

61 Thornton Hill
Exeter, EX4 4NR
22 December 2021

Miss Emily Perryman
Project Manager
City Development
Exeter City Council.

Exwick Changing Rooms, Western Road. Demolition of existing building to provide a new Sports Pavilion and All-Weather 3G Pitch. [21/1710/FUL](#)

Planning sub-committee of Exeter Civic Society wishes to object to that part of this application which concerns the all-weather 3G pitch.

The sub-committee understands that such a pitch is required to improve facilities for Exeter College and Exeter Rugby Academy training and matches but we are concerned that several aspects of the proposals are not acceptable. We had hoped that more information could be obtained about the material and structure of the fence as the statement *“Green rigid welded mesh panels providing security, being vandal resistant, anti-climb and visually unobtrusive”* although indicating why the College considers the fence is needed, does not show how see-through the fence may be and *“... visually unobtrusive.”* must be regarded as merely an aspiration. The application also lacks details of provision for spectators and of access gates through the fence.

We are also concerned about the positioning of the pitch. The fenced area would occupy almost all of the width of open grassland between the existing skateboard facility and the bank of trees bordering the rail-line, a valued part of the valley parkland giving a wide view and popular for impromptu ball games. We wonder whether the applicant has discussed putting the all-weather 3G pitch to the north of the area designated at present, where it would be nearer to the sports building and less disruptive of the wider view. We note with interest that Sports England recommends this location in their response and also questions whether such a pitch in this locality is in accord with the needs of Exeter sport as a whole.

Planning sub-committee finds difficulty in appraising this application on this latter point on which the Council's on-going strategy report is not yet published. We also lack information on the the Council's current ruling on structures such as fencing and lighting within Valley Parks. We consider that the application does not make sufficiently clear arrangements between Exeter College and Exeter Rugby Academy for use of the facility and between Exeter College and Exeter City Council for continuing lease of the land and continuing use of lesser pitches by local teams if two marked pitches are obliterated.

Planning sub-committee is offering no objection to the demolition of the old and construction of a new Sports Pavilion but we trust that in respect of the proposals for the location and standing structures of the 3G pitch this current application will be Refused.

Pamela Wootton
for the Planning sub-committee of Exeter Civic Society.