

To which part of the Proposed Changes to the Borough Local Plan Submission Version (2020 – 2038) as set out in the Development Strategy Topic Paper Addendum does this representation relate?

4.0 Paddock Wood strategic growth

Which part of the plan does your comment relate?

Paragraph

What is the reference number?

4.53-4.61

Do you consider the Proposed Changes to the Borough Local Plan Submission Version (2020 – 2038) would make it:

Yes No

Legally Compliant Selected Not Selected

Sound Not Selected Selected

Please give details of why you consider the Proposed Changes to the Borough Local Plan Submission Version (2020 - 2038)(as set out in the Development Strategy Topic Paper Addendum) are not legally compliant or are unsound. Please be as precise as possible. If you wish to support the legal compliance or soundness of the Proposed Changes to the Borough Local Plan Submission Version (2020 – 2038) (as set out in the Development Strategy Topic Paper Addendum) please also use this box to set out your comments.

Sports and Leisure

I sit on the Tunbridge Wells Borough Policy and Planning working group and it will be not surprise to the planning department that I am unhappy with the loss of a dedicated outdoor sports hub.

TWBC say that the new facilities of the sports hub can be placed at Putlands instead of having a new sports hub located in to the south of the railway line/east of the A228. This is against the recommended site in the Paddock Wood neighbourhood plan which has the site at Eastlands. A sports hub would have a new indoor 25m swimming pool.

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council – Strategic Outcomes Planning Guidance (SOPG) Diagnostic Report which was written by Strategic Leisure Limited in 2021, https://tunbridgewells.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0014/420305/Tunbridge-SOPG-Diagnostic-Report-FINAL-31.03.pdf

Point 5.25 of this report states under the second option of “Refurbish existing Putlands Leisure Centre on existing site” lists the following disadvantages of doing this

“1 Existing site will not have capacity for a swimming pool, larger fitness suite and additional studios

2 If existing facility is simply refurbished it is unlikely to deliver the potential it could do in terms of physical activity participation, because of its scale and location

3 Facility is in an unsustainable location to attract new communities

4 Existing infrastructure that is limited car parking, covenants on land restrict extent and nature of refurbishment

5 Additional pitch capacity would still be required on another site for football and rugby”

Point 1, It clearly states that the site does not have the capacity for a 25m pool, large fitness suite and additional studios. How does this site now have the capacity ?

Point 2

Even if you accept that the 25m swimming pool can be delivered on site, this point clearly says a refurbishment of existing building cannot fulfil the requirements of the growing town.

Point 3 its the wrong location. period. what more can be said.

Point 4 the answer here is to build a car park on the current rugby field. To my knowledge no consultation has taken place with rugby club. Building a car park destroys valuable green space & isn't supporting Active Travel. I am also unclear how the loss of a rugby pitch, the only one at Putlands is an “upgrade to facilities” as mentioned in the borough response to the inspectors letter.

Point 5 This has been met by allocating another piece of land beside the railway line.

Point 5.48 of that Summary states “Putlands Sports Centre does not provide a pool, is not fit for purpose,.....”

These points raised in the report still stand today – even given the removal of Tudley and the reduction in houses in Paddock wood.

Turning to the Paddock Wood NDP, policy SR1 states “Proposals which incorporate an extension of the existing Centre or replacement buildings should minimise the loss of mature trees on site **and the potential impact on existing outdoor sports facilities**”. The building of a car park on the rugby pitch is a clear impact on existing outdoor facilities [at Putlands]. At Green lane – there would be the loss of a mature oak tree (with a TPO) in the middle of the green – again not supporting policy SR1. This green area also suffers from being waterlogged – something that is not mentioned.

So the improvements to Putlands – consist of a swimming pool that wont fit, removal of a rugby pitch and a large car park. These are not improvements.

There is the failure to identify the Elm tree sports pitches and the largest club in Paddock Wood, and their limitations for on site parking and changing facilities.

If the indoor and outdoor sports are now combined then Paddock wood NDP states for the out door sports Hub SR2:

1) Proposals for a hub for outdoor sports for all ages, including team sports and other activities will be supported. The new hub and associated playing pitches should include on-site changing facilities, toilets, and a café / bar.

2. The hub should incorporate secure cycle parking facilities with cycle routes provided between the main point of access and sports centre buildings and appropriate levels of car parking.

There is no room at Putlands for a cafe/bar or improved on-site changing facilities of any size to support the increase in volume of sports users; It is impossible to have cycle routes between Putlands and any main point of access today. I do not see how SR2 is agrees with the Borough's response.

There is a strong lean towards improving walking and cycling conditions but Badsell/Maidstoneroad junction, current plans as seen by JTB and Paddock Wood town council are woefully below active travel schemes implemented in other boroughs- dedicated segregated cycleways; priority at traffic lights & priority at T junctions (cyclists have priority across the minor road)

As this is a 10 year plan only – why cant development of a sports Hub be planned in two phases? With land allocated now for when more s106 comes forward in the next local plan? This would of course provide better facilities in the long term.

Summary

The Paddock Wood NDP has not been taken into account. The “upgrade” of Putlands is an upgrade and has little chance of success.

I want to see the best for Paddock Wood – and this is not being addressed by this Local Plan

Please set out what modification(s) you consider necessary to the Proposed Changes to the Borough Local Plan Submission Version (2020 – 2038) Incorporating the Proposed Changes set out in the Development Strategy Topic Paper Addendum, legally compliant or sound, having regard to the Matter you have identified at Section 5 (above) where this relates to legal compliance or soundness. You will need to say why this modification will make the Proposed Changes to the Borough Local Plan Submission Version (2020 – 2038) legally compliant or sound. It will be helpful if you are able to put forward your suggested revised wording of any policy or text. Please be as precise as possible.

Paddock Wood NDP needs to be taken into account.

Upgrade of Putlands isnt concreting over the rugby field.

Establish a full relationship with Paddock Wood town council and work them for the betterment of Paddock Wood.

If your representation is seeking a modification, do you consider it necessary to participate at the examination hearings stage when it resumes?

No, I do not wish to participate at the examination hearings