

PLANNING REF : 242598
PROPERTY ADDRESS : 129 Fullbrook Avenue
: Reading
: RG7 1FE
SUBMITTED BY : Ms Loretta Edwards
DATE SUBMITTED : 24/11/2024

COMMENTS:

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed redevelopment plans for Millworth Lane, particularly due to the potential negative impact on the local sports teams that rely on its pitches.

****Loss of Vital Football Facilities****

The proposed changes threaten to eliminate or diminish the existing football pitches, which are crucial to our community's sports environment. Teams like Shinfield Rangers, along with other local organizations, depend on these facilities for regular training and mat ches. Reducing or removing these pitches would directly affect young players' opportunities for athletic growth and personal development. The demand for football facilities is already high, and the existing arrangements barely meet this need; decreasing capacity could result in the displacement of teams or even force some to disband.

****Insufficient Replacement Facilities for Football****

Although the plans include new sports pitches and fitness areas, there is no assurance that these will adequately meet the needs of football activities. Football clubs, especially those focused on youth development, require ample, regulation-sized pitches, training areas, and proper infrastructure. Without these provisions, it will be impossible to address the current or future needs of teams like Shinfield Rangers, which play an important role in encouraging girls' participation in sports. Any redevelopment should prioritize retaining and enhancing football-specific facilities.

****Overdevelopment and Misalignment with Community Needs****

The proposal appears overly ambitious, incorporating features such as an events mound, climbing wall, and running track, which do not align with local needs. There seems to have been limited consultation with community sports groups, leading to a plan that overlooks existing usage patterns. The council should instead focus on sustaining multiple football pitches in this area to address a longstanding demand and benefit local clubs, schools, and residents.

****Parking and Accessibility Issues****

The proposal also lacks a viable parking solution, a longstanding issue at Millworth Lane. Expanding parking and ensuring safe, accessible entry for players, parents, and spectators is crucial, especially for a facility that serves many young participants. A well-thought-out redesign of the parking and access areas would significantly enhance the site's usability for everyone involved.

****Environmental and Community Impact****

The removal of existing infrastructure could jeopardize the site's natural features, potentially affecting drainage, wildlife, and

biodiversity. The council should prioritize environmental assessments and preservation initiatives to safeguard the local ecosystem, which adds value to the area and contributes to the well-being of the community.

****Insufficient Consultation with Key Stakeholders****

It is alarming that there has been inadequate consultation with the local community, particularly with clubs like Shinfield Rangers that rely on these facilities. For any redevelopment plan to be effective, it must be informed by the needs of those who utilize these spaces regularly for organized sports. The Shinfield community treasures these pitches as a hub for unity, physical activity, and youth development, and the council's plans should reflect this.

In conclusion, while the redevelopment of Millworth Lane may offer some potential benefits, the current proposal risks jeopardizing essential sports facilities that serve the Shinfield community, particularly the Shinfield Rangers girls' team, from which my daughter has derived immense value. I strongly urge the council to reconsider its plans, prioritize the needs of the current sports groups dependent on these facilities, and engage collaboratively with them to ensure the project aligns with the community's requirements.