



## Saxilby Cricket Club: New Practice Nets Proposal, September 2023

### **Background**

Following a successful return for Saxilby Cricket Club on and off the field including strong performances for both our Men's and Women's teams throughout summer 2023 and an ever growing club bringing in new members all the time, the club has reached a stage where we need to expand and improve our practice facilities to ensure our club continues to grow and to be able to provide cricket training and practice to members of our club of all ages.

In May 2023 the club had a new Non-Turf Pitch (NTP) installed on the Recreation Ground and we thank the Trustees of the ground, the Parish Council and the ECB for their support on that project. The NTP has allowed both our teams to play competitive league matches throughout the summer.

For training throughout the summer both teams have used the NTP and the old concrete slab by the scoreboard, which used to be the site of the old cricket net during the club's previous iteration.

At the start of the summer the club purchased a 'pop up' net to put round the slab and an astroturf mat to cover the slab during training sessions. The pop-up net is billed as a 'two-person, 5-minute job' to put up, however it invariably takes 5-6 of the team at least 20 minutes to put up.

Throughout the summer we have also found that the slab is incredibly erratic with its bounce, this resulted in one occasion where one of our batsmen ended up in hospital with 26 stitches in his lip from a ball that flew up off a length and hit him in the face, (\*please note while all U18's have to wear helmets, the club has no power to make over 18s wear a helmet while batting and this is personal choice, the individual concerned now wears a helmet.)

Given the bounce of this slab, we will not be able to train youth teams on it due to its dangerous nature.

Teams have also trained on the NTP; however, this is a match pitch and ideally the club wants to limit its use to gameplay.

### **Proposal**

The club is now looking to install a two lane, 7.9m x 25.9m (net dimensions would be: L18.3m x W7.3m x H4m) net system on the Recreation Ground to provide safe and modern training facilities to the whole club, this would also allow us to set up youth teams, and several members of the club have expressed an interest in coaching youth teams, but on the condition that we have proper and safe training facilities.

Several sites on the ground have been considered, including; **the south west corner near the play area**, however a youth football pitch has now been marked out there so this option falls away; **removing the old slab and replacing**, this spot is directly behind the bowlers arm in line with the new NTP, meaning the nets would be unable to be used during matches for warming up before batting, the proposed system would also extend onto the football pitch sited on the south side of the ground; **down towards the scout hut**, the scouts need vehicular access to the scout hut which wouldn't be possible should nets be installed there and the ground isn't level, meaning a higher installation cost.

Other sites away from the Recreation Ground have been considered; **Mill Lane** is purely a football area and there is no room to put a net system; **Other village green spaces** do not have the facilities to host such a system and have no history of organised sport taking place on them.

The club has therefore settled on the site shown on the attached map, between the large football pitch and the footpath and tennis courts, running north-south. Following measuring, this site has been proven to fit the proposed system, while still leaving more than the required run off from the football pitch and upwards of two meters from the footpath. The tree in the northwestern corner of the ground would not need to be removed. The proposed system would be in keeping with the surrounding area, being about the same height as the fencing on the northern side of the tennis courts.

The club believes this area is also covered by CCTV, helping to make the nets more secure.

CAD drawings with dimensions and an example of a similar net system are attached.

This system would be funded by grants and fundraising and the club does not anticipate reaching out to the Parish Council to provide funding.

### **Next steps**

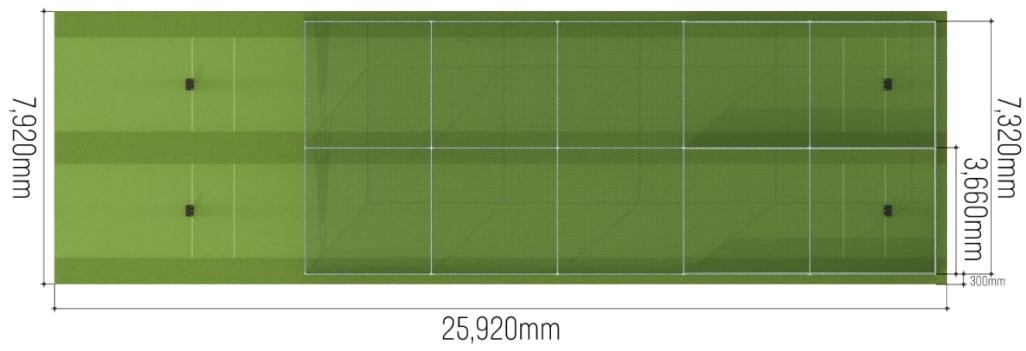
Following a positive meeting with the Recreation Ground Trustees on Monday, 11 September, the club is hopeful that they will give their blessing to the project at their next meeting.

The club would like to request and would be grateful for the support of the Parish Council for the project, before a full planning application is submitted to West Lindsey District Council.

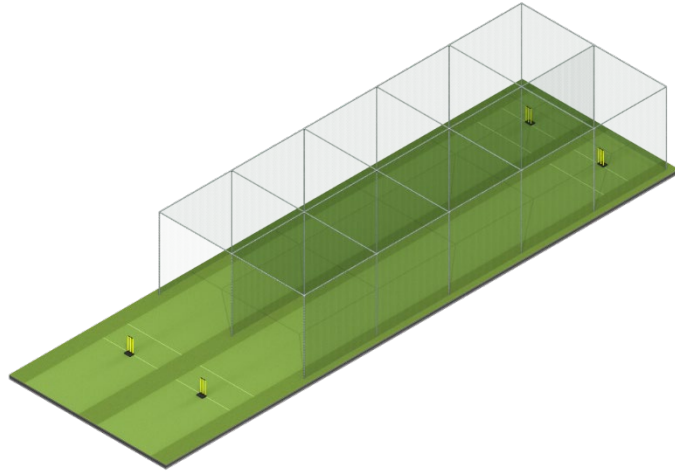
The club will also reach out to the football teams who use the pitch nearest to the proposed site, Saxilby's two district councillors, residents who live directly next to the proposed site and Sport England before a planning application is submitted.



Map showing site of proposed net system.



CAD Drawing with dimensions of proposed system (Height would be 4m)



CAD Drawing of overhead view of proposed system.



Image of similar system installed elsewhere.