

Planning Application Response of Planning Policy

Application No:	APP/22/01062
Site Address:	North Emsworth Recreation Ground, PO10 7XQ
Development:	Proposed change of use to an enclosed outdoor play area for the nursery school located within the existing hall, with associated play equipment installation with works and landscaping to the wider open space
Case Officer:	Arleta Miszewska
Comments by:	Emma Chisnall
Date of Comments:	20 th March 2022

Note: The application follows a pre-app from April 2022 GEN/22/00129

Policy Status:

The [Local Plan \(Core Strategy\)](#) and the [Local Plan \(Allocations\)](#), together with the [Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan](#), provide the development plan for the borough. Given the location of the site, the [Emsworth Neighbourhood Plan](#) is also of relevance.

Following the receipt of the Inspectors' Interim Findings, the Examination was concluded, and the Havant Borough Local Plan was formally withdrawn on the 16th March 2022. It should, however, be noted that the Council published the [Open Space Strategy](#) in support of the previous Local Plan which is a material consideration.

The following policies are of relevance:

- AL1- Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- DM1- Recreation and Open Space
- DM8- Conservation, Protection and Enhancement of Existing Natural Features

Principle of Development:

The application proposes a change of use from an area of open space identified by the Council's Open Space Strategy (OSS) from the rear of the building to a play space to serve the nursery school. Although the site is an 'amenity greenspace' (reference 450) within the OSS, it is not formally designated as a Local Green Space (LGS).

It is noted that within the OSS the area of land also falls within a site for 'facilities for children and young people' (reference 43). This is due to parts of the site off from Spencer Road containing a play space facility to the north with hardsurfacing and the MUGA site to the south. The proposed land in question to the west of the hall is not considered to be currently used in this form, nor would it impact the existing provision and as such shall be considered as 'amenity greenspace' for this assessment.

Policy DM1 of the adopted local plan states that:

"Development of existing open space, including play spaces, playing fields, pitches, courts and allotments, for alternative uses will only be permitted where the following criteria can be met:

- 1. It has been demonstrated that there is a surplus of provision according to the local standards set out in the council's Open Spaces Plan or any subsequent review of the plan; and*

2. *It has been demonstrated that the land cannot reasonably be converted to another type of open space for example green infrastructure for which the council's Open Spaces Plan has identified a deficit.*
3. *If the land has been identified within the South East Hampshire Coast Brent Goose Strategy (2002) as providing habitat for Brent Geese then it must be demonstrated that any impact on this habitat can be fully mitigated.*

Where there is no identified surplus of the original type of open space, contributions to new provision of an equivalent or improved standard, both in terms of quality and quantity, will be required in line with the council's Open Spaces Plan and developer contributions policy"

Paragraph 9.7 of the OSS indicates there is currently a surplus of amenity greenspace, although this surplus is expected to reduce by 2036 because of the anticipated increase in population. As such, criterion 1 and 2 of ALP Policy DM1 are of relevance. In this case, there is clearly of surplus of this provision according to local standards set out in the OSS.

In terms of criterion 2, it is noted that the existing open space is proposed to be used as an outdoor play area associated with the adjacent nursery and as such, there would be unlikely be reasonable alternatives to provide this. Therefore the proposal is considered to meet and comply with policy DM1.

It can be noted that the proposal would support the nursery school in providing an additional and beneficial play space to the children of the nursery. This would benefit the community use and improve the current facilities of the nursery. Furthermore, improvements to the landscaping and wider space are proposed and it would be advised that the landscaping team are consulted on for an assessment of this.

Conclusion:

Pending the above considerations and compliance with policy DM1, the principle of the development can be supported.