby similar facilities, it is likely to attract people who live in nearby villages/towns and visitors. As such Policy DMB3 of the Core Strategy is relevant which states that planning permission will be granted for development proposals that extend the range of tourism and visitor facilities in the Borough. This is subject to meeting a number of criterion:-

- 1. The proposal must not conflict with other policies of this plan;*
- 2. The proposal must be physically well related to an existing main settlement or village or to an existing group of buildings, except where the proposed facilities are required in conjunction with a particular countryside attraction and there are no suitable existing buildings or developed sites available;*
- 3. The development should not undermine the character, quality or visual amenities of the plan area by virtue of its scale, siting, materials or design;*
- 4. The proposals should be well related to the existing highway network. It should not generate additional traffic movements of a scale and type likely to cause undue problems or disturbance. Where possible the proposals should be well related to the public transport network;*
- 5. The site should be large enough to accommodate the necessary car parking, service areas and appropriate landscaped areas; and*
- 6. The proposal must take into account any nature conservation impacts using suitable survey information and where possible seek to incorporate any important existing associations within the development. Failing this then adequate mitigation will be sought*

6.1.5 Having regard to criterion 1, the proposal would not conflict with other policies of this plan in terms of protecting open space and playing field provision.

6.1.6 The site is immediately adjacent to the settlement boundary of Clitheroe and as such, the proposal complies with criterion 2. Criteria 3-6 is considered in more detail later in this report but no conflict is identified. Therefore, the proposal is considered to satisfy policy DMB3 and provide an appropriate play / leisure facility in the Borough.

6.2 Visual Amenity

- 6.2.1 Policy DMG1 is engaged insofar that the policy sets out general Development Management considerations, with the policy having a number of inherent criterion that are relevant to the assessment of the current proposal, which state:

In determining planning applications, all development must:

DESIGN

1. *Be of a high standard of building design which considers the 8 building in context principles (from the CABE/English Heritage building in context toolkit).*
2. *Be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of its size, intensity and nature as well as scale, massing, style, features and building materials.*
3. *Consider the density, layout and relationship between buildings, which is of major importance. particular emphasis will be placed on visual appearance and the relationship to surroundings, including impact on landscape character, as well as the effects of development on existing amenities.*

AMENITY

1. *Not adversely affect the amenities of the surrounding area.*

- 6.2.2 The pump track has been designed as a continuous loop with a series of rolling features of between 0.4m – 1.3m in height. The track surface would be finished in asphalt with a strip of amenity turf laid around the edges and small wildflower areas within the track. A minimum of an 80mm layer of topsoil is to be laid on embankments and ground requiring reinstatement and a 1.2m strip of amenity turf is to be laid around all edges of the asphalt on the pump track and internal areas. The soiled areas outside of the 1.2m turf strip are also proposed to be wildflower seeded to help promote biodiversity and provide a great aesthetic to the facility.

- 6.2.3 The proposal would be situated to the south of the play park that is currently being constructed and therefore has been positioned to form part of a new recreation sports/play facility within the former pitch and putt grounds. The proposal would involve excavation works to facilitate the pump track. However, wildflower planting will help to soften the appearance of the hard surfacing and existing hedgerow planting along the wider site boundaries would help screen the development and it would only be highly visible from within the park itself.

- 6.2.4 Accordingly, the visual impact of the works proposed is considered to be acceptable in accordance with Policies DMG1, DMG2, and DMB3 of the Core Strategy.

6.3 Impact(s) upon Residential Amenities:

- 6.3.1 Policy DMG1 of the Core Strategy stipulates that development must be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of its size, intensity and

nature and not adversely affect the amenities of the surrounding area. Furthermore, Policy DMG1 of the Core Strategy requires all proposals for development to consider the effects of development upon existing amenities.

- 6.3.2 Paragraph 135 (f) of the National Planning Policy Framework states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

“create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.”

- 6.3.3 The properties that are likely to be impacted by the proposed development are the properties to the south-east of the site being 24-42 Ribble Prospect which are sited over 80m from the play equipment. The creation of a new play park is likely to result in some noise pollution and consideration must be given to the potential undue impacts on residential amenity. However, given the distances to neighbouring properties and the fact that the site is already used as a recreation grounds, the proposed development is unlikely to result in a level of noise/disturbance that would be detrimental to residential amenity.

- 6.3.4 The Environmental Health Officer is satisfied with the scheme in relation to noise levels and considers that the lack of lighting proposed would also help to reduce antisocial noise in the winter months.

- 6.3.5 Taking account of the above, the proposal raises no significant measurable conflict with Policies DMG1 or DMB3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy which seeks to protect against development(s) that will result in measurable adverse impacts upon nearby existing or future residential amenities.

6.4 Trees and Ecology:

- 6.4.1 There are a number of trees within the wider site but no trees that are within influencing distance of the proposed development.

- 6.4.2 A Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment has been submitted which demonstrates how the development will achieve the mandatory 10% (minimum) uplift in biodiversity through the provision of wildflowers and new grassland. This would be secured by conditions. The agent has been asked to clarify whether the removal of hedge is taken into account in the BNG assessment and if not whether a further update is required, which can be dealt with as a Late Item for committee.

