

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 19 July 2023 10:57
To: Planning
Subject: App Ref: DC/23/0406 - Land to the west of Ashington C of E School - Sport England Ref: PA/23/SE/HO/65140

Categories: Consultations

FAO Ms N Pettifer

Dear Nicola,

Thank you for consulting Sport England on the above application.

Sport England – Non Statutory Role and Policy

The Government, within their Planning Practice Guidance (Open Space, Sports and Recreation Facilities Section) advises Local Planning Authorities to consult Sport England on a wide range of applications: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/open-space-sports-and-recreation-facilities-public-rights-of-way-and-local-green-space#open-space-sports-and-recreation-facilities>

This application falls within the scope of the above guidance as it relates to: *creation of a site for one or more playing pitches*.

Sport England assesses this type of application in light of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and against its own planning objectives, which are Protect - To protect the right opportunities in the right places; Enhance - To enhance opportunities through better use of existing provision; Provide - To provide new opportunities to meet the needs of current and future generations. Further information on the objectives and Sport England's wider planning guidance can be found on its website:

<https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/planning-for-sport>

The occupiers of new development, especially residential, will generate demand for sporting provision. The existing provision within an area may not be able to accommodate this increased demand without exacerbating existing and/or predicted future deficiencies. Therefore, Sport England considers that new developments should contribute towards meeting the demand that they generate through the provision of on-site facilities and/or providing additional capacity off-site. The level and nature of any provision should be informed by a robust evidence base such as an up to date Sports Facilities Strategy, Playing Pitch Strategy or other relevant needs assessment.

The Proposal

The proposal is for the demolition of existing buildings and erection of 180 dwellings, sports pavilion, sport pitches and allotments; with associated access, landscaping, open space and infrastructure.

Assessment against Sport England's Objectives and the NPPF

There are two playing pitches shown on the masterplan; one a natural grass pitch on the south and one to the west of the site below proposed allotments, which appears to be an artificial grass pitch. There is also a sports pavilion proposed.

It is not clear how the applicants have made the decision on providing football pitches. There is a Horsham playing pitch strategy which is coming to the end of its life, it not evident if this been referenced.

It is not acceptable to sperate the pitches out from the pavilion which provides changing and toilet provision. This can lead to safeguarding issues.

It is not clear what type of surface is proposed for the artificial grass pitch, (AGP) who is going to maintain it, who is going to use it and if there is a business plan. AGPs have a limited life and require a high level of maintenance without a sound business plan, which includes a usage plan and sinking fund and sports lighting, it is difficult to support it.

I have a number of concerns with the pavilion's design:

1. Communal showers are not acceptable in the 21st century as they create safeguarding issues and are a barrier to inclusivity;
2. There should be 2 officials changing rooms with showers and WC and if possible have separate access/egress form the players;
3. There is no environmental sustainability statement or obvious sustainable energy designed in to the pavilion. I note that PV is included in the housing design but if it included in the pavilion there will need to be storage for the batteries – rainwater harvesting for use by the allotments?
4. There is no plant room;
5. Is the club room to be used during the week for use? E.g. toddlers groups, maybe having the café open for homeworkers to meet? For the allotment users to have a tea or coffee. There may be need for an office;
6. There will be need for equipment storage for the AGP and natural grass pitch.
7. In a lot of pavilion designs there is an external accessible WC.
8. There should be a service hatch from the kitchen to the outside to serve drinks and food to spectators.

Another thing to consider, in most cases where there is a leap proposed, it is usually adjacent to the café area for security and away from SUDS for safety reasons.

It would be good to try and create a walking route around the outside of the site with low level LED lighting to create a safe and secure environment for informal activity.

Given the design issues, I cannot support this application.

Conclusion

Sport England considers that the application conflicts with Objective *Provide* due to the poor layout, lack of information and poor design of the proposed sports facilities and infrastructure.

In light of the above and the lack of evidence of any exceptional circumstances Sport England objects to the application.

I would be happy to meet with the applicants and the case officer to see how the design of the layout for the sports provision can become fit for purpose. Due to Annual Leave this will be possible until after the 7th August 2023.

If this application is to be presented to a Planning Committee, Sport England would like to be notified in advance of the meeting date(s) and the publication of any agenda(s) and report(s). Sport England would also like to be notified of the outcome of the application through the receipt of a copy of the decision notice.

If you would like any further information or advice please contact me at the address below.

Yours sincerely,

Bob

Bob Sharples RIBA MRTPI ARB Principal Planning Manager - South Team Planning & Active Environments



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