

OUTLANE CC

LINDLEY MOOR ROAD TODAY

If there was ever an award for the 'British Cricket Ground Situated Closest to a Motorway', Outlane would be clear favourites. Rastrick CC and Blackley CC might push them close, but Outlane would just have the edge.

Their table-top, motorway-adjacent HQ lies just yards from the M62, just inside Calderdale and yards away from the boundary with Kirklees.



Note the lorry and the blue 'directions' sign

Outlane cricketers explain that they quickly get used to the motorway noise - and that they get withdrawal symptoms when they don't hear the rush of traffic at away venues - but for the first-time visitor to the ground, the motorway noise is the first thing that one notices.



And these are the views from the Club's car park

The ground is perched at a pretty high level and from the top perimeter fence one can see for miles and miles into the distance. To the right one can make out the small green and white 'blob' that is Blackley Cricket Club, and straight ahead one can just deduce where Elland Cricket Club and Elland Golf Club are situated.



LEFT: Blackley's cricket ground. RIGHT: Outlane's top boundary

Outlane are a well-run club, as evidenced by the fact that it has attracted a range of local advertisers. The location is ideal - and the big, colourful wall hoardings can be seen by all who travel in a Leeds direction on the M62.

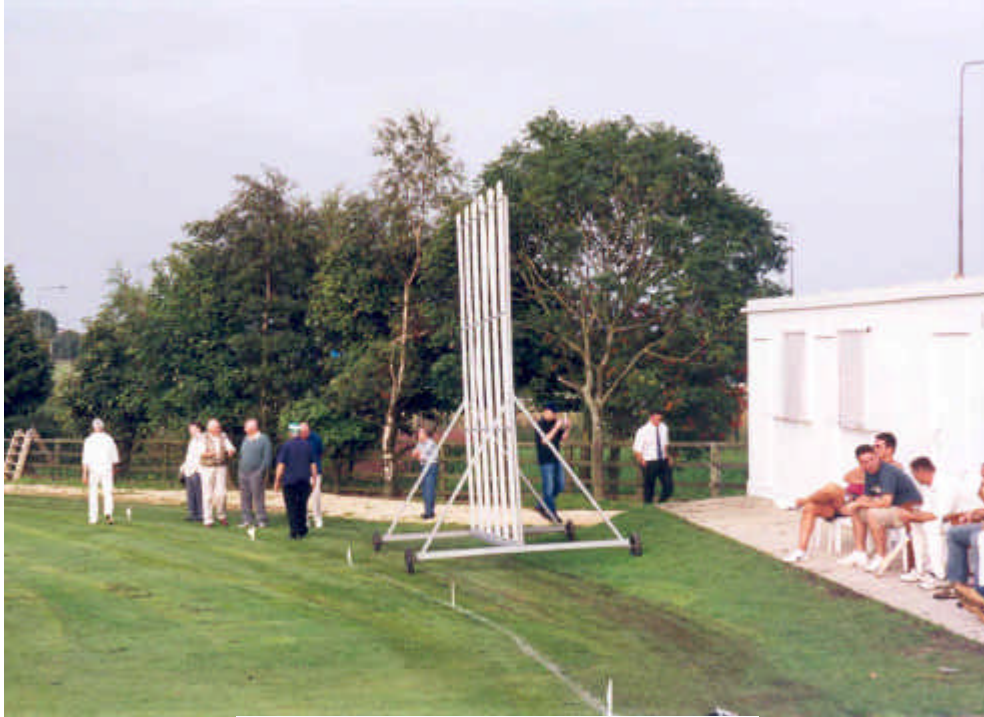


The playing area is a large rectangle: the boundaries straight of the wicket are quite short, but when the track in use is towards the centre of the field, the onside and offside boundaries can be quite long (usually, wickets are pitched on the pavilion side, leaving a short boundary on the Junction 23 side of the ground and a very challenging boundary on the Junction 24 side).

The boundary is denoted by white flags and a white painted line, and white seats and benches line the area between pavilion and scoreboard.



There are two sightscreens at the pavilion end and a long, low dry stone wall at the far end. Farmland and empty fields lie beyond the playing area on three sides of the ground (hence the need for a ladder to avoid too many lost balls).



The one-storey pavilion greets all visitors to the ground through the main entrance. It incorporates tearoom, bar area, games room and trophy cabinet.





The players change in a white and green portakabin next door to the pavilion.





The walls of the bar are particularly interesting. There are two aerial shots of the OCC ground, plus framed photos of three football stadia: the Shay in Halifax, the McAlpine in Huddersfield and the Stadium of Light in Sunderland.



There's also a couple of cartoons and a large photo of Darren Gough with his tongue sticking out! Various

photos line the walls of the spacious tearoom. Outside the pavilion, and round and about, local cricket-watchers congregate.









Between the tearoom and bar is the Club noticeboard, which advertises the many and various activities going on at the Club.

There's also information about the website (www.outlanecricketclub.co.uk), fundraising events, and a sponsorship deal that has netted the club £1,000 to help pay for a new roller.