6.5 Drainage:

- 6.5.1 The scheme has been designed so that surface water shed from the track surface will be managed by a series of inlets with silt traps, with culverts piping excess water away from the track into a soakaway. This drainage scheme is considered to be appropriate to deal with surface water from the development and is not

considered to exacerbate any existing issues of flooding in the area. It therefore satisfies Policy DME6 of the Core Strategy.

6.6 Highways:

6.6.1 The Local Highway Authority have provided comments on the scheme. They raise no concerns with regards to highway safety and consider that the proposal would not exacerbate the existing highway safety situation. They consider that the facility would predominantly attract local users with a proportion of trips likely to be undertaken on foot, by bicycle or by other sustainable modes.

6.6.2 Whilst the scale of the proposal is not considered to give rise to significant traffic generation, the Local Highway Authority (LHA) state that consideration should be given to the potential parking demand associated with peak periods of use and any interaction with existing recreational facilities in the surrounding area.

6.6.3 The LHA is aware of ongoing parking concerns along unrestricted parts of Edisford Road and understands that existing inappropriate parking has resulted in highway safety concerns, in particular at the junction of Vicarage Close, impacting the visibility of drivers exiting the junction onto Edisford Road, as well as other inconsiderate driver behaviour such as pavement parking. In an attempt to address these concerns as well as to ease traffic flows, the LHA requests that mitigation be provided through the pursuit of an extension to the existing Traffic Regulation Order (no waiting restriction). This proposal will require the applicant to enter into an appropriate legal agreement with Lancashire County Council and will be subject to the statutory Traffic Regulation Order process.

6.6.4 Taking account of the above, the proposal raises no significant measurable conflict with Policies DMG1, DMG3 or DMB3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy which require traffic and car parking implications to be considered, and developments to have appropriate access and be located in accessible locations.

7. Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion

7.1 For the reasons outlined above, the application is recommended for approval insofar that the proposal would not result in any significant adverse impacts, nor will the proposal result in significant measurable conflicts with the aims and objectives of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy that would warrant the refusal to grant planning permission in this instance.

RECOMMENDATION: That the application be APPROVED subject to the imposition of the following condition(s):

1. The development hereby approved must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

REASON: Required to be imposed by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. Unless explicitly required by condition within this consent, the development hereby permitted shall be carried out in complete accordance with the proposals as detailed on drawings:

Location Plan 1:1250

Proposed Site Plan drawing ref: CLI04_4 Rev 4

Proposed Site Sections drawing ref: CLI09_1 Rev 1

Pump Track Cross Section Detail drawing ref: CLI08_1 Rev 1

Drainage Plan drawing ref: CLI07_2 Rev 2

Biodiversity Net Gain Study Baseline Enhancement Plan drawing ref: P759-PL-L102

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and to clarify which plans are relevant to the consent hereby approved.

3. The development shall be implemented in accordance with the hard surfacing details provided within the approved plans.

REASON: To ensure the proposal is satisfactorily landscaped and trees/hedgerow of landscape/visual amenity value are retained as part of the development.

4. The Biodiversity Gain Plan (as required by the 'Statutory Biodiversity Condition' - see further details below at #5 of the Notes Section) shall be prepared in accordance with the submitted Biodiversity Net Gain Report by Elsie Josland Landscape Design dated 22 May 2026.

REASON: This is not a statutory requirement but unless imposed there is no requirement that the Biodiversity Gain Plan submitted for approval shall be in accordance with the biodiversity and ecology information submitted with the planning application.

5. Notwithstanding the submitted details, no development, including any site preparation, demolition, scrub/hedgerow clearance or tree works/removal shall commence or be undertaken on site until a landscape/habitat management and monitoring plan, including long term design objectives, management responsibilities and maintenance schedules for all landscape areas has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The landscape shall thereafter be managed and maintained in accordance with the approved plan.

REASON: To ensure the proper long-term management and maintenance of the landscaped areas in the interests of visual amenity and biodiversity enhancement in accordance with Policy DMG1, DME1 and DME3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

6. Upon commencement of the development hereby permitted a traffic regulation order shall be pursued on Edisford Road at Vicarage Close and implemented thereafter in accordance with the agreed details.

REASON: For highway safety

7. No external lighting/floodlighting or building mounted lighting shall be erected or placed anywhere within the site to which this consent relates without express planning permission first being obtained.

REASON: To enable the Local Planning Authority to exercise control over development which could prove materially harmful the character and visual amenities of the immediate area or wildlife.

8. No development hereby permitted shall be brought into use until the drainage for the site has been completed in accordance with the drainage scheme as identified in drawing ref: CLI07_2.

REASON: In order to reduce the risk of flooding in accordance with Policy DME6 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

INFORMATIVES:

5. Statutory Biodiversity Condition

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for the development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition "(the biodiversity gain condition)" that development may not begin unless:

- (a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the local planning authority, and
- (b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because none of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements listed in the legislation are considered to apply.

The biodiversity gain plan must include:

- (a) information about the steps taken or to be taken to minimise the adverse effect of the development on the biodiversity of the onsite habitat and any other habitat;
- (b) the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat;
- (c) the post-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat;
- (d) any registered offsite biodiversity gain allocated to the development and the biodiversity and the biodiversity value of that gain in relation to the development;
- (e) any biodiversity credits purchased for the development; and
- (f) such other matters as the Secretary of State may by regulations specify.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

https://webportal.ribblevalley.gov.uk/site/scripts/planx_details.php?appNumber=3%2F2026%2F0419