

Re the proposals in the latest consultation version of Pendle Local Plan,

I have the following comments to make:

The democratically endorsed Neighbourhood plan is being ignored by this new local plan and is out of line with policy CNDP 10 and Plan CNDP 10/8 as outlined below:

Policy CNDP10 seeks to protect the key sport and recreation facilities in the town and consolidates the approach taken in the Pendle Core Strategy.

By ensuring the maintenance and improvements to sport and recreation facilities, Policy CNDP10 supports PLPCS Strategic Objective 9 which seeks to improve health and well-being through the promotion of more active lifestyles.

This is in line with national planning policy in chapter 8 of NPPF, that, in particular, states: "Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

- a) an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
- b) the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
- c) the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use."

(NPPF, paragraph 99).

I believe that a proposal for building is against this recently adopted Neighbourhood Plan as the above criteria cannot be met and:

- a. To my knowledge there hasn't been an assessment which proves the land is surplus.
- b. The loss is replaced by better provision (there isn't any land available in the vicinity)
- c. It is not being proposed for alternative sports/recreational provision.

As a local resident I have witnessed the deterioration of the land over the past years and the absence of maintenance which has rendered them unusable (until recently after much pressure from local groups). This is contrary to their agreement in the S106 (which was part of the agreement to allow them to build on adjacent land) which states they must be well maintained to allow for full use.

The maintenance they should be undertaking is contained in section 5 of the 106 agreement and states treatment to the pitches should be kept in a proper and groundsman like manner to a playable standard and should include;

- 5.1 Cutting the grass to between 20-70mm
- 5.2 Tractor mounted spiking
- 5.3 Chain harrow spiking up and down
- 5.4 Applying herbicide
- 5.5 Applying sand (1 ton per week)

5.6 Fertiliser (spring and summer)

5.7 Line and mark

5.8 Over mark with dry powder

5.9 Erecting posts

5.10 End of season reinstatement.

It would be helpful to know what has been the exact maintenance undertaken by the college in past years? When I first moved to the area, the pitches were well maintained and well used. Sadly following years of neglect they were unfit to play leaving the college able to suggest they are surplus to requirements. Since maintenance has been re established, the fields are in use again and it's a joy to see them full of young people enjoying the benefits of outdoor sports both during the week, but especially at weekends. There are areas still areas not maintained. There used to be 3 marked football pitches and there are I believe currently 2 that are playable. If the land was fully available, I believe that even more of our local sports and community groups could benefit.

In conclusion I object to the classification of the playing fields as building land in the new Local Plan for the reasons stated above. It is undemocratic following the adoption last year of the Neighbourhood plan and the S106 entered into by the landowner and must be resisted, as playing fields are a vital part of our communities, encouraging team sports and the health and wellbeing of our young people.

Gill

