

## Bede Academy, North

Refurbishment of an Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) with perimeter fencing, hardstanding areas, storage container and floodlights

## Design and Access Statement with Planning Statement

<b>Client</b>	Bede Academy, North Sixth Ave, Blyth NE24 2SY		
<b>Project</b>	Refurbishment of an Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) with perimeter fencing, hardstanding areas, storage container and floodlights		
<b>SSL project code</b>	LANO-CLS-027		
<b>Document title</b>	Design and Access Statement with Planning Statement		
<b>Document control</b>	<b>Revision</b>	<b>By</b>	<b>Date</b>
	First Issue	ME	15/08/23

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## Associated Documents

LANO-CLS-027 01 - Topographical Survey  
 LANO-CLS-027 02 – Site Location Plan  
 LANO-CLS-027 03 – Proposed Site Plan  
 LANO-CLS-027 04 – Existing and Proposed Elevation  
 LANO-CLS-027 05 – Proposed Floodlighting Contours

Appendix A – Lighting Impact Assessment  
 Appendix B – ILP Guidance Notes  
 Appendix C – Proposed Materials and Appearance  
 Appendix D - Public Consultation Form  
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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Surfacing Standards Limited has been appointed to consider and develop an application for full planning permission for the Refurbishment of the Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) at:

Bede Academy, North,  
 Sixth Ave,  
 Blyth  
 NE24 2SY

- 1.2 In order to assist the application for full planning permission and to facilitate the implementation and delivery of the project; this document describes the project aspirations and illustrates the process that has led to the development proposal, and to explain and justify the proposal in a structured way.
- 1.3 This statement discusses design and access issues regarding the use, amount, layout, scale, landscaping, appearance and context of the scheme. In addition, the wider access implications of the proposal are addressed.
- 1.4 A planning statement is also provided to adequately address development plan policies and material considerations associated with this proposal.
- 1.5 The planning agent is:

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## 2. Design and Access Statement

2.1 Having followed planning policy recommendations and published technical guidance, we consider the proposal is based upon best design practices for external sports facility provision.

### 2.2 Proposal Description

This application seeks planning permission for the refurbishment of an external Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP).

The proposed refurbishment will replace the pitch surface which is necessary to renew life cycle and functionality, along with introducing replacement ball-stop fencing, modern and improved LED lighting system, clean access and site furniture; all required to modernise the sports pitch in accordance with The Football Association's (FA) technical guidance and current standards.

- Extending the pitch footprint west to accommodate goal storage and to the north for additional spectator area.
- Resurfacing of existing Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) pitch surface with new 3G artificial grass pitch surface.
- Replacement of the 3.0m high twin bar fencing for 4.5m high twin bar ball stop fencing to the AGP perimeter with a 0.5m wooden kickboard to the base of the internal fenced sports areas.
- Pitch perimeter barrier fence (1.2m) with a 0.2m wooden kickboard to the base of the internal fenced sports areas within the pitch enclosure, to segregate the pitch playing area from adjoining macadam 'respect' area.
- Macadam hard standing viewing area ('respect area') internally within the pitch enclosure adjoining the AGP perimeter
- Replacement of a metal halide floodlights to a new LED floodlighting system.
- Maintenance / sports equipment store located within the fenced facility enclosure.

### 2.3 Site Description



Site location

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The site is located approximately 1.1km southwest of Blyth town centre and comprises an artificial grass surfaced sports pitch located in the southern grounds of Bede Academy

The proposed FTP location currently comprises a sand-dressed sports pitch installed in 2009, and will replace such. Levels are relatively flat, with a marginal fall to the south. It is not currently understood if existing floodlighting will be retained, or new columns/ foundations installed. A grassed playing field borders the FTP location to the south and east, with the main academy buildings present to the north. A large hedgerow is present adjacent to the eastern boundary of the existing pitch. The wider site is surrounded on all sides by mature vegetation, with residential properties beyond.

## 2.4 Site History

An attempt to trace the history of the site has been carried out by reviewing readily available ordnance survey maps. The earliest records date back to the late 1800s and show the wider site to be entirely comprised of agricultural land, associated with Barras Farm, to the south of the site boundary. The site is bordered to the south by the New Blyth Railway line, and to the west by the Blyth and Newsham railway line. Located approximately 0.7km to the northeast of the site, the Cowpen Colliery is recorded, connected to the Blyth and Newsham railway line via the Cowpen Colliery line. The New Delaval Colliery is located approximately 1.5km to the west of the wider site.

