| **Barking and Dagenham Council**  
| **Development Control Board**  
| **Date:** 3 July 2017 |
| **Application No:** 16/01990/FUL  
| **Ward:** Mayesbrook |
| **Reason for Referral to DCB as set out in Part 2, Chapter 9 of the Council Constitution:** 10 letters objecting to the proposed development have been received and the application is recommended for approval. The proposed building also comprises inappropriate development on Metropolitan Open Land |
| **Address:** Land at the junction of Porters Avenue and Gale Street, Dagenham |
| **Development:** Erection of two storey Youth Zone facility including sports hall, skate park, floodlit kick pitch, service yard, plant, minibus and blue badge parking and associated landscaping. |
| **Applicant:** Onside Youth Zones |

**Summary:**

The application site is located in Parsloes Park on land at the junction of Porters Avenue and Gale Street, Dagenham. The site is bounded to the west by Gale Street and to the north by Porters Avenue. Parsloes Park is designated as ‘Metropolitan Open Land’ (MOL).

The application relates to the erection of a two storey Youth Zone facility including skate park, floodlit kick pitch, service yard, plant, minibus and blue badge parking and associated landscaping.

Internally, the facility would comprise a 4-court indoor sports hall, indoor climbing wall, fitness gym, performing arts studio, music studio, boxing gym, art and craft rooms, media suite, café, and recreational areas.

OnSide Youth Zones is a registered charity providing young people with access to a wide range of sports and learning activities to encourage social interaction and youth development in a safe and positive way. Youth Zones operate 365 days a year outside of school hours. During term time, the facility is likely to be open Monday-Friday 3.30/4.00pm to 10pm, during school holidays, Monday to Friday 8am to 10pm and at weekends 9am to 10pm. The Youth Zone will cater for young people aged 8-19 (or up to 25 years for those with a disability).

The proposed development has the potential to address obesity and poor health of young people living in the Borough which is currently a priority issue for the Council. Similarly, the unemployment and low skill levels of young residents could also be addressed by the Youth Zone Employability Programmes which are targeted towards the needs of young people.

The sports hall wraps around the Porters Avenue and park elevations and would be the highest part of the building at 9.65 metres. The external kick pitch and skate park are located on the south east park side of the building, a 2.6m high natural stone wall will mask the skate park, whilst a 4 metre high fence would surround the kick pitch.
The proposed materials and external finishes are sympathetic to the location and suitably respond to the local context, with timber cladding responding to the park and a glazed facade responding to the street frontage.

In addition to the retention of existing trees, the development will be integrated into the park with sloping mounds on the north and east sides, planted with additional trees alongside a wildflower meadow wrapped around the building.

The kick pitch would be located 70 metres away from the nearest residential property and the skate park 45 metres away which is considered to be sufficient separation to avoid noise adversely affecting residential amenity. The external lighting design has been specified in order to minimise the impact on the amenity of local residents and the potential impact on local wildlife.

No car parking is provided within the site for staff or visitors. There will be on-site parking for one minibus and one blue badge space for staff use located in the service yard area, and one blue badge space for visitors which will be accessed from a proposed service access fronting Gale Street. 16 Cycle parking spaces will be provided with a further 12 cycle spaces for staff.

The proposed development lies within metropolitan open land (MOL) and therefore is subject to the same policies as would apply within the green belt. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that such development is ‘inappropriate’ by definition. The guidance states that such inappropriate development should be refused unless there are very special circumstances that clearly outweigh the harm by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm caused by the proposed development.

The land to be occupied by the proposed Youth Zone equates to 0.65 of a hectare. Parsloes Park is one of eight strategic parks in the borough and the overall size of the park is 58 hectares. The land to be occupied by the proposed Youth Zone equates to just (1.1%) of the park. It is envisaged that the siting of the facility on a prominent corner at the junction with well-used streets will attract users who will be also be encouraged to take advantage of the adjacent open space.

The proposal will have an impact on MOL openness because of its size, however, a significant part of the site will be occupied by outdoor facilities that would generally be acceptable in a park/public open space setting.

Although located on a visible corner, the presence of Porters Avenue Health Centre opposite the site on the north west side provides an urban context for the building. Distant views across the park from the north and east are respected by positioning the main mass of the development opposite existing built form. The site is edged on both streets by mature and semi mature parkland trees which will be retained to provide an effective screen.

The successful operation of Onside’s existing Youth Zones is based on the core principles of neutrality, accessibility, and prominence. Parsloes Park is located in the centre of the borough and therefore represents neutral ground for young people using the facility. Alternative development sites considered were not as accessible as Parsloes Park with low public transport accessibility levels or situated to the south of the A13 restricting access for communities to the north.
The chosen site occupies an underutilised area of the park, the development would not result in the loss of sports playing fields or displace existing park activity. Officers consider that the proposal would result in a high quality well designed facility and surrounding environment.

In conclusion, it is considered that any impact on the openness of the MOL is outweighed by the nature and scale of the positive benefits which would be delivered to users of the facility, with the potential to make an important contribution to the health, well-being and employment prospects of young people in the local community together with an associated fall in anti-social behaviour.

For the reasons above, and expanded upon below, it is considered that ‘very special circumstances’ have been demonstrated which outweigh the harm to the openness of the MOL and justify the proposed development.

**Recommendation:**

That planning permission be granted subject to any direction from the Mayor of London and/or the Secretary of State, and the conditions listed in this report (with any amendments that might be necessary up to the issue of the decision, including any other conditions that may be required as a result of referral to the Mayor of London and the Secretary of State).

