

Barnsley College The Fleets
Planning Statement



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INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In the last five years Barnsley College has made substantial improvements to their existing facilities, with a key part of the plan involving the centralisation of the College departments around the Old Mill Lane site within Barnsley Town Centre. In addition the College has established a Sports Academy at the Honeywell site with the creation of a range of high quality sports facilities. As a consequence of these developments their Carrington Avenue site will become surplus to the College's requirements.
- 1.2 Barnsley College, through their agents Capita, are submitted a planning application for the creation of 2 mini pitches for young players under the age of 8 at the Fleets site, as part of the compensation for the loss of the playing fields at Carrington Avenue.
- 1.3 This report relates to the proposals for the development of mini pitches at the Fleets site and will consider the development in relation to relevant national and local planning policies.

LOCATION

- 2.1 The application site comprises Barnsley College's Fleets teaching facility along with the changing rooms, classrooms and ancillary parking area, as well as the open space amenity area immediately to south of this building. The site is approximately 0.62 hectares in area and is accessed from Smithies Lane by an existing vehicle and pedestrian access. To the west of the site on slightly higher ground are the semi detached properties on Hartington Drive. On lower ground and to the east of the site are the Barnsley College playing pitches and other open fields bounded by scrubland and hedging. To the east of the pitches is the Fleets fishing lake, and to the north are further areas of open space and a designated Nature Conservation Site.
- 2.2 The open grassed area of the application site is allocated within the Barnsley Council Proposals Map as Green Belt land and Urban Green Space.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 Planning Reference No 2012/0330
Change of use from drinking establishment (A4) to non-residential institution (D1), internal alterations & alterations to elevations Approved subject to Conditions on 23-03-2012

PROPOSALS

- 4.1 The proposal involves the creation of two football mini pitches for the use of players under the age of 8 years old. The pitches would be laid out in accordance with the requirements of Sport England and to meet the Football Association's standards. The adult playing fields at the Fleets are available for community use and there are existing management arrangements to facilitate their use. The new pitches will also be open for community use and will be served by the existing car park and changing facilities in the Fleets Building.

Access for the community to the new mini pitches will be through the existing arrangements for managing the adult pitches on site.

- 4.2 Additional surveys provided in support of this planning application include a Transport Assessment and an Agronomist Survey demonstrating the suitability of the site for use as a playing field are to be submitted separately.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

5.1 National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework ("NPPF") was published in March 2012 and replaced virtually all previous national guidance. The introduction to the document confirms it should be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

- 5.4 The NPPF sets out guidance on a number of different themes, some of which are relevant to the proposed development.

Local Planning Policy

- 5.9 Barnsley Council has a suite of planning policy documents and supporting evidence which are pertinent to consideration of this application. Relevant National and Local Planning Policies and Guidance are referenced below in relation to different planning matters.

In addition to the policies and objectives set out above Barnsley Council has a range of supporting planning advice in relation to the following matters;

- Green Space Strategy Open Space
- Parking
- Barnsley Council Playing Pitch Strategy

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Location and Principle of Development

- 6.1 Paragraph 89 of the NPPF sets out what type of development is acceptable within Green Belt allocated land and references the provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation and for cemeteries, as long as it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.
- 6.2 Barnsley Core Strategy Policy CSP 34 Protection of Green Belt states that in order to protect the countryside and open land around built up areas, the extent of the Green Belt will be safeguarded and remain unchanged.
- 6.3 The Barnsley Playing Pitch Strategy state that In relation to mini pitches there is recognised deficiency of 3 mini pitches across the Borough and taking into increase demand of these type of facilities this deficiency is due to rise to 12 mini pitches by 2021. In the North Neighbourhood area of Barnsley, where the Fleets

is located there is a deficiency of 2 mini pitches and this deficiency is due to continue until 2021.

- 6.4 The proposed use of the site for mini pitches complies with the designation as Green Belt, and the ancillary facilities serving the pitches are existing development outside the Green Belt area. The pitches would meet a recognised need identified within the Barnsley Playing Pitch Strategy and accords with Green Belt policy.

Sport Provision and Open Space

- 6.5 Chapter 8 of the NPPF which deals with, promoting healthy communities, sets out the guidance relating to playing fields and confirms that:

“Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

- an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
- 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
- the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs of which clearly outweigh the loss.”

- 6.6 Paragraph 73 of the NPPF 73 confirms that access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities and that planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. NPPF goes on to state that these assessments should identify specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses of open space, sports and recreational facilities.

- 6.7 Barnsley Core Strategy Policy CSP 35 relating to Green Space states that Barnsley Council will only allow development proposals that result in the loss of green space where:

an assessment shows that there is too much of that particular type of green space in the area which it serves and its loss would not affect the existing and potential green space needs of the borough;

or

an appropriate replacement green space of at least an equivalent community benefit, accessibility and value is provided in the area which it serves;

- 6.8 The supporting text of this Policy states that Green spaces are green open areas which are valuable for recreation, wildlife or biodiversity and include types such as village greens, local open spaces, country parks, formal gardens, cemeteries, allotments, woodlands, recreation grounds, sports pitches and parks.

- 6.9 The proposal would involve development of a part of a designated urban green space at The Fleets for mini pitches. Whilst the landscaping for the site would be more formal through the creation of playing fields, it would necessarily remain green open space. A legal agreement is proposed that this site would be retained for the purposes of pitches and will be made available for community use. It is considered that the benefit of bringing forward these much needed quality sports facilities will outweigh the loss of this informal area of open space and its change of character to formal pitch provision.

Transport

- 6.10 Para 32 of the NPPF confirms that development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds, where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.
- 6.11 Barnsley Core Strategy Policy CSP 26 states that new developments will be expected to be designed and built to provide safe, secure and convenient access for all road users.
- 6.12 A Transport Assessment has been carried out for the application in accordance with Department for Transport's 'Guidance on Transport Assessment'. This highlights that the proposals are sustainable through the availability of good links to walking, cycling and public transport. An assessment by Capita of key junctions within the study area demonstrates that development trips do not create any operational issues and all junctions operate within capacity.
- 6.13 The submitted Transport Assessment demonstrates that there is more than adequate parking spaces on site to meet the requirements for the use of the existing and proposed pitches. Bearing in mind that the mini pitches are likely to be used by local youth teams and clubs outside normal school hours, the use of the car park on the site will not conflict with its use in connection with the operation of classrooms on site.

Pollution

- 6.14 Chapter 11 of the NPPF seeks to ensure that planning decisions take account of factors such as risk from pollution, ground conditions and instability. With particular regard to noise, paragraph 123 states that decisions should aim to avoid significant adverse impacts from noise through both reduction and mitigation measures.
- 6.15 No floodlighting is proposed for the mini pitches. The levels of noise arising from the mini pitches which will operate during early evenings will be limited. As the pitches are for the use of junior players under the age of 8, their use are therefore unlikely to result in issues of noise for the nearest existing residents in Hartington Drive.

CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The proposed mini pitches will meet a government objective in creating opportunities for sport and recreation and thereby contributing to the health and well-being of the residents of Barnsley. The pitches will also help meet an identified deficiency in mini pitches recognised in the Barnsley Playing Pitch

Strategy. The proposal would have minimal impact upon local amenity and upon the Green Belt designation of the site.

- 7.2 The information contained within this statement, along with the supporting reports have demonstrated that the scheme would comply economic, social and environmental considerations set out in the NPPF
- 7.3 On the basis of the above, it is considered that the proposal accords with relevant planning policies, and therefore planning permission should be granted.