

Rachel Tibbetts

From: Andrew Thompson
Sent: 07 February 2023 11:18
To: DC Support
Subject: FW: App Ref:23/00173/OUT - Land South of Green Lane - Sport England Ref: PA/23/SE/CL/63747

Please add to Def

Andrew Thompson

Principal Planning Officer – Major Developments South Planning Team
Development Management
Environment and Place Directorate
Cherwell District Council
E: andrew.thompson@cherwell-dc.gov.uk
T: +44 (0)1295 221831

Website address - www.cherwell.gov.uk

From: Bob Sharples <Bob.Sharples@sportengland.org>
Sent: 07 February 2023 07:29
To: Andrew Thompson <Andrew.Thompson@Cherwell-DC.gov.uk>
Cc: Harry Ash <Harry.Ash@lta.org.uk>; Joseph Hall <Joseph.Hall@footballfoundation.org.uk>; Andrew Earnshaw <Andrew.Earnshaw@oxfordshirefa.com>; Thomas Darlington <Thomas.Darlington@Cherwell-DC.gov.uk>
Subject: App Ref:23/00173/OUT - Land South of Green Lane - Sport England Ref: PA/23/SE/CL/63747

You don't often get email from bob.sharples@sportengland.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the Council. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Andrew,

Thank you for consulting Sport England on 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 new playing fields.

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:

The Proposal

The proposal is for an outline planning application for up to 147 homes, public open space, flexible recreational playing field area and sports pitches with associated car parking, alongside landscaping, ecological enhancements, SuDs, green/blue and hard infrastructure, with vehicular and pedestrian/cycle accesses, and all associated works (all matters reserved except for means of access). It is proposed that there will be 1 or 2 football pitches and a netball and basketball courts and 4 tennis courts and a possible Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA).

Assessment

Cherwell District Council are in the process of creating a new playing pitch strategy and since the previous one has been adopted there have been planning applications for new playing pitch provision in the Bicester area.

As part of my assessment I have contacted the county Football Association/Football Foundation (FA/FF) and the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) for their comments.

FA/FF comments:

We note the intention for this site to operate in conjunction with the existing adjacent playing fields space and welcome the joined-up approach to provision locally to avoid multiple, smaller sites being developed which are independently less viable.

We would however note the following:

- *There appears to be duplication by providing a separate access road and car park to the site, rather than extending the parking directly adjacent to the existing car park. We don't feel two separate parking areas with disconnected access through two different housing developments are the correct approach and could lead to operational challenges. A pedestrian/cycle connection would appear more appropriate and allow greater use of the available space for sport/recreation.*
- *The emerging PPS for Cherwell identifies Chesterton FC (current user of the adjacent facility, alongside cricket) as having demand to grow but being unable to field more teams due to a lack of facility space. We would therefore encourage that a configuration is put forward which provides more than one pitch (we note the DAS included a design option with two pitches), to maximise opportunity for the club's growth. There appears scope for this, particularly if the parking were to be relocated. There is also duplicated playing area (NEAP/LEAP) provision across the proposed playing field, the existing playing field site, and the new housing development.*
- *The detail of the existing ancillary provision isn't provided. We would welcome clarity in what ancillary provision serves the proposed pitch(es) to ascertain suitability to provides facilities for additional pitch users across the wider combined site now that additional pitch space is proposed.*

Finally, we were unable to find detail of the construction of the new pitches. A qualified and suitably experienced sports turf consultant, agronomist, soil scientist or land drainage engineer must be employed to carry out a feasibility study, design and specification of the Natural Turf Pitches. The construction of Natural Turf Pitches should be project managed and/or signed off by the same registered agronomist or sports turf consultant that produced the design. The pitches should be constructed by a specialist pitch contractor and not a general civil engineering contractor.

Pitches should pass a PQS assessment to a 'Good' standard for football as defined by the Grounds Management Association (GMA) Pitch Grading Framework before they are used. In order to keep the quality of the pitches, an appropriate maintenance programme should be agreed in-line with the design consultant recommendations.

