

North Lincolnshire Council
FAO: Emmanuel Hiamey

By email only

4th March 2025

Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015

Application Reference: PA/2024/1261

Site: Barrow Playing Field, Mill Lane, DN19 7BD

Proposal: Planning permission to place a twenty foot storage container

Sport England Reference: PA/24/Y/NL/69256

Thank you again for consulting Sport England on the above application.

Sport England – statutory consultee role and policy

We understand that you have consulted us as a statutory consultee in line with the above Order. Therefore, we have considered the application in light of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), in particular paragraph 104, and Sport England's Playing Fields Policy, which is presented within our 'Playing Fields Policy and Guidance Document': www.sportengland.org/playingfieldspolicy

Sport England's policy is to oppose the granting of planning permission for any development which would lead to the loss of, or prejudice the use of:

- all or any part of a playing field, or
- land which has been used as a playing field land 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. The exceptions are provided in the Annex to this response.

The proposal and impact on playing field

As previously explained, according to the active places power database the playing field is used for adult football, senior rugby union and mini soccer 7v7. However, the database does not provide any details where these pitches are marked out on the playing field.

When reviewing the additional information, it appears that the proposed storage container has now been relocated onto a hardstanding area used as car parking, which supports the natural turf playing field. When reviewing Google Street View and the site location plan it appears that the proposed container would be located next to an existing container on the car park.

An email dated 7th January 2025 from Barrow Upon Humber Parish Council explains that the container has been requested by a football team that uses the natural turf playing field for the storage of their equipment.

Consultation with National Governing Bodies of Sport

As part of this assessment, Sport England has consulted the relevant National Governing Bodies of Sport (NGBs) under the terms of a Memorandum of Understanding. The NGBs act as Sport England's technical advisors for their relative sports. The comments of the NGBs which have been received have been summarised as follows:

Football Foundation (FF):

- *The FF and Lincolnshire FA confirm no objections to the revised location of the container.*

Rugby Football Union (RFU):

1. *There is no detriment to the rugby union playing field land; we acknowledge and welcome the relocation.*
2. *The existing parking provisions on-site are already reasonably restrictive. We have several inquiries to determine if the reduction in parking availability will result in additional concerns:*
 - *Will the decrease in parking spaces affect the accommodation of demand during training or match days?*
 - *Is there an adequate supply of overflow parking? If so, where is it situated?*
 - *Will this situation raise any complications in relation to local highways and residents?*
 - *Are there challenges associated with accessing the container, such as traversing the car park?*

- *Is there a potential access route through the trees located to the west of the car park?*

Assessment against Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and NPPF

As explained previously, The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 defines a playing field as 'the whole of a site which encompasses at least one playing pitch' the definition refers to the whole of a site and therefore does not just cover land which is currently laid out as pitches. This is because playing field is seen as a resource for pitches to be marked out on, pitches to be changed from one pitch sport type to another to meet new demand, or to allow areas of the playing field to rest from over play. It also allows the potential for non-pitch sports such as athletics to be marked out.

Playing field policy is a restrictive policy based on a presumption against any development which results in the loss of playing field (in whole or part) or prejudices its use. As such, for development not to encounter an objection from Sport England it must be shown to be of a form covered by one of the exceptions (to the presumption against) set out in the Annex.

Given the above NGB comments and having assessed the application, Sport England is satisfied that the proposed development meets exception 2 of our playing fields policy, in that:

'The proposed development is for ancillary facilities supporting the principal use of the site as a playing field, and does not affect the quantity or quality of playing pitches or otherwise adversely affect their use.'

Sport England note the comments and queries raised by the RFU with regards to parking and highway safety. Given the nature of the queries, Sport England advise that the Local Planning Authority consult the Highway Authority as to whether the proposal would still be considered acceptable when considering these matters.

Sport England's Position

Given the above assessment, Sport England wishes to **withdraw its statutory objection** to the planning application because it is now considered to accord with policy exception 2 of our Playing Fields Policy and paragraph 104 (formerly paragraph 103) of the NPPF.

Determining the application

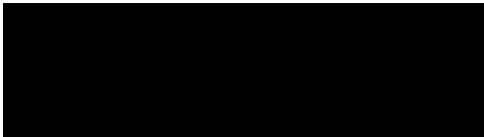
If this application is to be presented to a Planning Committee, we would like to be notified in advance of the publication of any committee agendas, report(s) and committee date(s).

Please note that this response relates to Sport England's planning function only. It is not associated with our funding role or any grant application/award that may relate to the site.

Sport England would be pleased to comment on further details that address the above comments.

In providing any further information, Sport England would ask that the applicant submits this to the Local Planning Authority and not to Sport England directly. That way it forms part of the application submission and its associated audit trail. The Local Planning Authority can then consult Sport England on receipt of this information. Sport England request that the Local Planning Authority send any additional information to Planning.Central@sportengland.org and not the Planning Manager directly.

Yours sincerely,



Christopher Carroll

Planning Manager

Annex

The Five Exceptions to Sport England's Playing Fields Policy

Exception 1

A robust and up-to-date assessment has demonstrated, to the satisfaction of Sport England, that there is an excess of playing field provision in the catchment, which will remain the case should the development be permitted, and the site has no special significance to the interests of sport.

Exception 2

The proposed development is for ancillary facilities supporting the principal use of the site as a playing field, and does not affect the quantity or quality of playing pitches or otherwise adversely affect their use.

Exception 3

The proposed development affects only land incapable of forming part of a playing pitch and does not:

- reduce the size of any playing pitch;
 - result in the inability to use any playing pitch (including the maintenance of adequate safety margins and run-off areas);
 - reduce the sporting capacity of the playing field to accommodate playing pitches or the capability to rotate or reposition playing pitches to maintain their quality;
 - result in the loss of other sporting provision or ancillary facilities on the site;
- or
- prejudice the use of any remaining areas of playing field on the site.

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.

Exception 5

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 full 'Playing Fields Policy and Guidance Document' is available to view at:
www.sportengland.org/playingfieldspolicy