

Eastleigh Borough Council

FAO: Rachel Morris

By email

25th March 2024

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

Application Ref: F/24/96739

Site: VT SPORTS GROUND, VT SPORTS GROUND PORTSMOUTH ROAD SO19 9PW

Proposal: Extension to the existing cricket pavilion to provide changing facilities

Sport England Reference: PA/24/SE/ET/67066

Thank you for consulting Sport England on the above application.

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 and 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

Sport England does not consider there is any additional impact on the playing field as a result of the proposed development. Sport England has consulted with the ECB, as the national governing body for cricket, and we have received the following comments. Both the ECB and the Hampshire Cricket Board have been supporting the cricket club's need for improved changing accommodation at this site.

The ECB comments that while they are supportive of the principle of this application, to fulfil the ECB's Technical Guidance (TS3), the minimum changing space (excluding showers) within the two main changing rooms should be 20sqm. Based on the plans provided, both fall short of this.

The ECB therefore recommends that the applicant revisits the design, with a view to increasing both the main changing room spaces to fulfil this. To achieve this, a reduction in the unisex/officials changing space could be considered alongside a review of the size of the showering space.

With the above in mind, both the ECB and Hampshire Cricket are willing to work with the applicant in reviewing further design modifications to ensure compliance with the ECB's guidelines.

Assessment against Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and NPPF

Sport England considers that the application needs to be assessed against our E2 exception in our playing fields policy. This states:

- *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.*

Sport England notes and supports the comments from the ECB in respect of compliance with ECB technical design guidance. We would strongly encourage the applicant to carefully consider these comments from the ECB and reviews the design and layout.

Sport England is satisfied that the proposal meets our E2 exception as we do not consider there is an adverse impact on the playing field/pitches at the site.

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.

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,

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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