

Planning Statement

Proposal: Proposed Change of Use of Ancillary Grassland and Siting of Mobile Sauna Unit
Site: Worthing Rugby Football Club, Roundstone Lane, Angmering, BN16 4AX

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Supporting Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of the applicant in support of a planning application seeking consent for the proposed change of use of a small area of ancillary grassland associated with Worthing Rugby Football Club for the siting and operation of a mobile sauna unit.
- 1.2 The application site forms part of the wider sporting and leisure complex at Worthing Rugby Football Club on Roundstone Lane, Angmering. The proposal is intended to provide a complementary leisure and wellness facility associated with the established sporting use of the site, serving both members of the rugby club and members of the public through an online booking system.
- 1.3 The proposal represents a modest and low-key form of development that will support the continued viability and diversification of the rugby club whilst remaining entirely compatible with the existing recreational and sporting character of the site and surrounding area.

2.0 The Site and Surroundings

- 2.1 The application site comprises a small area of ancillary grassland located within the wider grounds of Worthing Rugby Football Club. The wider site is an established sporting and recreational facility containing rugby pitches, associated infrastructure, parking areas, children nursery and recently approved padel courts immediately to the north.
- 2.2 The site is accessed from Roundstone Lane and benefits from substantial existing on-site parking provision. The surrounding area comprises a mixture of sporting uses, open land and residential development at a greater distance from the proposed sauna location.
- 2.3 A children's nursery is situated nearby within the wider complex; however, the proposed use is of a quiet and passive nature and would not give rise to disturbance or conflict with the operation of the nursery.

3.0 The Proposal

- 3.1 Planning permission is sought for the change of use of the land only to facilitate the operation of a mobile sauna facility.
- 3.2 Importantly, the sauna itself is a mobile and non-permanent structure and does not constitute operational development requiring planning permission. The application therefore relates solely to the proposed use of the land associated with the siting and operation of the mobile sauna unit.
- 3.3 The sauna facility would operate as a wellness and recovery use associated with the established sporting and recreational activities undertaken at the rugby club. The facility would be available to:
- Members of Worthing Rugby Football Club; and
 - Members of the public via a pre-booked online booking system.
- 3.4 The proposal would make use of the club's existing parking facilities and would not require any significant additional infrastructure or physical alterations to the site.

4.0 Planning Considerations

Principle of Development

- 4.1 The proposal represents a logical and appropriate extension of the established sport, leisure and recreational uses already taking place at Worthing Rugby Football Club.
- 4.2 The use is entirely complementary to the existing sporting function of the site, particularly given the growing association between wellness, recovery and organised sport. The proposal would support the ongoing viability and diversification of the rugby club through the introduction of an ancillary income stream, helping to sustain the long-term operation of the wider sporting facility.
- 4.3 Given the established recreational character of the site and the modest scale of the proposal, the principle of development is considered acceptable.

Scale and Nature of Use

- 4.4 The proposal is low intensity in nature and would operate on a small scale. The sauna use would function on a booked-session basis, limiting activity levels and ensuring orderly management of visitors.
- 4.5 No permanent built form is proposed and the development would not materially alter the character or appearance of the wider site.
- 4.6 The proposal is therefore materially different from more intensive commercial leisure uses and should be considered in the context of the existing sporting complex within which it is located.

Residential Amenity

- 4.7 The proposed sauna use would not result in any unacceptable impact upon neighbouring residential amenity.
- 4.8 The use is inherently quiet in nature, involving small numbers of visitors participating in passive wellness and recovery activities. The proposal would not generate significant noise, disturbance, overlooking or activity levels that would adversely affect nearby residents
- 4.9 Furthermore, the sauna would be located within an existing sporting and leisure complex where visitors and recreational activity are already established characteristics of the area.
- 4.10 For completeness, it is proposed that the sauna operates within the same hours previously approved by Arun District Council under planning permission ref. A/180/24/PL for the adjacent padel court development, namely:
- 07:00 – 22:00 Monday to Saturday; and
 - 08:00 – 19:00 Sundays.
- 4.11 Those operating hours have already been accepted by the Council within the context of a significantly more active and potentially noise-generating sporting use immediately adjacent to the application site. The proposed sauna use is materially quieter and lower impact in comparison.

- 4.12 The development would also not adversely impact the nearby children's nursery due to the passive and low-key nature of the use.

Highways and Parking

- 4.13 The proposal would utilise the substantial existing parking provision already available within Worthing Rugby Football Club.
- 4.14 Given the modest scale of the proposal, together with its session-based booking system, the use would not generate significant vehicle movements or parking demand over and above the established operation of the wider sporting facility.
- 4.15 The site remains sustainably located within an established leisure destination where parking and access arrangements are already in place.

Character of the Area

- 4.16 The proposal would preserve the character and appearance of the area.
- 4.17 The application relates only to the use of the land and the siting of a temporary mobile sauna unit within an existing sporting complex. No permanent buildings or urbanising development are proposed.
- 4.18 The proposal would therefore integrate appropriately within its surroundings and would not result in harm to the wider character of the area.

5.0 Biodiversity Net Gain

- 5.1 The proposal is considered to fall within the category of exempt development for the purposes of mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain requirements.
- 5.2 The application relates to a small-scale change of use of land associated with the siting of a mobile sauna structure and does not involve substantive operational development or built form, namely, the site area falls below 25sqm.
- 5.3 Reference is made to the Government guidance relating to exempt development below the applicable threshold:

[Biodiversity Net Gain Exempt Developments Guidance](#)

- 5.4 Given the very limited scale and nature of the proposal, it is not considered that the development would result in any material ecological impacts.

6.0 Conclusion

- 6.1 The proposed change of use of ancillary grassland for the siting and operation of a mobile sauna unit represents an appropriate and sustainable form of development within the established sporting grounds of Worthing Rugby Football Club.
- 6.2 In summary, the proposal:
- Complements the existing sport and leisure uses on site;
 - Supports the diversification and long-term viability of the rugby club;
 - Would operate on a modest and low-key basis;
 - Would not result in unacceptable impacts on residential amenity;
 - Would not adversely affect the nearby nursery;
 - Makes use of existing parking and infrastructure; and
 - Would not harm the character or appearance of the wider area.
- 6.3 The proposal therefore accords with the relevant provisions of the development plan and the overarching objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework, and planning permission is respectfully requested.