

Eastleigh Borough Council

FAO: Rachael Morris

By email only

10th March 2024

Application Reference: F/24/96865

Site: WIDE LANE SPORTS GROUND, UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON SPORTS GROUND, SO50 5PE

Proposal: Discharge of Condition. Condition 3-Designs and Layout. Planning Application F/23/95045-Installation of 2no. synthetic sports pitches, erection of fencing including new pedestrian access route, associated engineering operations and landscaping

Sport England Reference: PA/24/SE/ET/66952

Thank you for consulting Sport England in respect of the details submitted under the above planning reference to discharge condition no. 3 of planning permission F/23/95045.

Sport England welcomes the commitment to discharging the condition.

We have consulted with the relevant national governing bodies for sport, the Football Foundation/FA and the RFU, and we have received the following comments.

The Football Foundation on behalf of the FA comments that they are content with the information supplied to sign off the condition. The test report shows the cork infill has passed the FIFA and WR22 test and therefore is considered sufficient to sign off the condition.

The RFU comments that they are content that the specification presented is compliant with World Rugby Regulation 22, and it is welcome that the applicant has selected a system with 60mm carpet as per feedback provided to the original planning application. As far as RFU and World Rugby records show it is believed that this is the only artificial grass rugby pitch in the UK with this specific organic infill. As such the RFU may be interested in monitoring the performance of the system once constructed in order to understand the longer-term performance of this infill. However, whilst the specification of the surface has been confirmed, the layout, dimensions and markings of the proposed rugby AGP have yet to be provided. The applicant is advised that new pitches should be constructed in line with World Rugby Law 1. The RFU further adds that the specification of the posts and flags will be important for ensuring the smooth operation of the dual use facility including the transitioning between rugby and football activity.

At this stage further details are required in order to satisfy the details and requirements set out in the condition.

Sport England is happy to discuss these comments further with you/the applicant's agent with a view to a constructive way forward being identified.

If you have any queries, please contact the undersigned.

Yours sincerely,

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