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My reference

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Date

14 June 2023

E-mail F/22/94174

Planning reference: F/22/94174

Site location: FAIR OAK SPORTS PAVILION, PAVILION CLOSE, FAIR OAK,
EASTLEIGH, SO50 7PS

Proposals: Conversion of the existing playing field to accommodate 2.no football pitches and 2.no cricket pitches with the loss of 1.no football pitch. Erection of a single-storey cricket score-box & storage cabin. Erection of cricket nets. Extension to an existing culvert. Associated landscaping and footpath upgrade.

Response: Holding objection subject to further information

Introduction

Thank you for consulting Hampshire County Council's Countryside Service ('the Service') as local highway authority in respect of Public Rights of Way ('PROW') and as Commons Registration Authority. It also manages Country Parks and Countryside Sites throughout Hampshire. Please accept this as its response to the above application taking into account the material considerations relating to PROW, Commons, and impacts to Hampshire County Council (HCC) Country Parks and Countryside Sites.

Site Context

Fair Oak and Horton Heath Public Footpath 1b ('footpath 1b') leaves the B3354 Botley Road at a point opposite White Tree Close to run north-westwards at the rear of residential properties, then joining Pavilion Close and continuing into the Lapstone Playing Field Pavilion car park. From here the path runs west then south on an earth/ grassed surface separated from the playing fields before turning west and eventually joining Fair Oak and Horton Heath Public Footpath 10 ('footpath 10') within Quobleigh Woods, which itself runs north-south west and outside of the site.

No HCC Countryside Site is situated in any material proximity to the site.

A copy of the Definitive Map of Rights of Way and Definitive Statement can be found at <https://maps.hants.gov.uk/rightsofwaydefinitivemap/> and <https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/rightsofway/definitivemap>

Comment

As noted in the Service's response of 20 December 2022, the proposed layout of pitches, nets, surface grading and cabin will not physically impact on footpath 1b.

The revised proposal suggests the intention to infill land to create level land for future use for sports. The infilling of land shall be achieved by extending an existing culvert and laying soil over.

The Service, noting the concern also by the Ramblers, is uncertain whether the proposed future drainage outfall could undermine land west of the playing field, which could result in the ground below footpath 1b being washed away and the footpath being unusable. This would present a safety risk to the public and a potential liability to the Service which, as the local highway authority managing PROW, could be liable for repairs. It may be that future water outfall velocities increase if pressure increases from predicted shorter but heavier downpours (as a result of climate change), also that the length of the culvert does not allow the energy to dissipate. The Service would wish to see the works considered and addressed by a suitably qualified engineer, also the view of the Environment Agency, to be reassured footpath 1b will not be detrimentally impacted.

Until receipt of this information and consideration of that, the Service hereby lodges a holding objection.

Yours sincerely,

Jon Perks

On behalf of Hampshire Countryside Service - Countryside Planning

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