



22nd March 2023

SOUTH HAMS SOCIETY letter regarding proposed use of the Former School Playing Ground Elmwood Park Loddiswell TQ7 SA for a housing development.

The South Hams Society interest

For the last 60 years, the South Hams Society has been stimulating public interest and care for the beauty, history and character of the South Hams. We encourage high standards of planning and architecture that respect the character of the area. We aim to secure the protection and improvement of the landscape, features of historic interest and public amenity and to promote the conservation of the South Hams as a living, working environment. We take the South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty very seriously and work hard to increase people's knowledge and appreciation of our precious environment. We support the right development - in the right places - and oppose inappropriate development.

The South Hams Society have been asked for advice and support regarding proposals to develop the old playing field at Elmwood Park. The Society has reviewed recent developments in and policy for both Loddiswell and the old playing field site and has come to the following conclusions.

Introduction.

Much of the land around the playing field was developed in the late seventies becoming known as Elmwood Park. Noticeably, Elmwood Park did not have any open public space provision when designed and constructed. Developments are now expected to provide some provision of public open space.

The Society can therefore understand the community's desire to retain the old playing field site as a public open space.

Review of Planning Policy and Planning History.

Loddiswell is within the South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and has provided considerable levels of new housing recently, such that there are no further housing proposals in the JLP for the settlement.

Any new development is expected to come through the Neighbourhood Planning process. The Society notes that currently there is no Neighbourhood Plan or progress towards a Plan.

The Society would also highlight two developments that have been brought forward during the current JLP plan period (2014-2034) in Loddiswell.

Charity No 263985

Registered Address: 20 Highfield Drive, Kingsbridge, Devon TQ7 1JR
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Planning Application Ref: 32/0844/12/F

Description: Resubmission of planning application 32/2590/11/F (erection of 70 dwellings, access, associated infrastructure, public open space and a sitereserved for a primary school)

Address: Development Site At Sx720 487 Harveys Field South Brent Road Loddiswell

Decision Date: 13 December 2012

(The last pre-commencement condition approval (32/2086/13/DIS) was approved on the 9th July 2015).

This development provided the location for Loddiswell's new primary School constructed in 2017-18.

Planning Application Ref: 32/1722/15/F

Description: Erection of 5no. dwellings

Address: Development Site At Pendarves Loddiswell Devon TQ7 4RQ

Decision Date: 23 May 2016

Together, these two developments have created 75 new dwellings in the village since 2014.

The Joint Local Plan for Loddiswell.

As the Society has stated, the JLP proposed no further housing for Loddiswell, while the playing field was identified as being allocated for open space, sport and recreation use.

