


THE WHITEHAVEN ACADEMY

DESIGN AND ACCESS / PLANNING STATEMENT

**THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES WITH ASSOCIATED SPORTS LIGHTING,
FENCING AND ANCILLARY FEATURES**

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SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

We (Notts Sport Ltd) were appointed to consider and develop a full planning application for the proposed construction of new outdoor sports facilities with associated sports lighting, fencing and ancillary features at The Whitehaven Academy.

1.2 Planning Application Document Schedule

The following table lists all documents submitted in support of the subject scheme, in addition to and at the time of producing this document (Design and Access / Planning Statement):

| Document Type | Author | Document No | Document Title/Description |
|---------------------------|----------------------|---------------|---|
| Planning Application Form | Notts Sport Ltd | - | - |
| Plans/Drawings | Notts Sport Ltd | NSTWA001E | Location Plan - Prior |
| | Notts Sport Ltd | NSTWA002F | Location Plan - Post |
| | Notts Sport Ltd | NSTWA003C | Aerial View |
| | Notts Sport Ltd | NSTWA004C | Access Plan |
| | Notts Sport Ltd | NSTWA005C | Line Marking Plan - HTP |
| | Notts Sport Ltd | NSTWA006C | Line Marking Plan - AGP |
| | Notts Sport Ltd | NSTWA007C | Line Marking Plan - Court |
| | Notts Sport Ltd | NSTWA008A | Fencing Plan |
| | Notts Sport Ltd | NSTWA009A | Drainage Plan |
| | Notts Sport Ltd | NSTWA010B | Cross Section |
| Appendices | Halliday Lighting | HLS3648 REV1 | Proposed Floodlighting |
| | Halliday Lighting | - | Floodlight Column Detail |
| | ILP | GN01:2020 | Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light |
| | Siteco | FL11 Pro Maxi | Light Specification |
| | WaterCo | 14437 | Drainage Strategy |
| | Environmental Agency | - | Flood Map Planning |
| | Modal TP | - | Transport Statement |

1.3 Statement Purpose and Structure

This statement addresses design and access issues regarding the proposal; use, amount, layout, scale, landscaping, appearance and access.

In addition, the main planning considerations relevant to this proposal are listed along with reasoned justifications which support the scheme.

The remaining statement structure is as follows:

- **Section 2** – Describes the site, its surroundings, and any pertinent previous planning applications;
- **Section 3** – Details the layout, appearance, and access considerations;
- **Section 4** – Assesses the policies relevant to the proposals – National, Local and Neighbourhood;
- **Section 5** – Considers the key material considerations based on the type of development; and
- **Section 6** – Provides a statement summary and sets out the conclusions

2. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

2.1 Site Description

The subject site is The Whitehaven Academy, located in western Cumbria. The proposed location for the outdoor sports facilities is over an existing sports surface 'Redgra' central to the site, towards the northern site boundary. Online mapping services show that the relevant area has served for sporting purposes for over thirty years.

Hedgerows and dotted trees moderately screen the site with dense vegetation and large trees due north. The development area and wider site is surrounded by open space due north and east, school buildings due west, and residential dwellings due south near 0.2km from the proposed development.

The subject application should be reviewed in connection with the recently permitted planning application/development '4/19/2327/OF1 – Phased demolition of existing school building and replacement with new school building and sports hall'. The re-configuration of the wider site is detailed in said application documentation and should be considered when determining the subject application.

2.2 Site Planning History

Examples of applications which received planning permission within the subject site are outlined below:

| Reference | Decision | Development Description |
|---------------|----------------------|--|
| 4/19/2327/OF1 | Granted date unknown | Phased demolition of existing school building and replacement with new school building and sports hall |
| 4/10/9010 | Granted 26/05/10 | Erection of a shelter - outdoor covered seating area approximately 46m long 3.3m wide |
| 4/07/9008 | Granted 11/07/07 | New entrance / reception building and additional security perimeter fencing |
| 4/02/9007 | Granted 03/07/02 | Single Storey Extension to provide extra drama/story area adjacent to the existing hall |

2.3 Similar Applications

'The Council is currently reviewing how it can make hard copies of planning documents available to the public for inspection. Further details will be issued as soon as possible.'

