

By email only

Date: 28th May 2025

FAO Claire Westwood

Application Reference: 24/2073/OUT

Site: Land to the North of Little Green Lane, Croxley Green, WD3 3SP

Proposal: Outline Application: Development of up to 600 residential dwellings etc

Sport England Reference: PA/25/E/TR/69762

Thank you for consulting Sport England on the amended plans/information relating to the above application. The applicant's agent's letter dated 22nd May 2025 responds to the comments made in our initial formal response dated 7th February 2025. I am now in a position to review our position on the planning application and would wish to comment on the following matters:

Sport England's Position

Community Sports Provision

The objection in the previous response is withdrawn subject to the following matters being addressed as set out in this response:

- Financial contributions being secured through a section 106 agreement towards off-site outdoor and indoor sports facility provision in accordance with the capital costings set out in this response. The projects that the contributions would be used towards and the trigger points for the contribution payments to be made would need to be addressed as part of the preparation of a section 106 agreement.
- A minimum specification for the community hall building being secured through a section 106 agreement.
- A planning condition being imposed to address the design and implementation of the NewGen Active Track.

Primary School

The previous request to secure a community use agreement for the primary school's sports facilities through the imposition of a planning condition is withdrawn.

Active Design

A planning condition is requested requiring details to be submitted and approved which demonstrate how Active Design principles have been considered in the design and layout of reserved matters applications.

Community Sports Facility Provision

Financial Contributions: Off-Site Outdoor and Indoor Sports Provision

As set out in the agent's letter, if planning permission is forthcoming, the applicant is proposing to enter into a section 106 agreement with the District Council to secure financial contributions towards off-site outdoor and indoor sports facility provision in accordance with Table 1 in their letter (copied below). Financial contributions would address the majority of the additional demand for sports facilities generated by the proposed residential development.

Facility Type	Impact of New Development (Number of Pitches / size / courts)	Capital Cost
<i>Natural Grass Pitches</i>	<i>2.12</i>	<i>£217,169</i>
<i>Adult Football</i>	<i>0.46</i>	<i>£52,381</i>
<i>Youth Football</i>	<i>0.75</i>	<i>£70,447</i>
<i>Mini Soccer</i>	<i>0.67</i>	<i>£20,951</i>
<i>Rugby Union</i>	<i>0.06</i>	<i>£10,767</i>
<i>Cricket</i>	<i>0.17</i>	<i>£62,624</i>
<i>Artificial Grass Pitches</i>		
<i>3G</i>	<i>0.10</i>	<i>£117,438</i>
<i>Tennis</i>	<i>0.18 courts</i>	<i>£21,226</i>
<i>Indoor</i>		
<i>Swimming Pools</i>	<i>14.9 sqm (0.07 pools)</i>	<i>£330,488</i>
<i>Sports Halls*</i>	<i>0.35 courts – equivalent to 0.09 halls</i>	<i>£273,238</i>

The capital cost figures in the above table align with the costs associated with meeting the additional demand set out in the applicant's Sport and Leisure Strategy document which is based on Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator and Sport Facility Calculator outputs. The above figures are therefore supported if secured as financial contributions through a section 106 agreement.

If the above contributions were secured through a section 106 agreement, Sport England's objection to the lack of confirmed proposals for financial contributions for meeting the demands arising from development would be **withdrawn subject** to a section 106 agreement identifying the projects that the contributions would be used towards and the trigger points for the contribution payments to be made. These matters can be addressed as part of the preparation of a section 106 agreement following determination of the planning application.

It is noted from the agent's letter that the principal terms of a section 106 agreement are yet to be agreed with the District Council and that updated evidence or viability factors may influence the terms of a section 106 agreement

that are agreed. In the event that the above financial contributions (in part or in full) do not form part of the terms of a section 106 agreement that is subsequently agreed between the District Council and the applicant, the Council is requested to re-consult Sport England so that our position on this matter can be reviewed if necessary.

As set out below, if a minimum specification for the on-site community hall was agreed as part of a section 106 agreement and if this was subsequently delivered it would not be necessary to secure an off-site financial contribution towards sports hall provision as well.

