

Bury MBC

FAO: Helen Pressley

By email

3rd January 2024

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

Application Reference: 70269

Site: STAND CRICKET CLUB, HAMILTON ROAD, WHITEFIELD M45 7WF

Proposal: Single storey extension at rear of existing changing rooms and erection of porch; refurbishment of existing scoreboard building including external alterations, new entrance porch and disabled access to form new toilets and member's bar

Sport England Reference: PA/23/NW/BUR/66510

Thank you for consulting Sport England on the above application.

Summary

Statutory consultee role

Sport England **objects** to this application as although it is in some part considered to meet Exception 2 of our Playing Fields Policy and to accord with Paragraph 103 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), subject to conditions, the proposed layout of the changing facilities do not meet ECB and Sport England guidance and require amendments.

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 site is an existing cricket club which has an area of functional playing field of approximately 1.31ha and appears to be in sole use for the purposes of playing cricket and includes a non-turf wicket and batting nets. The ancillary buildings serving the facility are to the western frontage of the site and the existing scoreboard building to the south of the site.



The proposed extensions/improvements and refurbishment of existing scoreboard building are designed to take place within the existing building areas and do not encroach onto the playing field area. In this regard the proposal does not impact the use of the playing field for pitch sport.

The proposal includes alterations to the changing and toilet facilities at the club and which as currently presented, raise issues relating to appropriate safeguarding in terms of the lack of deflection of direct views into each changing areas; and the separation of toilet facilities from the changing areas which should be incorporated into each changing area. This is particularly important for the promotion of the sport for children, girls and women.

Such provisions are identified in the ECB 'Pavilions and Clubhouses [TS5] - Version 1 2009' which is attached.

Assessment is made against the Playing Fields Policy and NPPF as follows:

(See Annex for full Exception wording)

Sport England has considered the proposals with regard to the specific exception criteria identified in the above policy and made the following assessment:

E1: Does not apply as there is no evidence that the playing field is not needed.

E2: Has the potential to apply and in terms of the layout of the facilities in the context of the playing field, is acceptable. However the design of the changing rooms could have an adverse impact on the future use of the cricket facility and in that regard, the proposal fails to meet this exception.

E3: This exception also has the potential to apply similar to E2, however it is considered that E2 is the most appropriate method of assessment in this case.

E4: Does not apply.

E5: Does not apply, the proposal will need to provide appropriate design of sports facilities, the current design would outweigh any positive impacts resulting from the overall improvements to the cricket club.

The National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 103 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.

In this circumstance Paragraph 103 b) applies.

Consultation with the National Governing Bodies for Sport

Sport England has a memorandum of understanding with the pitch sport National Governing Bodies and consults with them on planning proposals. On this occasion, Sport England has consulted with the ECB and their response is summarised as follows: -

Sport England's Position

Given the above, Sport England **objects** to the application because it is considered to not fully accord with Exception 2 of our Playing Fields Policy and paragraph 103 of the NPPF.

Potential Resolution:

- Amendment to the design and layout of the proposed changing and toilet facilities to meet ECB and Sport England guidelines

If the LPA is minded to approve the application without amendments, then Sport England objects to the application as it is not considered to accord with any of the exceptions to our Playing Fields Policy or paragraph 103 of the NPPF.

Sport England would require any future planning permission to include a condition in relation to the submission of a Construction Management Plan in order to be content that the playing field will be protected throughout the course of the construction period. Wording can be provided if needed.

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