

Bury MBC

FAO: Helen Pressley

6th July 2026

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

Planning Application: 72578

Site: STAND GOLF CLUB, ASHBOURNE GROVE, WHITEFIELD M45 7NL

Proposal: Re-location of the clubhouse from Ashbourne Grove (Site A) to land to east of Ringley Road (Site B); Erection of 45 no. dwellings (Class C3) and erection of 60 no. retirement-living apartments (Class C3) in site A; Reconfiguration of numbering of the golf course holes to provide the start (Hole #1) and the finish (Hole #18) to coincide with the new replacement clubhouse facility; Associated access, parking, landscaping, drainage and infrastructure works

Sport England Reference: PA/26/NW/BUR/72932

Thank you for consulting Sport England in relation to the additional information for the above planning application.

Summary:

Statutory Response

Sport England currently **maintains its objection** to the proposal as a consistent set of drawings is needed to demonstrate that Exception 2 of the Playing Field Policy is fully met and that it accords with paragraph 104 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Non-Statutory Response

Sport England currently **withdraws its previous objection** to the proposed introduction of residential development adjacent to the golf course to the north of the site, as it has been demonstrated that there is no requirement for ball strike mitigation and as such the proposal satisfies para. 200 of the NPPF.

An assessment and suggested resolution in relation to both objections is set out below.

Sport England – Statutory Role and Policy

As previously set out.

The Proposal and Impact on Playing Field

As previously set out.

The previous information with regard to impact on playing field is based on Drawings 23036-PJA-02-ZZ-DR-A-1205-J and 23036-PJA-00-ZZ-DR-A-1202 and the Addendum Planning Statement.

The latest information is in relation to ball strike risk associated with golf.

Assessment is made against the Playing Fields Policy Exceptions E1-E5 as follows:

Sport England has considered the proposals with regard to the specific exception criteria identified in the above policy and made the following amended assessment in view of the latest drawings to show no impact on the football pitch:

E1: Does not apply, it has not been demonstrated that there is an excess of playing pitches for football.

E2: Could apply, but the proposal impacts the football facility.

E3: Could apply, as based on the latest drawing the clubhouse and car parking/pathway development has no impact on the playing pitch.

E4: Does not apply, no replacement playing field has been proposed.

E5: The proposal is for a sport facility, but it is considered that, in this case, the proposal is not impacting on the football pitch provision and use.

The National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 104 states that existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

- a) an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings, or land to be surplus to requirements; or
- b) the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
- c) the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use.

Consultation with National Governing Body's for Sport

Sport England has a memorandum of understanding with sport's National Governing Bodies and in that case, Sport England has consulted with the Football Foundation (FF); and England Golf (EG) and response received are summarised as follows: -

FF: (previous comments)

- *The new path is shown to not encroach on the 3m run off area, however, the phasing plan documents show the old designs and FF would encourage the applicant to have complete consistency across the application to ensure football provision is not impeded on.*
- *FF also notes that previous comments regarding changing room safeguarding and accessible toilet provision have not been addressed. FF would expect to see updated and compliant plans that fully consider the safety of users.*
- *Please see images below for details regarding the above.*



FF: (latest comments)

- *Ball strike satisfactory with no mitigation required and it does not encroach on football.*
- *FF also notes that previous comments regarding changing room safeguarding and accessible toilet provision have still not been addressed. The line of site for the accessible and junior changing remains directly open to one another. FF would expect to see updated and compliant plans that fully consider the safety of users. For further information on changes FF recommends referring to <https://footballfoundation.org.uk/changing-pavilion-design-key-considerations>*

England Golf:

- *No Having gone through the site plan with the proposed reconfigured 14th hole we are satisfied that there is enough mitigation to ensure players hit away from the development. The additional water hazard and trees along the left of the hole reinforce this. The ball strike assessment commissioned by Labosport also shows the angle of potentially stray shots of 20 degrees not going into the development. We support the recommendation from the assessment that there is no need for any additional ball stop netting.*

Evidence Base

As previously set out.

Sport England's Position

Sport England has considered the development for the clubhouse area, adjacent to the football pitch under Exception 2, based on the latest information and the provision for football therein:

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.

Whilst the proposal could meet Exception 2 as further information has clarified that the pitch will not be impacted in terms of layout, the submission needs to achieve consistency within all drawings. The submission includes reference to improvements to this pitch including maintenance and management but further information with regard to this should be provided.

It is noted that the proposal seeks to provide facilities to support the football use of the pitch to the east. Whilst this is supported, these need to be capable of meeting FA standards and further information is needed to demonstrate this on the basis of the comments from the Football Foundation, Sport England is concerned in particular as the layout impacts child safeguarding issues.

