

From: Pauline Shearer

Sent: Monday, April 3, 2023 1:31 PM

To: Clapworthy, Dean <D.Clapworthy@bury.gov.uk>

Subject: PLANNING APPLICATION 69361 - SPURR HOUSE, POLE LANE, BURY BL9 8QL - SPORT ENGLAND

REF: PA/23/NW/BUR/64022

Dear Dean.

Thank you for consulting Sport England on the above application.

It is understood that the proposal could prejudice the use, or lead to the loss of use, of land being used as a playing field or has been used as a playing field in the last five years, as defined in The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (Statutory Instrument 2015 No. 595). The consultation with Sport England is therefore a statutory requirement.

Sport England has considered the application in light of the National Planning Policy Framework (particularly Para 187) and against its own playing fields policy, which states:

'Sport England will oppose the granting of planning permission for any development which would lead to the loss of, or would 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.'

Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and Guidance document can be viewed via the below link:

https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/planning-for-sport#playing_fields_policy

Sport England Policy Exceptions	
E1	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.
E2	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.
E3	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.
E4	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.
E5	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 Proposal and Impact on Playing Field

The proposal results in the conversion and extension of short stay residential home for education use comprising of classrooms, WC's, plant room, storage, ancillary office, provision of additional car parking, cycle storage, new playground, landscaping, external works and servicing. To the southeast of the site is Unsworth Cricket and Tennis Club; Spring Lane sits on the outer boundary of the cricket pitch beyond a border of thick vegetation. Unsworth Cricket and Tennis Club contains marked out pitched for both cricket and football and is considered as a playing field for the purposes of the above Sport England polity assessment.

The Northeast of the site fronts onto a dense border of overgrowth and vegetation which appears to be a section of disused land and beyond, an all-weather pitch over 85m from the site boundary.

The proposed additions are within the existing building footprint, with the MUGA which is for private use close to the building to the north of the site. The existing car park will provide a total of 25 vehicle space; bin storage and cycle shelter and will be extended towards the southeast to accommodate this, bringing it close to the boundary of the adjacent playing field.

Concerns have been raised with regard to the potential impact of ball strike from the use of the adjacent playing field for cricket. The applicant has provided additional information in the form of a 'Cricket Ball Strike Assessment' – Labosport.

National Governing Bodies of Sport

As part of the assessment of this consultation, Sport England has sought the views of the relevant National Governing Bodies of Sport (NGBs) who acts as Sport England's technical advisors for their relevant sport and their sport facilities. For the proposal Sport England has consulted with the Football Foundation and the England and Wales Cricket Board and their comments are summarised as follows:

Football Foundation:

- Given that new infrastructure proposed on the site border with the sports club is just for car parking (also less likely to be in use at weekends), and that there are no known ball strike issues for football relating to the existing retained building, FF does not foresee any prejudicial impact from this proposal to football pitches adjacent.

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England and Wales Cricket Board:

- Following initial concerns, agrees with the recommendation of the report that no mitigation is needed.

A multi-use games area is to be formed at the northeast of the site which it is stated will be surfaced with a porous macadam surface and lined with sports court markings suitable for the size of the space. The games area will be bounded by rebound fencing and fitted with basketball hoops and mini goal ends. Sport England would advise that:

1. The MUGA should meet Sport England's 'Artificial Surfaces for Outdoor Sports' design guidance and the Sports and Play Construction Association (SAPCA) guidance for MUGAs.
<https://www.sportengland.org/guidance-and-support/facilities-and-planning/design-and-cost-guidance/outdoor-surfaces>
<https://sapca.org.uk/guides/>

For basketball use, a fence 3 metres high and 4 metres high – the latter required directly behind the basket to act as a ball stop.

2. Although the intention to create an educational facility it is not known whether any of the sports facilities could meet a general community sport need. Sport England considers that the applicant should consider making these sports facilities available for community use and enter into a community use agreement, as the facility can offer significant benefits to the delivery of community sport in the locality, and the additional income generated could assist the long-term sustainability of the facility.

<https://www.sportengland.org/funds-and-campaigns/use-our-school>

Having assessed the application, Sport England is satisfied that the proposed development meets Exception 3 of our playing fields policy, in that:

'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.'

This being the case, Sport England **does not wish to raise an objection** to this application.

If you would like any further information or advice please contact planning.north@sportengland.org

Kind Regards

Pauline Shearer MSc BA(Hons) MRTPI

Planning Manager