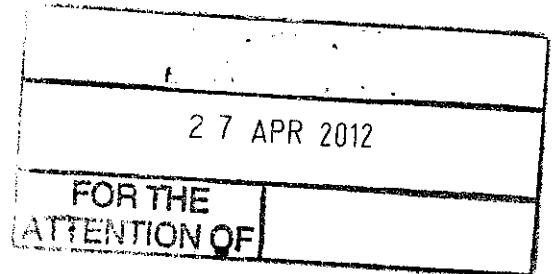




Creating sporting opportunities in every community

Graeme Thorpe
Ribble Valley Borough Council
Council Offices
Church Walk
CLITHEROE
BB7 2RA



27 April 2012

Our Ref: NW/RV/2012/28259/S

Dear Mr Thorpe

Application Number: 3/2012/0277
Site Address: Chatburn Road Clitheroe BB7 2BA
Proposal: Proposed erection of a new sports hall and re-orientation of existing tennis courts.

Thank you for consulting Sport England on the above application.

It is understood that the site forms part of, or constitutes a playing field as defined in The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010 (Statutory Instrument 2010 No.2184), in that it is on land that has been used as a playing field within the last five years, and the field encompasses at least one playing pitch of 0.2 ha or more, or that it is on land that allocated for the use as a playing field in a development plan or in proposals for such a plan or its alteration or replacement.

Sport England has therefore considered the application in the light of its playing fields policy. The aim of this policy is to ensure that there is an adequate supply of quality pitches to satisfy the current and estimated future demand for pitch sports within the area. The policy seeks to protect all parts of the playing field from development and not just those which, for the time being, are laid out as pitches. The Policy states that:

“Sport England will oppose the granting of planning permission for any development which would lead to the loss of, or would prejudice the use of, all or any part of a playing field, or land last used as a playing field or allocated for use as a playing field in an adopted or draft deposit local



**SPORT
ENGLAND**

Creating sporting opportunities in every community

plan, unless, in the judgement of Sport England, one of the Specific circumstances applies.”

Reason: Development which would lead to the loss of all or part of a playing field, or which would prejudice its use, should not normally be permitted because it would permanently reduce the opportunities for participation in sporting activities. Government planning policy and the policies of Sport England have recognised the importance of such activities to the social and economic well-being of the country.

The proposal is to locate a new sports hall on the location of existing tennis courts, four in total. The tennis courts will be relocated and positioned north of the sports hall in an area that is currently amenity grassland. There are no plans showing the layout of the tennis courts and I have assumed 4 courts will be replaced as the Design and Access Statement infers this is the case.

Sport England welcomes the creation of new sports facilities in this location and considers the proposal meets the following exception to the above policy:

E3 - Only affects land incapable of forming a pitch

The proposed development affects only land incapable of forming, or forming part of, a playing pitch, and does not result in the loss of or inability to make use of any playing pitch (including the maintenance and adequate safety margins), a reduction in the size of the playing area of any playing pitch or the loss of any other sporting/ancillary facilities on site.

This being the case, Sport England **does not wish to raise an objection** to this application.

However, I have some comments that I would like you to draw to the applicants attention.

The poor quality of the plans on the website means I have not been able to scale from the drawings to ensure the sports hall and changing rooms meet the minimum design standards. Although I have noted there are doors opening into the sports hall area which is a safety hazard. The walls and doors of the sports hall act as a functional part of the sports hall, acting as rebound boards for some sports, and to have doors opening into the court area would be dangerous to hall users. I have provided a link to the design guidance on Sport England's website which I would appreciate being forwarded to the applicant for information. The guidance includes sports halls and accessible sports facilities to ensure they are DDA compliant.

http://www.sportengland.org/facilities_planning/design_and_cost_guidance.a

SDX



**SPORT
ENGLAND**

Creating sporting opportunities in every community

As there are no plans showing the design and layout of the relocated tennis courts I have provided a link to the Lawn Tennis Associations Facility Design Guidance which I hope the applicant will find useful:
<http://www.lta.org.uk/clubs-schools/Resources---facility-guidance/>

As the school will be investing alot of money into the new sports facilities I wonder if community use has been considered? Schools, including private schools, can often act as hubs for the local community and a well managed community use arrangement can promote sporting links between the school and local clubs/organisations whilst generating an income to help maintain those facilities. I have provided a link to our website that gives advice to Local Authorities and schools as to how this can be achieved:
http://www.sportengland.org/support_advice/accessing_schools.aspx

On a final note the Design and Access Statement provides an assumption about playing fields that is fundamentally flawed. Paragraph 3.3.2 states the tennis courts do not form a playing field. However, the tennis courts and pitches form an integral part of the playing field. The statutory definition of a playing field is "the whole of a site which encompasses at least one pitch." It is the whole of the site that forms the playing field not the individual pitches and includes other sports facilities that fall within that site. If a pitch formed a playing field then Sport England's statutory remit would be to protect pitches not playing fields.

The absence of an objection to this application in the context of the Town and Country Planning Acts, does not in any way commit Sport England's or any National Governing Body of Sport's support for any related application for grant funding.

If this application is to be presented to a Planning Committee, we would like to be notified in advance of the publication of any committee agendas, report(s) and committee date(s). We would be grateful if you would advise us of the outcome of the application by sending us a copy of the decision notice.

If you would like any further information or advice please contact the undersigned at the address below.

Yours sincerely

Fiona Pudge
Planning Manager

Tel: 07747 763534
e-mail: fiona.pudge@sportengland.org