The proposal includes provision of vehicle parking specifically to support the use of the football pitch for 14 spaces. Whilst this is a benefit and based on Google Earth information, there was only previously limited parking for the pitch, the provision needs to be realistic and managed to avoid future conflicts between the two sports (football and golf), and a car parking management plan would be advised.

Statutory Response Summary

The proposal can be considered under Exception 2 of the Playing Fields Policy, as it is concluded that, based on the latest additional information, there is no direct impact on the football pitch to the east of the application site. However, the applicant should update ALL drawings, including phasing information, in order for Sport England to be satisfied that Exception 2 is fully met.

As such, Sport England **maintains its statutory objection**, however we would be happy to withdraw the objection once information has been provided to deal with these outstanding matters.

Further information is needed to; – demonstrate that the changing and toilet facilities meet FA technical standards, particularly in relation to safeguarding; set out pitch improvement and drainage; provide for a car parking management plan. It is accepted that the latter two requirements can be dealt with by planning conditions.

Sport England – Non-Statutory Role and Policy

The proposal includes the loss of part of a golf course to provide a residential site and the relocation of the club house to a different part of the golf course. Site A is the residential proposal and Site B the relocated golf clubhouse. The impact of the latter on the existing playing field site has been dealt with above. Sport England has no information to indicate that the majority of the remainder of that Site B area is playing field and as such it is not considered to form playing field under the terms of the definition within Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (Statutory Instrument 2015 No. 595). Similarly, Site A is existing golf course land which does not form playing field and is not directly associated with the playing field site to the south. The proposed loss of the golf facility and its relocation/consolidation of greens is dealt with under Sport England 'non-statutory' role.

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 proposal involves the loss of a sports facility, in which case full consideration is given to whether the proposal meets Paragraph 104 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), is in accordance with local plan policies to protect sport and recreation facilities, and whether it meets any approved Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy that the local authority has in place.

The Bury PPOSS includes golf in its assessment and can be used as evidence base for the purposes of decision making.

The conclusion for Golf includes:

- ▶ *With six 18-hole and one 9-hole course golf facilities in Bury, supply is well placed to meet demand.*
- ▶ *In the meantime, emphasis should be placed on protecting the facilities that are provided, with options explored to increase demand to more sustainable levels.*

Stand Golf Club is identified as a 'good quality 18-hole course' with a requirement to 'protect.'

The proposal in relocating the golf clubhouse, does so on an area of land which is currently unused to deliver golf – notwithstanding the impacts on the playing field site as set out in the statutory response above – the submitted information states that an 18-hole golf course will be retained. The Planning Statement indicates that the proposal on Site A would not :-

- *reduce the size of the golf course*
- *result in the inability to use the golf course*
- *reduce the sporting capacity of the golf course*

As such, the principle of the proposal could be acceptable. However, this would be subject to any impacts that may result from ball strike with the introduction of new residential development adjacent to the golf facility. As such the proposal is also assessed against the impact on the existing adjacent use of the golf course in view of the introduction of residential development and the requirements of para 200 of NPPF which states that:

200. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new development can be integrated effectively with existing businesses and community facilities (such as places of worship, pubs, music venues and sports clubs). Existing businesses and facilities should not have unreasonable restrictions placed on them as a result of development permitted after they were established. Where the operation of an existing business or community facility could have a significant adverse effect on new development (including changes of use) in its vicinity, the applicant (or 'agent of change') should be required to provide suitable mitigation before the development has been completed.

The applicant has provided a 'Boundary Risk Assessment' by Labosport LSUK.26-0355_GBRA Version 1.0 which deals with this issue and England Golf have agreed with its conclusions and recommendations in that no ball strike mitigation is required.

As such Sport England agrees that the non-statutory issue in relation to golf has been fully addressed.

Conclusions and Recommendation

Statutory Response

Sport England currently **maintains its objection** to the proposal as it does not currently fully meet the requirements of Exception 2 of the Playing Field Policy, nor does it accord with paragraph 104 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Potential Statutory Resolution

- Provision of a set of consistent drawings to show no encroachment within the 3m run off area of the football pitch – including phasing drawings.
- A demonstration that the changing and toilet facilities meet FA technical standards – please refer to the comments from the Football Foundation above.
- Information relating to replacement/improved pitch (needs to meet Sport England's Natural Turf for Sport – can be achieved through planning condition).
- Car parking management plan – can be achieved through planning condition. (Sport England advisory only).

Non-Statutory Response

Sport England currently **withdraws its previous objection** as it is considered to satisfy para. 200 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 agendas, report(s) and committee date(s).

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.

I hope this is of assistance, any further information or correspondence should be forwarded to planning.north@sportengland.org

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