Dear Ms Bedford

Thank you for consulting Sport England on the above pre application proposal involving a playing field and sports facilities.

**Sport England –Statutory Role and Policy**

The aerial image indicates outdoor sports facilities that include a significant playing field. Within the playing field is a cricket pitch (with multiple wickets); an adult football pitch; a youth football pitch and a tennis court. The playing field site should be included in the audit of the Council’s Playing Pitch Strategy which is currently being undertaken.

The site is considered to constitute playing field, or land last used as playing field, therefore Sport England advises that this proposal would require statutory consultation, under the terms of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, at the formal planning application stage.

Sport England considers proposals affecting playing fields in the light of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (in particular Para. 74), and its Playing Fields Policy: ‘A Sporting Future for the Playing Fields of England’, which can be accessed via the following link: 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, unless one or more of the five exceptions stated in its policy apply:

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<th>Sport England Policy</th>
<th>Summary of Exceptions</th>
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<td>E1</td>
<td>An assessment has demonstrated that there is an excess of playing fields in the</td>
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An assessment has demonstrated that there is an excess of playing fields in the catchment and the site has no special significance for sport.

The development is ancillary to the principal use of the playing field and does not affect the quantity/quality of pitches.

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.

Playing field lost would be replaced, equivalent or better in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility.

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.

Assessment against Sport England Policy

The proposal is for the redevelopment of the site with housing. The documents that I have reviewed does not go into any detail about the playing field and sports facilities on site. It therefore does not attempt to address paragraph 74 of the NPPF (which also includes loss of open space as well as sport):

*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.*

The proposal does not adequately meet any of the above exceptions in relation to the loss of playing field therefore Sport England is likely to object to any planning application as currently set out.

Sport England will reconsider its position if the following issues are addressed:
  * The retention of the sport facilities in their current position (although this may be problematic with the distance of new housing and risk of ball strike from cricket) or
  * The relocation of the sport facilities on site (most logical to the south of the main building) subject to compliance with technical guidance and provided prior to loss of existing sport facilities and
  * Access to the wider community / sports clubs secured by a planning condition/obligation for community use. We have a model condition and template for use on our website [http://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/planning-for-sport/planning-tools-and-guidance/community-use-agreements/](http://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/planning-tools-and-guidance/community-use-agreements/)

Any new facilities should be built in accordance with Sport England’s technical guidance notes, copies of which can be found at: [http://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/tools-guidance/design-and-cost-guidance/](http://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/tools-guidance/design-and-cost-guidance/)

During the submission of a formal planning application, Sport England will consult with the relevant National Governing Bodies for Sport. We would suggest that you also share these plans with the Football Association, the England & Wales Cricket Board and the Lawn Tennis Association. The contacts are: robert.chambers@ecb.co.uk Dylan.Evans@thefa.com darren.clarke@lta.org.uk

Sport England reserves the right to object to any subsequent planning application if we do not consider that it accords with our playing fields policy or para 74 of NPPF.

If you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact the my colleague.
If you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact my colleague
Vicky Aston vicky.aston@sportengland.org

Yours sincerely,

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