Maps from the mid-20th century indicate the development of the wider site into a school from circa.1949 (see Figure 2-1 below), with the proposed development area consisting of grassed playing fields. Development of residential housing around the site's boundary is also noted. The Cowpen Colliery appears to still be operational at this time, although a disused mine is noted within the Delaval Colliery area to the west of the site.

Aerial imagery indicates the demolition of the school buildings on site circa. 2006, with construction of the new academy and sand-dressed football pitch evident from 2009 onwards. The Cowpen Colliery can be seen as open parkland at this time, whilst the railway lines bordering the site appear to have been dismantled

## 2.5 Purpose and Use

This application seeks planning permission to refurbish the existing Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) at Bede Academy, North.

The proposed refurbishment will replace the pitch surface which is necessary to renew life cycle and functionality, along with introducing replacement ball-stop fencing, modern and improved LED lighting system, clean access and site furniture; all required to modernise the sports pitch in accordance with The Football Association's (FA) technical guidance and current standards.

The AGP will be capable of supporting the following formal pitch arrangements:

Size and Age grouping	Quantity
Main pitch size 100m x 64m (Over 18/ Adult Football) in white	1
64m x 46m* (U11/U12, 9v9) in blue	2
55m x 37m (U9 / U10, 7v7) in yellow	2
37m x 27m (U7 / U8, 5v5) in red	4
*smaller than recommended size, but acceptable for match play use	

- The dimensions meet (and exceed) minimum pitch dimensions as per FA guidance and are sufficient to meet local league requirements for senior community football.
- The intended programme of use is not detrimentally impacted (there is no loss of functionality, or displacement of any teams/groups as a result of the pitch being provided at 91x55m versus 100x64m).
- The smaller footprint of the facility reduces the impact on the remaining playing field, allowing more space for other formal and informal activity.
- The artificial pitch being provided exceeds the dimensions of the existing natural grass pitch, whilst also providing significantly increased capacity which supports the application in ensuring the benefits outweigh the loss.

## 2.6 Amount

The proposed development has been prepared in accordance with published Design Guidance Notes (The Football Association (FA) / Sport England) pertinent to external artificial sports facility provision. The Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) design is in accordance with The FA Guide to 3G Football Turf Pitch Design Principles and Layouts and the proposed amount of development is:

Aspect	Area
3G artificial grass pitch area	5,917m <sup>2</sup>
Porous macadam surfaced areas	558m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Total Development Area</b>	<b>6,475m<sup>2</sup></b>

## 2.7 Scale

The existing height of the open steel mesh fencing and entrance gates are 3.0m high.

The proposed height of new open steel mesh ball stop fencing and entrance gates around the entire pitch perimeter enclosing the Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) will be 4.5m above ground level with a 0.5m high wooden kick board to the base.

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The proposed height of new open steel mesh pitch perimeter barrier and entrance gates with a 0.2m high wooden kick board to the base within the pitch enclosure to segregate the artificial grass pitch surface from adjoining hard standing area is 1.2m above ground level.

The existing lighting scheme consists of six (6 Nr) slimline masts mounted with luminaires at a height of 15m high above ground level. Three masts are installed along each longitudinal side of the AGP.

The proposed floodlight system is utilising three (3 Nr) slimline masts to the north and 3 new columns to the south. All columns are mounted with new LED luminaires at the same height of 15m high above ground level.

## 2.8 Landscaping

With the exception of hard landscaping (i.e. new macadam spectator hard standing), all other soft ground surrounding the area affected by the development shall be reinstated to grass (soft landscaping) to enable effective grounds maintenance to surrounding grassed areas.

New hard landscaping treatment around the 3G facility is restricted to porous asphalt surfacing for pedestrian access, goal storage recesses, a 'respect' spectator viewing area to the side of the pitch, and any vehicular access for maintenance operations.

Soil shall be reinstated to grass (soft landscaping) in accordance with BS 4428 Code of Practice for General Landscape Operations.

## 2.9 Appearance

To understand the materials and image of the components please refer to Appendix C – Proposed Materials and Appearance

The proposed finished appearance of principal pitch features is as follows:

### 2.9.1 3G Artificial Grass Playing Surface

The installed appearance of the playing surface will comprise a 3G artificial grass partially in-filled with silica sand (for stability) and granulate rubber (for performance), coloured grass green.

This is consistent with current Football Association (FA) technical requirements to deliver adequate performance characteristics for the intended sporting activities.

This surface type is recognised as the most suitable artificial playing surface for community football and youth football development.