You can view planning applications and associated plans and documents lodged from June 1, 2020 onwards through the Planning Application Search Tool.'

The above extract taken from the Copeland Borough Council website confirms that very few historic applications are readily accessible online. Pertinent local policies will be addressed in later sections following a review of the local plan and supporting guidance documents, rather than a review of similar applications in the local area.

3. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Description

The proposed development includes the following features:

- An artificial Hockey Turf Pitch (HTP) with goal storage recess;
- An Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) with goal storage recess;
- Sports lighting systems to illuminate the HTP and AGP when in use;
- Hard standing tennis/netball courts with acrylic coating;
- Polymeric surfaced sprint straight;
- Hard standing access paths/spectator areas; and
- Associated aperture mesh & box post fencing throughout.

3.2 Purpose and Use

The Redgra area is used by the school for some aspects of Physical Education (PE) between 09:00 and 15:00, however it is at times unplayable therefore a challenge to delivering the curriculum. It is also not of a standard that any community group would use, as is evident from the present lack of local community participation/use.

Whilst the existing Redgra surface does provide the pupils with access to an informal sports area, it does not meet modern requirements for outdoor sports; restricting not only PE activities but also the community potential. The carefully designed solution would dramatically improve the sporting curriculum for pupils and provide the local community with access to state of the art facilities outside of school hours.

The proposed sports facilities have been designed to provide high quality performance for Hockey, Football, Tennis, Netball, and Athletics. Their designs and constructions comply with National Governing Bodies (NGB) guidance documents for the aforementioned sports, whilst they could also serve to support wider uses such as rounders play, boot camps, etc. Refer to supporting section plans for further information on the performance.

The Whitehaven Academy aims to develop local partnerships to ensure that the sports facilities are available and promoted to the local community for use on weeknights and weekends, outside of school use. The facilities would not be available for use on December 24th/25th/31st.

The proposed hours of use for the development are as follows (e.g. 20:00 block is 8pm to 9pm) –

| Schedule | 07:00 | 08:00 | 09:00 | 10:00 | 11:00 | 12:00 | 13:00 | 14:00 | 15:00 | 16:00 | 17:00 | 18:00 | 19:00 | 20:00 | 21:00 | 22:00 |
|-----------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Monday | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Tuesday | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Wednesday | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Thursday | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Friday | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Saturday | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Sunday | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Bank Hols | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|------------|--|---------------|--|----------------|--|
| School Use | | Community Use | | Use Prohibited | |
|------------|--|---------------|--|----------------|--|

*- Illustrated use presents curfews of 9pm on weekdays, 7pm on Saturdays, and 5pm on Sundays & Bank Holidays

3.3 Layout



Various locations within the site were considered to accommodate the sports facilities, with the shown location identified following a review of considerations – retention of natural sports areas, accessibility, noise, light, and more. The identified location retains the majority of the existing playing field and open space, whilst also distancing itself from the majority of nearby dwellings. Furthermore, the development would improve/upgrade the existing Redgra surface which does meet modern sports performance requirements.

3.4 Amount

The proposed development features are listed below with their amounts:

| Features | Quantity | Length (m) | Width (m) | Area (m ²) |
|--|----------|------------|-----------|------------------------|
| Artificial Hockey Turf Pitch (HTP) | 1 | 101.40 | 61.00 | 6,185.40 |
| Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) | 1 | 106.00 | 70.00 | 7,420.00 |
| Artificial AGP and HTP goal storage recesses | 1 | - | - | 130.00 |
| Hard standing tennis/netball courts | 3 | 35.33 | 18.30 | 1,939.62 |
| Polymeric sprint straight | 1 | 110.00 | 4.88 | 536.80 |
| Hard standing access paths/spectator areas | 1 | - | - | 1883.00 |
| Total | | | | 18,094.82 |

3.5 Scale

Perimeter fencing is recommended on outdoor sports facilities to contain balls, protect playing surfaces from contamination, and to help prevent unauthorised use/vandalism. All steelworks should be galvanised to minimise premature corrosion with powder coating often sought to improve the finish of the fencing and to blend in with site surroundings (green or black typically).

