

Ecosystem Services Statement

19037 – Seaford College
Indoor Cricket Lane

Date: 19/06/2020

Revision: P01 First Issue

Checked by: AC

ECOSYSTEM SERVICES STATEMENT INCLUDING:

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1. THE ECOSYSTEM SERVICES APPROACH

Ecosystem Services are the benefits that people and society get from the natural environment. An ecosystems approach helps to identify the benefits we get from nature, value them and build them into planning, decision-making and management. Ecosystem services are already a key component in the design and decision-making process of Seaford College and have holistically been incorporated into the design process from conception. The College are committed to ensuring the overall reduction of CO2 emissions within the park, as well as having a positive impact upon the surrounding natural environment, cultural resources and amenities on offer to the wider local community.

2. THE PROPOSAL

The proposal comprises the addition of an indoor cricket lane, golf lane, two new teaching classrooms and office space to the rear of the existing Sports Hall. The provision of the new indoor cricket and golf lanes, as well as teaching classrooms reflects the College's continuing investment in improving its built estate, in line with their 20-year Estate Plan and on-going Masterplan. It also reflects the continued success of the College to attract new students.

The provision of new sporting facilities will improve the enjoyment of the College by the staff, students and wider local community; first class sporting facilities help to attract new students to the College, improving its sustainability and ability to continue providing a renowned sporting education in the community for years to come.

3. CORE POLICY

SDNP planning policy SD2 gives clear structured aims for the ecosystem services, to positively impact upon and enhance the Park. These aims have been carefully considered and incorporated into the proposal at every possible opportunity.

Core Policy SD2: Ecosystem Services

“1. Development proposals will be permitted where they have an overall positive impact on the ability of the natural environment to contribute goods and services. This will be achieved through the use of high-quality design, and by delivering all opportunities to:

- a) Sustainably manage land and water environments;*
- b) Protect and provide more, better and joined up natural habitats;*
- c) Conserve water resources and improve water quality;*
- d) Manage and mitigate the risk of flooding;*
- e) Improve the National Park’s resilience to, and mitigation of, climate change;*
- f) Increase the ability to store carbon through new planting or other means;*
- g) Conserve and enhance soils;*
- h) Support the sustainable production and use of food, forestry and raw materials;*
- i) Reduce levels of pollution;*
- j) Improve opportunities for peoples’ health and wellbeing; and*
- k) Provide opportunities for access to the natural and cultural resources which contribute to the special qualities.”*

4. ECOSYSTEM SERVICES AIMS

“The purpose of this policy is to embed a holistic approach to managing our natural resources sustainably for the future. Its criteria encapsulates the ecosystem services that the natural environment contributes to people. This integrated approach is important because development can have multiple effects across these services. Development proposals should take a positive approach to the delivery of ecosystem services and take adequate account of the economic benefit of enhancing ecosystem services.” There are many ways to deliver on these criteria. These should be delivered on a site by site basis with reference to the aspects of ecosystem services

5. SEAFORD COLLEGE APPROACH

The proposal is for a minimal development to the rear of the existing Sports Hall, within an underutilised area of land, sunken into the ground and concealed from view behind surrounding College buildings. The proposal incorporates a cricket lane and golf lane at the lower level, with two classrooms above. The proposed modest extension does not adversely impact upon the National Park, environment, surrounding natural habitat, soil and water quality.



The proposed extension produces little rainwater run-off. Notwithstanding this, the new roof area and rainwater run-off have been kept to a minimum by extending the existing shallow pitch of the Sports Hall roof over the extension. Rainwater from the extension is collected and managed using the existing Sports Hall rainwater collection system.

The site has a low probability of flooding and is located in Flood Zone 1. The Environment Agency identifies the site as having a less than 1 in 1,000 annual probability of river or sea flooding (<0.1%).

The proposal does not increase water usage, conserving water resources. It does not impact water quality and the site is not at risk of flooding.

As with the Johnson Centre, the method of construction for this small extension has been carefully considered and thus the proposal will be a well-insulated building with good air tightness, beyond Building Regulations requirements, helping to retain heat in winter and keeping it cool in summer. The two tall volumes permit the stratification of heat, reducing cooling requirements, whilst air tightness reduces heating requirements in winter. The classrooms have openable windows, allowing for natural ventilation.

