

Comments relating to SMD/2021/0550 - Approval of Reserve Matters at Fole Diary, Uttoxeter Road, Staffs. (Following planning application SMD/2018/0234).

Dear Planning,

Thank you for forwarding the revised plans for the proposed development on land at Fole Diary, Uttoxeter Road, Fole, Staffs, ST14 5EH. (DATED 09/09/2022)

The following information provides more detailed comments regarding the opportunities relating to play, open space, playing pitches and Sport England 'Active Design' guidance.

On-site Play

The LEAP is now moved away from the immediate close proximity of the River Tean but it is still bordered on one side by the open water ditch which runs the length of the site. There is still a risk posed by the open ditch and we would ask that appropriate fencing is used around the play area (minimum 1.2m high with two self-closing gates at the entrances). The new position means the play area isn't pushed in to a corner of the site anymore which again is welcomed. Unfortunately, the issues that were highlighted last time with the close proximity of the play area to the dwellings is still a problem. There are a number of properties which sit around three sides of the play area who's rear or side gardens and boundary fences are extremely close to the play area. Ideally, dwellings should face on to play space and have a buffer of at least 20 meters. The residents may end up suffering with high levels of nuisance.

The play area needs to meet the criteria of a Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAP). As such the activity zone should be at least 400m² and provide stimulating and challenging play experience for both the toddler age and junior (0 to 14yrs). There should additionally be room for children to run around and play 'chase' type games.

From the site layout it seems that there is intended to be a strip of shrubs/hedge or trees between the fence of the play area and the boundary fences of the properties. Although this may provide some form of barrier between the play area and the properties it will become a difficult area to maintain. This may lead to it becoming overgrown and harbouring high quantities of litter in the undergrowth.

Active design

It seems that some of the pathways and therefore walking opportunities for residents within the development have been lost on the new revision of the site layout. There is still a linking pathway from one side of the development over the open water ditch to the other side which is welcomed. Having said that the pathway on the right-hand side of the open water ditch seems to lead people to have to enter the play area which may prove to be a barrier to those with mobility issues and will also promote unnecessary pedestrian traffic through the children's play area. Additionally, the pathway leading towards properties 32 and 31 seems to stop at a dead end and push walkers to come in to close conflict with the parking spaces and therefore vehicles in front of those properties.

The site is isolated from local amenities and as such the ability for people to walk to the nearest shops/schools etc may be limited.

Off-site contributions for playing pitches

Off-site contributions for playing pitches will be required.

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Service Development Officer

Service Commissioning (Leisure & Recreation)

Staffordshire Moorlands District Council