

Wiltshire Council

FAO: James Webster

By email

26th May 2026

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

Application Reference: PL/2026/01787

**Site: Cricket Ground, Land Northwest of St Barnabas Church, Nr Melksham, SN12
7PT**

Proposal: Erection of wooden changing pavilion/facility

Sport England Reference: PA/26/SW/WSH/73894

Thank you for consulting Sport England on the above application.

Summary

Statutory consultee role

Sport England raises **an objection** to this application as it is currently not considered capable of meeting exception 2 of our Playing Fields Policy or accord 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. A summary of the exceptions is provided in the annex to this response.

The Proposal and its Impact on the playing field

The proposed erection of wooden changing pavilion/facility will be located on the playing field. The proposed site plans are unclear as to where this is sited in relation to the boundary. It would be helpful if more detailed site plans can be provided showing the existing pitch layout plan and the proposed pitch layout plan with the new facility in situ.

Sport England has consulted the ECB, as the relevant national governing body for sport, and we have received the following comments. The ECB comments that Corsham Cricket Club is one of the largest cricket clubs in Wiltshire. Operating over four sites (of which this is one), the club provides 5 adult open age teams, Sunday cricket, midweek T20, women's hardball and softball together with a full youth and junior offering. This site is used primarily for junior and youth cricket (across all genders) as well open age adult cricket as required. The ECB comments that the siting of the new pavilion to the north of the site is acknowledged. However, a more detailed site plan should be provided to ensure that this location does not compromise the pitch boundary and allows for a 'run off' of 3 meters from the boundary to the new building.

The ECB comments that the design as proposed needs addressing to ensure that it is both fully inclusive and provides adequate welfare facilities (notwithstanding the current arrangements in place with the Church). Therefore, can the applicant provide a further design:

- as a minimum, the building should offer a fully accessible toilet together with one further toilet for players.
- there is no provision in the proposed design for refreshments; there should be the ability to provide this for both players and spectators.
- noting that there is space for scorers, can this be repurposed and, scorers at this level of the game operating from the veranda?
- the space allocated for umpires/officials is noted and welcomed. Again, can this be repurposed as an all gender/flexible changing option/refreshment area?
- the entrances to the principle changing rooms as laid out, require privacy screening to reduce line of sight from the outside.

- it is noted within the D&A Statement, that the pedestrian access is level and inclusive. However, what are the proposed arrangements for disabled/wheelchair users to get to the new pavilion thus, being fully inclusive?

Overall, the ECB is supportive of this application, but before being able to provide full support, the above needs addressing.

Assessment against Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and NPPF

The E2 exception in our playing fields policy is relevant in this case. 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 considers that further details are needed in relation to more detailed existing and proposed pitch layout plans to demonstrate that suitable sized boundaries are not compromised. The ECB asks for amendments to the proposed design and layout of the facility, and we would strongly urge the applicant to consider these positively as some of these matters relate to safeguarding.

As it stands, Sport England considers the E2 exception above is not currently met as there is insufficient detail to demonstrate that there is no impact on the playing pitches/field on the site.

Sport England's Position

Given the above, Sport England raises **an objection** to the application because it is currently not considered to accord with exception 2 of our Playing Fields Policy and paragraph 104 of the NPPF. Once further details are provided, Sport England will reconsider its position.

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