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**Tom Wilson**

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**From:** Sarah Smith  
**Sent:** 27 July 2012 08:41  
**To:** Planning  
**Subject:** FW: Police HQ, Stanborough Road, WGC - N6/2012/0854/MA  
**Attachments:** 20120727 Hertfordshire Constabulary Welwyn Garden City.doc

**From:** Roy Warren [mailto:Roy.Warren@sportengland.org]  
**Sent:** 27 July 2012 08:40  
**To:** Sarah Smith; Planning  
**Subject:** RE: Police HQ, Stanborough Road, WGC - N6/2012/0854/MA

Hi

Thanks for the response. I now attach my formal response to the planning application.

Regards

**Roy Warren**  
Planning Manager  
T: 020 7273 1831  
M: 07769 741 137  
E: [Roy.Warren@sportengland.org](mailto:Roy.Warren@sportengland.org)



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Sport England, SportPark, 3 Oakwood Drive, Loughborough, LE11 3QF

**From:** Sarah Smith [mailto:s.mountford@welhat.gov.uk]  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 26, 2012 4:43 PM  
**To:** Roy Warren  
**Subject:** RE: Police HQ, Stanborough Road, WGC - N6/2012/0854/MA

Dear Mr Warren

Further to your email, the agent has confirmed that the pitches have been out of commission for about 2 years, however at no time were they open to the public and were only used by the police for playing football.

If you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards

Sarah Smith

**From:** Roy Warren [mailto:Roy.Warren@sportengland.org]  
**Sent:** 26 July 2012 09:38  
**To:** Sarah Smith  
**Subject:** RE: Police HQ, Stanborough Road, WGC - N6/2012/0854/MA

Dear Ms. Smith

Thanks for your response to my e-mail dated 25<sup>th</sup> May 2012. The response and the attached plans address my request for further information.

However, before responding I have one further query. Reference has been made to the site no longer being used for sports pitches and it is implied that this may have been the case for some time. As Sport England is not a statutory consultee on sites that have not been used as playing fields for 5 or more years, are you able to advise roughly when the site was last used for sports pitches as I would prefer to have clarity about whether we are a statutory consultee or not before responding.

If you can provide me with this information at your earliest convenience, I will seek to get a response to you by 2<sup>nd</sup> August.

Regards

**Roy Warren**  
Planning Manager  
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**From:** Sarah Smith [<mailto:s.mountford@welhat.gov.uk>]  
**Sent:** 25 July 2012 14:24  
**To:** Roy Warren  
**Subject:** Police HQ, Stanborough Road, WGC - N6/2012/0854/MA

Dear Mr Warren

Thank you for your email concerning the proposed development at Hertfordshire Constabulary, Stanborough Road and your comments in relation to this application which is currently pending consideration.

Following your email you raised some questions, which I hope the following answers.

Please find attached two plans which show the existing and proposed layout of the scheme.

With regard to your questions within your consultation response the applicant has confirmed that the Headquarters Site does not contain any active sports pitches. In respect of the field situated to the North of the proposed Range location, due to the poor quality of the top soil and the existence of stony slippery surface to the field area it is no longer used for football or any other sports activities. The field is currently used for dog training activities and exercising. It is the intention of the Constabulary that the remaining field area would be retained for this use to satisfy current training requirements. The field is situated within the Headquarters security compound and is used only by Hertfordshire Constabulary for training purposes. The field is not currently accessible to the public and the application does not seek to alter this arrangement.

They continue to say that there is in existence a football pitch adjoining the police site that is owned by Stanborough School opposite on the other side of the A6129 Stanborough Road. There is also the Gosling Sports Centre adjacent to the constabulary site which provides numerous sports pitches and playing fields. Both of these facilities are outside of the Hertfordshire Constabulary Headquarters site boundary and neither are affected by the proposal. The existing field occupies a sloping area of the site and falls approximately 3m over its cross section from the northern boundary to the existing range along the southern boundary. In addition, as mentioned above, the ground

condition is unsuitable for use as a sports pitch due to the top soil containing a large quantity of slippery stone material making sports activities upon it hazardous.

