

APPLICATION NO: 15/01162/FUL		OFFICER: Mrs Lucy White
DATE REGISTERED: 21st July 2015		DATE OF EXPIRY : 20th October 2015
WARD: Pittville		PARISH:
APPLICANT:	Pittville School	
LOCATION:	Pittville School, Albert Road, Cheltenham	
PROPOSAL:	Erection of indoor sports centre, artificial turf pitch, tennis courts, floodlighting, associated parking and landscaping and including demolition of two dwellings.	

ADDITIONAL REPRESENTATION

Greenfields
New Barn Lane
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL52 3LG

Comments: 17th February 2016

We would be grateful if you would take a few minutes of your time to read this.

Successive Governments and Local Councils have assured us that school playing fields will only be disposed of as a last resort. So important is this rule that Permission for Disposal has to be sought from the Secretary of State for Education.

The Government's list of approvals indicate the reasons for disposing of a school playing field as follows.

- Schools have closed, schools have merged, fields had poor drainage, land has been leased for public use etc. None of these apply to Pittville.

Has there ever been a case where a perfectly good school sports field was sold for housing?

We have tried to understand why Pittville School would wish to sell their best playing field to fund a £3million sports facility. One reason for this we are told is because the present PE facilities at the school need updating. We accept that this is the case but question the wisdom or necessity to spend £3 million to add a modern sports facility to an 80 year old school for 500 pupils.

The headmaster has informed us that 1; his pupils deserve this and 2; dancing gives his pupils confidence especially the girls. It has also been claimed that the school has to compete with Pates and Balcarras. Is such thinking a sound basis for selling a good playing field and spending the £3million on a sports centre?

The proposed project does not meet the requirements set out by Sport England, the professional body who advise on the protection of our playing fields and who distribute grants to improve sporting facilities. Pittville School has not applied for a grant from Sport England. Why have they not done this ?

Balcarras School was able to provide an excellent sporting centre with the aid of funding.

Foxley Tagg state that the school does not qualify for a grant but fails to explain why. Is it because the school has set its sights too high ?

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The school claim the sports centre will be for community use. We do not know what community this is aimed at because there has been no survey done locally. The fact is that Cheltenham is well served with leisure centres, especially the centre in Tommy Taylors lane. There is no evidence of any demand for another. Should Pittville School be competing with the local established facilities ?

It is interesting to note that no additional funding will be provided by the LEA to cover the running cost of the proposed sports centre e.g. insurance, staff, maintenance, energy, depreciation, security etc. This will have to be funded out of the school budget. A shortfall in income could spell disaster for the school. This is a matter of grave concern to us as taxpayers.

We would also like add that in view of the current speculation on the media about the dangers of 3G surfaces and possible investigation into other ATP surfaces should we be exposing our children to the possible risk of cancer until research has proved otherwise.

We trust our concerns will be borne in mind when making your decision.

Thank you for your attention.

18th February 2016