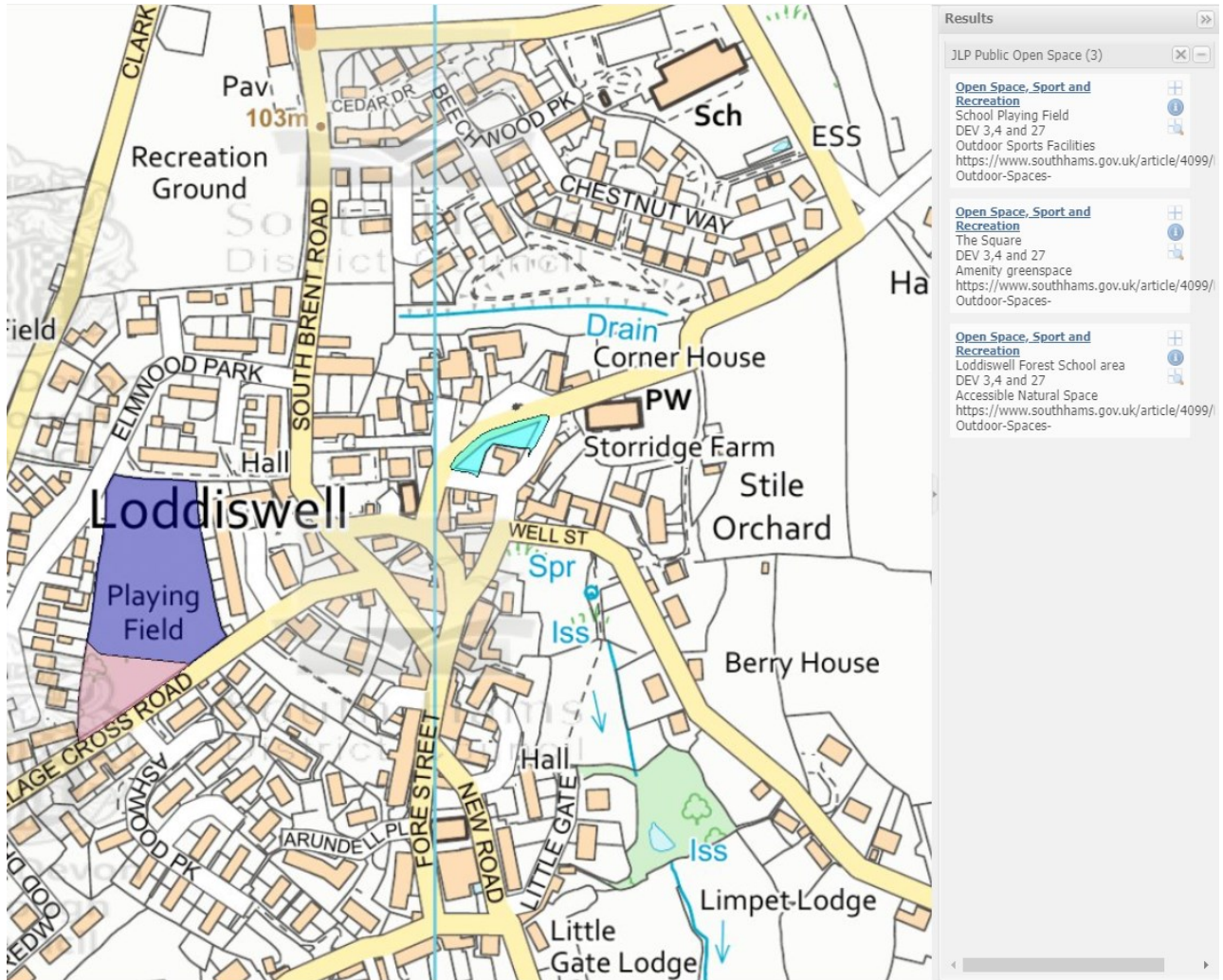
It is worth noting that the JLP was widely consulted upon by the general public, the local Parish Councils, Plymouth City Council, South Hams District Council, West Devon Borough Council and Devon County Council, with the Plan subject to thorough examination by the Planning Inspectorate.

And it is the Local Plan that the councils are required to implement.

The old playing field site is shown on SHDC's mapping, listing the applicable policies.

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This mapping identifies the JLP policies DEV2, DEV4 and DEV27 (Outdoor Sports Facilities, Amenity Greenspace and Accessible Natural Space) as being suitable for this site.

The Society supports these policies at this site.

The Society also notes that the site has been the subject of two previous applications.

Applicant Name: Devon County Council

Description: READVERTISEMENT (Amended description) Outline application with some matters reserved for residential development of 17 dwellings

Address: Former School Playing Ground Elmwood Park Loddiswell TQ7 SA

Decision Date: 19 December 2022

Withdrawn

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Moreover, where there is an intended loss of a recreational facility, Sport England is a statutory consultee.

The Society wish to note the response from Sport England to this application who stated:

'Sport England does not wish to raise an objection to this application providing that the new replacement Loddiswell school site is open to the wider community in perpetuity and adequately maintained'.

The Society considers the Primary School Facilities fail to offer an acceptable location for Elmwood Park. Nonetheless, we contacted the school to ask whether the facilities are open to the wider community. We were not surprised to be told the facilities are not available for wider community use.

The second planning application was a pre-application 2164/22/PR6 that obtained officer support on the 16/10/2022.

The Society can see no reason for the pre-application advice to be kept from the public domain so that the Society and the general public can see how officers came to the decision to deviate from the recognised JLP policy for this site.

Considering JLP policy and Sport England's previous consultation response highlighted by the Society, we are keen to understand how officers came to the conclusion to support the pre-application request.

The Society therefore ask the District Council to release the pre-application officer advice for the old playing fields (2164/22/PR6).

The Society are currently of the opinion that officers have given incorrect advice for this site, unless it can be shown that exceptional circumstances exist for deviating from JLP policy and a previous Sports England consultation response.

The South Hams Society fully supports the community's desire to retain its valuable public open space.

For and on behalf of the South Hams Society
Richard Howell

Chairman



The Harvey Field Development with public open space and the new Primary School.



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The Elmwood development and the old playing field (Outdoor Sports Facilities, Amenity Greenspace and Accessible Natural Space) site.