I would be grateful if you have any comments on this that you could submit them to me 2 August. If this is not convenient, please contact me on the number below.

I trust the above is of assistance, and if you have any queries please contact me.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Smith  
Senior Planning Officer: North Team

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Your ref: N6/2012/0854/MA  
Our ref : EWH/2012/28615/S

Ms. S. Smith  
Senior Planning Officer  
Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council  
Council Offices  
Campus East  
Welwyn Garden City  
Herts AL8 6AE

27 July 2012

Dear Madam,

**FORMATION OF NEW FIREARMS TRAINING RANGE, REPLACEMENT BULLET CATCHER AND BACKSTOP STRUCTURE WITH ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPING – HERTFORDSHIRE CONSTABULARY, STANBOROUGH ROAD, WELWYN GARDEN CITY**

Thank you for consulting Sport England on the above planning application. The proposal affects a playing field and the consultation is therefore statutory, under the terms of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2010 (SI No. 2184 (2010)).

I have considered the proposal with regard to Sport England's policy 'A Sporting Future for the Playing Fields of England' (1997), a copy of which can be downloaded from our website at [www.sportengland.org/facilities\\_planning/playing\\_field\\_3.aspx](http://www.sportengland.org/facilities_planning/playing_field_3.aspx). The aim of this policy is to ensure that there is no further reduction in the supply of conveniently located, quality playing fields to satisfy the current and likely future demand. Sport England will normally oppose development that would lead to the loss of, or prejudice the use of, all or part of a playing field, without meeting at least one of the specific exception criteria identified in the above policy.

The proposal involves the enlargement of the Hertfordshire Constabulary's firearms range to provide improved firearms training facilities for the police. The extended range would encroach onto an area that was used until 2 years ago as a playing field for police use only but which is now only used for dog training. While I have not visited the site, the development would encroach onto an area of the former playing field that would be capable of forming a playing pitch or part of one. Technically, the proposal would not be entirely consistent with exception E3 of the above policy and none of the other exceptions in the policy are considered to be applicable in relation to this proposal. However, in this instance I am mindful of the following characteristics:

- The former playing field was only used by Hertfordshire Constabulary and is now no longer needed for sports use by the constabulary. There was no community use of the playing field and in view of the high security nature of the site there is no realistic potential that this area would be made available for community use in the future. The constabulary intend to continue using the area for dog training so it would appear unlikely that the area would be used for formal sport again in the foreseeable future;
- While no technical assessment has been provided to validate it, the applicant has advised that because of the poor quality of the topsoil and the stony surface the site is no longer safe for sports use. It is also acknowledged that the field slopes steeply from north to south (a 3 metre fall from north to south) and would not meet recommended guidance on playing pitch gradients. While these gradients would not prevent the field from being used for marking out playing pitches, it is accepted that the slope would reduce its quality and its potential for being used for competitive sport. While potential may exist to address these problems if appropriate groundworks were implemented, it is accepted that the suitability of the site for playing pitches in terms of the ground conditions would appear to be poor which is likely to limit the potential for the field to be reinstated to sports use;
- In the event that the Hertfordshire Constabulary wished to reinstate the remaining area of the former playing field to sports pitch use sufficient space would still exist for marking out a small playing pitch e.g. a small sided football pitch. The Hertfordshire Constabulary site is also in close proximity to the playing fields on the adjoining Gosling Sports Park and Stanborough School in the event that the police require access to playing pitches.
- While the proposed firearms range is only intended for police firearms training, shooting ranges in general terms are defined as sports facilities as shooting (on a licensed basis) is a recognised sport. While it is not intended that the range would be used for recreational shooting activities and no community use would be permitted, the enhanced range would help develop the shooting skills of police officers which would be of assistance to officers who wished to pursue shooting as a sport outside of police duties.

On the basis of the above considerations, on this occasion, I am therefore satisfied that there will be no harm to sports provision if the development was permitted. Consequently, no objection is made to the planning application.

I hope that these comments can be given full consideration when a decision is made. I would be grateful if you could advise me of the decision on the application, when available, by e-mailing or sending me the decision notice.

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Yours sincerely



Roy Warren  
Planning Manager

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