

Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council

FAO: Gwion Russell

By email

17 October 2025

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

Application Reference: 25/00897/FUL

Proposal: Proposed Multi Use Games Area (MUGA)

Location: Village Hall, Hall Drive, Stoke Golding, Nuneaton

Sport England Reference: PA/25/EM/HIN/71984

Thank you 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 Proposal and its Impact on the playing field

The proposal would involve the construction of a 20 x 10m multi-use games area (MUGA) with fenced enclosure varying in heights between 1 metre and 2 metres.

Drw No: 01A and the Visual Document produced by Creative Plan indicate that the

MUGA would have a 14mm artificial grass surface area with football goal ends and basketball hoops. Mini targets would be included on the northern boundary of the MUGA along with cricket stumps. Markings would be provided on the surface for football and basketball. The MUGA would be unlit.

Part of the MUGA would be located on an existing hardstanding play area which contains a basketball hoop. The brick wall which forms the northern boundary of this existing hardcore area would remain in situ. Located on playing field, the proposed MUGA would result in the loss of playing field.

Sport England's database "Active Places Power" records that the playing field has been previously marked out with football pitches and a cricket pitch all used by the community with facilities provided in the village hall and access to a car park.

Hinckley and Bosworth's Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS), as required by paragraph 103 of the NPPF, includes 4 junior football pitches of poor quality at the site. One cricket pitch is included in the PPS of standard quality although it is noted that Burbage and Stoke Golding Cricket Clubs have recently merged due to a decline in membership. The PPS records that the cricket square at the site is unused. Aerial photography shows that the cricket pitch has not been marked out since 2021.

The PPS recommends that the playing field should be protected in the Local Plan.

Assessment against Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and NPPF

The proposal would lead to the loss of playing field land. The proposal therefore needs to be considered against the exceptions in Sport England's policy which accord with the specified justifications included in paragraph 104 of the NPPF. Sport England has assessed the proposal against exception 5 of Sport England's Playing Fields Policy (which is in accordance with paragraph 104 c) of the NPPF) which states:

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.'

An assessment of the benefits of the outdoor sports facility is thus required.

Based on the information and plans submitted, the proposed MUGA would provide a benefit to the development of sport in the area through providing an informal multi-use community sport's facility. Compared to the sports facility currently in situ, this replacement facility would be of greater benefit to the development of sport through the provision of a larger enclosed surface area. This larger area would include football goal mouths, basketball hoops, cricket stumps and target practice.

However, the development would be located on playing field land. The siting of this outdoor sports facility could lead to the loss of a playing pitch. Whilst part of the proposed MUGA is a replacement facility for the hardstanding currently used for basketball, an additional 13 metres in length would be required for the improved MUGA being proposed as part of this planning application.

Aerial photography of the site shows that the additional area of land required for the proposed MUGA has not been marked out with a football pitch since 2011 or as part of the cricket outfield since 2021. The existing MUGA and brick wall in situ currently acts as a barrier for marking out pitches in this area. It is considered that the proposal to build an extended MUGA in this location would not prejudice the use for the remaining playing field to mark out pitches and that sufficient land remains to mark out playing pitches.

Based on the above, it is considered that the proposal would, on balance, meet exception 5 of Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and the requirements of Paragraph 104 of the NPPF (2024) in that the proposed MUGA would be of sufficient benefit to the development of sport for the community as to outweigh the loss of this part of the playing field.

Sport England's Position

Given the above, Sport England raises **no objection** to the application which is considered, on balance, to accord with exception 5 of our playing fields policy and the requirements of paragraph 104(c) of the NPPF in that the proposal for a MUGA in this location would provide sufficient benefits to sport for the community and its proposed extension would not affect the quantity or quality of playing pitches at the site or otherwise adversely affect their use.

Yours sincerely,

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Planning Manager

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