

West Sussex County Council

FAO: Chris Bartlett

By email

28 February 2024

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

Application Ref: WSCC/005/24

Site: Buckingham Park Primary School, BN43 5UD

Proposal: Erection of two temporary classroom blocks on playground with access from existing site compound

Sport England Reference: PA/24/SE/

Thank you for consulting Sport England on the above application.

Summary

Statutory consultee role

Sport England raises **no objection** to this application subject to a condition being attached to any grant of planning permission to secure the restoration of the playing field to at least equivalent condition as existing in a timescale to be agreed after 31st July 2025.

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 proposal is for the erection of temporary school buildings on the playground and a site works access route across the northern part of the playing field that links to an existing temporary site works compound. It is noted that the temporary compound was granted permission by Adur and Worthing Councils under planning permission reference AWDM/0649/23 for a temporary period up until the end of July 2025, but that contrary to the above Order, Sport England wasn't consulted. That permission requires the compound to be removed and the playing field restored to its former condition, or to a condition to be agreed with the LPA on or before that date.

The permitted compound appears to impact on part of the playing field that has recently accommodated a junior football pitch together with a grass athletics track and summer sports pitches. The proposed access road will further impact on this part of the playing field.



Assessment against Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and NPPF

The proposal results in the loss of part of the existing playing field to provide the required vehicular access between the site compound permitted under planning permission AWDM/0649/23 and the proposed temporary classrooms and existing school to be refurbished without mitigation. As such it would not meet any of the exceptions to our policy. Notwithstanding that and taking into account the constraints of the site, its current use and previous planning history, Sport England does not wish to object to the proposal subject to the imposition of a condition that secures the restoration of the playing field within a reasonable timescale (3-6 months) following the completion of the works and removal of the temporary facilities.

In assessing the proposal, I have consulted with the Football Foundation that has confirmed that no affiliated football takes place on the playing field, and it is also not aware of any other community use.

Sport England's Position

Given the above, Sport England raises **no objection** to the application.

The absence of an objection is subject to the following condition being imposed should the local planning authority (LPA) resolve to approve the application:

Condition 1

Unless otherwise approved in writing by the LPA in consultation with Sport England, the access route hereby approved shall be removed from the land by no later than 31st July 2025 and the playing field thereafter be restored to at least equivalent condition to existing in accordance with a scheme and timetable that has first been submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA in consultation with Sport England.

Reason: *To ensure the site is restored to a condition fit for purpose and to accord with Development Plan Policy **.*

Informative: The applicant is advised to consider undertaking an existing condition agronomy assessment. An agronomy report to inform the restoration scheme for the playing field will be required to satisfy the above condition.

If the LPA is minded to approve the application without imposing the above condition 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.

If you wish to amend the wording of the condition, please contact us to discuss. Sport England does not object to amendments to conditions, provided they achieve the same outcome, and we are involved in any amendments.

Should the local planning authority be minded to approve this application without the above condition, then given Sport England's subsequent objection the Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2021 requires the application to be referred to the Secretary of State via the National Planning Casework Unit.

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.

If you would like any further information or advice, please contact the undersigned.

Yours sincerely,

Jo Edwards
Planning Manager

She/her

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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