SECTION 3 - PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed fencing around the total perimeter comprises 5.00m high rollform welded mesh (50x50 apertures), galvanised and powder coated green (RAL 6005) with supporting box section posts. A lower fence height of 3.00m is proposed to enclose the internal AGP with a panelled rigid mesh (200x50 apertures) system. 1.20m high spectator fencing would be installed internally to promote coaching and spectator attendance.

Timber kickboards shall be fitted to the footings of the HTP fencelines to reduce the risk of fencing damage/wear as per NGB and Sport England guidance. Rubber infill mitigation measures (low height perimeter boards and catchment grates) have been incorporated in the AGP design to comply with SAPCA and Sport England guidance.

Artificial lighting is desired on most outdoor sports facilities to allow for evening use and use throughout the winter months where daylight hours otherwise restrict use – thereby enabling the facility to be used to its full potential. The proposed lighting scheme comprises 12no. galvanised columns each 15m high, supporting 28no. LED luminaries between them. The lighting columns include a raise & lower feature for improved maintenance.

3.6 Appearance

The proposals have been designed to minimise visual impact when viewed beyond the site, and to consider the site character/appearance. The completed appearance of the proposed features are as follows:

- The artificial turf (green) for the HTP shall be sand dressed with all playing lines stitched/cut/painted;
- The artificial turf (green) for the AGP shall be 3G long pile with all playing lines stitched/cut/painted;
- The hard standing courts shall be acrylic coated 2-tone blue;
- The sprint straight shall be surfaced with a polymeric material terracotta in colour;
- The fencing varying 1.20-5.00m in height shall comprise both a high rigid panel mesh (200x50) system and a rollform welded mesh (50x50) system, all galvanised and powder coated green. The aperture mesh and green colour finish would allow the fencing to appear discreet against its surroundings;
- Low height treated timber (oak) kickboards shall be installed to the internal face of the HTP fencing;
- Low height perimeter boards (oak TBC) shall be installed to the internal face of the AGP fencing;
- The 15m high lighting columns and their luminaries shall be silver/grey in appearance as this galvanised finish is considered to be most neutral against typical settings (vegetation, brickwork, skylines); and
- The hard standing access paths/spectator areas shall be surfaced with macadam grey/black in colour.

3.7 Landscaping

Ground surrounding the development shall be reinstated to grass (soft landscaping) to enable effective grounds maintenance to the wider playing fields. All reinstatement works for natural grass shall be implemented in accordance with BS 4428 Code of Practice for General Landscape Operations. Excavated spoil to be spread onsite.

3.8 Pedestrian and Vehicular Access

The proposed construction access for the development is via the main site entrance off Moresby Rd. From there, construction vehicles shall proceed along the existing road due SE before reaching the development footprint. The proposed access path connects the facility to the exiting road to support maintenance vehicles thereafter.

Post construction, the pupils and local community users shall access the facilities via the same entrance with access to the car park users outside of school hours when the majority of staff will have vacated the site. Users could access the facilities via the recently developed path or the wider proposed access path.

3.9 Inclusive Access

Inclusive access has been carefully considered throughout the whole design and applied wherever possible. The intention is to provide a smooth transition to and from the development, for use by people of all ages and abilities. The proposed hard standing path and access gates achieve this aim with clean/safe access.

4. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

4.1 National Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published July 2018, sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally-prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced.

Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This includes local and neighbourhood plans that have been brought into force and any spatial development strategies produced by combined authorities or elected Mayors.

4.2 NPPF – Achieving Sustainable Development

NPPF (paragraph 7) – *'the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development'*.

NPPF (paragraph 8) – *'the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways:*

- a) An economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;*
- b) A social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and*
- c) An environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy'.*

NPPF (paragraph 10) – *'at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development'*.

