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**Planning Application Reports – Update Note**

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Listed below are changes to the planning reports made as a result of additional information received since the publication of the agenda for this meeting.

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**The following updates relate to application ref. 19/0241 – land at Former Bispham High School**

**1.0 Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS)**

- 1.1 The December 2020 update to the Council’s Playing Pitch Strategy was published on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2021. The supporting Assessment Report considers Blackpool’s requirements with regard to football, cricket, rugby union, rugby league and artificial grass pitches. By using population growth projections, it considers future need as well as current demand. The Assessment reviews the existing provision within the borough in terms of both quantity and quality.
- 1.2 Table 1.1 of the PPS Assessment Report lists the playing fields at the former Bispham High School site as being ‘lapsed’. The associated commentary notes that the school was closed in 2014 with the buildings demolished by early 2017. It makes reference to a Land Release Fund award of £1,050,000 that was allocated to the Council in 2018 to support the development of the site for housing, and to the current planning application. This commentary also states that, whilst the loss of the land would not displace any sporting activity or teams, the Council has committed to a contribution of £200,000 towards the upgrade of an artificial pitch at Stanley Park to 3G standard. The Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) also makes reference to the application site and confirms that the provision on site has not been included in the capacity analysis provided in the Assessment Report.
- 1.3 In relation to the different sports considered, the PPS Assessment Report reaches the following conclusions:
- Football – there is sufficient supply of grass football pitch provision (excluding the provision on the application site) to accommodate current football demand in Blackpool. Presently available supply can also sufficiently cater for future demand at all formats based solely on population change forecasts, except for mini 5v5.
- Cricket - there is sufficient supply of cricket pitches (excluding the potential for provision on the application site) to cater for current demand from clubs within Blackpool except for senior league cricket. To accommodate future increases in peak demand, an additional cricket square available on a Saturday is required, or the days of play need to be changed. The focus of new facilities should be to drive junior and womens/girls cricket growth.
- Rugby Union - there is sufficient supply of rugby union pitches (excluding the provision on the application site) to accommodate current and anticipated future demand for rugby union in Blackpool

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Rugby League – There is sufficient rugby league pitch provision to accommodate current and future demand for rugby league in Blackpool. Any loss of provision due to the development of the Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone would need to be replaced.

Artificial grass pitches – within Blackpool there is no regular demand for formal hockey, and no requirement for a full-size hockey AGP. Otherwise the current supply of full-size, 3G pitches is not sufficient to service football demand in Blackpool. It is noted that the provision at Arnfield Academy lacks floodlighting. The report recommends the PPS should aim to increase match play on 3G pitches.

1.4 Based on the findings of the Assessment Report, the Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) makes the following general recommendations in addition to specific recommendations for each sport:

- Protect existing provision of pitches (those used within the capacity calculations)
- Explore opportunities for multi-pitch hub sites for community 3G provision
- Ensure regular and rigorous maintenance of 3G pitches
- Convert the one remaining sand-based AGP at Stanley Park into a dual 3G pitch football hub
- Explore opportunities for new 3G provision to deliver a wide variety of sporting opportunities, e.g. walking football, floodlighting to support rugby use
- Ensure re-provision at the Enterprise Zone meets appropriate standards
- Prioritise investment into overplayed pitches or those rated as standard or poor quality
- Maximise pitch provision where additional capacity exists to address deficiencies elsewhere
- Ensure appropriate maintenance regimes
- Reduce the number of over-marked pitches through improvements in quality and/or use of 3G provision
- Utilise spare capacity to reduce over-play and/or accommodate future growth
- Explore opportunities for local clubs to undertake self-maintenance
- Increase access to and use of 3G pitches
- Secure community use of sites through formal agreements or planning process
- Improve and increase provision of supporting facilities e.g. toilets and changing
- Secure developer contributions from new housing developments where increased demand generates a need for additional provision

1.5 The PPS discusses lapsed sites in Part 4. It is noted that Sport England recommend protection of existing playing pitch provision unless it can be demonstrated that there is an excess of pitches and the lapsed provision is surplus to requirements. It also recommends that retention of space capacity should be a key outcome of a PPS to provide flexibility and ensure that unforeseen peaks in demand can be accommodated.

