

From: Sharron Wilkinson <Sharron.Wilkinson@sportengland.org>
Sent: 05 January 2024 14:50
To: Planning Folder New
Cc: Matt Jedruch
Subject: App No: 23/00355/FUL - Proposed Office Block and Parking at Leicester Road FC, Hinckley - Sport England ref: PA/23/EM/HIN/64566

Dear Matt,

Thank you for confirming that Drw No: ND.21.166.01 Rev F has been submitted to the local planning authority as an amended plan for the above planning application. Additional information has also been submitted by the applicant on this proposal on 2nd October 2023.

As part of the assessment of this amended plan and additional information, Sport England has sought the views of the Rugby Football Union (RFU), and the Football Foundation (FF) who act as Sport England's technical advisors in relation to their sport and its facilities. The RFU has confirmed that the Rugby Club do not agree with the legal situation as laid out by the applicant in their additional information and that they are continuing to seek legal advice on this issue.

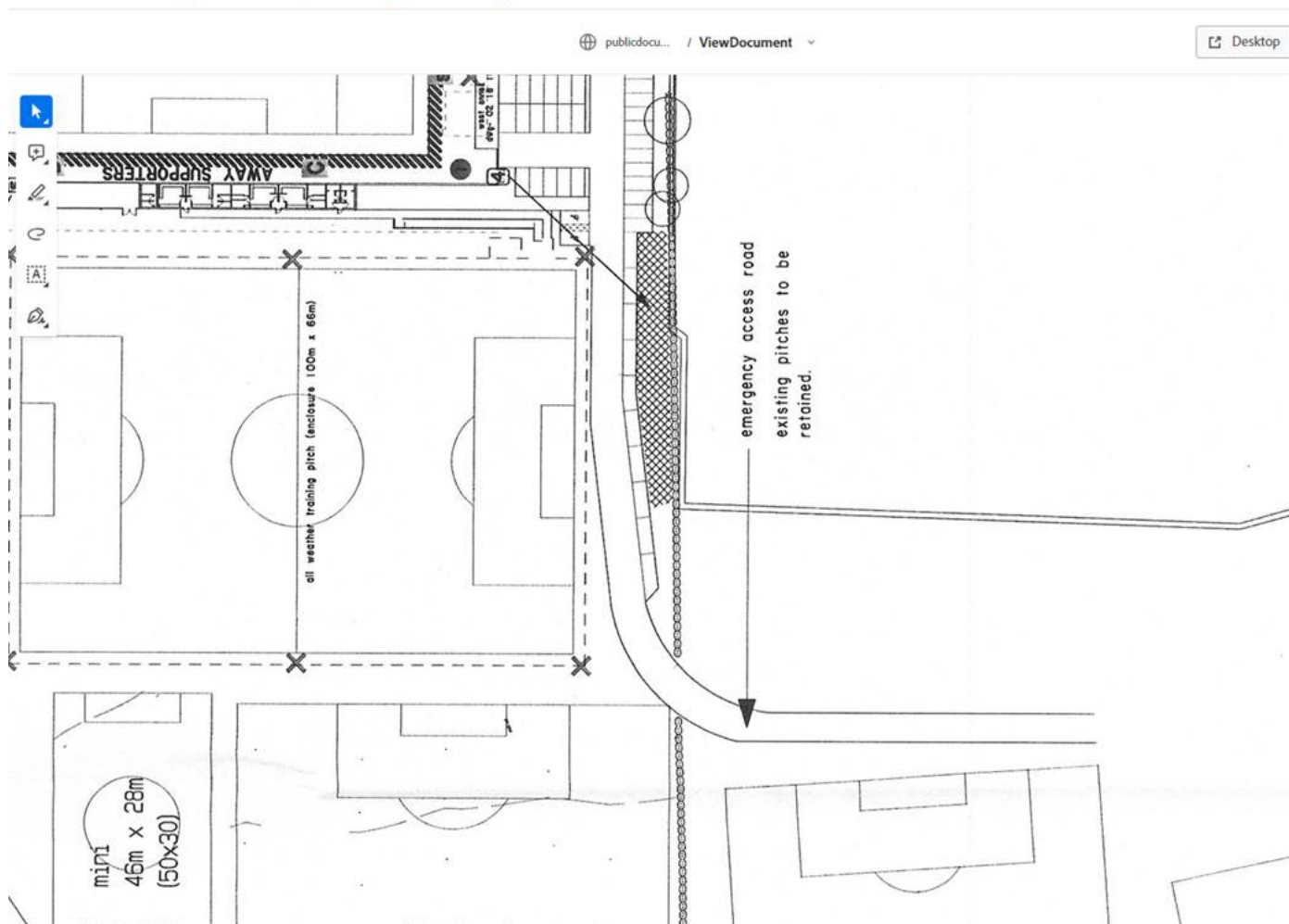
The FF has confirmed that on behalf of the FA they are satisfied that the proposal will not affect football having access to the 3G pitch.

