

Good morning [REDACTED]

Further to the email we both received containing the indicative business plan (IBP) I have consulted with the Football Association and the Football Foundation.

While the FF/FA have raised a few minor issues, none of these warrant an objection from them.

I have gone through the IBP several times and I am satisfied that it is acceptable for this outline planning application, but further work would be needed in the future, if it was to be implemented.

Whilst the applicants do not own, lease or rent the site, planning law does not prohibit them from submitting and obtaining planning permission. The permission goes with the land, as the case *Signature Realty Ltd v Fortis Developments Ltd [2016] EWHC 3583* confirms.

Sport England's concern in this application is to ensure that the proposal is robust and strategically justified. The site is currently a football stadium. Within the adopted West Berkshire Playing Pitch Strategy, it states in table 4.1 that the site is part of a future development and therefore the site is to be relocated elsewhere within a 20 minutes' drive time, as a step 6 facility with the provision expanded to a step 5 in the future. (The steps are different ground gradings within the football pyramid league structure.)

Whilst Sport England is aware through the press that there are discussions happening regarding the relocation, as yet Sport England have not received any formal details to consider.

Notwithstanding this, I am mindful that decisions can change and should the site be retained as a football stadium, then in reality the proposed scheme, with some tweaking of the business plan at reserved matters, could be delivered, either by the applicants or A N Other. This would meet Sport England's planning policy E5 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Conversely if the facilities are relocated, this satisfies the National Planning Policy Framework and Sport England's planning policy exception E4. NB there is no requirement to provide a 3G AGP, but is welcomed.

## **Conclusion**

The proposal for a new 3G Artificial Grass Pitch is considered to meet our planning policy exception E5. Therefore Sport England does not raise an objection to the granting of outline planning permission for this planning application to the following conditions:

1. No development shall commence until details of the design and layout of 3G Artificial Grass Pitch have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority [after consultation with Sport England]. The 3G

Artificial Grass Pitch shall not be constructed other than in accordance with the approved details.

*Reason: To ensure the development is fit for purpose and sustainable and to accord with Development Plan Policy \*\*.*

*Informative: The applicant is advised that the design and layout of the 3G Artificial Grass Pitch should comply with the relevant industry Technical Design Guidance, including guidance published by Sport England, Football Foundation.*

*Informative (artificial grass pitches for Steps 1 to 6 of the FA's National League System) – The applicant is advised that pitches to be used for Step 1 and Step 2 level football matches should be built in accordance with FIFA Quality Concept for Football Turf - FIFA Quality Pro and Steps 3 to 6 should be built in accordance with FIFA Quality as a minimum and tested annually as per league rules.*

2. Within 3 months of work commencing on site, a community use agreement prepared in consultation with Sport England has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and a copy of the completed approved agreement has been provided to the Local Planning Authority. The agreement shall apply to the stadium site and include details of pricing policy, hours of use, access by non-members, management responsibilities and a mechanism for review. The development shall not be used otherwise than in strict compliance with the approved agreement."

*Reason: To secure well managed safe community access to the sports facility/facilities, to ensure sufficient benefit to the development of sport and to accord with Development Plan Policy \*\*.*

3. Before the 3G Artificial Grass Pitch is brought into use, a Management and Maintenance Scheme for the facility including management responsibilities, a maintenance schedule and a mechanism for review shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority after consultation with Sport England. This should [include measures to ensure the replacement of the Artificial Grass Pitch within the manufacturer's specified period.] The measures set out in the approved scheme shall be complied with in full, with effect from commencement of use of the Artificial Grass Pitch.

*Reason: To ensure that a new facility is capable of being managed and maintained to deliver a facility which is fit for purpose, sustainable and to ensure sufficient benefit of the development to sport and to accord with Development Plan Policy \*\*.*

If you wish to amend the wording of the recommended conditions, or use another mechanism in lieu of the conditions, please discuss the details with the undersigned. Sport England does not object to amendments to conditions, provided they achieve the same outcome and we are involved in any amendments.

Sport England would also like to be notified of the outcome of the application through the receipt of a copy of the decision notice.

The absence of an objection to this application, in the context of the Town and Country Planning Act, cannot be taken as formal support or consent from Sport England or any National Governing Body of Sport to any related funding application, or as may be required by virtue of any pre-existing funding agreement.

If you would like any further information or advice, please contact me at the address below.

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Principal Planning Manager - South Team

T: [Redacted]

M: [Redacted]

F: [Redacted]

E: [Redacted]



We have updated our Privacy Statement to reflect the recent changes to data protection law but rest assured, we will continue looking after your personal data just as carefully as we always have. Our Privacy Statement is published on our [website](#), and our Data Protection Officer can be contacted by emailing [Gaile Walters](#)