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**Subject:** Ref APP/X5210/W/16/3153454 Mansfield Bowling Club appeal  
**Date:** 25 August 2016 16:06:02

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Please consider this a strong objection to the above-named appeal.

**\* Failure to demonstrate lack of demand:** Camden's various leisure reports (notably the Camden Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study (Atkins) from June 2014) make it clear the facility is not surplus to requirements. To underline this, Camden needs a 1400sq.m indoor sports hall and the building on the Appeal Site is 1435sq.m. This report states that within the Borough the shortfall in provision will jump by 2025, with only 51% of all demand met by then. Research by local people has shown that there is huge demand for indoor leisure facilities, and not in the narrow areas supposedly explored by the Appellant. Camden's own Olympic-run fencing school needs a new home, trampoline parks are a rising and popular phenomenon, and there are many more viable long term options which would not entail a change of use for the site. The Mansfield Bowling Club site is designated for leisure use and the Appellant has only narrowly explored potential alternative users for the space, which in my view is calculated to support a conclusion which suits its purpose ie that there is no sports / leisure demand for the site.

**\* Lack of engagement with local community:** the Appellant has, despite its assertions, made minimal attempts to collaborate with the community. Its efforts, such as they were, were bullish and under-advertised, presumably to ensure it can assert a lack of community interest in the site. My own experience of attending one of their events was that they became aggressive when it was suggested their idea amounted to a fait accompli rather than a dialogue, hardly what one could call working with the community. As you will see from the following news story, there has been active discouragement of local people learning of the plans: <http://www.camdennewjournal.com/ripleybowls> This story also demonstrates that local people rather than the Appellant have been responsible for the dissemination of information on this proposal.

**\* AVC** The site has been designated an asset of community value, demonstrating its importance to the community as an area of open space.

**\* Application is contrary to council's core strategy:** The stated core strategy of Camden Council is to support the retention and enhancement of existing community, leisure and cultural facilities. To allow this development would clearly be contrary to that.

**\* Lack of support** At January's planning meeting, which was well attended by campaigners, the council voted overwhelmingly to reject the proposal, indeed no-one on the committee voted in support of it. The huge amount of objections to this and variations of the proposals over the years show consistent and high community opposition to housing development on this site. The Kenlyn Tennis Club, which is based on the site, has recently withdrawn its support over concerns that the club's future is not secure under the current proposal. This lack of security of tenure means that even more land currently used for sport could easily be lost.

Local people are desperate to exploit the sporting potential of this site and as I have explained, interested commercial parties are keen to buy it to continue sporting use - clearly they feel their sports use would be viable, though this is not a test within the planning framework.

I urge you to recognise the overwhelming well-founded opposition to these proposals and reject this appeal.

Yours sincerely,

Sonia Rothwell

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