

## Email correspondence between Sport England and ENC – 7 May 2009

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**From:** Karen Britton  
**Sent:** 07 May 2009 10:50  
**To:** 'Fiona Waye'  
**Cc:** Michael Burton; Daniel Ray  
**Subject:** Oundle School Playing Field Information  
**Importance:** High

Fiona

Following the Inspector's request at the Examination

Please find attached some information relating to the Oundle School Playing Field, which we forwarded this week to Sport England to comment on – their response to this information is attached further below.

### **ENC Information**

Open Space Site PMP ID: 132 (see attached map)

Outdoor Sports Facility,

Glaphorn Road, Oundle, adjacent to the Creed Road Development - Oundle School.

The 2006 PMP Open Space Study makes no specific reference to any of the Oundle School Playing fields as being of a high quality standard, either in Quality or accessibility terms. Indeed the study identifies site 132 as having poor access and lack of ancillary accommodation, e.g. bins, parking provision, seats/benches etc. This is the case for all Oundle School owned playing fields.

Site ID 147 - Herne Road Playing Fields is the only site to score 'excellent' on both quality and access.

It is apparent that the loss of Site ID 132 would not have a negative impact on the access to Outdoor Sports Facilities in Oundle due to the large amount of other privately owned pitches which abut and are frequent throughout Oundle due to the vast quantity of Oundle School Playing fields (see attached plan). There would be no loss to public playing fields.

The loss of this site would also not bring Oundle below the recommended local standard of 1.69ha per 1,000 population, Oundle currently has over 46ha of Outdoor Playing Facilities and has an estimated population of 5731 as of 2008.

**In response to the information you have provided below my comments on behalf of Sport England are as follows:-**

The satellite image suggests that site PC132 has included a cricket square and has been marked out for rounders. This suggests that it has recently performed a useful function as a playing field area.

Sport England is not aware of any evidence that has demonstrated that there is an overall surplus of playing fields in this part of the district.

It is important to look at any playing fields in the context of the wider catchment area that they are likely to serve and specifically the demand for playing pitches from local clubs. Use of a standard per 1000 population is too crude.

Sport England advises that a robust playing fields strategy, using the methodology included on our website, is the most satisfactory means of assessing whether any playing fields are surplus to requirements. This is the key test as PPG 17 paragraph 10 states:-

"Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land should not be built on unless an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space or the buildings and land to be surplus to requirements. For open space, 'surplus to requirements' should include consideration of all the functions that open space can perform....."

Paragraph 15 relates specifically to playing fields and states:-

"In advance of an assessment of need, local authorities should give very careful consideration to any planning applications involving development on playing fields (see endnote 3). Where a robust assessment of need in accordance with this guidance has not been undertaken, planning permission for such developments should not be allowed unless:

i. the proposed development is ancillary to the use of the site as a playing field (eg new changing rooms) and does not adversely affect the quantity or quality of pitches and their use; ii. the proposed development only affects land which is incapable of forming a playing pitch (or part of one); iii. the playing fields that would be lost as a result of the proposed development would be replaced by a playing field or fields of equivalent or better quantity and quality and in a suitable location - see paragraph 13 above; or iv. the proposed development is for an outdoor or indoor sports facility of sufficient benefit to the development of sport to outweigh the loss of the playing field....."

Regards

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Regards

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