

Ribble Valley BC

FAO: Emily Pickup

By email

25<sup>th</sup> March 2026

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

**Application Reference: 3/2026/0144**

**Site: READ CRICKET CLUB, WHALLEY ROAD, READ BB12 7PN**

**Proposal: A proposed ball stop net**

**Sport England Reference: PA/26/NW/RV/73319**

Thank you for consulting Sport England on the above application.

**Summary**

Statutory consultee role

Sport England currently **objects** to this application as there is insufficient information to enable consideration against the requirements of Exception 2 of our Playing Fields Policy and Paragraphs 104 and 200 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Full assessment and potential resolution is set out below.

**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](http://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:

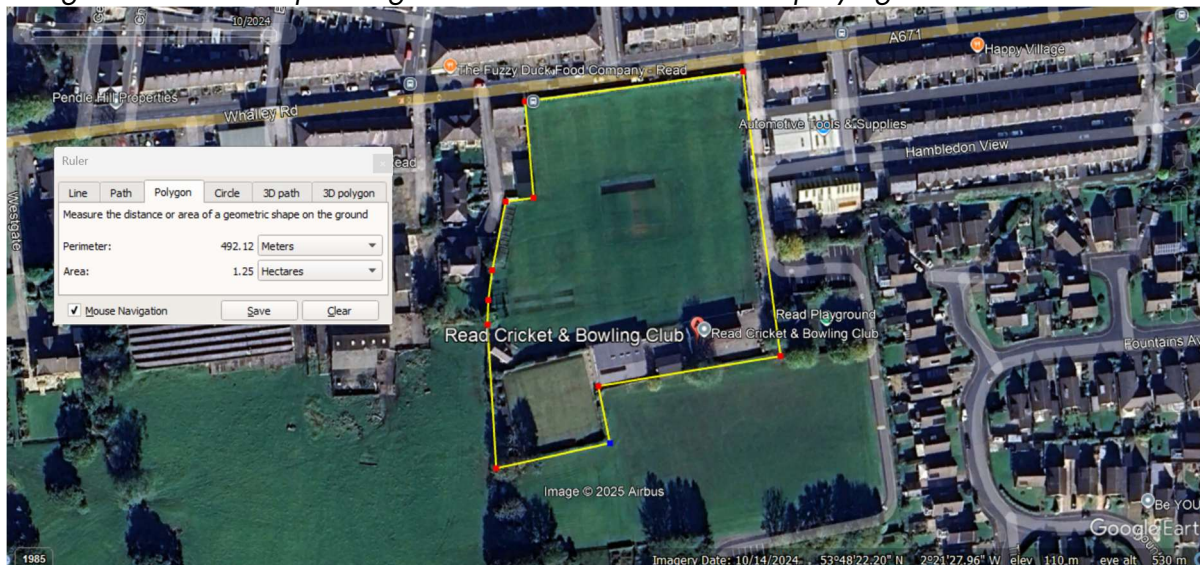
- all or any part of a playing field, or
- land which has been used as a playing field land remains undeveloped, or
- land allocated for use as a playing field

unless, in the judgement of Sport England the development as a whole meets with one or more of five specific exceptions. A summary of the exceptions is provided in the annex to this response.

## The Proposal and its Impact on the playing field

The proposal affects land which forms part of a cricket and bowling club. There is an additional pitch site to the south however this is not shown on the location plan and it is assumed that it does not form part of the cricket and bowling club playing field, rather is the separate playing field for Read Recreation Ground. The proposed ball stop fencing is proposed to be located to the north of the cricket pitch between the site and the northern boundary with Whalley Road. The facility is in association with and support the use of the site for the delivery of cricket.

*Google Extract 2024: Sport England assessment of extent of playing field:-1.25ha*



the netting system is shown to be 65m in length, 11m high support poles, with 8m high netting to be erected between April and September to serve the cricket season.

There is no specific information as to the rationale justifying the netting system nor its precise location.

## Consultation with National Governing Body's for Sport – Strategic Need

Sport England has a memorandum of understanding with the pitch sport National Governing Bodies and consults with them on planning proposals. On this occasion, Sport England has consulted with the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) and their comments are summarised as follows: –

ECB:

- *Site is the home of Read CC which has 3 senior teams and 3 junior teams.*
- *Unable to assess at present. Whilst there is a diagram showing the plan, there is no indication as to how the height of the fence has been determined and given the tight space between playing field and existing wall, we would need to know where the fence will be erected.*
- *The ECB is happy to work with the club around finding a solution*

### **Assessment against Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and NPPF**

It is considered that the proposal can be assessed against the requirements of Sport England's Playing Field Policy Exception 2:

**E2** – *The proposed development is for ancillary facilities supporting the principal use of the site as a playing field, and does not affect the quantity or quality of playing pitches or otherwise adversely affect their use.*

Sport England will require further information in order to fully assess the proposal in terms of justification for the type and height of system shown and its location on the cricket pitch in plan form to indicate the distance between the fencing and pitch boundary and/or wicket.

### **Sport England's Position**

Sport England concur with the view of the England and Wales Cricket Board in terms of the need for further specific information before a complete assessment can be undertaken and advice provided as to its suitability and impact on the delivery of cricket at the site.

Given the above, Sport England currently **objects** to the application as there is insufficient information to determine whether it meets the requirements of Exception 2 of our Playing Fields Policy and paragraph 104 and 200 of the NPPF.

### **Potential Resolution:**

- Provision of justification for the type and height of fencing system proposed – has a ball strike assessment been undertaken?
- Provision of a drawing to show the impact on the cricket pitch – proximity of the fencing to the cricket boundary and wicket.
- The applicant should contact the ECB to discuss how to progress their proposal  
contact email: [Richard.dixon@ecb.co.uk](mailto:Richard.dixon@ecb.co.uk)

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 agenda(s), report(s) and committee date(s). Please notify Sport England of the outcome of the planning application.

Any further submission should be made to [planning.north@sportengland.org](mailto:planning.north@sportengland.org)

Yours sincerely

**Pauline Shearer MSc BA(Hons) MRTPI**

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## **Annex**

### **The Five Exceptions to Sport England's Playing Fields Policy**

#### **Exception 1**

A robust and up-to-date assessment has demonstrated, to the satisfaction of Sport England, that there is an excess of playing field provision in the catchment, which will remain the case should the development be permitted, and the site has no special significance to the interests of sport.

#### **Exception 2**

The proposed development is for ancillary facilities supporting the principal use of the site as a playing field, and does not affect the quantity or quality of playing pitches or otherwise adversely affect their use.

#### **Exception 3**

The proposed development 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.

#### **Exception 4**

The area of playing field to be lost as a result of the proposed development will be replaced, prior to the commencement of development, by a new area of playing field:

- of equivalent or better quality, and
- of equivalent or greater quantity, and
- in a suitable location, and
- subject to equivalent or better accessibility and management arrangements.

#### **Exception 5**

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.

**The full 'Playing Fields Policy and Guidance Document' is available to view at:**

[www.sportengland.org/playingfieldspolicy](http://www.sportengland.org/playingfieldspolicy)