



Woodcroft Primary School.

Woodcroft Lane, Lovedean
Waterlooville
PO8 9QD



**Planning Statement
for the construction of a
grass playing field.**

February 2014.



1 Introduction

1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared to support a planning application for the change of use of a field, currently used as a paddock, to a grass playing pitch to serve the needs of children attending Woodcroft Primary School in Waterloooville, in the Borough of Havant.

1.2 The purpose of the Statement is to assess the proposals for the playing pitch against the provisions of the Development Plan and other material considerations that are relevant in determining the planning application. In particular, proposals for the site have been guided by relevant national planning guidance and the Havant Borough Local Plan (Core Strategy).

1.3 This statement should be read in conjunction with the documents, plans, and Design and Access Statement submitted as part of the planning application.

2. Background

2.1 Planning Application No. 09/59532/002 for the conversion of the former Meadowlands Junior School building, the demolition of the Meadowlands Infant School and playground, and the relocation of a grass playing pitch to create the new Woodcroft Primary School was approved by Hampshire County Council on 03 July 2009. This school rationalisation also resulted in a surplus area of land that is currently being considered separately for development through the emerging Havant Borough Council Local Plan (Allocations).

2.2 Whilst the creation of the new Woodcroft Primary School and the demolition of the former Infants School and playground have been completed, the approved playing field was not relocated at that time as it became evident that part of the retained school grounds would be required to provide access to a strategic housing site, immediately to the north of the school, which was being promoted by the adjacent landowner and supported by Havant Borough Council, as the Local Planning Authority (LPA), through its then emerging Core Strategy.

2.3 This strategic housing site, known as 'Woodcroft Farm', was formally allocated under Core Strategy Policy CS18 (Site 5) of the Havant Borough Local Plan in March 2011.

2.4 Following discussions between the owner of 'Woodcroft Farm', Havant Borough Council, and the County Council, an agreement was reached whereby this Regulation 3 Planning Application would be submitted by the County Council for the creation of the replacement school playing field within 'Woodcroft Farm'. At the same time, the landowner would submit a detailed planning application for the development of 'Woodcroft Farm' itself

and a separate application to divert the bridleway through the new development site to Havant BC.

2.5 Under the agreement reached with the adjoining landowner, the boundary of the Woodcroft Primary School will be amended to include the replacement junior-sized playing pitch, should both these planning applications be granted and implemented.

2.6 A full planning application (APP/13/00804) for the development of 'Woodcroft Farm' for 288 dwellings was submitted by the landowner in September 2013 and was approved by Havant Borough Council on 23 January 2014.

3. The Proposal

3.1 The grass playing field that is the subject of this planning application has been designed by Hampshire County Council's Property Services to meet all statutory requirements. It has been developed following discussions with the Head of Woodcroft Primary School and the Strategic Planning Officer within Children's Services, and represents a considerable improvement, in terms of levels, drainage and fencing, to the playing fields within the existing school grounds.

3.2 Details are provided within the submitted drawing (ref: E1653-L-201 Rev C).

3.3 The proposals shown in the submitted drawing take account of the need to accommodate two possible scenarios for accessing and fencing the playing field in relation to the existing bridleway under the requirements of Local Plan (Core Strategy) Policy CS18.

3.4 As shown on the submitted drawing, Items 7 (pedestrian gate) and 9 (maintenance gate) are proposed pending the diversion of the bridleway, in order to ensure the security of the school site and safeguarding of pupils. Items 4, 12, and 14 are subject to the approval of the diversion of the existing bridleway. If and when the bridleway is diverted, Items 7 and 9 would be removed, together with the existing chain-link school boundary fence to enhance the safety and visual amenity of the school.

3.5 The applicant is content that a condition be placed on any planning consent for this application that the implementation of Items 4, 12, and 14 is subject to the formal diversion of the bridleway.

3.6 Subject to the above, pedestrian access between the proposed playing field and the main school building will be provided through a security gate in the existing school boundary and through the existing tree belt.

3.7 An existing tarmac farm track, which runs along the southern boundary of the 'Woodcroft Farm' site, will be used to provide a gated access for maintenance vehicles into the playing field from the northern end of Woodcroft Lane. However, the western section

of the existing farm track within the application site is not required for maintenance and will be grubbed up and landscaped, as shown in the submitted drawing.

3.8 The application also includes a temporary replacement farm track, shown around the outside perimeter of the proposed playing field, to retain rights of access to the existing farm business, pending the development of the strategic housing site.

3.9 The proposal will require the removal of 120 metres of existing hedgerow, along the southern edge of the new sports pitch, to provide adequate visual supervision from within the existing school grounds. However, the submitted drawing indicates that new hedge planting, approximately 205m in length, is proposed around the entire western, northern, and eastern perimeters of the playing field, which will more than compensate for this loss.

3.10 The proposal does not include any lighting or additional buildings. The playing field will be secured by fencing, painted green, and the new perimeter hedges will provide an attractive natural screen between this fencing and future residential properties within 'Woodcroft Farm'.

4 Policy Review

4.1 Section 38 of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

4.2 The following summarises the most relevant national planning guidance, set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and local planning policy, set out in the Havant Borough Local Plan (Core Strategy), adopted in March 2011 to cover the period to 2026.

4.3 The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and constitutes guidance for the Local Planning Authority (LPA) which must be taken into account as a material consideration in planning decisions. It notes that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

4.4 More specific to this proposal, Paragraph 74 of the NPPF states that existing playing fields should not be built on "*unless the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location*".

4.5 Core Strategy Policy CS18 (Site 5) of the Havant Borough Local Plan is central to this proposal. In allocating the strategic housing site known as 'Woodcroft Farm', that Policy requires the main access to the housing site to be taken through the western part of the County Council's land and part of the school playing field consented under Planning Application No. 09/59532/002 (see para 2.1).

4.6 Policy CS18 also requires that a replacement school sports facilities be re-provided within 'Woodcroft Farm' and that the existing bridleway, which currently runs along the

boundary between the existing Primary School site and 'Woodcroft Farm', be diverted "*in order to aid management, child supervision and security of the amended school site*".

4.7 This application is therefore being made to further the objectives of the adopted Local Plan and to provide a better playing field for Woodcroft Primary School.

5 Conclusion

5.1 The proposal is compliant with planning policy at the national and local level and will deliver improved sports facilities for Woodcroft Primary School.

5.2 The supporting documents submitted with the application provide evidence to demonstrate that there are no overriding dis-benefits associated with the scheme proposals. Where any impacts have been identified, suitable mitigation measures have been proposed.

5.3 In line with Government guidance, the proposal will deliver a high quality sports facility within an accessible location and therefore meets the objectives of sustainable development.