

Bury MBC

FAO: Helen Pressley

By email

15th November 2024

Application Reference: 71043

**Site: HOLCOMBE BROOK SPORTS CLUB, HAZEL HALL LANE, RAMSBOTTOM HAZEL HALL
BL0 9FS**

Proposal: Alterations to existing tennis court to create 2 no. padel courts

Sport England Reference: PA/24/NW/BUR/68847

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

Sport England – Non-Statutory Role and Policy

The Government, within their Planning Practice Guidance (Open Space, Sports and Recreation Facilities Section) advises Local Planning Authorities to consult Sport England on a wide range of applications. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/open-space-sports-and-recreation-facilities-public-rights-of-way-and-local-green-space#open-space-sports-and-recreation-facilities>

This application falls within the scope of the above guidance as it relates to the creation of a padel tennis facility on non-playing field land.

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 and Assessment against Sport England's Objectives and the NPPF

The proposal seeks permission to create a two padel tennis court provision, which would result in the loss of one existing tennis court. It is considered that padel can increase the opportunity to access tennis as a sport, regardless of the padel sport itself. However, as set out in Sport England's previous response, whilst this is acknowledged and the court loss is only one, the Council's evidence base is clear on the recommendations for tennis facilities to be protected.

Since Sport England's last response the applicant has provided a justification for the proposal which includes how the proposal will benefit the use of the site for the purpose of tennis. It is noted that the single tennis court loss will be replaced by 2 padel courts.

Although Sport England does not support enabling development as a justification for the loss of existing required facilities, however, given the loss is only a single court loss and that it is being replaced by a racquet facility, that it can be considered as a minimal loss and that there are sporting benefits that will result from the replacement with the padel courts.

It is acknowledged that the PPS did not assess the Padel given its relatively recent introduction as a racquet sport.

Facility Design

Sport England does not currently have technical standards for Padel Tennis as it is a relatively new sport.

An LTA technical document has been provided with the application however as yet, the response from the Lawn Tennis Association has not been received, it is recommended that the facility accords with LTA standards.

Availability for Community Sport

Sport England considers that the applicant should consider making sports facilities available for community use and the latest justification explains how that will be achieved on a pay per play basis.

Conclusion

In light of the above, Sport England wishes to **withdraw its objection** to this application as it has been demonstrated that the loss of a single court with replacement with 2 padel courts, will not harm the delivery of tennis and is likely to support the tennis use of the site in the future and as such it meets the

requirements of paragraph 98 of the NPPF and accords with Sport England's 12 planning for sport principles

<https://www.sportengland.org/guidance-and-support/facilities-and-planning/planning-sport>

In particular Principles:-

- 3 - Plan, design and maintain buildings, developments, facilities, land and environments that enable people to lead active lifestyles.
- 6 - Support improvements to existing sport and physical activity provision where they're needed.
- 7 - Encourage and secure wider community use of new and existing sport and physical activity provision.
- 8 - Support new provision, including allocating new sites for sport and physical activity which meets identified needs.
- 10 - 'Provide' for sport and physical activity provision which is fit for purpose and well designed.

Informative:

The proposal should meet the technical requirements of the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA).

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). We would be grateful if you would advise us of the outcome of the application by sending us a copy of the decision notice.

Any further information should be sent to planning.north@sportengland.org

Yours sincerely

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