

David Perrow  
Drayton (Abingdon) Parish Clerk  
c/o 12 Loddon Close  
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Oxfordshire  
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15 January 2014

Dear Mr Perrow

### Drayton 2020 Neighbourhood Plan

Thank you for inviting Sport England to comment on the above document.

Sport England has an established role within the planning system which includes providing advice and guidance on all relevant areas of national, regional and local policy as well as supporting local authorities in developing the evidence base for sport.

Sport England aims to ensure positive planning for sport, enabling the right facilities to be provided in the right places, based on robust and up-to-date assessments of need for all levels of sport and all sectors of the community. To achieve this our planning objectives are to seek to PROTECT sports facilities from loss as a result of redevelopment, to ENHANCE existing facilities through improving their quality, accessibility and management and to PROVIDE new facilities that are fit for purpose to meet demands for participation now and in the future.

We work with the planning system to achieve these aims and objectives, seeking to ensure that they are reflected in local planning policies and applied in development management. Please see our website for more advice:

<http://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/planning-for-sport/>

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires each local planning authority to produce a Local Plan for its area. Local Plans should address the spatial implications of economic, social and environmental change. Local Plans should be based on an adequate, up-to-date and relevant evidence base. Additionally, paragraph 73 of the NPPF requires that:

“Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. The assessments should identify specific needs and quantitative or

qualitative deficits or surpluses of open space, sports and recreational facilities in the local area.”

The Vale of White Horse District Council adopted a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) entitled Open Space, Sport and Recreation Future Provision in July 2008. This was based on a background study that included a playing pitch strategy, which followed Sport England’s recommended methodology. The background study would no longer be considered up-to-date in the context of the NPPF. The District Council’s Leisure and Sports Facilities Strategy: March 2013 has recognised this fact and recommended that the playing pitch strategy be updated in accordance with new guidance published by Sport England.

Sport England published new guidance on the preparation of playing pitch strategies in October 2013 and is currently developing further guidance on assessing needs and opportunities to supersede that which was published alongside the former PPG17 Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation. Further information can be found by following the link below.

<http://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/planning-for-sport/planning-tools-and-guidance/playing-pitch-strategy-guidance/>

It is important that the Neighbourhood Plan reflects national policy for sport as set out in the NPPF (particularly paragraphs 73 & 74), the contents of the district council’s leisure and sports facilities strategy and the conclusions of a forthcoming updated playing pitch strategy.

Sport England supports the principle of seeking to secure improved sports facilities through PLANNING POLICY P-WP5, but would draw particular attention to the space requirements for pitches, the need for ancillary changing accommodation, the typical cost of such provision and the technical requirements to ensure that facilities are fit for their intended purpose. Guidance can be downloaded via the links below.

1. Pitch Sizes - <http://www.sportengland.org/media/30685/Comparative-Sizes-Checklist-April-2011.pdf> and <http://www.thefa.com/my-football/football-volunteers/runningaclub/yourfacilities/~media/E6AB12A02BB7493E8B09B5963C61BC03.ashx>
2. Pavilions and Clubhouses - <http://www.sportengland.org/media/30956/Pavilions-and-clubhouses.pdf>
3. Facility Costs - <http://www.sportengland.org/media/198443/facility-costs-4q13.pdf>
4. Design Guidance - <http://www.sportengland.org/media/30865/Natural-turf-for-sport.pdf> and <http://www.sportengland.org/media/228585/artificial-surfaces-for-outdoor-sports-2013.pdf>.

Sport England notes that one of the potential development sites (North of Barrow Road) has scope to accommodate “two football pitches and possibly a cricket pitch”. In this instance, consideration should also be given to the need for ancillary changing accommodation on the site and the long-term future use of the existing football pitch and hall at the southern end of the village. With management and sustainability of the facilities in mind, it might be better to provide a multi-sports hub on a single site in the village rather than split the provision between two separate sites.

It is hoped you will find these comments of assistance. If you would like any further information or advice please contact the undersigned at the address below.

Yours sincerely

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