1) The development permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

   *Reason:* To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).


   *Reason:* For the avoidance of doubt and in the interest of proper planning.

3) No development above ground level shall take place until details/samples of all materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved materials.

   *Reason:* To protect or enhance the character and amenity of the area in accordance with policies BP8 and BP11 of the Borough Wide Development Policies Development Plan Document.

4) No development above ground level shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority a scheme of landscaping for the site which shall include indications of all existing trees, shrubs and hedgerows on the site and details of those to be retained.

   *Reason:* To safeguard and improve the appearance of the area in accordance with policy BP11 of the Borough Wide Development Policies Development Plan.
5) The landscaping scheme as approved in accordance with condition No 4 shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the occupation of the building or completion of the development, whichever is the sooner. Any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased, shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

**Reason:** To secure the provision and retention of the landscaping in the interests of the visual amenity of the area in accordance with policy BP11 of the Borough Wide Development Policies Development Plan Document and Section 197 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

6) No development above ground level shall take place until a scheme showing those areas to be hard landscaped, including all skate park ramps, and the details of that hard landscaping have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing. The scheme as approved shall be carried out prior to the occupation of the development and thereafter permanently retained.

**Reason:** To safeguard and improve the appearance of the area and to provide safe movement throughout the site in accordance with policy BP11 of the Borough Wide Development Policies Development Plan Document.

7) No development above ground level shall take place until a scheme showing the provisions to be made for external lighting has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall not be occupied until the approved scheme has been implemented. Thereafter the approved measures shall be permanently retained unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

**Reason:** In the interests of enhancing security and safety, to avoid light pollution and safeguard neighbouring amenity and in accordance with policy BP11 of the Borough Wide Development Policies Development Plan Document.

8) No development above ground level shall commence until there has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority a plan indicating the position, design, materials and type of boundary treatment to be erected. The approved boundary treatment shall be retained unless the Local Planning Authority gives prior written approval for its removal.

**Reason:** To ensure the boundary treatment protects or enhances the character and amenity of the area in accordance with policy BP11 of the Borough Wide Development Policies Development Plan Document.

9) No external construction works, deliveries, external running of plant and equipment or internal works audible outside the site boundary shall take place on the site other than between the hours of 0800 to 1800 on Monday to Friday and 0800 to 1300 on Saturday and not at all on Sundays, Public or Bank Holidays without the prior written permission of the Local Planning Authority.

**Reason:** To ensure that the proposed construction work does not cause undue
nuisance and disturbance to neighbouring properties at unreasonable hours and in accordance with policy BP8 of the Borough Wide Development Policies Development Plan Document.

10) The approved development shall make provision for cycle parking in accordance with a scheme that shall have been previously submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be implemented prior to the occupation of the development and thereafter retained permanently for the accommodation of bicycles of occupiers and visitors to the premises and not used for any other purpose.

Reason: In the interests of promoting cycling as a sustainable and non-polluting mode of transport and in accordance with policy BR11 of the Borough Wide Development Policies Development Plan Document.

11) Noise from activities taking place inside the Youth Zone building (AN) including any live and amplified music associated shall be controlled so as to be inaudible inside noise-sensitive premises in the vicinity of the Youth Zone. The initial test for compliance with ‘inaudibility’ criterion will be that noise should be no more than barely audible outside those noise sensitive premises. In the event there is a disagreement as to whether activity noise is or is not audible the following numerical limits shall be used to determine compliance with this condition:

The LAeq (AN) (15 minute) shall not exceed LA90 (WAN*) (15 minute) and;
The L10 (AN) (15 minute) shall not exceed L90 (WAN*) (15 minute) in any 1/3 octave band between 40Hz and 160Hz.

*WAN Without activity noise

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity, in accordance with Policies BR13 and BP8 of the Borough Development Policies DPD (March 2011).

12) The combined rating level of the noise from any plant installed pursuant to this permission shall not exceed the existing background noise level outside the window to any noise sensitive room. Any assessment of compliance with this condition shall be made according to the methodology and procedures presented in BS4142:2014.

Reason: In the interest of residential amenity, in accordance with Policies BR13 and BP8 of the Borough Development Policies DPD (March 2011).

13) All external floodlighting of the kick pitch and skate park shall be switched off between the hours of 22:00 and 06:00.

Reason: In the interest of residential amenity and protection of local ecology in accordance with Policies BP8 and BR3 of the Borough Development Policies DPD (March 2011).

14) Demolition and construction work and associated activities are to be carried out in accordance with the recommendations contained within British Standard 5228:2009, “Code of practice for noise and vibration control on construction and open sites”. Parts 1 and 2.
Reason: To ensure that the proposed construction work does not cause undue nuisance and disturbance to neighbouring properties at unreasonable hours and in accordance with policy BP8 of the Borough Wide Development Policies Development Plan Document.

