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Senior Planning Officer
Local Plans
Warwick District Council
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23 July 2012

Your ref:

Our ref:

Dear Tony,

Warwick District Council Local Plan Preferred Options

Thank you for inviting Sport England to comment on the Local Plan Preferred Options.

We have made a number of comments using the on-line comments facility, however we would like to make some other general observations. One of which is that we found the maps difficult to interrogate (It was impossible to zoom in at a reasonable scale to identify the sites precisely), and putting posts codes with the site names would help their identification easier.

Sport can have an important role in contributing to sustainable communities, reducing the need to travel and benefiting access by disadvantaged groups. Sport and active recreation have also been proved to be important contributors to national, regional and local economic health. Sport can lead regeneration by engaging the communities in the improvement of their area, creating employment and training opportunities. It would therefore be appropriate, in our opinion to include the benefits of sport in the overall vision.

It is also important to recognise that those working in and visiting business parks and town centres will generate additional demand for sport and recreation activities. This tends to be at the peak times - early morning, at lunch times, late afternoon and early evening. Sport England recommends that this is fully assessed and that appropriate consideration is given in the Preferred Options to this issue. Recreational and sports facilities in or close to District centres can provide additional attractions that can support the viability of centres.

Sport England has developed extensive guidance for local authorities to assist them in the development of LDF policies and documents that include policies for sports facilities. The link to general guidance on policy development for sport on Sport England's website is below:-

http://www.sportengland.org/facilities_planning.aspx



The advice on Sport England's website specifically includes policies for inclusion in core strategies and AAPs and includes a checklist of potential policy content relating to sport and some examples of good practice. This can be accessed at:-

http://www.sportengland.org/facilities_planning/developing_policies_for_sport.aspx

Local Plan Policies should also place a strong emphasis upon designing quality places, which includes high quality public places and the promotion of walking and cycling. A document you may wish to draw upon in developing your approach is Active Design, which suggests practical ways in which good design can facilitate a more active and sporting community. This can be downloaded from our website at:-

http://www.sportengland.org/facilities_planning/planning_tools_and_guidance.aspx

Sport England believes that the Local Plan - Preferred Options should contain within its vision and objectives the ability to maximise the opportunities for and the benefits of sport in the community and to integrate future developments with the existing community. A series of recent publications by Sport England have been prepared under the banner of 'Shaping places through sport' which emphasise this opportunity.

http://www.sportengland.org/support_advice/local_government.aspx

Sport England would also like to advise that, the previous National Sports Strategy, 'Game Plan', the Government's strategy for delivering sport and physical activity, has been replaced by Sport England's Strategy 2008-2011. This can be accessed on our website at:

http://www.sportengland.org/about_us/what_we_do.aspx

The economic benefits of sport in the West Midlands is also recognised and a Sport England survey in 2008, showed continued growth from 2002 with over £2.1 billion spent on sport-related goods and services in the region in 2008. In the same year, consumer expenditure on sport accounts for 2.9% of the total expenditure in the region, the highest percentage among the English regions. Compared with 2005, there is a 39% increase in sport-related consumption. During the period 2003-2008, the proportion of total consumer spending on sport has increased from 2.4% to 2.9%.

Sport and associated industries are estimated to employ 54,200 people in the West Midlands. This represents an increase of 23% over the period 2005-2008. During the aforementioned period, the percentage of sport related employment in the region increased from 1.8% to 2.2%. Employment linked to the sport-retailing sector increased very strongly during the 2005-2008 period, reaching 5,400 people employed. The region bucked the recession trend in all sport related indicators. Sport therefore plays a vital role in the economy in the West Midlands.

Whilst Sport England does not have evidence on the economic impact that sport has in Warwick District, given the various regional, and national sporting events which the District



hosts as well as the wide variety of sports particularly in the first division league football and national roller sport the economic value of sport to Local Plan area should not be overlooked.

In conclusion, Sport England would like to continue to work with the District Council on the development of the Local Plan, but we believe there is more work needed to understand the needs of the established sports and existing sports facilities, how they can assist the district on the delivery of objectives on crime reduction, education and health to name but three.

In the meantime if you require any clarification of any of the points raised above please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Bob Sharples MRTPI RIBA
Planning Manager