

Manchester City Council

FAO: Jennifer Atkinson

By email only

16th May 2025

Application Reference: 142464/FO/2025

Site: Former Riverpark Trading Estate, Riverpark Road, Manchester M40 2XR

Proposal: Erection of a residential development comprising 498 dwellings (Use Class C3a) together with landscaping, sustainable drainage features, pedestrian footways, vehicular accesses and highways, parking provision and other associated works

Sport England Reference: P A / 2 5 / N W / M C / 7 0 5 7 1

Thank you for consulting Sport England on the above proposal.

Summary:

Non-statutory response:

Sport England **objects** to this application as the proposal will generate demand for sporting provision, and this is not adequately addressed in the current planning application.

It is essential that the provision is of the right type to meet demand that will be created by the occupiers of the new dwellings and no contribution is provided with this proposal.

As such it fails to meet the requirements of Sport England's objective to provide and fails to meet Section 8 of the NPPF.

An assessment is set out below and possible resolution.

Sport England – Non-Statutory Role and Policy:

Additional Demand for Sport arising from the housing development

The Government, within their Planning Practice Guidance (Open Space, Sports and Recreation Facilities Section) advises Local Planning Authorities to consult Sport England on a wide range of applications. The guidance can be viewed on this [link](#).

Sport England assesses this type of application in line with its planning objectives and with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Sport England's planning objectives are to **PROTECT** existing facilities, **ENHANCE** the quality, accessibility and management of existing facilities, and to **PROVIDE** new facilities to meet demand. Further information on Sport England's planning objectives can be found on this [link](#).

The occupiers of new development, especially residential, will generate demand for sporting provision. The existing provision within an area may not be able to accommodate this increased demand without exacerbating existing and/or predicted future deficiencies. Therefore, Sport England considers that new developments should contribute towards meeting the demand that they generate through the provision of on-site facilities and/or providing additional capacity off-site. The level and nature of any provision should be informed by a robust evidence base such as an up-to-date Sports Facilities Strategy, Playing Pitch Strategy, or other relevant needs assessment. In accordance with Section 8 of the NPPF and the Sport England objective to 'Provide' Sport England seeks to ensure that the development meets any new sports facility needs arising as a result of the development.

Local Authorities will usually use a Built Facilities Strategy and Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy as the baseline data for the numbers of teams and supply of facilities and pitches which can be used to give an indication of the likely additional demand for them that development would generate. The headline calculations provide a basis to discuss the Council's sports facility requirements with Leisure/Outdoor Spaces officers. Manchester has an up to date Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy (Annual Monitoring Report Dec 2023); a Built Facilities Strategy (March 2021); and an Indoor Bowls Assessment (Nov 2023). With the help of these document and the Council's Leisure/Outdoor Spaces officers, this should provide information on supply in the borough in order to obtain the optimum financial contribution from the proposed development in this case. The latest demand information contained in this evidence base has been used to provide the calculations presented here.

Sport England uses Office for National Statistics data when using the Active Places Power, Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Calculator as the basis for calculating facility requirements in the first instance.

The Proposal and Impact on Demand Sports Facilities

The Council is advised to use Sport England's Sport England's Active Places – Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Calculators (using a 2.4 average occupancy rate taken from ONS Census 2021) to provide the applicant with an estimation of the costs of the required sports facilities, resulting the demand from the proposed development.

The Council should use Manchester's latest team generation rates information through their needs assessment evidence base – Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy (Annual Monitoring Report Dec 2023); a Built Facilities Strategy (March 2021); and an Indoor Bowls Assessment (Nov 2023).

Together with this information Sport England advises consultation with the Council's Leisure/Outdoor Spaces officers to agree the costs of new and/or improved playing pitches and facilities that the demand from this proposal will generate. Any additional cost should be added to the sports facility requirement above and again, be requested from the applicant via a suitable legal mechanism.

Sport England would expect the local planning authority to request this through a financial contribution via a Section 106 legal agreement or other appropriate legal mechanism.

Sport England is not aware of any submitted Section 106 that would address this demand.

Active Design

Sport England promotes Active Design for all development proposals, to facilitate environments that can help people to lead more physically active and healthy lifestyles. It is about helping to create 'Active Environments'. Active Environments are the spaces and places for people to be active. They seek to encourage physical activity – such as walking, cycling, sport, exercise, children's play, outdoor leisure and anything else that maximises opportunities for people to be active. Further advice can be found here:

<https://www.sportengland.org/guidance-and-support/facilities-and-planning/design-and-cost-guidance/active-design>

Sport England encourages the Council's assessment of the proposal to refer to the principles outlined in the guidance and to use the Active Design Checklist to assist:

https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2023-05/Document%203%20-%20Active%20Design%20Checklist%20-%20May%202023.pdf?VersionId=fc45irvlfyWPhgC396_2BFSas4y4d7gN

Sport England would encourage you to discuss the scheme with MCRactive who may be happy to advise you further in these matters.

Conclusion

Considering the above, Sport England **objects** to the application because it is not considered to accord with Sport England's objective to 'provide' nor with Section 8 of the NPPF as it fails to adequately provide for future demand for sports facilities.

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.

Possible resolution

Sport England would be pleased to review the non-statutory objection with a view to considering potentially withdrawing it when we have received documentation that addresses the following:

1. *Details of the planning mechanism to secure off-site provision to provide additional sports facilities and playing pitches on the basis of the demand calculation and the Council's own playing pitch requirements as indicated above.*

For any further information please contact planning.north@sportengland.org

Yours sincerely

[Redacted Signature]

Planning Manager

[Redacted Address Line]
[Redacted Address Line]