15) No development shall commence, including any works of demolition, until a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and a Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These plans shall incorporate details of:

a. construction traffic management;
b. the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors;
c. loading and unloading of plant and materials;
d. storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development;
e. the erection and maintenance of security hoarding(s) including decorative displays and facilities for public viewing, where appropriate;
f. wheel washing facilities;
g. measures to control the emission of dust, dirt and emissions to air during construction; such measures to accord with the guidance provided in the document “The Control of Dust and Emissions during construction and demolition”, Mayor of London, July 2014; including but not confined to, non road mobile machinery (NRMM) requirements.
h. a scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from demolition and construction works;
i. the use of efficient construction materials;
j. methods to minimise waste, to encourage re-use, recovery and recycling, and sourcing of materials; and a nominated Developer/Resident Liaison Representative with an address and contact telephone number to be circulated to those residents consulted on the application by the developer’s representatives. This person will act as first point of contact for residents who have any problems or questions related to the ongoing development.

Reason: The construction method statement is required prior to commencement of development in order to reduce the environmental impact of the construction and the impact on the amenities of neighbouring residents, and in accordance with policy BP8 of the Borough Wide Development Policies Development Plan Document.

16) No above ground new development shall take place until a scheme showing the provisions to be made for CCTV coverage, access control, and any other measures to reduce the risk of crime, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall not be occupied until the approved scheme has been implemented. Thereafter the approved measures shall be permanently retained unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to provide a good standard of security to future users and visitors to the site and to reduce the risk of crime in accordance with policy BP11 of the Borough Wide Development Policies Development Plan Document.

17) The building shall not be occupied by users except between 0800 and 2200 Monday to Friday, and 0900 and 2200 at weekends.
Reason: To protect the amenities of neighbouring residents in accordance with policies BR13 and BP8 of the Borough Wide Development Policies Development Plan Document.

18) Before any works hereby permitted are commenced and until all such works are completed:

a) all trees to be retained shall be protected by secure, stout exclusion fencing erected at a minimum distance equivalent to the branch spread of the trees and in accordance with BS.5837;

b) any works connected with the approved scheme within the branch spread of the trees shall be by hand only. No materials, supplies, plant or machinery shall be stored, parked or allowed access beneath the branch spread or within the exclusion fencing. Any trees that are damaged or felled during construction work must be replaced with semi mature trees of the same or similar species.

Reason: To ensure that retained trees are identified prior to the commencement of development and adequately protected during the construction phase in accordance with Policy CR2 of the Core Strategy and policies BR3 and BP11 of the Borough Wide Development Policies Development Plan Document and Section 197 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990

19) No development shall be carried out until a method statement identifying the root protection areas of all trees on and around the site, and giving details of any works to be carried out within the root protection areas of the trees and the method to avoid damage to the trees during these works has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that retained trees are adequately protected during the construction phase in accordance with Policy CR2 of the Core Strategy and policies BR3 and BP11 of the Borough Wide Development Policies Development Plan Document and Section 197 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990

20) The building hereby permitted shall not be occupied until there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority a Travel Plan for the site which shall include proposals for minimising car-borne travel and encouraging walking, cycling and the use of public transport. The Travel Plan shall include details of funding, implementation, monitoring and review. The approved Travel Plan shall be implemented and monitored in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason: In order to encourage the use of sustainable transport and in accordance with policy BR10 of the Borough Wide Development Policies Development Plan Document.

21) Prior to the commencement of the permitted use a Delivery and Servicing Plan to incorporate details of deliveries to the site, including size of vehicle, routing of deliveries, and times of deliveries shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Plan shall be adhered to thereafter unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
22) No development shall commence, including any works of demolition, until a Construction Logistics Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Plan shall be designed to minimise deliveries of materials and export of any waste materials within the times of peak traffic congestion on the local road network. The Plan shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and thereafter maintained.

Reason: The Construction Logistics Plan is required prior to commencement of development in order to minimise the impact of the development on the free flow of traffic on the local highway network and in the interests of highway safety and in accordance with policy BR10 of the Borough Wide Development Policies Development Plan Document and policy 6.3 of the London Plan.

23) No above ground new development shall take place until details of the surface of the sports hall and kick pitch have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The development thereby permitted shall not be constructed other than in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure the development is fit for purpose and sustainable in accordance with policies BC5 and BP11 of the Borough Wide Development Policies Development Plan Document.

24) The accessible parking bays indicated on drawing Nos. 110:16:53 H and 110:16:55 H, as relevant, shall be clearly marked with a British Standard disabled symbol prior to the occupation of the development and permanently retained for the use of disabled persons and their vehicles and for no other purpose.


25) No development shall take place until a detailed surface water drainage scheme for the site, based on Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The drainage strategy shall include a restriction in run-off along with details of surface water storage on site. The scheme shall subsequently be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the development is completed.

Reason: SUDS must be identified prior to the commencement of development to prevent flooding, improve and protect water quality, improve habitat and amenity, and ensure future maintenance of the surface water drainage system in accordance with Policy CR4 of the Core Strategy (July 2010) and Policy BR4 of the Borough Wide Development Policies DPD (March 2011).

26) The development hereby permitted shall achieve as a minimum a 35% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions over Part L of the Building Regulations (2013).
Reason: To ensure compliance with the proposed energy strategy in accordance with Policy 5.2 of the London Plan (March 2015) and Policy BR2 of the Borough Wide Development Policies DPD (March 2011).

27) No above ground development shall take place until full details including annotated plans of the photo voltaic panels have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The renewable energy technologies shall be installed in accordance with the approved detail and thereafter permanently retained to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure compliance with the proposed energy strategy in accordance with Policy 5.2 of the London Plan (March 2015) and Policy BR2 of the Borough Wide Development Policies DPD (March 2011).

