The Highfield School

Creation of a 3G Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) with perimeter fencing, hardstanding areas, storage container, floodlights and an access footpath

Removal of Planning Conditions

Site	The Highfield School Highfield, Letchworth Garden City, SG6 3QA		
Project	Creation of a 3G Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) with perimeter fencing, hardstanding areas, storage container, floodlights and an access footpath		
SSL project code	SSL3394		
Document title	Removal of Planning Conditions		
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SSL have been commissioned to complete site-specific survey works to date and collate further site information and details in order to assist in the removal of the planning conditions placed on the permitted application for the creation of an Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP):

The Highfield School
Highfield,
Letchworth Garden City,
SG6 3QA

This statement and supporting information are to be considered in order to remove the below planning conditions in relation to the planning application 25/01830/FP.

Condition 6

Use of the artificial grass pitch shall not commence until:
(a) certification that the Artificial Grass Pitch hereby permitted has met the FIFA Quality accreditation or equivalent International Artificial Turf Standard (IATS); and
(b) confirmation that the facility has been registered on the Football Foundation's Register of Football Turf Pitches; have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the development is fit for purpose and sustainable, provides sporting benefits and to accord with the aims of Policy NE6 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031.

Response:

Condition 6 was imposed on the basis that the approved development comprised a 3G Artificial Grass Pitch. Since the grant of permission, the specification of the playing surface has been amended from a 3G artificial grass pitch to a sand-dressed artificial carpet to maximise sporting and recreational usage from exclusively football to include football, hockey, tennis, basketball etc. as part of its PE curriculum programme. As a result, the facility will not be subject to FIFA Quality accreditation testing and is not eligible for inclusion on the Football Foundation Register of Football Turf Pitches. The requirements of Condition 6 are therefore no longer relevant to the development as proposed and cannot reasonably be complied with. Removal of the condition is sought to reflect the amended pitch specification accordingly.

Condition 7

No occupation shall commence of the artificial grass pitch hereby permitted until a community use agreement prepared in consultation with Sport England has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and a copy of the completed approved agreement has been provided to the Local Planning Authority. The agreement shall apply to the artificial grass pitch and supporting ancillary changing and parking facilities and include details of pricing policy, hours of use, access by community users, management responsibilities and a mechanism for review, and anything else which the Local Planning Authority in consultation with Sport England considers necessary in order to secure the effective community use of the facilities. The development shall not be used at any time other than in strict compliance with the approved agreement.

Reason: To secure well managed safe community access to the sports facility/facilities, to ensure sufficient benefit to the development of sport and to accord with Policies HC1 and NE6 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 - 2031.

Response:

Condition 7 was imposed to secure community access to the facility. However, the approved development is subject to significantly restricted operating hours since the implementation of the Community Use Agreement, along with the change of surface. The hours of use are limited to 08:00-17:00 Monday to Friday, 09:00-13:00 on Saturdays and with no use permitted on Sundays or Bank Holidays. During the weekdays the community use hours will only be restricted to times outside of the school day leaving 16:00-17:00 for daily community use. Furthermore, no floodlighting is permitted as part of the development, substantially limiting opportunities for community use during winter months.

Community access will therefore be inherently restricted to Saturday mornings and limited weekday periods immediately after school hours during the summer months. The school already operates an established community use framework for its existing facilities and would utilise these arrangements for any community use of the pitch. In these circumstances, the submission and approval of a formal Community Use Agreement is not considered necessary or proportionate, and the removal of Condition 7 is therefore requested.