4.3 NPPF – Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities

NPPF (paragraph 91) – *'Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which; promote social interaction, are safe and accessible and enable and support healthy lifestyles'*.

NPPF (paragraph 96) – *'Access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities. Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate'*.

NPPF (paragraph 97) – *'Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:*

- a) An assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or*
- b) 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; or*
- c) The development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use'.*

4.4 NPPF – Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change

NPPF (paragraph 163) – ‘When determining any planning applications, local planning authorities should ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere. Where appropriate, applications should be supported by a site-specific flood-risk assessment. Development should only be allowed in areas at risk of flooding where, in the light of this assessment it can be demonstrated that:

- a) Within the site, the most vulnerable development is located in areas of lowest flood risk, unless there are overriding reasons to prefer a different location;
- b) The development is appropriately flood resistant and resilient;
- c) It incorporates sustainable drainage systems, unless there is clear evidence that this would be inappropriate;
- d) Any residual risk can be safely managed; and
- e) Safe access and escape routes are included where appropriate, as part of an agreed emergency plan’.

NPPF (paragraph 164) – ‘Applications for some minor development and changes of use should not be subject to the sequential or exception tests but should still meet the requirements for site-specific flood risk assessments’.

4.5 NPPF – Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

NPPF (paragraph 180) – ‘Planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. In doing so they should:

- a) Mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impacts resulting from noise from new development – and avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life;
- b) Identify and protect tranquil areas which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason; and
- c) Limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation’.

4.6 Local Planning Policy

The ‘Copeland Local Plan 2013-2028 Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD adopted December 2013’ is the most pertinent document to assess when proposing development within the Borough. The document details local policies which present a range of design considerations, whilst also allocating land for specific purposes/developments.

4.7 Local Plan – Relevant Policies

| COPELAND LOCAL PLAN 2013-2028 CORE STRATEGY | |
|---|---|
| Policy | Title |
| ST1 | Strategic Development Principles |
| SS4 | Community and Cultural Facilities and Services |
| ENV1 | Flood Risk and Risk Management |
| ENV3 | Biodiversity and Geodiversity |
| ENV5 | Protecting and Enhancing the Borough’s Landscapes |

| COPELAND LOCAL PLAN 2013-2028 DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES DPD | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| Policy | Title |
| DM10 | Achieving Quality of Place |
| DM11 | Sustainable Development Standards |
| DM21 | Protecting Community Facilities |
| DM22 | Accessible Developments |
| DM24 | Development Proposals and Flood Risk |
| DM25 | Protecting Nature Conservation Sites |
| DM26 | Landscaping |

4.8 Local Planning Policy Assessment

Policies ST1, DM10, and DM11

The policies set out key principles when creating/retaining quality places through environmental sustainability, safeguarding residential amenity, and accommodating traffic to name but a few. Through specialist surveys and consultations, we were able to design a development which would not adversely impact any local amenities. Furthermore, no mitigations were recommended based on the identified location and proposed hours of use.

Policies SS4 and DM21

The policies direct development considerations towards healthier communities and leisure facilities. It is deemed that the development would achieve this through its betterment to local fitness and wellbeing, especially with the artificial surfaces and lighting allowing for year round use despite weather conditions or lack of natural light.

Policies ENV1 and DM24

Focusing on drainage and water consumption, the policies set out sustainability principles and material drainage considerations. The specialist drainage strategy followed the drainage hierarchy before developing a Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS) solution which would not increase flood risk, even in a storm event.

Policies ENV3 and DM25

The policies serve to conserve and enhance the local natural environment. The proposals relate to the upgrading of an existing Redgra sports pitch which primarily serves to accommodate sports use within the site. The nature of the development is therefore in keeping with its current intended use. The location and hours of use shall not have an adverse impact on local biodiversity as it is not located over unmaintained grassland or dense vegetation.

Policies ENV5 and DM26

The policies centre on landscaping and visual impacts upon the existing setting/character. The development with its proposed mesh fencing and galvanised lighting columns has been designed to minimise its appearance on the setting, no different to similar facilities in the local area. The public views of the development would be limited due to the existing buildings to the west, and the trees/hedgerows to all other directions.

