

<b>Application Number:</b>	2018/0808/RG3
<b>Site Address:</b>	Birchwood Leisure Centre, Birchwood Avenue, Lincoln
<b>Target Date:</b>	17th August 2018
<b>Agent Name:</b>	Surfacing Standards
<b>Applicant Name:</b>	Mr Lockwood (City of Lincoln Council)
<b>Proposal:</b>	Installation of an artificial sports pitch with associated fencing, floodlighting, storage container and access.

### **Background - Site Location and Description**

Permission is sought for an Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) to accommodate an 11 aside football pitch. It would measure 106metres in length and 70metres in width. The pitch would also be capable of accommodating a combination of youth football pitches, mini soccer pitches and training areas. The proposal also seeks the installation of associated fencing to include a 4.5metre high ball stop fencing to the AGP perimeter and a 3.5 metre acoustic fence.

The site is located to the east of Birchwood Leisure Centre on an area of grassed playing field. Residential properties adjoin the site to the north, south and east. A former airstrip runs along the north western boundary of the site.

### **Site History**

No relevant site history.

### **Case Officer Site Visit**

Undertaken on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2018.

### **Policies Referred to**

- National Planning Policy Framework
- Central Lincolnshire Local Plan
- LP23 – Local Green Space and other Important Open Space
- LP26 – Design and Amenity

### **Issues**

- Impact on Neighbours
- Visual Amenity

### **Consultations**

Consultations were carried out in accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement, adopted May 2014.

### **Statutory Consultation Responses**

Consultee	Comment
Highways & Planning	Comments Received – No objections

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Highways & Planning	Comments Received – No objections
Sport England, East Midlands	Comments Received

### **Public Consultation Responses**

Name	Address
Mrs Nicola Shaw	29 Ridgewell Close Doddington Park Lincoln
Mrs Lynne Mott	31 Ridgewell Close Doddington Park Lincoln
Mr James L	2 Avocet Close Lincoln

### **Consideration**

#### Policy Context

The site is located within Policy Area LP23 which is designated as local green space and other important open space. Central Lincolnshire has a wide variety of open spaces which perform a range of functions and deliver benefits to local people and wildlife. In the explanatory text which accompanies Policy LP23 Open space is defined as parks and gardens, amenity space, play space for children/teenagers, outdoor sports facilities and allotments are all examples of publicly accessible and valued for their recreational and social functions.

As the proposal is for the provision of an outdoor sports facility the proposal would be in accordance with Local Plan Policy LP23.

The National Planning Policy Framework seeks to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which promote healthy communities. This can be achieved through the provision of sports facilities. It further states in para.97 states that existing open space should not be built on unless the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use.

It is therefore considered that the principle of development is acceptable in planning policy subject to the development not causing unacceptable harm.

#### Impact on Neighbouring Residents

Policy LP26 of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan states that “the amenities which all existing and future occupants of neighbouring land and buildings may reasonably expect to enjoy must not be unduly harmed by or as a result of development”.

At the time of writing this report objections had been received from residents on Ridgewell Close. Those properties with an immediate boundary with the playfield have been consulted. This issues raised are discussed below.

### *Noise*

The applicant has submitted a noise impact assessment report in support of their application. The assessment identifies that the proposed use would not cause unreasonable levels of noise at the surrounding residential properties provided that appropriate mitigation measures are put in place. The Noise Assessment recommends a 3.5metre high solid acoustic barrier around parts of the pitch and this has been included as part of the application.

### *External Lighting*

The applicant has submitted a lighting impact assessment in support of their application. The assessment confirms that the proposed lighting scheme would not cause unreasonable levels of light at the surrounding residential properties provided that the floodlighting is installed as proposed in the applicant's submission. It would therefore be conditioned that the lighting is installed as per the submitted plans and that any changes to this would have to be approved by the Local Planning Authority.

### *Operating Hours*

Due to the proposed use having the potential to cause disturbance due to noise and excess light, particularly during the sensitive night-time and early morning hours, it is recommended that a condition be attached to the consent, if granted, to restrict the hours of operation to between 8.00am and 10.00pm on any day.

### Visual Amenity

The most visually prominent aspect of the proposed development would be the fencing around the perimeter of the pitch. This fencing is of a colour and design which makes it as visually recessive as possible so as not to be intrusive on the landscape. The scheme would also include a store which would be green in colour so as to be less noticeable.

### Sport England

Sport England have a statutory role where development relates to land currently used as a playing field. Sport England considered that further clarification was required in relation to the intended end users and programme of use to enable the long term viability of the provision to be assessed within the context of other existing and proposed AGP provision in the area.

On this basis Sport England initially objected to the proposal.

Subsequent to this response the applicants have gone back to Sport England with further detail and addressed these concerns. Therefore the objection from Sport England has been withdrawn subject to a condition being attached to ensure the artificial turf pitch be constructed in accordance with the details submitted within the application and in line with guidance and standards set out in Artificial Surfaces for Outdoor Sport, Sport England, 2012 and The Football Association (FA) Guide to 3G Football Turf Pitch Design Principles and Layouts, 2013.

## **Conclusion**

The proposed Artificial Grass Pitch would be located on an area of grass which is currently used for informal playspace. The proposal formalises the space with an all-weather pitch and associated infrastructure which means it can be used all year round. Appropriate measures have been taken to mitigate the impact on adjacent neighbours and it is considered that the use is appropriate given the surrounding context of existing sports uses.

## **Application Determined within Target Date**

Yes.

## **Recommendation**

That the application is Granted Conditionally.

## **Conditions**

- Development to commence within 3 years
- Development to be carried out in accordance with the plans
- Contaminated land – unexpected contamination
- Carried out in accordance with noise assessment
- Carried out in accordance with lighting details
- Hours of construction
- Hours of operation