LTA comments:

The LTA supports the proposal for an additional tennis facility in Bicester. The latest PPOSS for Cherwell shows the local tennis club, Bicester Lawn Tennis Club, are over capacity and this will continue to grow over time unless additional facilities are made available. There are also no pay and play tennis facilities in Bicester currently so we would welcome a new site that could be opened up for public access. However, there a few questions and considerations we would welcome thoughts on:

- It would be good to understand why this specific location has been chosen for tennis. We are aware of a relatively recently approved planning application for tennis facilities to be developed at Whitelands Farm Sports Ground. This would pose a better opportunity given the higher and more relevant footfall at this site, as well as availability of ancillary facilities.*
- We strongly recommend the addition of sports lighting to tennis courts provided as we know this has a significant impact on participation and all year-round play.*
- We would recommend looking at how the tennis courts are managed to ensure sustainability (e.g. online booking, smart gate access and coaching offer).*
- As mentioned, the local club, Bicester LTC are over capacity and have no potential to expand their current site so it would be important the club are consulted on plans as there would be interest to expand their offer to this site or relocate.*
- Finally, since there are no designs of the courts themselves we would recommend, when at that stage, to work with a SAPCA member court constructor.*

I note on p48 of the planning statement, that there is to be potential contributions towards the upgrading of the changing room building immediately to the north of the site (i.e., to address the new sports pitches envisaged within the application proposals). While is welcomed there will need to at least toilet provision on this site.

The tennis courts should be of an artificial surface and we support the comments made by the LTA that they should be sports lit. This is also true for the basketball and netball courts, to be sports lit and have an artificial surface – NB you can't play basketball on grass.. It would be better if these courts could be parallel in order to allow competition games to take place and to allow both courts to be used by either sport.

I would advise consideration is given to the other comments raised by the LTA and the FA/FA.

The occupiers of new residential development, will generate demand for sporting provision. The existing provision within an area may not be able to accommodate this increased demand without exacerbating existing and/or predicted future deficiencies. Therefore, Sport England considers that new developments should contribute towards meeting the demand that they generate through the provision of on-site facilities and/or providing additional capacity off-site. The level and nature of any provision should be informed by a robust evidence base such as an up to date Sports Facilities Strategy, Playing Pitch Strategy or other relevant needs assessment. While the football pitch(es) address this need as does the other outdoor sports facilities there is no mention of off-site contributions given to built facilities such as swimming pools and sports halls. Therefore I would urge CDC to consider seeking contributions towards built facilities or alternatively funding an activity hub for the site. The creation of an activity hub to support the various activities on the site:

https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/designing-for-physical-activity-activity-hubs.pdf?VersionId=fTq_THi4etbWfiVAfU_rY.d9INbg3I_D

Playing Field Design

There are no details on the playing field or netball or basketball courts or MUGA designs. Therefore we strongly advise that this needs to be conditioned to ensure what is provided is fit for purpose and not a drain on the public purse.

Sport England recommends that a ground conditions assessment is undertaken by a sports turf specialist/agronomist who can recommend a scheme for preparing the playing fields to the required specification. The recommended scheme should then be implemented. Detailed guidance on the issues that require consideration is set out in Sport England's guidance 'Natural Turf for Sport'.

A copy of this guidance can be found at: <https://www.sportengland.org/guidance-and-support/facilities-and-planning/design-and-cost-guidance>

Conclusion

This being the case, Sport England offers its **support** for this application, as it is considered to meet Objective Provide as set out above.

Sport England recommends, based on our assessment, that if the Council is minded to approve the application, the following planning conditions should be imposed.

1. (a) No development shall commence on the Sports until the following documents have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority after consultation with Sport England:
 - (i) A detailed assessment of ground conditions (including drainage and topography) of the land proposed for the playing field which identifies constraints which could adversely affect playing field quality; and
 - (ii) Where the results of the assessment to be carried out pursuant to (i) above identify constraints which could adversely affect playing field quality, a detailed scheme to address any such constraints. The scheme shall include a written specification of the proposed soils structure, proposed drainage, cultivation and other operations associated with grass and sports turf establishment and a programme of implementation.
- (b) The approved scheme shall be carried out in full and in accordance with the approved programme of. The land shall thereafter be maintained in accordance with the scheme and made available for playing field use in accordance with the scheme.

The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme within a timescale to be first approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority after consultation with Sport England.