Policy DM22

The policy surrounds off-street parking standards and positive movement patterns. The nature of the development upgrading the existing sports area will not increase parking demand or trip generation within school hours where PE lessons will occupy its use. Outside of school times the development would be made available to the local community at periods which avoid exacerbating any highway strains. Existing cycle and car parking provisions within the site would be made available for the community on weeknights and weekends, when the majority of school staff will have vacated the site.

4.9 Neighbourhood Plan

At the time of producing this document, there are no active neighbourhood plans relevant to the subject site. No Neighbourhood Plans should be considered in the decision making process for the subject application.

4.10 Sport England

As set out in the Statutory Instrument 2015/595, local planning authorities are required to consult Sport England on any planning application for development affecting playing field land.

The Playing Fields Policy and Guidance document, published by Sport England in March 2018, provides clarity and advice to external parties on how Sport England assesses planning applications affecting playing fields. It provides detail on how Sport England applies its Playing Fields Policy and the five exceptions, along with presenting definitions of key terms and how Sport England interprets them.

Sport England's Playing Fields Policy 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'*.

Exception 5 states *'The proposed development is for an indoor or outdoor facility for sport, the provision of which would be of sufficient benefit to the development of sport as to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss, or prejudice to the use, of the area of playing field'*.

The proposal is development on a playing field, on an existing artificial pitch, with a small strip on natural turf playing field. The proposal would provide a range of new court and pitch based sports facilities to replace the existing disused Redgra. In considering such a proposal against Sport England's Playing Fields Policy the principle of such a proposal could be considered to meet exception E5 because it is for a new outdoor facility for sport.

We welcome correspondence from Sport England as they determine whether the development would meet their exception 5 criteria in light of this statement and the wider documents which seek to improve sports at the site.

4.11 Playing Pitch Strategy

The 'Copeland Borough Council Playing Pitch Strategy and Action Plan v3.0 March 2021' (hereafter known as PPS) provides a baseline for current and future supply and demand assessments and also sets out plans for playing pitch provision in the borough in the short, medium, and long term.

PPS section 3.2 (Football) – *'[current demand] The current supply and demand analysis for available pitch provision shows a small amount of spare capacity for Youth and Mini 7v7 provision, and a deficit of Adult provision across Copeland.'*

PPS section 3.2 (Football) – *'[future demand] There is insufficient supply to meet the projected level of future demand in the study area for football. Adult and Youth 11v11 pitches are expected to have the greatest deficit, influenced by the high amount of overplay and projected demand within the North sub-area. Due to the lack of Mini 5v5 provision in Copeland, demand for this pitch typology is estimated to be currently taking place on Mini 7v7 or Adult/Youth pitches through overmarking.'*

PPS section 3.3 (Rugby) – *'[current demand] The analysis shows a large deficit of floodlit training provision in the current picture, with some level of spare capacity for match provision, however due to a high level of training overplay potentially taking place on match pitches, it can be considered that club sites in Copeland are overall operating near or at capacity'*

PPS section 3.3 (Rugby) – *‘[future demand] The future demand for rugby is projected to increase slightly across the Study Area, with the current deficit for training provision likely to increase further over the lifetime of the Local Plan. Further floodlighting at existing sites, and access to the additional AGP facilities is required to meet the current and future needs of local residents.’*

PPS section 3.4 (Hockey) – *‘[current demand] One of the two hockey pitches in Copeland (Millom School) lacks security of long term community access, however the analysis shows that there is sufficient secured capacity at Cleator Moor Activity Centre to satisfy the very low current levels of demand. It must be highlighted that are located approximately 30 miles from each other (50 minute journey drive time).’*

PPS section 3.4 (Hockey) – *‘[future demand] Future capacity analysis indicates that over the lifetime of the Local Plan period (2035), there is expected to be sufficient capacity to satisfy hockey demand, provided that at least one of those sites remains available for hockey. However, in order to allow this, the improvement of existing facilities is urgently required.’*

Tennis and Netball demands were not detailed within the PPS, however from early consultation with England Netball and the Lawn Tennis Association we understand that the development would be supported given it would provide the community with access to high quality facilities in addition to existing provisions in the Borough.

5. MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 Key Material Considerations

Based on the planning policies found to be relevant in the determination of the subject application, we find that the key material considerations for this development are; principle of development, flood risk and drainage, light, and highways/access.

5.2 Principle of Development – National Planning Policy

The proposed development is considered to be in accordance with the aims and objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published July 2018.

NPPF (paragraph 7) – *‘the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development’*. The proposal has been designed with consideration to sustainability, considering that it is improving/upgrading the existing facilities of an established school.

NPPF (paragraph 8) – *‘achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives’* – economic, social and environmental. The proposal is considered to embrace all three dimensions of sustainable development in the following ways:

- a) The proposals ensure that the sporting facilities are modernised and enhanced, enabling the school to compete with the facilities offered by other educational facilities in the local area;
- b) The upgrading of sporting facilities at the school would provide social benefits through the increased participation in sporting activities;
- c) The proposals involve the adaptation of the existing Redgra pitch. The environmental benefits of the proposed scheme would therefore emerge from the re-use of an existing pitch and enhancement of existing facilities.

NPPF (paragraph 96) – *‘access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities’*. The proposals have been designed to support this aim.

NPPF (paragraph 97) – *‘existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on’* unless one of the exceptions listed is met. Exception *b* states that *‘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’*. We find that the proposals meet this exception as they serve to upgrade the Redgra pitch.

5.3 Local Planning Policy – Consideration

Sub sections 4.6-4.8 contained information on the local planning documentation which the application should be assessed against. Similar to the national planning policies/aims, we find that the development would support the majority of local planning policies/aims through the high quality design which has been shaped through months of consultation work and specialist surveys.

As the following sub sections will detail, the development respects and complies with all major considerations from lighting to parking. Many of which expand upon the information outlined in sub sections 4.6-4.8.

5.4 Flood Risk and Drainage System

The Environment Agency’s online mapping services confirmed that the development area is within flood zone 1, an area with a low probability of flooding. Despite the low flood risk, we sought to engage with specialist drainage engineers to develop a SuDS solution given the scale of development.

The specialist drainage engineers developed a SuDS solution which follows the drainage hierarchy with a design which accounts for Microdrainage calculations, climate change, amongst other factors. In short, the development would not increase local flood risk whatsoever. However, do refer to the full drainage strategy for further details.

5.5 Lighting

In designing a suitable lighting solution for the proposed development, several key factors need to be considered such as; Illuminance (Lux) level, environmental zone category, minimum mast height, type of floodlights, etc.

Specialist lighting engineers were consulted to design a suitable outdoor lighting solution for the proposed sports development. Their lighting plan illustrates a solution which would provide the facilities with the recommended lighting levels (as specified by the relevant National Governing Bodies), whilst also ensuring that they would not adversely impact the surrounding site features.

Halliday Lighting designed the lighting solution in accordance with The Institution of Lighting Professionals (ILP) 'Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light 2020'. The lighting design complies with environmental zone requirements for the site and demonstrates a lack of light spill beyond the school boundaries.

5.6 Highways and Access

There is often a perception that outdoor sports facility developments generate a significant amount of traffic, however this is rarely the case, particularly when situated within school grounds. There will be increased trip generation to/from the site outside of school hours where the local community access the site to use the facility, albeit this would not have an adverse impact on the surrounding highways given the junction networks and the volume of public transport options within close proximity of the site.

There are 129 parking's bays permanently marked out within the school site nearest the buildings (121x standard, 6x disabled, and 2x electric). There are also 32 cycle bays adjacent. These parking provisions would be available for use by the community when accessing the development outside of school hours, at which point the bulk of school staff will have vacated the site. The existing parking provisions are considered capable of accommodating the increased parking demands outside of school hours. Cycling and public means of transport will be encouraged as alternate means of travel, with carpooling also advised to reduce car movements.

