

Herefordshire Council

**FAO: Heather Carlisle**

By email

14/10/2024

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

**Application Reference: P242157/CD4**

**Site: Land at Ashley Farm Grafton Court Close Grafton Hereford Herefordshire**

**Proposal: The erection of six floodlights to light an approved football pitch; and the refurbishment and relocation of an existing cabin to provide sports changing facilities, storage, showers and WCs.**

**Sport England Reference: 68862**

Thank you for consulting Sport England on the above application.

**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](http://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 land at Ashley Farm entails the erection of six floodlights to light an approved football pitch (P223281/CD4) and the refurbishment and relocation of an existing cabin to provide sports changing facilities, storage, showers and WCs. There is a separate reserved matters application (P241961/RM) for the site which seeks to agree the layout of the artificial pitch, natural turf pitches, community/clubhouse building, car park and access road, which Sport England raised no objection to.

The proposed location of the floodlights and the relocated cabins is aligned with the abovementioned reserved matters application layout for the site.

To inform this response Sport England consulted the Football Foundation (responding on behalf of County FA) who commented that the location and specification of the sports lighting is satisfactory for community football needs of the site, and it meets all relevant guidance. The Football Foundation also comment that the relocation of the cabins will allow for additional car parking capacity on the existing macadam area. The refurbishment of the cabins would cater for the wider use of the site, including improved changing and toilet provision for users. The design of changing rooms is also fully compliant to FF guidance.

## **Assessment against Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and NPPF**

The proposal entails the provision of ancillary facilities serving the playing field site. The sports lighting is of appropriate design and location to serve the approved 3G pitch at the site. The relocated and refurbished cabins will provide changing facilities, showers and WCs for the playing field site and its location will not impact on the pitches at the site as displayed within the reserved matters application (P241961/RM), which Sport England raised no objection to.

Having assessed the application, Sport England is satisfied that the proposed development has the potential to meet exception 2 of our playing fields policy, in that:

'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.'

## **Sport England's Position**

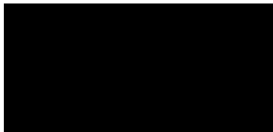
Given the above, Sport England raises **no objection** to the application because it is considered to accord with exception 2 of our Playing Fields Policy and paragraph 103 of the NPPF.

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.

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

Yours sincerely,

Rajvir Bahey  
Planning Manager



E: [Rajvir.bahey@sportengland.org](mailto:Rajvir.bahey@sportengland.org)

## **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](http://www.sportengland.org/playingfieldspolicy)