# Introduction

Purpose of Note

## This Sport England Response Note is intended to provide an overview of, and context to, the proposals – in relation to the relevant Sport England’s Playing Fields Policy - ‘A Sporting Future for the Playing Fields of England’ Policy Exception.

## The proposals are assessed within the context of Sport England’s specific information requirements related to Policy Exception E5 – which is applicable in the following scenario:

E5 – Sports facilities: *‘The proposed development is for an indoor or outdoor sports facility, the provision of which would be of sufficient benefit to the development of sport as to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss of the playing field or playing fields.’*

The Proposals

## The proposals comprise:

*‘Construction of a synthetic turf pitch, club house, fencing, floodlighting, drainage, and ancillary works’.*

## Before addressing the Policy Exception information requirements, it is considered important to outline the underlying rationale and need for the proposals. In this regard, the following is the case:

* This application seeks full planning permission for the redevelopment of the existing partly synthetic/ partly natural turf cricket pitch to provide a modern, synthetic grass surfaced sports pitch with perimeter fencing and associated features;
* The proposals will provide access to a facility which can be used throughout the year and in times of incremental weather;
* In addition to providing the School with compliant state of the art sports facilities to meet the demands of the School itself, the facilities will also be offered to the local community during evenings and weekends when available. Accordingly, the completed facilities would naturally offer significant community benefits as well as meeting the direct requirements of the School itself.

# Assessment of proposals

## The following table provides a response to the information likely to be required as part of their assessment of the application against this Policy Exception:

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| **Assessment against Policy Exception E5: Sports Facilities** |
| **What is the impact on the existing playing field land in terms of the number of pitches the site can accommodate and their capacity?** |
| The proposed siting of the proposed pitch will allow the existing training fields to continue to be utilised. The application will provide an all-weather pitch suitable for use throughout the year without having an adverse effect on the existing pitches. |
| **Will all existing users of the playing field land still be adequately accommodated within the site?** |
| All existing users will be adequately accommodated by the sports facilities which will provide an enhancement of the sporting facilities within the school site as well as the natural turf pitches. |
| **What is the view of the sport’s national governing bodies whose playing pitch provision may be adversely affected?** |
| There is no current sport’s national governing body who will be affected by this development. |
| **Is the playing field land proposed for development of a particularly high quality or of particular importance to the development of sport in the local area?** |
| The proposed area of development is not currently available for use during times of inclement weather. The provision of a synthetic turf pitch will provide all weather facilities for users, which will enable greater sporting participation throughout the year for pupils and youth groups. |
| **Is there evidence that the proposed facility has been carefully located to minimise any adverse impact on the playing field land? For example, has an assessment of alternative sites been undertaken?** |
| The proposed facility has been carefully located, on an area of the playing fields which is already partly synthetic and currently has a similar use. This way the surrounding natural turf pitches can be retained. |
| **Will the proposed facility help to meet an identified sporting need i.e. as set out in a needs assessment or Playing Pitch / Sports Facility Strategy?** |
| The scheme has been designed to meet the direct requirements of the School, and to improve the availability of a multi-use pitch throughout the year for youth sports. In addition, the proposals would address the demand more additional hockey pitch surfaces in the Bradford area, as identified by both the ‘Sport and Recreation Facility Strategy and Open Space Informal Recreation Assessment’ and ‘The Bradford Metropolitan District Council Playing Pitch Strategy 2014- 2021’ |
| **Does the proposed facility help to deliver the plans and strategies of the relevant sport’s national governing bodies and does the application have their support?** |
| The proposed pitch will enhance the opportunity to play hockey and other sports within the community and the school. |
| **Will the proposed facility duplicate any existing provision within the local catchment area?** |
| The scheme seeks to provide a direct requirement from the School for an all-weather pitch that can be used throughout the year for a range of sports by youth groups. The pitch will also be available to be used by local clubs and the local community on evenings and weekends. |
| **Does the proposed facility meet with Sport England’s and the relevant sport’s national governing body design guidance?** |
| The proposed pitch is in accordance with the design guidance of Sport England. |
| **Will the proposed facility be available for use by the local community? Will this use be secured and managed on a formal basis i.e. through the development and implementation of a community use agreement?** |
| The school will offer the use of the facilities for evening, weekend and holiday use. This project will provide a specialist all-weather PE teaching facility for pupils and will allow greater use by more pupils as well as local youth clubs who will both utilise the pitch for their own training and matches. |
| **Does the design of the proposed facility allow for adequate storage, changing provision and access to allow for community use?** |
| It is proposed that the already existing changing facilities and storage provided by the School will be utilised for any players of the new pitch. |
| **Is the proposed facility supported by the existing and potential future users of the site e.g. local sports clubs?** |
| In order to maximise the advantages that the facility will bring to the community, the pitch will be available for use by the local community and local clubs. |
| **Is there evidence that the proposed facility will be linked into the wider sports development network? Will a sports development plan be produced and implemented for the facility?** |
| The scheme is designed to meet the direct requirements of the School where the sports facilities will be used throughout the year as well as providing facilities for the local community and sports clubs. |
| **For applications on school sites, is there evidence that the proposed facility will lead to an increase in PE in the curriculum and the development, or further development, of after school sports clubs and school club links?** |
| The proposed development will increase sport participation amongst pupils. The redevelopment of the existing pitch will mean that this can be used in all weathers and for longer hours due to the proposed usage on evenings and weekends. The facility will provide high quality PE training for both school and other local teams. This will have a positive impact on the number of children participating in school based sport and then onto local clubs. |
| **Are appropriate arrangements proposed to ensure the long term maintenance of the facility?** |
| A Maintenance Package will be set out and agreed as part of the proposals. |
| **Is there evidence to suggest that the sporting benefits that will arise from the proposed development are unlikely to be obtained in any other way in the foreseeable future?** |
| Policy OS3 of the Bradford Metropolitan District Council Core Strategy (July 2017) states that the provision of additional new facilities will be supported where they are accessibly located, particularly noting that ‘the development is ancillary to the principal use of the site as a playing field or playing fields and does not affect the quantity and quality of pitches or adversely affect their use.’  It is therefore considered that this Policy within the Core Strategy supports the provision of additional sports facilities, including a new pitch and clubhouse as per the proposal, in the area. |
| **What is the sporting rationale behind the choice of surface proposed and what sports and activities is it envisaged the facility will accommodate?** |
| There is an established need for all-weather pitches for use within the school and the local community by youth players. |
| **How will the provision of the facility benefit the current sporting users of the playing field land (e.g. school and club use)?** |
| The provision will allow the School to create access to top level facilities for all students which can be used throughout the year as well as by local clubs and teams. |
| **Will the provision of the facility help to enhance the quality of the remaining playing field land e.g. by moving training activity off a grass playing pitch and onto the artificial surface?** |
| The proposed pitch will provide a high-quality sports pitch which will enable some training to come off the natural turf pitches. |
| **Is sports lighting proposed and is it likely that its use will be restricted due to the proximity of residential properties or sensitive areas (e.g. Green Belt or Conservation Areas)?** |
| The proposals do not include flood lighting and as such will not impact on neighbouring residential amenity. |
| **To ensure the long-term benefit of the facility will a sinking fund be established to ensure the appropriate replacement of the artificial surface and/or sports lighting?** |
| A Sinking Fund will be established in order to secure the replacement of the pitch. |

# Conclusion

## Having regard to the above key considerations, it is considered that the proposals have covered, addressed and thoroughly satisfied all Sport England Playing Fields Policy considerations relevant to the proposals.