Manchester City Council

FAO: Holly Wright

By email only

20th June 2025

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

Planning Application: 143023/JO/2025
Site: DIDSBURY HIGH SCHOOL, 4 THE AVENUE, DIDSBURY M20 2ET
Proposal: Variation of condition number 6 (hours of use) to planning approval reference 132550/FO/2021 to allow the use of the artificial pitch to include weekends: No activity on the artificial turf pitch shall be permitted outside the hours of: Monday to Friday, 09:00 to 17:00 and Saturdays and Sundays 08:30 to 16:00
Sport England Reference: PA/25/NW/MC/70905

Thank you for consulting Sport England with reference to the additional information in relation to the above application.

Summary:
Sport England **raises no objection** to this application to vary the condition as it is considered to meet Exception 5 of our Playing Fields Policy and paragraph 104 of the NPPF.

Conclusion
In view of the above and latest information, Sport England **raises no objection** to the proposal as it meets Exception 5 of our Playing Fields Policy and encourage the additional use of the facility at weekends to provide wider community and club accessibility.

Sport England has consulted with the Football Foundation (FF) who, according to Manchester FA data, have stated that there is no community usage at the site. The FF and Manchester FA welcome this proposal to include weekend usage of the 3G. The FF recommends engagement with Manchester FA who could support the offer by aligning and building a programme for weekend usage to maximise football outcomes.

If you would like any further information or advice, please contact planning.north@sportengland.org

Yours sincerely

[redacted]
Planning Manager
[redacted]
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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