This surface type is credited as 'preferred football surface' and 'surface for high level competition / training' within Sport England's guidance document 'Selecting the Right Artificial Surface for Hockey, Football, Rugby League and Rugby Union' Issue 002 / December 2010.

### 2.9.2 Perimeter Ball Stop Fencing

The proposed type and quality of ball-stop fencing is consistent with current Football Association (FA) technical requirements for fencing to enclose artificial grass sports pitches.

The installed appearance of perimeter ball stop fencing (4.5m high) and a pitch perimeter barrier (1.2m high) will be polyester powder coated RAL6005 Moss Green, all supported with an intermediate post system and entrance gates of matching colour with a 0.5m wooden kickboard to the base of the internal fenced sports areas.

The fencing type will be steel open mesh fencing containing a general 200x50mm aperture (and 66x50mm rebound aperture to the internal pitch perimeter barrier).

Panels are fixed onto posts with 8mm galvanised security bolts to (U shape) brackets containing threaded inserts and neoprene washers (inserts) to reduce panel rattle and vibration from ball impacts. Panel connectors are applied at horizontal panel joins to increase the overall rigidity of the product.

The dark (moss) green fence colour provides the most discrete appearance.

### 2.9.3 Floodlights

The installed appearance of the new artificial lighting system will include three (3 Nr) new slimline 15m high sectional hinged steel masts finished galvanised (Z275) self-coloured. All six (6 Nr) columns to be mounted with a total of twelve (12 Nr) slimline LED luminaires and fittings finished raw aluminium.

The LED lighting system will have functionality and controls to dim the lighting to 10lux in order to act as amenity lighting to safely allow users to enter and vacate the site.

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#### 2.9.4 Hard Standing Areas

The installed appearance of new hard standing areas (access pathway, goal storage recesses/alcoves, 'respect' spectator viewing area) will be grey / black coloured porous asphalt.

#### 2.9.5 Maintenance Equipment Storage Container

The installed appearance of the new maintenance store will be steel, powder coated RAL 6005 moss green to match the perimeter fence.

#### 2.10 Access/ Transport Links

The refurbished Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) will be secured within the existing boundaries to maintain site security out of permitted operational hours.

Pedestrian and vehicular access is currently in place from the existing entrances to the pitch.

The volume and frequency of traffic movements to and from the site will mainly remain the same with a slight increase due to the additional hour opening requested each day:

	School Use	Current Community Use	Proposed Community Use
Monday – Friday	9am-5pm	6pm-9pm	5pm-10pm
Saturday	-	9am-5pm	9am-6pm
Sunday	-	9am-5pm	9am-6pm

Existing onsite parking areas, public transport and green travel initiatives including walking and cycling will continue to be available.

The existing site already has a significant amount of parking capacity. The existing and proposed parking provision will consist of:

Table 3 – Site Car Parking and Availability

Type of Vehicle	Existing number of Spaces	Proposed number of spaces (inc retained)	Difference in spaces
Car	137	137	0
Light Goods Vehicles/ Public Carrier	3	3	0
Motorcycles	2	2	0
Disability Spaces	2	2	0
Cycle Spaces	60	60	0
Bus Spaces	2	2	0

It is therefore concluded that onsite parking provision can accommodate the expected vehicular traffic during operational hours.

#### 2.11 Inclusive Access

Internal access passages and pathways from the car park to the area are already in place with appropriate and safe amenity lighting. The intention is to provide a smooth transition to and from the new 3G facility, for use by all people. All new pedestrian paths are designed to be compliant with the Equality Act 2010.

#### 2.12 Maintenance/ Management Considerations and Sustainability

The site and pitch have been available for community use since 2009, managed directly by Bede Academy on Monday-Saturday, with responsibility for Sunday external pitch use passed to one of our partners – either Blyth Rugby Club or Blyth Rangers FC – depending on usage on that day. This will remain in place going forward.

#### 2.13 Design Standards

In terms of design standards, the schedule of works necessary to implement the proposal are designed in accordance with, and must be constructed if full compliance with; the following sources of technical guidance and performance quality standards which are appropriate to external artificial sports facilities:

##### 2.13.1 Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP)

- The Football Association (FA) Guide to 3G Football Turf Pitch Design Principles and Layouts.
- Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) Quality Concept for Football Turf – Handbook of Requirements (October 2015).
- Sport England Design Guidance Note 'Artificial Surfaces for Outdoor Sport – updated guidance for 2012.
- Sport England's guidance document 'Selecting the Right Artificial Surface for Hockey, Football, Rugby League and Rugby Union' Issue 002 / December 2010.

