

Jeremy Owens
Development Planning Manager
Cheshire East Council
Strategic Planning (Westfields),
C/O Municipal Buildings,
Earle Street,
Crewe
CW1 2BJ

29 October 2021

Dear Jeremy,

Re: Cheshire East SADPD – Poynton Mitigation Strategy

Sport England has been and will continue to work with the Council to ensure the Cheshire East Site Allocations and Development Policies Document is sound and based on a robust and up to date evidence base for sport. Sport England consider the Council has an up to date and robust sport evidence base, and the Council have expressed their commitment to working with Sport England to ensure the evidence base remains up to date to enable policies PYT1, PYT2, PYT3, and PYT4, in particular, can be adequately implemented.

Evidence Base to support Policies PYT1 to PYT4

Sport England is a statutory consultee on all planning applications affecting playing fields and there was a need to ensure the emerging SADPD allocation policies and associated evidence base did not compromise that position. Sport England's Playing Fields Policy¹ reflects the content of paragraph 99 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Sport England assesses relevant planning applications against the criteria of paragraph 99 of the NPPF and the exceptions to the Sport England policy.

To ensure the loss of playing field associated with policies PYT1, PYT3 and PYT4 and the proposed replacement playing field site associated with PYT2 complies with paragraph 99 of the NPPF and Sport England Playing Fields Policy Exception E4, a Sports Mitigation Strategy for Poynton was prepared. This was a collaborative approach between Sport England and the Council using the recently updated Playing Pitch Strategy, Built Facilities Strategy and Local Football Facility Plan to help Inform the content. Sport England were on the Steering Groups of all three evidence base documents, and can confirm the methodology used and final documents were agreed and signed off as robust by Sport England.

¹ https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/planning-for-sport#playing_fields_policy

In turn the scope and methodology used to prepare the Sports Mitigation Strategy was agreed with Sport England. The final document is considered to be robust and provides the strategic framework that supports the principle of each of the allocations.

Conclusion

Sport England consider the Council's commitment to work with Sport England to ensure allocations PYT1 to PYT4 comply with paragraph 99 of the NPPF and Sport England Playing Fields Policy Is sufficient to alleviate any previously raised concerns.

Sport England understand the specific detail of each allocation, and the replacement site associated with PYT2 in particular, will be dealt with via the planning application process. As statutory consultee, Sport England will have the opportunity to help Influence the final detail to ensure policy compliance.

Proposed Main Modification PYT1 (Poynton Sports Club)

Sport England has been asked to comment on the proposed Main Modification proposed by Jones Homes:

"Jones Homes request that the proposed wording to bullet point 3 of proposed Policy PYT1 be revised to provide flexibility for the phased delivery of PYT 1 (Poynton Sports Club): '...and Action Plan, and that ~~the any~~relocated facilities ~~ies~~ is fully brought into use in advance of the loss of ~~any the corresponding~~ existing facilities to ensure continuity of provision."

Sport England's Playing Fields Policy Exception E4 specifically requires any replacement sports facilities to be replaced prior to commencement of the development that causes the loss:

EXCEPTION 4

*The area of playing field to be lost as a result of the proposed development will be replaced, **prior to the commencement of development** by a new area of playing field:*

- of equivalent or better quality, and*
- of equivalent or greater quantity, and*
- in a suitable location, and*
- subject to equivalent or better accessibility and management arrangements.*

The reason being that pitches need ancillary facilities to support their use and to ensure, continuity of use and sustainability for the Club. If a phased approach to the development was approved, this could see the demolition of the ancillary facilities leaving the pitches in

use, or vice versa, that would leave the Club in a position whereby they would have to seek alternative ancillary/pitch facilities elsewhere. This would be an unreasonable cost and expectation for the Club to bear. Even if the ancillary facilities or pitches were developed at the replacement site before loss of the corresponding facility at the existing site, this would create a separation of facilities and require travel between the two sites. In addition, a phased approach does not provide certainty the entire playing field and associated facilities would be replaced. Sport England's Playing Fields Policy Guidance provides the following clarification in Section 6.4, paragraph 61, page 21:

"The replacement area of playing field and associated facilities should be available for use prior to the implementation of any development affecting the existing area of playing field, or the loss of any sporting use of the existing area of playing field, in order to secure continuity of use and certainty of re-provision."

For the reasons given above Sport England would object to the Main Modification being approved.

If you have any queries in relation to these comments, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Yours sincerely



Fiona Pudge BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI
Planning Manager - North West

M: 07747 763534

E: Fiona.Pudge@sportengland.org