Assessment of amended plan and additional information against Sport England Policy/NPPF

The proposal would involve the loss of playing field. Exception 3 in Sport England's Playing Fields Policy allows developments which affects only land incapable of forming part of a playing pitch and does not:

- *reduce the size of any playing pitch;*
- *result in the inability to use any playing pitch (including the maintenance of adequate safety margins and run-off areas);*
- *reduce the sporting capacity of the playing field to accommodate playing pitches or the capability to rotate or reposition playing pitches to maintain their quality;*
- *result in the loss of other sporting provision or ancillary facilities on the site; or*
- *prejudice the use of any remaining areas of playing field on the site.*

Drw No: ND.21.166.01 Rev F does show the removal of two car parking spaces and the installation of a 5m wide emergency access through the application site. This amended layout would remove the previous concerns raised by Sport England and the FF about the impact of the proposal on the current emergency access to the artificial grass pitch (AGP) and for accessing the remaining site. Previous approved plans for the site (ref: 02/00863/FUL and 05/00752/FUL below) do show the approved location of an access road labelled "emergency access road" to the pitches and the AGP.



With regards to whether the correct certificate of ownership has been served by the applicant for the land edged in red, the Rugby Football Union (RFU) has responded to the additional information submitted confirming that the Rugby Club do not agree with the legal situation as laid out by the applicant. It is understood that there is ongoing communication on this issue. This issue is unlikely to be resolved in the foreseeable future. Whilst the applicant may be successful in gaining planning permission for this proposal based on the evidence currently available, this ownership issue would need to be resolved before the applicant could implement the scheme.

Notwithstanding the above, it is considered that the amended proposal would comply with the requirements of Exception 3 in Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and with paragraph 103 in the NPPF in that the proposal affects only land incapable of forming part of a playing pitch and would not prejudice the use of the remaining area of playing field on the site.

Conclusion

In light of the above, Sport England wishes to withdraw its previous objection to the proposal and has **no objection** to the amended layout of the scheme as shown in Drw No: ND.21.166.01 Rev F which would meet exception 3 in Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and the specified criteria in Paragraph 103 of the NPPF.

If you would like any further information or advice please contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Sharron Wilkinson MRTPI

Planning Manager, Planning & Active Environments

Sport England

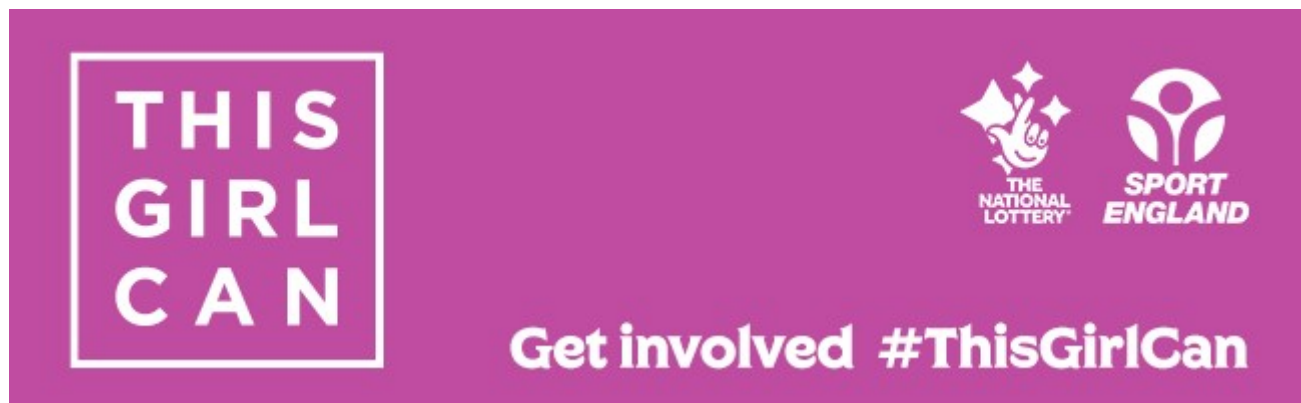
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