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Contact Details: Tel: 020 8227 3067 E-mail: <a href="mailto:ian.Drew@lbld.gov.uk">ian.Drew@lbld.gov.uk</a></th>
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1. **Introduction and Description of Development**

1.1 The application site is located in Parsloes Park on land at the junction of Porters Avenue and Gale Street, Dagenham. The site is bounded to the west by Gale Street and to the north by Porters Avenue. Parsloes Park is designated as ‘Metropolitan Open Land’ (MOL).

1.2 On the north-west side of Porters Avenue is a 3-storey health centre with ancillary offices at 230-234 Porters Avenue. On the west side of Gale Street are 2-storey semi-detached residential dwellings which form part of the Becontree Estate. The site is within 700 metres of Becontree Station and is well served by bus routes via Gale Street and Porters Avenue.

1.3 The site is generally level. To the east of the site is the Squatts local nature reserve (approximately 140 metres away from the skate park/kick pitch).

1.4 The application relates to the erection of a two storey Youth Zone facility including sports hall, skate park, floodlit kick pitch, service yard, plant, minibus and blue badge parking and associated landscaping.

1.5 OnSide Youth Zones is a registered charity which aims to build a network of 21st Century youth clubs, giving young people, safe, affordable and inspiring places to go in their leisure time. OnSide Youth Zones are designed to provide young people with access to a wide range of sports and learning activities to encourage social interaction and youth development in a safe and positive way. There are currently 10 OnSide Youth Zones in operation in the UK, if approved this would be the first facility of its kind to operate in London.

1.6 Youth Zones operate 365 days a year outside of school hours. During term time, the facility is likely to be open Monday-Friday 3.30/4.00pm to 10pm, during school holidays, Monday to Friday 8am to 10pm and at weekends 9am to 10pm. The Youth Zone will cater for young people aged 8-19 (or up to 25 years for those with a disability). Users will pay a joining fee of £5 and then 50p per visit. A subsidised hot
meal is also provided each day with the kitchens providing members with a chance to learn how to cook their own food.

1.7 Typically a Youth Zone offers a minimum of 20 different activities that include; a 4-court sports hall, climbing wall, fitness gym, performing arts studio, music suite, boxing gym, art and craft rooms, media suite, café, and an outdoor kick pitch. Employability/skills workshops are also provided.

1.8 The funding strategy is based on Council owned land being leased to OnSide for a nominal rent. The council is investing £3m towards the development costs, the Queen’s Trust is investing £2.1m and the Jack Petchey Foundation investing £1.5m.

2. Background

2.1 The site has been identified as a suitable location for a youth facility in the Arup Parsloes Park Masterplan (March 2016). The LBBD Parks and Open Spaces Strategy (including the Arup Masterplan) is scheduled to be adopted by Cabinet on 11 July 2017.

2.2 The Parsloes Park Masterplan was commissioned by LBBD in response to new funding opportunities which present an opportunity to re-imagine and reinvigorate the park in a financially sustainable way. Reviving Parsloes Park has the potential to address a number of the borough’s challenges including improving health and wellbeing, inclusive access and recreation, active and sustainable travel, adapting to climate change, and conserving and enhancing its biodiversity and heritage. Importantly the regeneration of the park also has the potential to deliver upon the three key aspects of the borough’s strategic vision and priorities which are: Encouraging civic pride, enabling social responsibility and growing the borough.

3. Consultations

3.1 250 neighbouring occupiers were consulted. 6 site notices were displayed and a press notice placed. 10 responses were received (2 from the same address) objecting to the proposal on the following grounds;

- Concern regarding continued encroachment on the open space of Parsloes Park
- An existing youth area already exists in Parsloes Park
- Traffic generation and parking congestion
- Noise and disturbance to nearby residents
- Precedent for future residential developments in Parsloes Park
- Insufficient parking provided
- Litter generation
- Overlooking
- Entrance to proposed development is directly opposite a busy roundabout
- Increase in air pollution from traffic
- Light pollution from proposed floodlights
- Impact on local wildlife
- Groups of youths would cause anxiety for elderly residents
- Proposed building will obstruct the view of traffic approaching from Porters Avenue
- Inappropriate commercial facility in a residential setting
• No designated drop-off / pick-up point for parents
• A good project proposed for an unsuitable location
• Parsloes Park is an important recreation facility and should not be built on
• Sightlines for drivers will be obscured by the proposed development
• Potential for anti-social behaviour to occur

The Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) have objected to the proposal on the grounds of the loss of parkland for public use, and on financial issues relating to Council subsidy and long term viability.

3.2 Greater London Authority (GLA)

London Plan policies on Green Belt/MOL, health, equalities, urban design, sustainable development, biodiversity and transport are relevant to this application. Whilst the scheme is strongly supported in strategic planning terms, the application does not fully comply with the London Plan. Accordingly, the issues below should be addressed prior to the Mayor’s decision making stage:

• **Principle of development**: The principle of the youth facility is strongly supported in strategic terms and accords fully with London Plan policies on health inequalities. The very special circumstances could justify the development of this MOL site. However, fundamental to this assessment is the long-term financial viability of the proposal, which the applicant and Council is required to address. Further, verification of this provision contributing to the loss of a playing pitch is also required from Sport England.

• **Community use**: To ensure the wider community benefits are secured in perpetuity, the intended level of access should be secured by condition by the Council.

• **Energy**: The applicant has broadly followed the energy hierarchy; however further information is needed before the proposals can be considered acceptable and the carbon dioxide savings verified.

