



# LYMPSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk to the Council: A J Le Riche,  
DMS,

8 Drakes Gardens, Drakes Avenue,  
Exmouth, EX8 4AD

Tel 01395 279665/ 07866 535580

Email: [clerk@lympstone.org](mailto:clerk@lympstone.org)

[www.lympstone.org](http://www.lympstone.org)

Chairman: Cllr Chris Carter  
Tel 01395 274014

5<sup>th</sup> July 2016

Graeme Thompson,  
Local Planning,  
EDDC  
Knowle,  
Sidmouth

Dear Graeme

Exmouth Sports Pitch Strategy

The Draft Exmouth Sports Pitch Strategy has been considered by Lympstone Parish Council at two meetings and there has been a public meeting attended by over eighty residents. The Parish Council would like to thank you and Charlie for coming along to explain your draft Strategy to residents.

The Strategy recommends a combination of new sites on which to deliver sports pitches and improvements to existing sites. A secondary action from it is to encourage provision of additional football pitches for Lympstone FC. Some of the sites which have been included are within Lympstone Parish and as such must be judged against the Lympstone Neighbourhood Plan as much as the ED Local Plan.

The Parish Council was disappointed to hear that no consideration was given to the provision of a cricket pitch for Lympstone CC as the Club is not affiliated to the Devon Cricket Board.

Two sites which are favoured for development are in Lympstone Parish. The Lympstone community, led by the Parish Council, came together to fight any development of land off Courtlands Lane. Access to the site for sports use will be off a single track road with very limited visibility. The secondary access off the A376 is unlikely to be constructed for many years.

The land off Hulham Road is in open countryside beyond the Green Wedge and should be judged as such. There should be a presumption against development of this land.

The Site Assessments undertaken resulted in both Hulham Road and Courtlands Lane sites being marked unsatisfactory the former with a score of 61 and the latter 58. These scores fall in the lower end of the Unsatisfactory which ranges from 56-70. The document confirms that these 'yellow' [Unsatisfactory category] sites will require significant works to bring the sites up to an acceptable level. It is noted that the assessment on page 4 suggests that the Courtlands Cross site is 'flat site' but this is not the case and extensive regrading would be required. Furthermore, the site is exposed to high winds and rain weakening its suitability for outdoor sports.

This site will require considerable investment (£485,000 indicative cost stated excluding land purchase and clubhouse) assuming that all issues can be rectified. One learned resident suggested that a total sum of £2m was a reasonable assessment of cost at this stage.

The proposal for the land at Courtlands Cross includes a small clubhouse and changing rooms for four pitches. However, if all four pitches were in use at the same time, there would be a need for facilities for 120+ players & officials. To achieve this, the Club House would need to be extensive. While the draft strategy suggests that a sympathetic design could be used, the development will still result in a material structure being built on the Green Wedge and there is a requirement for a large car park. Either of these would make development of the site to be unsuitable.

The character of the immediate area will be changed through noise pollution (120 players plus) which would also make the site unsuitable in comparison to the existing use and setting.

The Parish Council feels that development of the Courtland Cross site, which includes extensive car parking and a club house could be seen as leading to coalescence with Exmouth. The noise from rugby and football could also compromise the amenities of existing houses, the ambience and setting of A la Ronde and its grounds and the new hotel at Lympstone Manor.

In both sites, the soil is heavy clay with very poor drainage capability. Other than use as farm land with regular ploughing, any other use will present a significant land drainage and flooding risk to a number of properties in the Parish. This should be avoided. In view of the land areas required for pitches etc., it is suggested that it would not be possible to provide acceptable measures to control the flow of surface water from these two sites.

It is felt that there are other more appropriate sites in Exmouth which could be provided. A number of these sites are shown in the Strategy but are discounted for various reasons which are not seen by the Parish Council as totally conclusive. Rolle College playing fields could be compulsorily purchased and the Strategy confirms that this area could provide all of the needs for Exmouth.

There are sites at Primary schools which could be used for primary school aged children's sports. This would give young children an affinity with their Club and school together.

The Parish Council would like to suggest that the land off Salterton Road is more sustainable for sports pitches, it could be argued that damage has already been done to the setting of the AONB by the development of land opposite this site. There are precedents of more extensive developments in an AONB in the District. Sports pitches would help retain the open character of this area in perpetuity. It is also understood that there may be a willing seller. This would help to make the Strategy more achievable than other options.

There is land at Goodmores Farm which has a covenant against built development. This could accommodate pitches, with supporting facilities being provided nearby. This is worthy of serious investigation.

Land around the Archery Centre should also be reconsidered as sports pitches should be seen as a similar use of land and should not compromise any designations of this area.

There is scope to use the Imperial Recreation Ground to provide additional pitches at Exmouth Rugby Club. Problems arising from its previous use as a waste tip could be tackled at a lesser cost than developing land in Lympstone.

In summary, Lymptone Parish Council and the residents of Lymptone object to the proposals to use the two sites proposed for sports pitches and feel that other sites identified in the Strategy are to be preferred.

The Parish Council would welcome more work to identify sites for Lymptone Clubs.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D/E Ruck', written in a cursive style.

Clerk to the Parish Council