The cricket lane extension utilises existing excavated land to the rear of the existing Sports Hall. It has been designed to accommodate the existing topography and mitigate the need to remove soil from the site. By reusing previously excavated land, the proposal conserves the surrounding environment. There is little to no existing vegetation, planting or landscaping on the site. Biodiversity and natural habitats within the surrounding landscape are preserved and not affected by development proposals.

A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been undertaken, informing cricket lane development proposals. The LVIA should be read in conjunction with this Ecosystem Services Statement.

The LVIA states:

- that the replacement of the presently negative space (associated with the rear elevation of the Sports Hall and underlying cutting) with the functional use and southern-facing aspect proposed, which maintains the low-key material use associated with the current building façade, is considered to result in a locally beneficial effect;
- UK Priority Habitats are recognised as a material consideration in the planning process by the National Planning Policy Framework, but do not have statutory protection. Much of the Ancient Woodland to the south of the site is identified within Natural England's Priority Habitats Inventory v2.1 as UK Priority Habitat Deciduous Woodland, which extends as a fringe, beyond the northern edge of much of the Ancient Woodland.

Natural habitats are well established within the Ancient Woodland. The cricket lane extension maintains existing joined up natural habitats.

An Ecological Assessment (EA) has been undertaken informing cricket lane development proposals. The EA should be read in conjunction with this Ecosystem Services Statement

The Ecological Report highlights that the existing site is formed of existing buildings, amenity grassland and bare ground. The site itself is of low ecological value with no habitats of interest noted. The site is located 30m from an area of Ancient Woodland which lies to the south-west. This habitat is to be retained and protected during construction in accordance with BS5837 and Natural England standing advice with a 15m buffer zone maintained between the construction zone and ancient woodland. No machinery, welfare units or storage of materials will be permitted within the 15m exclusion zone. Once avoidance and mitigation measures have been taken into account, the impacts of the planned development upon biodiversity will be negligible, non-significant with proposed ecological enhancements resulting in a net gain and a long-term positive increase in biodiversity, in line with national planning policy guidance.

The College have an on-going Woodland Management Plan to increase light levels, ground flora and biodiversity to the woodland (Norway spruce), which is independent of the planning application. As part of this, traditional tree species will be re-planted in the parkland in similar locations and patterns to which they were originally planted, adhering to the advice set out in the appraisal prepared by Woods Environmental Solutions UK Ltd. The restoration of landscape features



will be rejuvenated where it enhances the original landscape character. This will be achieved through the re-planting of original wildflowers, increasing the amount of wildlife habitats and enhancing ecological networks, therefore in turn promoting biodiversity within the park. Landscape maintenance, including the replanting of trees, throughout the Estate will offset and improve the College's carbon footprint.

The cricket lane extension, along with the College's wider on-going sports and recreational facilities improvements across the College site and parkland will enable the College to make available to the wider local community additional high-quality sports facilities for out-of-hours use. By improving sports and recreational facilities at Seaford College that can be used by local surrounding communities, the need for those living near the College to travel excessive distances to access equivalent sports facilities can be reduced. Levels of pollution associated with excessive vehicular travel will also be reduced.

The proposed cricket lane extension is serviced by the existing footpath and vehicle links on the College site and located in close proximity to the existing car park for the sports hall and Johnson Centre. The proposal mitigates the need for any additional traffic routes or changes to the ones already existing on site. The extension will not lead to an increase in parking requirements

Providing sports facilities offers the wider local population, as well as College students and staff, the opportunity to improve their health and wellbeing through participating in sporting activities and enhances the National Park's cultural resources and amenities. The proposal provides further opportunities for access to the natural and cultural resources which contribute to the special qualities of the SDNP.

6. CONCLUSION

The proposal has integrated Ecosystem Services from the outset informing the design process and is consistent with planning policy SD2. An Ecological Impact Assessment and a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment have been provided to support this application, containing relevant evidence and recommendations to ensure the proposal aligns with the Ecosystem Services approach.

The location, layout and setting of the indoor cricket lane are amongst existing College sports facilities, including the Sports Hall, Johnson Centre and parking. The site optimises an obscured linear strip of underutilised land, which is currently a ditch and sloping embankment. The design of the proposal will enhance the existing landscape through setting the cricket lane into the slope of the land and through choice of materials, which will match the those of the existing Sports Hall. The proposal infills a neglected strip of underutilised land and positively contributes to the landscape of the Estate, allowing students, staff and the wider community to enjoy the new facilities.