1.6 The PPS identifies the following deficiencies:

- Need for two additional 3G pitches
- Need 2.5 MES (match equivalent sessions) at mini 5v5 format
- Issue of overplay at 9 MES

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These deficiencies can be addressed if the recommendations set out in the PPS are implemented. The PPS sets out a detailed Action Plan to ensure that these recommendations can be realised.

- 1.7 As such, the provision on site is not considered to be required to meet current or future demand.
- 1.8 The recommendations in the PPS include the provision of replacement 3G facilities at Stanley Park. This is within the gift of the Council. The works will be carried out as part of the suite of measures to address identified deficiencies and the timetable for this programme of works will reflect the demands and priorities set out in the PPS. The PPS notes that the Council has committed £200k from the development proposed towards the provision of replacement facilities to meet the wider goals of the PPS.
- 1.9 Members will be aware that the current recommendation is for a resolution to support the proposal and delegate the Head of Development Management to grant planning permission subject to the conditions listed and completion of a S106 legal agreement to secure commuted sum contributions towards local education and public health provision. This recommendation is also subject to either Sport England withdrawing their current objection or the Secretary of State confirming that he does not want to call the application in for his own determination.
- 1.10 In light of the above, it is considered that condition 23 as listed at the end of the officer report could be deleted and a contribution of £200,000 towards the provision of replacement facilities at Stanley Park secured through a legal agreement in its place. The Council is awaiting a revised consultation response from Sport England following the publication of the draft PPS and will need to take their views into account.
- 1.11 Members are therefore recommended to support the proposal subject either to imposition of condition 23 and/or a condition to secure the £200,000 financial contribution and to delegate the final decision to the Head of Development Management following consultation with Sport England.

## **2.0 Consultee response**

- 2.1 A consultation response has been received from the Lead Local Flood Authority. This response requires the imposition of a condition to ensure that a drainage system based on sustainable drainage principles is agreed and implemented. The existing drainage conditions recommended to be imposed on any permission granted are considered to cover this requirement and so no changes to the report or recommendation are proposed.

## **3.0 Amended condition**

- 3.1 Amend condition 20 to read as follows:

*Prior to or concurrent with the submission of a reserved matters application to agree layout, a scheme for the provision of ~~3kW~~ 7kW vehicle charging points within the development shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall then proceed in full accordance with this approved scheme which shall thereafter be retained and maintained as such.*

*Reason: In order to minimise the environmental impact of the development and promote renewable/low-carbon energy use in accordance with the provisions of Policy CS10 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027.*

## **4.0 New condition**

4.1 As discussed in the officer report and above, the proposal is considered to be acceptable but would require the following financial contributions:

£1,895,066 towards local education provision  
£52,994 towards local health care provision  
£200,000 towards the provision of replacement playing pitch facilities at Stanley Park

4.2 The officer report states that these contributions will be secured through a S106 legal agreement. However, as the Council is applicant and land owner, it is not possible for it to enter into a legal agreement with itself as the Local Planning Authority. As such, the following condition has been recommended by the Council's Legal Services team and, as per paragraph 1.11 above, should be imposed onto any permission granted in addition to or in place of existing condition 23:

*No development shall commence on site until a legally binding planning obligation has been entered into to secure payment of the following planning obligations:*

- *£1,895,066 towards local education provision (or other such payment as shall be calculated in accordance with the relevant published methodology at such a time as the final details of housing mix on site are known)*
- *£52,994 towards local health care provision (or other such payment as shall be calculated in accordance with the relevant published methodology at such a time as the final details of housing mix on site are known)*
- *£200,000 towards the provision of replacement playing pitch facilities at Stanley Park*

*Reason: In order to ensure that local service provision is sufficient to meet the needs generated by the development hereby approved and to mitigate for the loss of playing pitch provision on site in accordance with Policies CS6, CS11 and CS15 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027 and paragraph 97 of the NPPF.*

## **5.0 Amended recommendation**

5.1 In light of the above, the officer recommendation is amended to read as follows:

Members are respectfully recommended to resolve to support the application and authorise the Head of Development Management to grant outline planning permission for the erection of up to 176 new homes, and full planning permission for the relocation of the existing cadet hut, subject to the following:

- (i) Sport England withdrawing their objection OR confirmation from the Secretary of State that he does not wish to call the application in for his own determination; AND
- (ii) The conditions set out in the officer report and this update note.