

September 2014

Land at Littleworth Lane, Lundwood, Barnsley

**Planning Policy Statement for a
Detailed Planning Application for the
Erection of 198 Residential Units,
new access road, Public Open Space,
Landscaping and balancing pond**

Addendum – Setting out Exception to loss of former Playing Fields

On behalf of

Harron Homes

Prepared by

I D Planning
Atlas House
31 King Street
Leeds
LS1 2HL

Introduction

This addendum has been prepared to address comments by Sport England in their consultation response dated 18th August 2014. Sport England raises objection on the basis of perceived loss of playing fields and the absence of any evidence to address one of the 5 exceptions (E1 – E5) set out in their policy documents. Further discussion with Sport England has clarified their objection, namely the lack of reference to the site's playing pitch designation within the submitted Planning Statement. This addendum therefore addresses this point.

From discussions with Sport England it is apparent that they are not aware that the former Priory School (together with its associated playing pitches) has been demolished and facilities reinstated at the new Shafton ALC.

In preparing this addendum consideration has been given to guidance set out in the NPPF (paragraph 74), Sport England's exception policies (E1 – E5), and Council's Playing Pitch Strategy Report together with details of sports pitch provision lost at Priory together with replacement facilities at Shafton ALC.

Planning Policy

Paragraph 74 of the NPPF states:

"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 for which clearly outweigh the loss."*

Sport England oppose the granting of planning permission for any development which would lead to the loss of a playing field unless one of the five exceptions applies:

Sport England Policy	
Summary of Exceptions	
E1	An assessment has demonstrated that there is an excess of playing fields in the catchment and the site has no special significance for sport
E2	The Development is ancillary to the principal use of the playing field and does not affect the quantity/quality of pitches
E3	The Development only affects land incapable of forming part of a playing pitch and would lead to no loss of ability to use/size of playing pitch
E4	Playing field lost would be replaced, equivalent or better in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility
E5	The proposed development is for an indoor/outdoor sports facility of sufficient benefit to sport to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss of playing field

Playing Pitch Strategy Report 2011

The site falls within the North East Area with pages 82 and 83 of the report setting out a summary of recommendations for this area. Page 26 of the report confirms loss of the Priory School (and Willowgarth High School) sites to be replaced by a new school at Shafton (as part of the Building Schools for the Future [BSF] programme). The relevant extract from the Playing Pitch Strategy is set out below.

"A new school is to be constructed on a new site in Shafton, to replace Willowgarth High School and Priory School and Sports College. The current pitches at the Willowgarth site will be retained (located in green belt). This is a substantial site with 3 adult pitches, 1 rugby pitch and tennis courts. The site does not currently have secured community use. Priory School and Sports College is currently accessible by the community, and currently accommodates a junior and adult football pitch, 2 rugby pitches and 3 tennis courts. It is understood that these facilities will be disposed of, but with monies available from the development of the land available to improve existing facilities. The new Shafton School site will accommodate more than 62,000 sqm of pitches. Although exact pitch designation is not known, it is likely there will be up to 2 adult football pitches, 1 rugby pitch, full size AGP (3rd generation,) cricket square and 6 tennis courts."

In addition, the Playing Pitch Strategy advises at Figure 17 and 19 respectively that Shafton ALC will provide a 3G AGP floodlit pitch and 2 MUGAs (6 tennis/3 netball), all for community use.

In terms of the recommendations for the North East Area set out on pages 82 and 83 of the Playing Pitch Strategy it is noted/acknowledged that:

- There will be a surplus of football pitches although there is an issue with quality;
- New full sized AGPs (3G rubber crumb) are proposed as part of the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme

Assessment against Sport England Exceptions Policy

Policy E4 sets out an exception whereby playing fields lost would be replaced by pitches that are equivalent or better in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility. It is considered the facilities provided at Shafton ALC, which replaced those lost when Priory School was demolished, meets these exceptions.

In terms of quantity, the Priory Sports College site had a general consent for the disposal of circa 56,563 m² of playing field land (as defined under S77 of the Education Act) or thereabouts being replaced by 106,171m² of playing field land at the new school. This gives a total of 56,563 m² or thereabouts of former playing field land that the Council intends to dispose of on the former Priory Sports College site.

At the former Willowgarth High School site, the majority of the adjoining playing fields are as previously stated, being retained by the Council, with what is effectively the footprint of the old school site being disposed of for residential purposes. The area that fell within the definition of playing field land under S77 within this site was 36,626 m² or thereabouts. This remains unchanged.

The total loss of playing field land therefore totals 93,189 m²:

Priory Sports College	56,563 m ²
Willowgarth High School	<u>36,626 m²</u>
	93,189 m ²

The replacement school (Shafton ALC) provides 106,171 m² of playing field land. I would therefore hold that in this instance Barnsley Council is able to rely upon a class consent to replace a total of 93,189 m² of playing field area at the former Willowgarth High School and former Priory Sports College sites with 106,171 m² of newly created playing field land at the abovementioned new site, under paragraph 7 of the schedule of The School Playing Fields General Disposal and Change of Use Consent (no 4) 2012.

In terms of quality the new facilities at Shafton ALC are considered to be an improvement given the AGP is 3G and floodlit whilst the new tennis courts on the MUGAs are of a better quality.

In terms of accessibility, all facilities at Shafton ALC benefit from community use agreements and are therefore accessible.

Summary

In light of the above it is considered the proposed residential use at former Priory School will not result in the loss of playing pitches. The pitches no longer exist, having been replaced at Shafton ALC by the Council as part of its BSF programme. These replacement facilities are considered to be better in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility and as such Sport England's Exception Policy E4 applies. Similarly the proposal will not therefore be contrary to paragraph 74 of the NPPF.

In light of the above it is respectfully requested that Sport England be re-consulted with a view to withdrawing their objection.