• **Drainage/biodiversity**: The applicant should consider additional SuDs measures to accord with London Plan Policy 5.13 and also give consideration to biodiversity concerns through adequate mitigation on site.

• **Transport**: Clarification of Blue Badge carparking and the provision of adequate drop off bays is required. A travel plan, DSP and CLP should be secured by way of condition.

3.3 Access Officer

The Access Officer has been involved with the scheme from an early stage and raises no objections.

3.4 Transport Development Management Team

Following consultation with the applicant the Transport Development Management Team are satisfied with the provision of accessible parking and cycle parking. Transport Officers have confirmed that a designated drop-off zone along Porters
Avenue is not viable or necessary as there are adequate places in the vicinity that can absorb drop-off/pick up of users of the facility.

3.5 Arboricultural Officer

The Arboricultural Officer has been involved with the scheme from an early stage and raises no objections.

3.6 Environmental Health Officer

No objections subject to conditions regarding amplified music, plant noise, external lighting, hours of working and noise and dust suppression during the construction phase.

3.7 Refuse and Waste Management

Initial comments raised regarding bin storage capacity have been addressed.

3.8 London Fire Brigade – Water Team

No objections.

3.9 London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority

No objections.

3.10 Historic England (Archaeology)

No objections.

3.11 Crime Prevention Officer

Initial comments made regarding gabion walls and CCTV provision have been addressed.

3.12 Sport England

This application needs to be considered against exception E5 of Sport England’s policy on planning applications affecting playing fields ‘A Sporting Future for the Playing Fields of England’.

E5 – The proposed development is for an indoor or outdoor sports facility, the provision of which would be of sufficient benefit to the development of sport as to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss of the playing field or playing fields.

The proposed development would be situated on an area of Parsloes Park that has had a football pitch marked on it in the past but not recently. Although the proposed facility would not be aimed at the wider community, there is a need for a sport hall within the Borough and the supporting documentation articulates a particular need for a youth aimed facility. Having regard to all these factors, and that the FA have no objection to the proposal, then provided that the sports facilities are constructed in line with Sport England’s design guidance (particularly with regard to the
surfacing), the proposal, in this instance, is considered to be of benefit to sport to outweigh the detriment caused by the partial playing field loss.

Given the above assessment, Sport England does not wish to raise an objection to this application as it is considered to broadly meet exception E5 of the above policy subject to a condition being imposed requiring the submission of surface details for the proposed sports hall and kick pitch.

4. Local Finance Considerations

4.1 The scheme is liable for charitable exemption from the Mayoral and Local Community Infrastructure Levy.

5. Equalities Considerations

5.1 The proposed development would help to minimise disadvantages experienced by young people in the borough by providing a facility which will help them to maximise their life chances and to live positive and healthy lives. The Youth Zone also positively caters for disabled people as it allows access to the facility for disabled people up to 25 years of age whereas otherwise it only caters for people up to 19 years. It is not considered that there are any specific negative impacts of the development on the groups identified in section 149 (7) of the Equality Act 2010.

6. Analysis

6.1 Principle of Development

6.1.1 The proposed development lies within metropolitan open land (MOL) and therefore is subject to the same policies as would apply within the green belt. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that ‘inappropriate’ development within the Green Belt should not be approved except in very special circumstances; local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt, ‘very special circumstances’ will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

6.1.2 The NPPF also states that once Green Belts have been defined, local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt such as, amongst other things, to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation; to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land. The NPPF goes on to state that access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities.

6.1.3 The NPPF contains twelve core principles, those that are particularly relevant to this application include:

- Planning should take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas, protecting the green belts around them, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it; and
Planning should take account of and support local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all, and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs.

6.1.4 Policy 7.17 of the London Plan 2016 states that the strongest protection should be given to London’s Metropolitan Open Land and inappropriate development refused, except in very special circumstances.

6.1.5 Policy 3.19 of the London Plan states that development proposals that increase or enhance the provision of sports and recreation facilities will be supported. Proposals that result in a net loss of sports and recreation facilities, including playing fields should be resisted. Wherever possible, multi-use public facilities for sport and recreational activity should be encouraged. The provision of sports lighting should be supported in areas where there is an identified need for sports facilities to increase sports participation opportunities. Where sports facility developments are proposed on existing open space, they will need to be considered carefully in light of policies on Green Belt and protecting open space as well as the borough’s own assessment of needs and opportunities for both sports facilities and for green multifunctional open space.

6.1.6 Policy CM3 of the Local Plan Core Strategy 2010 states that Barking and Dagenham’s Green Belt will be protected and maintained in accordance with national policy. Construction of new buildings is inappropriate in the green belt, but an exception is made for the provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport and recreation as long as the openness of the green belt is preserved.

6.1.7 Parsloes Park is one of eight strategic parks in the borough, the overall size of the park is 58 hectares, the land to be occupied by the proposed Youth Zone equates to 0.65 of a hectare. This represents a very small (1.1%) amount of the park.

6.1.8 The proposal will have an impact on MOL openness because of its size, which in turn is driven by the inclusion of a sports hall which represents the largest element, although a significant part of the site will be occupied by outdoor facilities that would generally be acceptable in a park/public open space setting.

6.1.9 Although located on a visible corner, the presence of a three storey health centre opposite the site to the north west provides an urban context for the building and a backdrop against which the building will be viewed from the eastern approach in Gale Street. Distant views across the park from the north and east are respected by positioning the main mass of the development opposite existing built form.