*Reason: To ensure that site surveys are undertaken for new or replacement playing fields and that any ground condition constraints can be and are mitigated to ensure provision of an adequate quality playing field and to accord with LP Policy ***

2. No development shall commence until details of the design and layout of Tennis courts, Basketball and Tennis courts and the Multi-Use Games Area have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority [after consultation with Sport

England]. The Tennis courts, Basketball and Tennis courts and the Multi-Use Games Area shall not be constructed other than in accordance with the approved details.

*Reason: To ensure the development is fit for purpose and sustainable and to accord with Development Plan Policy **.*

3. Prior to the bringing into use of the recreational sports/playing fields, a Management and Maintenance Scheme for the facility including management responsibilities, a maintenance schedule and a mechanism for review shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority after consultation with Sport England. The measures set out in the approved scheme shall be complied with in full, with effect from commencement of use of the recreational sports/playing fields.

*Reason: To ensure that new facilities is capable of being managed and maintained to deliver a facilities which are fit for purpose, sustainable and to ensure sufficient benefit of the development to sport (National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) para 99) and to accord with LP Policy ***

If you wish to amend the wording of the recommended condition(s), or use another mechanism in lieu of the condition(s), please discuss the details with the undersigned. Sport England does not object to amendments to conditions, provided they achieve the same outcome and we are involved in any amendments.

The absence of an objection to this application, in the context of the Town and Country Planning Act, cannot be taken as formal support or consent from Sport England or any National Governing Body of Sport to any related funding application, or as may be required by virtue of any pre-existing funding agreement.

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.

Yours sincerely,

Bob

Bob Sharples RIBA MRTPI
Principal Planning Manager - South Team

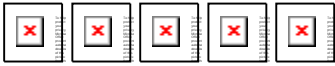
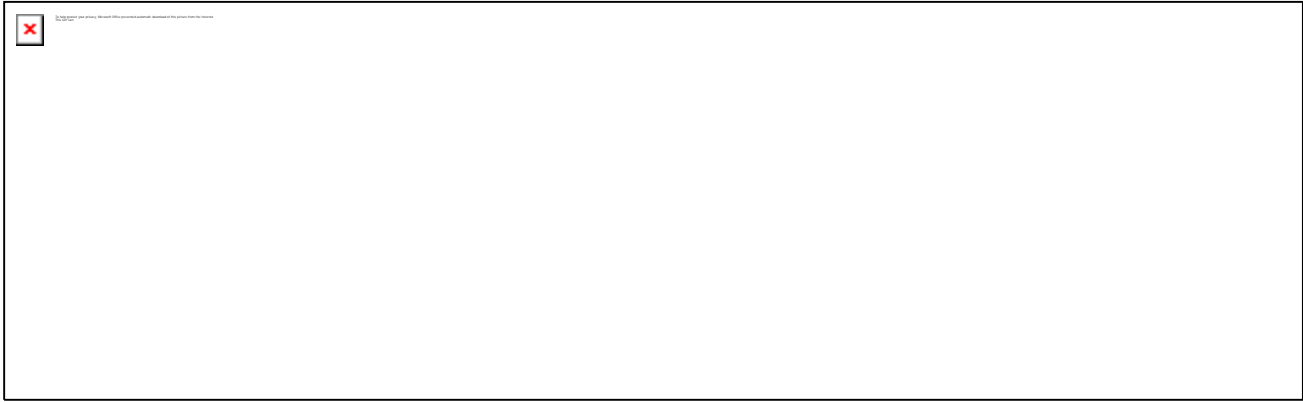
T: 07830315030

M: 07830315030

F: 01509 233 192

E: Bob.Sharples@sportengland.org





We have updated our Privacy Statement to reflect the recent changes to data protection law but rest assured, we will continue looking after your personal data just as carefully as we always have. Our Privacy Statement is published on our [website](#), and our Data Protection Officer can be contacted by emailing [Gaile Walters](#)

The information contained in this e-mail may be subject to public disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Additionally, this email and any attachment are confidential and intended solely for the use of the individual to whom they are addressed. If you are not the intended recipient, be advised that you have received this email and any attachment in error, and that any use, dissemination, forwarding, printing, or copying, is strictly prohibited. If you voluntarily provide personal data by email, Sport England will handle the data in accordance with its Privacy Statement. Sport England's Privacy Statement may be found here <https://www.sportengland.org/privacy-statement/> If you have any queries about Sport England's handling of personal data you can contact Gaile Walters, Sport England's Data Protection Officer directly by emailing DPO@sportengland.org