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MWS Planning Ltd
29 Blanquettes Avenue
Worcester
WR3 8DA

12 November 2014

Our Ref: WM/WOR/2014/37761/P

Dear ██████████

Site: Perdiswell Park, Worcester WR3 7SN
Proposal: Proposed community sports hub

Thank you for consulting Sport England on the above proposal.

Summary:

Sport England considers that additional information is required before an opinion can be given on whether or not the proposal meets NPPF or Sport England playing field policies.

Introduction

The proposal involves a new stadium for Worcester City FC and a full-size AGP on an existing playing field next to Perdiswell Leisure Centre.

Policy

The site forms part of, or constitutes a playing field as defined in The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010 (Statutory Instrument 2010 No. 2184). This pre-application consultation is therefore statutory and Sport England has considered the pre-application consultation in the light of the National Planning Policy Framework (in particular Par 74) and its policy to protect playing fields, 'A Sporting Future for the Playing Fields of England (see link below).

<http://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/planning-for-sport/development-management/planning-applications/playing-field-land/>

This policy statement defines a 'Playing Field', which is; the whole of a site that encompasses at least one playing pitch. A playing pitch is a delineated area, which together with any run off is of 0.2 hectares or more.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that there is an adequate supply of quality pitches to satisfy the current and estimated future demands of the pitch sports. The policy identifies five exceptions to our normal position of opposing development, which would result in the loss of playing fields, as follows:

| 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 |

The proposal introduces new development onto playing field land. This proposal will therefore need to be assessed against the 5 exceptions listed above.

Additional information

Sport England considers that, before an opinion can be given on whether or not the proposal meets any of the five exceptions listed above and before any formal planning application is submitted, additional information should be provided and outstanding issues resolved.

Layout

The proposed stadium and AGP are sited over an area which has been previously laid out as pitches. The proposed layout appears to 'sterilise' parts of the playing fields (to the north-east of the stadium and the south-east of the 3G pitch) so that they are no longer large enough to be laid out as pitches. The proposed layout would therefore limit the number of pitches the site could accommodate and prevent the site being used to its maximum potential. It is also not clear whether or not the northern section of the site which has not previously been laid out as pitches, is suitable to accommodate the proposed pitches (as shown drawing number MN:1229:02) without engineering works.

Viability

It is advised that further work including a business plan and user matrix is required and made available, if not already created, to ensure that the proposed stadium and 3G pitch are sustainable and viable before an application is submitted representing this proposal.

It is not clear whether or not the site is available for a Community Asset Transfer, as proposed, or whether funds are available for this. It is understood that no formal agreement has been reached regarding a lease for the site.

Transport and parking

The Travel Plan submitted states that no new parking spaces are planned as part of the proposal but that 96 spaces of the City Council's proposed leisure centre's 315 space car park will be made available to Worcester City FC on match days. It is not clear whether or not this is adequate to accommodate the additional traffic/parking created by the proposal or the potential impact on the functioning of the existing leisure centre or proposed new leisure centre. There could be potential conflicts between the proposal and the leisure centre at peak time use which would not be limited to match days.

Timing

Sport England considers that the submission of an application representing this proposal in the near future, as proposed, could be considered to be premature; It is understood that Worcester City Council still have aspirations to redevelop the leisure centre and this needs to be taken into consideration in this proposal.

Furthermore Worcester City Council has commissioned an up-to-date Playing Pitch Strategy which is due to be completed in February 2015 (Sport England did not support the existing 2010 South Worcestershire Playing Pitch Strategy). The emerging Playing Pitch Strategy will provide an up-to-date assessment of playing pitches in the Worcester City Council area and should be used to inform the facilities and mix of pitches etc required in the area and should therefore also be used to inform this proposal. It is important to provide a mix and standard of pitches which is sustainable, viable and meets local needs.

Masterplan

Sport England considers that this proposal should take into account the redevelopment of the leisure centre site and recommends that a masterplan is created covering the whole playing field and leisure site. The potential to create a masterplan (which takes into account the needs of, and is supported by, all relevant users and landowners) should be investigated.

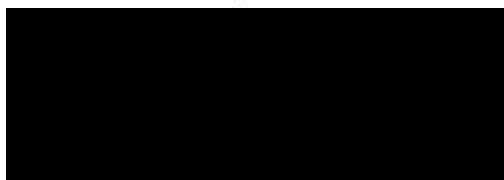
It is therefore recommended that a meeting takes place between representatives of Worcester City FC, Worcester City FC Supporters Trust, Worcester City Council,

1Life, Sport England, the relevant Governing bodies and any other relevant parties to discuss the potential for a masterplan and other issues relating to the site.

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 undersigned.

Yours sincerely



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