

Comments for Planning Application 23/00117/FUL

Application Summary

Application Number: 23/00117/FUL

Address: Belmont School Warden Hill Road Cheltenham Gloucestershire GL51 3AT

Proposal: Installation of 200m oval running track with a 60m straight and run-off, 2no. smaller 100m ovals, a campus-wide 2 metre wide cycle track, a long jump pit and informal and equipped play areas. Erection of 1no. MUGA (to include five-a-side football pitch), 1no. BMX pump track (advanced and beginner combined) and bleacher seating.

Case Officer: Mrs Lucy White

Customer Details

Name: Not Available

Address: 55 Eldon Road Cheltenham Gloucestershire GL52 6TX

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Other

Stance: Customer made comments in support of the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: Dear Mrs White,

My wife and I have been volunteering with Goals Beyond Grass for the last three years at the Sunday afternoon inclusive cycling sessions at Belmont School. We have already written in support of this application but here we would just like to comment on the suggestion that the existing Sunday afternoon sessions should be stopped.

Key points:

- The Sunday afternoon sessions are exactly the sort of activity that supports CBC's Physical Activity Strategy for Cheltenham
- They also support CBC's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy of equality of opportunity for all people
- Noise and environmental impact of these sessions is minimal

Detail

Looking through Cheltenham Borough Council's Draft Vision and Outcomes for Physical Activity and Sport, we see that the leaflet has a picture of some of the bikes we use on Sunday afternoons. That picture also includes MaryClare Faulkner, who organises and runs the Sunday afternoon sessions. MaryClare has been selected by Active Gloucestershire, the charity behind the We Can Move movement, as one of ten 'changemakers' for a community photography project

to showcase the stories of individuals making a difference in their communities, sectors or workplaces through physical activity. We find it very hard to believe that CBC would consider cancelling these sessions when they are exactly the sort of activity which fits the vision. CBC should be taking great pride in the fact that such an activity is taking place on their patch and should be using these sessions to promote their strategy. The Active Gloucestershire project provides a great opportunity to do so.

The people who attend the Sunday sessions have a range of physical and/or cognitive deficits, and accessible outdoor opportunities to exercise are few and far between. Those who attend benefit enormously from the exercise, both from a mental and physical health point of view. Surely, it would be totally wrong to deprive a minority group of their right to exercise given the overall lack of opportunity, and the commitment in CBC's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy to equality of opportunity.

The noise from these sessions is minimal - normal conversation plus some encouragement of participants from time to time. We don't use the play area or playing field - the cycling activities are limited to the school's tarmac roads and playgrounds. More noise comes from the magpies in the field, the great tits in the trees and the seagulls flying overhead. It's been so quiet that we've seen a fox trotting around the field. We find it really hard to see noise and disruption to Sunday life as an issue, especially when there are people mowing their lawns, aircraft on the approach to Staverton airport, and a football match often taking place within earshot.

Perhaps the people suggesting cancellation of the sessions should come along and see what we do? It wouldn't involve anything other than a short walk and I'm sure they would be able to appreciate how much enjoyment the participants get from the sessions. You never know, they might even decide to come and volunteer. A few minutes from home, out in the fresh air, being part of a caring community that makes a real difference to people's lives - what could be better?