The proposed hours of use were designed to provide after school groups as well as the community with flexibility in using the facilities without creating trip generation at busy movement periods. A supporting transport statement has been prepared by a specialist highways consultant to further detail the above information.

5.7 Other Considerations

Character and Appearance

The proposals have been sympathetically designed and located to minimise their visual impacts beyond the site. The development would be partially screened beyond the site footprint due to the distance of the development footprint from the nearest public viewpoints and the trees and vegetation which already surround the site.

The proposed pitch surfaces are of a similar appearance to natural grass and the proposed mesh fencing is powder coated green to appear in keeping with existing setting. The aperture mesh assists in blending the fence systems into the site surroundings, more so than a closed boundary material such as timber.

The proposed lighting columns and luminaries are galvanised/grey in colour, similar to most streetlights which are typically grey or green in colour to soften their appearance against most features such as open fields, trees, tarmac, brickwork, etc.

Noise

The development is situated towards the northern boundary to maximise the distance from nearby residential properties whilst retaining the majority of the natural grassland, whilst also grouping all sports provisions.

Based on the great separation distance between the development and the nearest residential dwellings, combined with the proposed hours of use, we concluded that the proposals would not result in any adverse noise impacts. This based on Sport England's acoustic guidance which models noise levels to be 58dB set 10m centrally from the side of a facility and based on the World Health Organisation's limit of 50-55dB upon residential gardens and buildings.

Trees and Ecology

Despite the various trees dotted around the site and concentrated due north, no trees would be affected by the development footprint or the identified construction access route. As such, no tree surveys were carried out in support of the application.

Between the lack of tree removal/implications and the scheduled maintenance which takes place over the Redgra pitch it was concluded that no adverse ecological impacts would arise from the development, hence the omission of a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA).

Bat presence or movements are often a key factor in an ecological officer's review of an application. The lighting operation and their hours of use shall not present issues on this matter as the lights would have an automated curfew of 9pm on weekdays, this being the latest curfew across any given week. Furthermore, bat guidance suggests that the most important migration periods are in/around summer months where daylight would already limit any artificial lighting use.

6. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Applicant Rationale

'In addition to providing Whitehaven Academy students with a first class Outdoor Learning Environment, the school wants to be at the very heart of the community. We would like to develop sporting facilities which give both students and the community access to a wide range of activities hence the intent to provide two different sports surfaces. Inclusion is at the heart of our ethos along with our values of respect, responsibility and resilience and we feel that Sport in general helps to strengthen those important underpinning principles.

Regarding the current Redgra surface, it is at times unplayable therefore a challenge to delivering the curriculum. It is also not of a standard that any community group would use. New facilities would be welcomed by both the School and the Community.'

6.2 Statement Summary and Conclusions

Based on a review of the policy and the physical context of the application site, it is considered to be suitable to accommodate the outdoor sports facilities development for the following reasons:

- **Planning Policy** – The proposals accord with national & local policy which support the development of a sports and recreation facility of this type, seeking to create qualitative and quantitative improvements to the existing sports provisions within the site, all without adversely impacting nearby amenities;
- **Sport England** – The proposals comply with the aims/policies of Sport England and their exception criteria following pre-application consultation;
- **Technical Compliance** – The specialist surveys carried out concluded that the proposed development in its identified location would present no adverse impacts upon nearby dwellings (noise, light, drainage or otherwise);
- **Access** – The school site is a sustainable location with great public transport links in the local area; and
- **Health & Wellbeing** – The proposals would provide the school pupils and the local community with access to great sports facilities, the kind of which positively influence fitness and wellbeing behaviours.

With regards to the information contained in this document, it is considered that the proposed development is fundamentally sound in principle and represents an appropriate and policy compliant scheme, which seeks to create qualitative and quantitative improvements to the existing sports provisions within the site.

The applicant respectfully contends that the proposal is acceptable in all regards, and planning permission ought to be granted.

CAD Technician
Email: _____ Office number: _____

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