

From: [Christopher Carroll](#)
To: [Haine, Jonathan](#); [Development Management](#)
Cc: [Richard Dixon](#)
Subject: App Ref: LCC/2022/0048 - Land at Woodcock Estate, Stanfield Lane, Farington PR5 5XS - Sport England Ref: PA/22/NW/LCC/62784
Date: 21 October 2022 20:46:14

FAO Jonathan Haine

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:

<https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/planning-for-sport>

The Proposal and Assessment against Sport England's Objectives and the NPPF

The proposal consists of the development of a Cricket Facility, comprising 2No. cricket ovals and associated pavilion building and spectator seating, covered cricket nets, access, parking, landscaping and associated works (including temporary event overlay facilities on ticketed match days), realignment of Public Right of Way Ref 9-12-FP 1, 7-4-FP 6 and Public Right of Way Ref 9-12-FP 2, 7-4-FP5' on 13.7ha of agricultural land.

England and Wales Cricket Board Comments

Prior to preparing this response, Sport England has sought the views of the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) on the planning application. The ECB act as Sport England's technical advisor in relation to its sport. A summary of their comments is provided as follows:

- *The ECB are aware of the proposal and are fully supportive.*
- *There is a strategic sporting need for the development proposals and is a key strategic outcome for Lancashire Cricket for both the recreational game and the player pathway to professional game.*
- *The proposal will have a particular impact on tackling inequalities by supporting disability cricket and the growth of Women's and Girls cricket.*
- *The proposal has been designed and developed in consultation with the ECB Facilities department and fully accords to our design standards.*
- *The applicant has had previous consultation with the ECB which has led to a number of design amendments to ensure that the facility is fit for purpose for a diverse range of users, accommodates safeguarding principles and is fully inclusive.*
- *The Lancashire Cricket Foundation is to be a core user of the facility and this agreement has been formed with the local authority. Therefore, the ECB do not require a Community Use Agreement planning condition.*
- *ECB has solicited a grant application from Lancashire County Council towards the facility, community use via the Lancashire Cricket Foundation will be conditioned as part of this funding agreement.*

Strategic/Local Need for the Playing Field

As explained in the planning application's supporting information there is a clear strategic sporting need for cricket pitch provision within South Ribble and the wider area as evidenced by the Playing Pitch Assessment (September 2018) and Playing Pitch Strategy (December 2018). ECB also acknowledge this strategic sporting need and believe that the provision of these pitches will help tackle inequalities by supporting disability cricket and the growth of Women's and Girls cricket.

By providing new pitches that could help address established playing pitch deficiencies, the proposal would meet Sport England's planning objective 'Provide' - *To provide new opportunities to meet the needs of current and future generations.* Sport England, therefore, considers this proposal addresses an identified need for this facility type and has the potential to be of benefit to the development of cricket. As such, Sport England has no objection in principle to this planning application and would wish to see this accorded an appropriate weight in the decision that is reached on this application.

Availability for Community Sport

The ECB have explained that community use would take place via the Lancashire Cricket Foundation, which is a condition of a funding agreement between the applicant and the ECB. Therefore, a planning condition for a Community Use Agreement is not required and Sport England is satisfied that the proposal will deliver benefits to community sport as identified above.

Facility Design

Sport England seeks to ensure the new sports facilities are fit for purpose. The Design and Access Statement submitted with the application identifies the facility has been designed to meet the needs of Lancashire County Council, and has been designed in accordance with the ECB Pavilions and Clubhouses and the Sports Ground Safety and Sports Grounds Safety Authority's 'Green Guide' to Safety at Sports Grounds 6th Edition. The ECB have confirmed that they have worked with the applicant to ensure that the design of this facility meets their technical guidance.

Sport England recommends that a grounds condition 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/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/design-and-cost-guidance/outdoor-surfaces>. Sport England are unclear if this is a requirement of the funding agreement between the ECB and the applicant, if it isn't then Sport England advise that a suitably worded planning condition is imposed on any planning permission.

Conclusion

Sport England **does not wish to object** to this application, as it is considered to meet Objective: 'Provide' - *To provide new opportunities to meet the needs of current and future generations, as set out above.*

Sport England recommends, based on our assessment, that if the Council is minded to approve the application, the following Sport England model planning condition is imposed (if this is not a condition as part of the funding agreement between the applicant and the ECB).

No development shall commence [or other specified time period] 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.*

The approved scheme shall be carried out in full and in accordance with the approved programme of implementation [or other specified time frame – e.g. before first occupation of the establishment]. The land shall thereafter be maintained in accordance with the scheme and made available for playing field use in accordance with the scheme.

*Reason: To ensure that the playing field is prepared to an adequate standard and is fit for purpose and to accord with Development Plan Policy **.*

Informative: The applicant is advised that the scheme should comply with the relevant industry Technical Guidance, including guidance published by Sport England, National Governing Bodies for Sport. Particular attention is drawn to 'Natural Turf for Sport', (Sport England, 2011)

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,

Christopher Carroll
Planning Manager



E: Christopher.Carroll@sportengland.org

Sport England



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This Girl Can



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