6.1.10 The site is edged on both streets by mature and semi mature parkland trees, which provide an effective screen, especially on the Gale Street approaches. The development is set back a minimum of 18 metres from the park/road boundary to allow for the safe retention of all of the trees on site.

6.1.11 It is considered that the proposed Youth Zone has the potential to channel access to Parsloes Park by new users and encourage greater use of the park. It is envisaged that the siting of the facility on a prominent corner at the junction with well-used streets will attract members who will be also be encouraged to take advantage of the adjacent open space.
6.1.12 The scheme includes direct access to the park from the north-east side of the building. This is considered to be a significant benefit as this part of the park is not readily accessible as it is bounded by a fence along Gale Street and away from the formal paths within the park. The development will open up this part of the park and provide a new entrance at this busy road intersection. Examples of activities which could potentially be integrated into the wider park include; informal play for younger age groups, recreational sport, sports coaching, cross country fun runs, orienteering, and environmental projects linked to the Squatts nature reserve. Such activities would help to create a synergy between the proposed new development and the wider context of Parsloes Park.

6.1.13 Section 8 of the NPPF seeks to promote healthy communities, noting that the planning system can play an important role in facilitating social interaction, health and inclusivity. It is considered that this proposal will facilitate access to high quality opportunities for sport and recreation and thus make an important contribution to the health and wellbeing of the local community.

6.1.14 London Plan policy 3.2 directly addresses the improvement of health and health inequalities; the proposed development seeks to improve health and to promote healthy lifestyles in a borough with clearly identified issues relating to excess weight, inactivity and life expectancy. In terms of inclusivity, all young people who wish to join the Youth Zone and pay 50p per visit will have access to high quality facilities irrespective of faith, gender, ability, sexual orientation or cultural background.

6.1.15 Recent data states that Barking and Dagenham is the 3rd most deprived borough in London and the 12th most deprived in England. There is a strong correlation between deprivation and poor health. In Barking and Dagenham more than two in five (43%) children aged 10-11 (Year 6) are overweight or obese, the highest proportion in England.

6.1.16 Obesity and poor health are priority issues for the Council, the Council’s Healthy Weight Strategy 2016-2020 states that 39% of adults in the Borough do no sport or active recreation. The overall cost of inactivity per hundred thousand people to the Borough is estimated to be over £23 million. Borough maps (2011-2014) show the amount of 10-11 year old children who are overweight in Mayesbrook and Parsloes Wards, which are the closest wards to the Youth Zone, as being 42.4% - 43.1%.

6.1.17 Youth Zones focus on teaching young people how to lead a healthy active lifestyle, the proposed park side location is considered to be an advantage in encouraging young people to engage in sport and activity. Overall it is considered that the Youth Zone facility has the potential to provide an opportunity to directly address many of the issues identified above.

6.1.18 The 2011 Census shows that 28% of 16 year olds and above were recorded as having no qualifications (Barking and Dagenham’s Community Strategy 2013-2016). Barking and Dagenham has a lower percentage of people aged 16-64 in employment than London, 65.9% in the Borough versus 73% for London (LBBD Health Impact Assessment – March 2017).

6.1.19 The Youth Zone Employability Programmes are targeted towards the needs of young people. It is considered that issues relating to young people who are not in
employment, education or training (NEET) can be helped by involvement in a youth zone.

6.1.20 A number of alternative sites were considered and discounted by Council Officers. The sequential site assessment was confined to Council owned sites as the Council is gifting the land for this project. The project is not viable if the applicant has to fund the land purchase.

6.1.21 The successful operation of Onside’s existing Youth Zones is based on the core principles of neutrality, accessibility, and prominence. Parsloes Park is located in the centre of the borough and therefore represents neutral ground for young people using the facility. Alternative development sites were not as accessible as Parsloes Park with low PTAL ratings or situated to the south of the A13 restricting access for communities to the north.

6.1.22 The chosen site occupies an underutilised area of the park, the development would not result in the loss of sports playing fields and as outlined in the ‘Consultation’ section of this report, Sport England is satisfied with the proposal subject to the imposition of a condition. The proposed development would not displace existing park activities.

6.1.23 It is considered that the Youth Zone facility has the potential to revitalise and energise this part of the park. Officers consider that the proposal would result in a high quality well designed facility and surrounding environment.

6.1.24 In conclusion it is considered that the impact of the building on the openness of the MOL is outweighed by the nature and scale of the positive benefits which would be delivered to users of the facility, with the potential to make an important contribution to the health and well-being of young people in the local community. The applicant has demonstrated ‘very special circumstances’ for the inappropriate development of Green Belt.

6.2 Design and Layout

6.2.1 The facility has been designed to be as compact as possible, making the most efficient use of the land donated by the Council and minimising the impact on the MOL. Access to the facility will be via a ‘pedestrian plaza’ located on the corner of Porters Avenue and Gale Street. This junction provides key existing access arrangements, including a pelican crossing and pedestrian routes which converge at this location. As well as providing a legible entrance, a key requirement is for a single access point to the building which can be supervised and controlled at all times.

6.2.2 The external kick pitch and skate park are located on the south east park side of the building, a 2.6m high split stone natural stone wall will mask the skate park, whilst a 4 metre high fence would surround the kick pitch. Following consultation, the relationship between the facility and the park has been improved by incorporating pathways into the design to create walkways linking the perimeter footpaths and the facility entrance with the grounds of the park.