##### 2.13.2 Ball Stop Fencing

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- BS EN 15312:2007 A1:2 Free access multi-sports equipment – Requirements, including:
- Clause 5.5.1.2.1 Resistance to repeated impact of footballs
- Clause 5.5.1.2.2 Very intense forceful impact resistance to player's kicks

#### 2.13.3 Floodlights

- The Football Association (FA) Guide to Football Turf Pitch Design Principles and Layouts (FIFA's Class II for Non – Televised events (4))
- BS EN 12193:2007 Light and lighting. Sports lighting
- The Institution of Lighting Professionals (ILP): Guidance Notes for The Reduction of Obtrusive Light GN01:2021

#### 2.13.4 Generally

- Works must comply with current Building Regulations and British / European Standards applicable to the proposal

### 2.14 Identification of Need

A public consultation was undertaken with nearly 700 respondents with a very positive response towards the creation of the 3G. one of the final questions of the online form was "Would you support the development of a 3G pitch at Bede Academy", of which 687 respondents answered Yes and 10 answered No. The results of the form can be seen in Appendix D

A letter from the Northumberland Football Association has also been included within Appendix E, which documents their support for the application.

### 2.15 Sport England

Sport England will be a statutory consultee on this planning application as the proposal affects an existing artificial pitch.

A playing pitch is a delineated area, which together with any run off is of 0.2 hectares or more. Playing pitches may have a grass surface or an artificial one.

The following details are provided to enable Sport England's informed assessment of whether the proposed benefits to sport associated with development would be sufficient to outweigh the detriment associated with the impact on the playing field and satisfy exception policy 5 of Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and Guidance 2018.

The aim of the policy is to ensure that there is an adequate supply of quality pitches to satisfy the current and estimated future demands of the pitch sports.

It is acknowledged that England Hockey will be consulted by Sport England with regards to the conversion of a 2<sup>nd</sup> generation Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) to a 3<sup>rd</sup> generation AGP. The school have previously been in consultation with England Hockey regarding the development and have provided the following information regarding the current use, consultation and future plans:

#### 1. Community use

The current sand-dressed pitch has been open to community use since opening in 2009. However, with the exception of a handful (no more than five or six) individual fixtures that were relocated to the pitch by a member of staff when their normal facility at Marden Bridge (Whitley Bay) was unavailable, we have not seen any interest from clubs or for individual hockey use. We have also consulted locally and we have found no likely clubs willing to use the space going forward, or to become partners in this project.

#### 2. Curricular use

Hockey will remain part of the curriculum at Bede Academy. Currently hockey represents approximately 12% of female PE curriculum time and 5% of male sports curriculum. It is likely that the female curriculum will adjust slightly to include more football and rugby, but hockey will still form part of the overall programme. The sports hall and other areas will be used for this. Bede Academy also has aspirations to convert the current MUGA into a "Gen2" surface in the future which would support both tennis, hockey and netball training.

We shared this information with Jamie Pover of England Hockey at the very earliest stages of choosing a new surface for the pitch at Bede Academy. We also shared with him our experience at one of our other schools, The King's Academy in Middlesbrough, where we have a longstanding active relationship with a local hockey team – Marton Furness Hockey Club. Marton use the school as a base on Saturdays and also link into the school with training etc. As a result of this important link, we have no plans to move away from a sand-dressed pitch at this location. With this combined information, Jamie provided us assurance that a decision to move to a 3G surface at Bede Academy (and a further location at Trinity Academy, Doncaster) would not be challenged by England Hockey.

On the basis of the above justification and approval from England Hockey, we consider the proposals would give rise to a considerable benefit to the wider community through the provision of an in demand playing facility.

Given the above details, we believe Sport England will agree that the proposed development is acceptable under the following exception policy:

*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.*

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### 3. Site Photos



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## 4. Conclusions

The proposed refurbishment of an existing Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) will result in better quality provision in a suitable location and supported by effective and appropriate management arrangements; whilst implementing best practice construction techniques.

The proposal would give rise to a considerable benefit to the site users through the provision of the vast improvement and enhanced playing facility.

The refurbishment of an existing Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) would not result in an unacceptable impact upon the character, appearance or visual amenity of the surrounding area.

The site will continue to provide adequate on-site parking to meet the needs of the continued use of the facility and would not result in any harm to the safety of the surrounding public highway network.

### End of document

<b>Published by</b>	Michael Eastman, Consultant
<b>Issued</b>	15/08/23

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