

COMMUNITY SPORTS PROVISION

BACKGROUND

West Berkshire Council's Playing Pitch Strategy adopted February 2020 identified a shortage of playing pitches across the district for community use, a situation made worse by the Council terminating a lease on Faraday Road for Newbury Football Club in order to facilitate the development of that area for flats, resulting in Newbury Football Club being without dedicated playing facilities since 2018.

The Council now wishes to help the Newbury Rugby Club's ambitions to become a community hub for sport. As part of this process they are looking to utilise one of the rugby pitches for a new 3G facility that will be shared by football. However the proposal will put increased pressure on the facilities available at the club.

The current proposal for Sandford Park, while providing green space for recreational use provides no facilities for community sport. The extension to Park House School will provide an additional playing field for the school but its use by the community will be limited.

Under the current proposal the Appellants are offering to return a large portion of the land they acquired from the Rugby Club to facilitate the development. This proposal will enable the Rugby Club to reinstate a full size pitch - a pitch that has been out of commission since September 2016 when the landowners fenced off the land they acquired without getting dispensation for a change of use from a playing pitch. However this proposal simply puts the Rugby Club back to the position it was in before the land was fenced off.

PROPOSAL

That the Appellants should make additional land available for a new full size playing pitch on land that is contiguous with the Rugby Club. The land would be made available for use for all community sports.