6.2.3 The volumes and uses within the building are reflected in its external form. The sports hall wraps around the Porters Avenue and park elevations and would be the
highest part of the building at 9.65 metres. The building itself has a width of 34.5m, a maximum depth of 51.5m, and (other than the sports hall) a height of 8.6m. The kick pitch and skate park are co-located to facilitate easy movement from one to the other. As floodlights are required, these are to be located the maximum distance from residential properties.

6.2.4 The entrance to the building from Porters Avenue and Gale Street comprises a double height glazed facade providing an active elevation addressing the street. The roof will be cantilevered over an external ‘colonnade’ creating a covered area, sheltering the building users and providing extra public space on the corner.

6.2.5 The architectural design features two distinct sections; the first encompasses the main facility, including the main entrance and general facilities and the second is the sports hall. For the main facility; the roof projection will be supported by brightly coloured columns. The main facilities area will have a masonry base to provide a robust easily maintained public interface. A timber clad first floor is proposed, sympathetic to the park context. In respect of the sports hall element; following consultation, the design of the sports hall cladding has evolved and comprises varied sections of vertical timber boarding to break up the mass of this element. This is envisaged to better respond to the local environment allowing the building to sit sympathetically within the natural park setting.

6.2.6 Whilst an active and translucent facade at ground level would be preferred in the context of the streetscene, it is acknowledged that there are conflicting requirements from the use of the internal spaces, namely the need to protect the privacy and safeguarding of young people using the facility. It is considered that the proposed materials and external finishes are sympathetic to the location and suitably respond to the local context, i.e. timber (responding to the park) and glass and masonry (responding to the urban edge).

6.3 Internal Design

6.3.1 Internally, at ground floor level, the main reception area will contain pool tables, table tennis tables, an informal arts area and seating adjacent to a kitchen and server. Male and female changing rooms will be located adjacent to a climbing wall and fitness suite, with access to the skate park and kick pitch. Other small specialist and meeting rooms are arranged around the main recreational area. The sports hall will accommodate four marked courts and is of a size broadly in accordance with Sport England’s specifications. At first floor level is office accommodation, a boxing/martial arts gym, a performing arts studio in addition to a music room and associated sound studio. These will be arranged around a landing that overlooks the void over the main recreational area.

6.4 Landscaping

6.4.1 The proposed Youth Zone building, kick pitch and skate park will be set back a minimum of 18m from the park/street boundary edge and away from the existing trees, to allow for their safe retention. All structures will therefore be significantly outside the root protection areas. The areas under the existing trees will remain grassed and the existing railings will be retained along the street frontage, with the exception of the Youth Zone entrance where bollards will be employed.
6.4.2 In addition to the retention of the existing trees, supplementary landscape proposals have been developed using the Arup Parsloes Park Masterplan as a guide. The proposals centre on integrating the development into the park with sloping mounds on the north and east sides, formed from construction spoil. The mounding will be up to 1.2m high and will typically have slopes of 1 in 6 to 1 in 7. Informal groups of parkland style trees will be planted on the mounds, together with generous areas of wildflower meadow which will be planted around the building helping to increase biodiversity and integrate the built form into its setting. The trees will be planted as a mix of Heavy standard and Extra Heavy Standard size to resist vandalism and create a strong initial impact.

6.4.3 Other landscape elements include the creation of a paved plaza at the entrance to the site and a new park entrance from Gale Street with a linking pathway in between, this is intended to improve connectivity to the park from the south side and from the Youth Zone building. It is considered that the combined effect of the mounding, tree planting and meadow would serve to soften the impact of the development and filter views of the Youth Zone from inside and outside the park.

6.5 External Flood Lighting

6.5.1 The external spaces of the Youth Zone including the kick pitch and skate park will be floodlit in order to maximise the use of these areas. The lighting design has been specified in order to minimise the impact on the amenity of local residents and the potential impact on local wildlife. The luminaires will be controlled via an internal time clock maintaining a ‘light out’ curfew between the hours of 22:00 and 07:00.

6.5.2 Following consultation, the lighting scheme has been redesigned to omit the flood lamps originally proposed, these will be replaced with LED lamps in order to minimise UV output. The overall lux has been reduced to circa 120 lux.

Existing street lighting is present along Gale Street and Porters Avenue. Light levels at ground level beneath a modern street lamp would be expected to be between 10 and 20 lux. The lux levels of the proposed lighting are calculated to depreciate to less 2 lux toward properties on Gale Street. The Environmental Health Officer has confirmed that the design should avoid obtrusive light affecting nearby homes and will not cause detriment to amenity subject to the imposition of a condition ensuring that the floodlights are switched off between the hours of 22:00 and 06:00.

6.6 Sustainable Design

6.6.1 Policy 5.2 of the London Plan requires each major development proposal to submit a detailed energy assessment in order to demonstrate that climate change mitigation measures are integral to the scheme’s design and evolution, and that they are appropriate to the context of the development. An emission reduction target of 35% below Part L 2013 for commercial development is sought.

6.6.2 The development aims to follow the London plan energy hierarchy of Lean, Clean and Green measures. Energy consumption of the building will be reduced through measures including optimising building fabric to achieve improved thermal efficiency, increasing airtightness, low energy lighting combined with effective controls and energy management systems. The Youth Zone is estimated to achieve
a 16% reduction in regulated carbon emissions over the 2013 baseline Target Emission Rate (TER) by passive design and energy efficiency measures alone in accordance with the energy hierarchy.

