

## **Frequently Asked Questions for Down Grange consultation**

**Why has this project come about?**

Membership numbers within the athletics, hockey and rugby clubs have increased and teams have experienced much success in recent seasons. The clubs therefore wish to extend or enhance playing surfaces and club facilities on site. Facility developments on site will also help to meet the changing needs of the borough and the continued increase in population. Clubs are also calling for more provision of artificial surfaces, due to the fact that the recent wet winters have caused such disruption to competition schedules.

**Would noise levels be higher?**

Additional artificial pitches and the erection of a stand is not likely to have significant effects on noise levels since they are catering for sports already held on site. Usage will also be limited to the usual times of hire: 9am - 10pm.

**Would the presence of additional floodlights affect neighbouring properties?**

Modern floodlights have technological advances and therefore have very little light 'spill,' meaning that most of the light will be focussed on the playing surfaces. Local residents are not expected to experience significant increases in light pollution. Again, times of hire will be limited to 9am – 10pm.

**Would these proposals increase congestion around the local area?**

Site usage would be scheduled, managed and monitored in order to minimise traffic congestion on site and to reduce disruption to traffic flow on roads nearby (particularly on Pack Lane and Consiton Road). For example, there are limits regarding the number of bookings that can be taken on site at one time.

Overflow parking arrangements are also put into place when required in order to minimise congestion on site and along nearby roads. The site's transport plan would be updated and users would be encouraged to travel to the site by foot or by bike. Bike parking provision has been enhanced on site in recent years.

**Would this cause car parking problems?**

A total of 47 additional spaces are currently being installed on site. The access road is also being widened in front of the Maidenwell Pavilion, which will improve access and use of the Walled Garden Car Park. The requirement for any additional spaces will also be considered as part of a planning application.

**Would there be loss of open space?**

Yes. The installation of one new Astro Turf pitch would lead to the loss of an area of open space. The proposed location on Down Grange is however identified for sport and recreation so the value of the enhanced facilities (particularly with a surface that can be used more throughout the winter months), is expected to outweigh the loss of grass pitches.

**Could I use the new facilities?**

Facilities on site and membership of the resident clubs are open to all, so you or your family could play these sports with the benefit of the new facilities. Alternatively these enhanced facilities would mean more high profile events could be held on site so you may like to watch others compete.

**Is Down Grange the only place for a new Astro Turf pitch?**

Basingstoke Hockey Club's clubhouse is on site and as participation in hockey exceeds the capacity of the current pitch, there is a good business case for funding a second pitch at Down Grange. However other sites in the borough are also potential venues for Astro Turf pitches with a football focus.

**Who is going to fund this?**

Clubs are seeking support from their National Governing Bodies of sport, and are also exploring opportunities through Sport England and other fundraising. The council is only intending to fund a planning application at this stage.

**When can I comment on a planning application?**

A full planning application is likely to be submitted in the summer 2015. Anyone will have the opportunity to comment on the application which would take into account the feedback from the consultation.

**What impact would this have on the local environment?**

Surveys would be carried out prior to submitting a planning application including environmental impact assessment. A drainage survey would also be conducted.

**When are these projects likely to be delivered?**

It is not possible to confirm timescales at this stage, since the progress of these projects is dependent on planning approval and funding. If planning consent is obtained, the project would need to start within 3 years.

**Who would be carrying out any building works?**

A contractor would be appointed following an open and transparent procurement process.

**How would the new facilities be managed?**

Discussions are being held with clubs, some of which are interested in taking on responsibility for bookings and management. The policies regarding the number of booking that can be held at one time will remain and will be monitored by the council.