

Wiltshire Council

FAO: Lucie Turner

By email only

23rd March 2026

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

Application Reference: PL/2026/00799

Site: SHELDON SCHOOL, HARDENHUISH LANE, SN14 6HJ

Proposal: Cricket Pavilion (single storey) (including 6 changing rooms, Club room, showers and toilet facilities); and Cricket Nets

Sport England Reference: PA/26/SW/WSH/73253

Thank you for consulting Sport England on the above application.

Summary

Sport England **does not object** to this application as it is considered to meet with the E2 exception in our Playing Fields Policy and accords with paragraph 104 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

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

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. The exceptions are provided in the Annex to this response.

The proposal and impact on playing field

The proposed development of a new cricket pavilion will result in encroachment onto the playing field. Sport England has consulted the ECB, as the national governing body for cricket, and we have received the following comments.

Both the ECB and Wiltshire Cricket Board (WCB) comment that they have been engaged with this project from the beginning. The WCB confirm that Chippenham Cricket Club is a strategically important club for Wiltshire Cricket. The club runs six Saturday teams (the largest in Wiltshire), a thriving Women's and Girls' section and large junior section. Currently, due to the volume of activity, the club utilises two cricket pitches at Sheldon School in addition to its main ground. This means that more playing members play cricket at Sheldon than on the club's main facility. At Sheldon School, the ancillary and off field facilities are non-existent, making the playing and spectator experience a relatively poor one. This pavilion project would significantly enhance the experience for all members and would hopefully help to retain the high membership levels that the club currently enjoys.

The ECB is fully supportive of this application.

Assessment against Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and NPPF

Sport England considers that the proposal should be assessed against the E2 exception in our playing fields policy. This states:

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 notes the comments from the ECB in relation to the important role the school's playing pitches play in meeting the needs of Chippenham Cricket Club and the need to have access to suitable ancillary provision to serve these facilities. The proposed pavilion will meet these needs. Sport England considers that there is no detrimental impact on existing pitches at the site from the proposed development.

On that basis, Sport England considers that the application meets the E2 exception in our playing fields policy.

Sport England's position

Given the above, Sport England **does not wish to raise a statutory objection** to the application because it is considered to accord with the E2 exception in our Playing Fields Policy and paragraph 104 of the NPPF.

If you would like any further information or advice, please the undersigned.

Yours sincerely,

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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