6.6.3 The development proposes the use of advanced natural ventilation by way of windcatchers to the sports hall and mechanical ventilation with heat recovery in other areas. A combination of high efficiency gas fired boilers and heat pump technology is intended to ensure that the space heating and cooling demands are met with minimal carbon emissions.

6.6.4 To further reduce carbon emissions, it is proposed that on-site renewable energy in the form of roof mounted solar PV panels are installed. The installation of 90m2 of Solar PV is estimated to reduce carbon emissions by a further 19%. The proposed development will achieve an overall 35% reduction in regulated carbon emissions through a suitable combination of lean and green measures.

6.6.5 The development will be assessed against the BREEAM 2014 Other Buildings: Assembly and Leisure criteria, to achieve a BREEAM Rating of ‘Excellent’.

6.6.6 The drainage strategy has taken into account the principles of sustainable drainage, with the incorporation of an attenuation tank that allows surface water to percolate into the soil, and the incorporation of porous materials in the MUGA and maintenance areas to reduce discharge to sewers. In terms of rainwater harvesting and green roof systems, the enhanced capital cost and ongoing maintenance liability for the charity is outside its budget allowances and would not therefore be feasible.

6.7 Impact on Residential Amenity

6.7.1 The proposed building will be set back 18m from the site boundary and the nearest residential properties would be approximately 35m away on the southern side of Gale Street. Given the intervening road and mature tree screening, it is not considered that there will be any issues relating to overlooking. The kick pitch would be located 70 metres away from the nearest residential property and the skate park 45 metres away which is considered to be sufficient separation to avoid noise adversely affecting residential amenity.

6.7.2 The external lighting report accompanying this application calculates that artificial light spill beyond the site boundary will have a negligible impact on surrounding residents in terms of nuisance lighting.

6.8 Parking and Transport

5.8.1 London Plan policy 6.13 sets out maximum car parking standards for development. Whilst there are no prescribed parking standards for a proposal of this type, the London Plan parking addendum is considered relevant for the proposed development. The following extract relates to ‘hotel and leisure’ developments;

In locations with a PTAL of 4-6, on-site provision should be limited to operational needs, parking for disabled people and that required for taxis, coaches and deliveries/servicing. In locations with a PTAL of 1-3, provision should be consistent
6.8.2 The application site has a PTAL rating of level 2 on a scale of 1-6 where 6 is excellent. In keeping with the OnSide philosophy that on-site parking is discouraged, no formal car parking is provided within the curtilage for staff or visitors to use. There will be on-site parking for one minibus, one blue badge space for staff, and one blue badge space for users of the facility which will be accessed from the proposed service access fronting Gale Street.

6.8.3 16 Cycle parking spaces are proposed, provided by 8 Sheffield stands fronting the entrance lobby of the building. A further 12 cycle spaces will be provided for staff situated in the service area.

6.8.4 Due to the scheme’s very nature young people using the facility are unlikely to be either eligible by age to drive to the facility or have access to a car to do so. It is considered that if car parking were to be provided for the site this would encourage both visitors and staff working at the facility to travel by car.

6.8.5 The absence of parking provision is expected to encourage both staff and visitors to travel to the site using more sustainable modes of transport. If staff and visitors do choose to use a car to travel to and from the facility they would need to park off-site. The lack of on-street parking would be expected to deter them from doing so on a regular basis. Furthermore it is noted that the site is only a few minutes’ walk from Becontree Station and is well served by bus routes via Gale Street and Porters Avenue.

6.8.6 In terms of the use of unrestricted parking bays fronting Porters Avenue, it should be noted that unlike conventional sports centres, the operational model of Onside Youth Zones does not allow parents to enter the facility to watch their children partake in the activities offered, as such the need for on-street parking is significantly reduced and is limited to a simple drop-off and pick-up process.

7. Conclusion

7.1 The proposed development will provide a high quality, highly accessible and inclusive facility offering a wide range of sport and recreation activities for young people in the Borough. It is considered that the impact on the openness of the MOL is outweighed by the nature and scale of the positive benefits which would be delivered to users of the facility, with the potential to make an important contribution to the health, well being and employment prospects of young people in the local community together with an associated fall in anti-social behaviour. The applicant has demonstrated ‘very special circumstances’ for the inappropriate development of Green Belt.

Background Papers

- Planning Application File [http://paplan.lbbd.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=OIJ5MXBLKVO00](http://paplan.lbbd.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=OIJ5MXBLKVO00)

- Local Plan Policy
Policy CM1 - General Principles for Development
Policy CM3 - Green Belt and Public Open Space
Policy CC2 - Social Infrastructure to Meet Community Needs
Policy CP3 - High Quality Built Environment
Policy CR2 - Preserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

Borough Wide Development Policies Development Plan Document;

Policy BC7 - Crime Prevention
Policy BR1 - Environmental Building Standards
Policy BR2 - Energy and On-site Renewables
Policy BR3 – Greening the Urban Environment
Policy BR9 - Parking
Policy BR10 - Sustainable Transport
Policy BR13 - Noise Mitigation
Policy BP8 - Protecting Residential Amenity
Policy BP11 - Urban Design

The London Plan (March 2016);

Policy 7.16 - Green belt
Policy 7.17 - Metropolitan open land
Policy 3.19 - Sports facilities
Policy 6.13 - Parking

National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Policy Guidance