

FAO Ms L Wells

Dear Ms L Wells

Thank you for consulting Sport England on the above named application.

It is understood that the proposal prejudices the use, or leads to the loss of use, of land being used as a playing field or has been used as a playing field in the last five years, as defined in The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (Statutory Instrument 2015 No. 595). The consultation with Sport England is therefore a statutory requirement.

Sport England has considered the application in light of the National Planning Policy Framework (in particular Para. 97), and against its own playing fields policy, which states:

'Sport England will oppose the granting of planning permission for any development which would lead to the loss of, or would prejudice the use of:

- all or any part of a playing field, or*
- land which has been used as a playing field and 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.'

Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and Guidance document can be viewed via the following link:
www.sportengland.org/playingfieldspolicy

The Proposal

The proposal is for the conversion of an existing Multi-games play area (MUGA) into a car park, by way of, creating a connection through the existing car park serving the rugby club, and associated footpath and lighting alterations.

Assessment

Sport England send out consultations to the Rugby Football Union, the Lawn Tennis Association and England Netball. Only the RFU have responded.

In their response the RFU have stated:

Havant RFC is a Rugby365 AGP site and a key strategic asset for the RFU. The site is primarily used by the club itself which has one of the highest memberships in the locality (3+ men's teams, 1 women's team, full youth section and full girls section), but is also a hub site for representative rugby, regional competition and coach education. Other users include local schools, colleges and University of Portsmouth, as well as other local clubs during periods of inclement weather. The site has also hosted Portsmouth Dreadnoughts American Football team.

During the planning submission for construction of the Rugby365 AGP parking capacity was highlighted as a potential issue by the planning authority. The club have tried to mitigate this by brokering additional parking arrangements with 2 local schools within walking distance of the site. They also deploy parking marshals to manage the traffic flow at key times.

Local intelligence suggests that the existing MUGA is in a state of disrepair and has no formal use and little (if any) informal use.

The RFU has no objection to this proposal to further improve the quality of experience available to members and visitors to Havant RFC, subject to the impact on other sports using the site.

I can only conclude that if the LTA or EN were concerned that the MUGA could play an important role in the development in their sport, they would have highlighted this in a response, and given they have not responded, I can only surmise that given the age and state of the MUGA, both these National Governing Bodies have no interest in the MUGA.

Therefore, having assessed the application, Sport England is satisfied that the proposed development meets 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.'

Conclusion

This being the case, Sport England **does not wish to raise an objection** to this application.

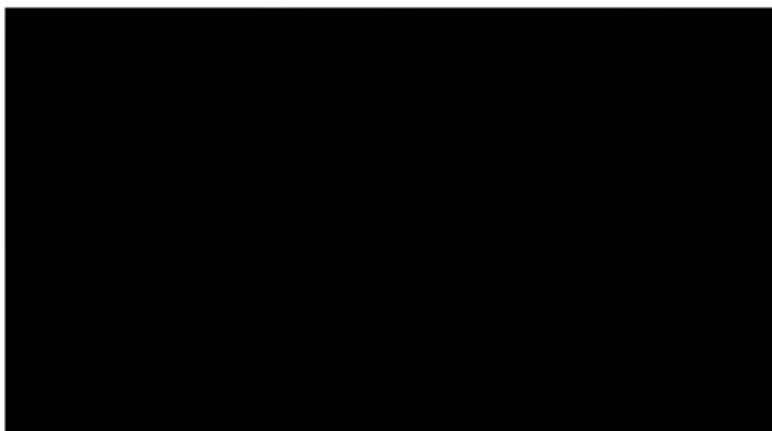
The absence of an objection to this application, in the context of the Town and Country Planning Act, cannot be taken as formal support or consent from Sport England or any National Governing Body of Sport to any related funding application, or as may be required by virtue of any pre-existing funding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

If you would like any further information or advice please contact the undersigned at the address below.

Yours sincerely,

Bob

Bob Sharples RIBA MRTPI
Principal Planning Manager - South Team





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