Community Hall

As set out in the agent's letter, the applicant has agreed as the default proposal for meeting the additional sports hall and health & fitness facility needs generated by the development to deliver a community hall that would be suitable for indoor sports and an activity studio. The specification proposed in the letter is based on Sport England's advice and would be considered appropriate for providing an indoor hall that could be used for activities such as dance, fitness and martial arts and a suitable activity studio. In the event that a community hall designed in accordance with this specification is not feasible, the contingency proposal of a financial contribution being secured towards off-site indoor sports hall provision would be considered acceptable and should be included in a section 106 agreement as suggested in the letter.

I can therefore advise that Sport England's objection to the lack of confirmed proposals for the specification of the community hall is **withdrawn subject** to the following minimum specification for the community hall being included in a section 106 agreement:

"A community hall building with a minimum of 695 sq. metres (external) floorspace for the community hall building and the minimum internal dimensions for the community hall floorspace of 18x10 metres and an internal clearance height of at least 3.5 metres together with an activity studio with a minimum size of 12x9.1 metres and a minimum clearance height of 3.5 metres. The design of the flooring, walls, windows, ceiling, lighting, and ventilation for both the community hall and activity studio, as well as the provision of ancillary toilets and storage facilities, shall accord with Sport England's Village and Community Halls Design guidance <https://www.sportengland.org/guidance-and-support/facilities-and-planning/design-and-cost-guidance/sports-halls>. "

NewGen Active Track

As set out in the agent's letter, the applicant has proposed a planning condition requiring details of the design and implementation of the proposed NewGen Active Track to be submitted and approved. The wording of the condition and

informative proposed by the applicant is considered to be acceptable for securing this. The condition would address the request for certainty to be provided in a planning permission that an suitably designed Active Track would be delivered as part of the development for meeting the demand for athletics generated by the proposal.

I can therefore advise that Sport England's objection to the lack of confirmed proposals for securing a suitably designed Active Track in the development is **withdrawn subject** to the condition suggested by the applicant (or a condition along these lines) set out below being imposed:

"Details of the design of the NewGen Active track, and timetables for the implementation of the facility shall be submitted to the local planning authority for approval with or before the submission of reserved matters application(s). No development shall commence until those schemes have been approved in writing by the local planning authority, and the facility shall then be delivered in accordance with the approved schemes and thereafter retained.

Reason: To secure well managed safe NewGen Active Track to ensure sufficient benefit to the development of sport and to accord with the Applicants Sports Strategy, Three Rivers Core Strategy, Three Rivers Development Management Policies Local Development Plan Document Policy DM11 and DM12 and Chapter 8 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Informative: The applicant is advised that the design and layout of the active track should comply with the relevant industry Technical Design Guidance, including guidance published by Sport England, National Governing Bodies for Sport. Particular attention is drawn to: England Athletics NewGen Tracks guidance"

Primary School

While the applicant is amenable to a planning condition being imposed to secure a community use agreement for the facilities in the proposed primary school, it is understood that it has been advised by Hertfordshire County Council (as Local Education Authority) that such a condition should not be imposed at this stage until the operator of the school is identified due to the uncertainty about whether the operator would be willing and able to deliver community use in practice. As the school facilities were not proposed for meeting the community sports facility needs generated by the development on this occasion it would not be necessary for such a condition to be imposed on any outline planning permission. Sport England would be happy to revisit this matter at a future date when a reserved matters application for the primary school is submitted by which time the operator of the school may be known. I can therefore confirm that the previous request for a planning condition to be imposed requiring a community use agreement to be submitted and approved for the primary school is **withdrawn**.

Active Design

As set out in the agent's letter, the applicant has accepted a planning condition requiring reserved matters applications to submit details for approval to demonstrate how Active Design principles have been met. The wording of the condition is as set out in our previous response (repeated below):

"For each parcel/phase of development for which Outline permission is granted, no development in relation to that parcel/phase shall commence until details have been submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority to demonstrate how Active Design principles have been met."

Reason: To promote healthy lifestyles through physical activity and to accord with the Three Rivers Core Strategy, Three Rivers Development Management Policies Local Development Plan Document Policy DM11 and DM12 and Chapter 8 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Informative: Consideration should be given to using the Active Design checklist in Sport England's Active Design Guidance to assess reserved matters planning applications."

It is therefore **requested** that the above condition is imposed if planning permission is forthcoming.

I would be happy to discuss the response with the local planning authority and/or the applicant as the determination of the application progresses. Please contact me if you have any queries.

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 agendas, report(s) and committee date(s). We would be grateful if you would advise us of the outcome of the application by sending us a copy of the decision notice.

Yours sincerely,

Roy Warren
Planning Manager

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