

Anstey Nomads FC and Ratby Town Cricket Club

Planning Supporting Statement including, Flood Risk Appraisal and Design and Access Statement



Ratby Sports Fields, Desford Lane, Ratby

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The Site:

Ratby Sports Fields, Station Road, Ratby, includes established cricket and football pitches located to the south of Station Road and east of Desford Lane.

The site is home to Ratby Town Cricket Club and is used as a training facility by Anstey Nomads FC.

Aspirations:

The fields have been acquired with the aim of providing pitch and facility improvements for the benefit of the long-established clubs. This will include the completion and use of a part-constructed clubhouse building and the redevelopment of the existing cricket club house – which currently offers ageing and inadequate limited facilities. In conjunction with education funding and the Football Association, the aim is to tap into available grant schemes to significantly upgrade the pitches and associated infrastructure, including an FA standard all-weather pitch with floodlighting. In accordance with Policy 8 of the Hinckley and Bosworth Council Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2009, Policy DM8 c) of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD 2016 and the Council's Play Strategy, this will provide enhanced quality sporting facilities for the town. In particular, it will offer improved facilities for coaching across all ages, for longer periods in the year and during darker evenings.

To facilitate the process, temporary facilities are proposed to provide an immediate improvement to the changing facilities available for use on the site, a facility for RTCC to use on matchdays to provide

teams with prepared teas, and the provision of secure grounds maintenance and sporting equipment storage. A welfare unit will provide for ancillary food preparation and hot drinks (cricket teas).

Constraints:

The location of the temporary facilities is largely dictated by the requirement to avoid encroachment into the existing playing pitches and run-off zones. Other areas are discounted on the basis of adverse topography and/or the presence of established trees and landscape buffers.

The unused central area is located where it is accessible within the spread of pitches. It is currently underused and covered in areas of grass and overgrown hard-standings that currently make it unsuitable for active play purposes.

Set low on the site, away from the outer boundaries of the sports fields and benefitting from some existing tree cover, the location is well screened such that the temporary buildings will not be readily visible from outside the site. Nor will they feature in the same views as the Ratby Conservation Area (which lies to the north of Station Road and about Main Street), or the setting of any recognised important local buildings.

It would avoid use of existing parking facilities but provide emergency access via the track off Desford Lane.

The area lies within Flood Zone 3. A sequential test for essential facilities associated with outdoor sports and recreation is limited to the sports field site due to its requirement to be located close to the pitches. As described above, in addition to the topography, it can be seen from the figure below that locations elsewhere within the playing fields area are limited by the pitches and established landscaped areas.



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Fig.1 Flood zone mapping and pitch/landscape areas

A recent site Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) prepared in 2021 by RAB Consultants Ltd. identifies that the locality would potentially be subject to some fluvial and surface water flooding during a 1 in 100

year event. The FRA identifies that other sources of flood risk would not affect the site. As an application for a fixed limited time permission, the modelling accounts for climate change effects (30%) that would be unlikely to arise in the timescale of the 3 year period sought. The risk is therefore somewhat overstated.

Notwithstanding, the 'Portakabin'-style buildings will be mounted on pads built to a height to provide freeboard to the flood levels (approx. 80.5mAOD) identified in the FRA. The temporary pad foundations will therefore be in the order of 0.3m high. This will ensure that the risk of flooding of the temporary buildings will be minimised in accordance with Policy DM7 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD 2016. The minimal footprint of the pads would have a negligible displacement effect on floodwater that, in any case, would be restricted to within the confines of the playing field site to avoid exacerbating flood risk elsewhere.

An exception test is not required for essential facilities for outdoor sport and recreation, which are classified as water-compatible development in the NPPF¹.

The proposed structures will not impede access to the watercourse should it be required.

Trees and biodiversity

The location has been chosen to ensure clear distance from the root protection areas and canopy spreads of trees alongside Rothley Brook and on an embankment to the south. The site area is subject to regular maintenance (albeit less frequent than the surrounding pitches). As a kept area, it therefore has little value for wildlife and does not contain any notable ecological features.

Design

To achieve a suitable standard of functionality and appearance, it is proposed to utilise proprietary modular buildings and secure containers for up to 3 years. The buildings will be finished in muted colours to assimilate them in their context.

Access

The site will be serviced by existing retained vehicular and pedestrian access points. Parking will remain unaffected by the proposals to ensure existing on-site capacity remains unaffected.

Temporary ramped access can be provided to the changing and sporting facilities to ensure appropriate standards of accessibility for their intended users.

¹ vulnerability classification Annex 3 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021