Horsham District Council

FAO: Robert Hermitage

By email

23 April 2024

Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015

Application Reference: DC/23/2261
Site: Storrington Cricket Club, RH20 4HJ
Proposal: Erection of a single storey rear extension to cricket pavilion to accommodate disability access, 2 additional changing rooms, spectator toilets, storage, and through access into leisure centre.
Sport England Reference: PA/24/SE/HO/67309

Thank you for consulting Sport England on the above application.

Summary

Statutory consultee role
Sport England raises **no objection** to this application as it is considered to meet exception 2 of our Playing Fields Policy and to accord with Paragraph 103 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

It is however understood part funding through the ECB is being sought to implement the scheme. The ECB has commented in that regard that the details submitted would not meet its funding criteria at this stage.

Sport England – Statutory consultee role and policy

We understand that you have consulted us as a statutory consultee in line with the above Order. Therefore, we have considered the application in light of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), in particular paragraph 103, and Sport England's Playing Fields Policy, which is presented within our 'Playing Fields Policy and Guidance Document':
www.sportengland.org/playingfieldspolicy

Sport England's policy is to oppose the granting of planning permission for any development which would lead to the loss of, or prejudice the use of:

- all or any part of a playing field, or
- land which has been used as a playing field land remains undeveloped, or
- land allocated for use as a playing field

unless, in the judgement of Sport England the development as a whole meets with one or more of five specific exceptions. A summary of the exceptions is provided in the annex to this response.

The Proposal and its Impact on the playing field

The proposal is for a single storey extension on the south side of the existing cricket pavilion and Chanctonbury Leisure Centre to accommodate additional accessible changing rooms, spectator toilets and storage. At present the land required for the extension is an area of hardstanding contiguous with the skatepark to the south, accommodating a couple of bench seats. These appear to be used mainly by parents and carers of children using the skatepark and the playground beyond. The benches would be removed if the extension is built but an existing access gate into the area would be retained.

Assessment against Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and NPPF

Proposals of this type are assessed against exception 2 of our Playing Field Policy that is, t*he proposed development is for ancillary facilities supporting the principal use of the site as a playing field, and does not affect the quantity or quality of playing pitches or otherwise adversely affect their use.*

The proposed extension would meet these requirements. It would also not adversely mpact on the skatepark, and the existing benches on the hardstanding could be easily relocated.

For that reason, Sport England has no objection to the application.

In assessing the application I have consulted with the ECB. While not directly related to the assessment of the application, it has commented that the Sussex Cricket Foundation has brought this project forward to the ECB for capital funding consideration as the club is a key club in the County engaged in growing the women's and girls game and disability cricket.

However, while the ECB has said that it supports the project's development in principle, the layout and design as currently proposed are not considered fit for purpose and therefore it would not be able to allocate funding to the development as currently proposed.

In particular, it has identified the following issues.

Team changing x2

- Only 14m2 changing area provided vs 20m2 minimum
- Need min. 2m width of changing areas between benches and lockers/toilets for wheelchair users
- Padding up Room (looking out of the doors) will only provide a narrow pitch view, as opposed to the whole playing area

Officials/flexible changing x2

- At 10 persons each, excess benching is provided, but only one (open) shower, via a
- "Wet room" which does not provide private cubicle, nor wide enough for wheelchair users, anyway.

The ECB and Sussex Cricket have met with the club to discuss these matters and to achieve a design that is consistent with the ECBs TS5 (Pavilions and Clubhouses) Technical Guidance.

Sport England's Position

Given the above, Sport England raises **no objection** to the application because it is considered to accord with exception 2 of our Playing Fields Policy and paragraph 103 of the NPPF, while noting that the scheme as currently proposed would not receive funding from the ECB as it falls some way short of its technical design specification.

If this application is to be presented to a Planning Committee, we would like to be notified in advance of the publication of any committee agenda(s), report(s) and committee date(s). Please notify Sport England of the outcome of the planning application.

Please note that this response relates to Sport England's planning function only. It is not associated with our funding role or any grant application/award that may relate to the site.

If you would like any further information or advice, please contact the undersigned.

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]
Planning Manager

[redacted]

[redacted]

cc. Planning Application Agent

Annex

The Five Exceptions to Sport England's Playing Fields Policy

Exception 1
A robust and up-to-date assessment has demonstrated, to the satisfaction of Sport England, that there is an excess of playing field provision in the catchment, which will remain the case should the development be permitted, and the site has no special significance to the interests of sport.

Exception 2
The proposed development is for ancillary facilities supporting the principal use of the site as a playing field, and does not affect the quantity or quality of playing pitches or otherwise adversely affect their use.

Exception 3
The proposed development affects only land incapable of forming part of a playing pitch and does not:

- reduce the size of any playing pitch;
- result in the inability to use any playing pitch (including the maintenance of adequate safety margins and run-off areas);
- reduce the sporting capacity of the playing field to accommodate playing pitches or the capability to rotate or reposition playing pitches to maintain their quality;
- result in the loss of other sporting provision or ancillary facilities on the site; or
- prejudice the use of any remaining areas of playing field on the site.

Exception 4
The area of playing field to be lost as a result of the proposed development will be replaced, prior to the commencement of development, by a new area of playing field:

- of equivalent or better quality, and
- of equivalent or greater quantity, and
- in a suitable location, and
- subject to equivalent or better accessibility and management arrangements.

Exception 5
The proposed development is for an indoor or outdoor facility for sport, the provision of which would be of sufficient benefit to the development of sport as to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss, or prejudice to the use, of the area of playing field.

The full 'Playing Fields Policy and Guidance Document' is available to view at:
www.sportengland.org/playingfieldspolicy