



20/00880/OUT
OS Land Parcel 7216
Bury Lane
Haddenham

Date: 16/11/2020

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MAIN CASE

Reference No: 20/00880/OUT

Proposal: Change of use from agricultural land to recreational land to create a new recreational ground for the parish to include pitches, parking, changing rooms, access and associated works

Site Address: OS Land Parcel 7216 Bury Lane Haddenham
Cambridgeshire

Applicant: Haddenham Parish Council

Case Officer: Emma Barral Planning Officer

Parish: Haddenham

Ward: Haddenham
Ward Councillor/s: Gareth Wilson

Date Received: 20 August 2020 **Expiry Date:** 11th December 2020
[V120]

1. **RECOMMENDATION**

- 1.1 Members are recommended to REFUSE the application for the following reasons:
- Policy COM7 states that development proposals shall be capable of accommodating the level/type of traffic generated without detriment to the local highway network and the amenity, character or appearance of the locality. Policy COM4 states that new community facilities should not have a significant adverse impact (itself or cumulatively) in terms of the scale or nature of traffic generated. The level of traffic generated by the proposed development cannot be safely accommodated and it would cause significant detrimental harm to traffic movement on the public highway, as there is a high probability that it will overburden the capacity of New Town Road. The application is therefore considered to be contrary to Policy COM4 and COM7 of the Local Plan 2015, due to detrimental harm to the highway network.
 - Policy ENV7 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 states that all development proposals will be required to protect biodiversity and geological value of land and buildings and minimise harm to or loss of environmental features such as trees, hedgerows, woodland, wetland and ponds. Policy ENV 7 also states that all applications for development that may affect biodiversity and geology interests must be accompanied by sufficient information to be determined by the Local Planning Authority, including an

ecological report, to allow potential impacts and possible mitigation measures to be assessed fully. The proposed application site may contain protected species. However, no ecology report has been submitted with the application and therefore the ecological impacts of the proposed development cannot be fully assessed. The application is therefore considered to be contrary to Policies ENV1, ENV2 and ENV7 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 and the Natural Environments SPD, as it has not demonstrated how biodiversity impacts will be mitigated and a net gain secured.

2. SUMMARY OF APPLICATION

- 2.1 The application submitted seeks Outline Planning Consent (with all matters reserved) for the change of use from agricultural land to recreational land to create a new recreational ground for the Haddenham Parish Council (applicant) to include football pitches, parking, changing rooms, access and associated works. The applicant has described the proposed development as the first phase of a wider recreational scheme within the parcel of land in question (red line plan) which will initially provide an additional 3 Football Pitches with access and parking for 30 cars.
- 2.2 Haddenham Parish Council have indicated that they are initially looking at providing three 84 metres (275 feet) by 58 metres (190 feet) football pitches (which could be reconfigured to a full size football pitch measuring 104 metres (341 feet) by 70 metres (229 feet) plus two 49 metres (160 feet) by 66 metre (216 feet) smaller pitches) but they are in discussion with the Cambridge Football Foundation regarding the actual configuration they would support. A car parking area and changing room would also be proposed. However, please note that the block plan submitted is indicative as the matters of access, layout, appearance, scale and landscaping are currently not being considered.
- 2.3 The Applicants statement provides that “The Parish Council has agreement to purchase approximately 6.5 Acres (2.6 hectares) of the 11.6-acre (4.5 hectares) field (OS parcel no 7216). There are potentially two options for vehicular access; via New Town Road off the A1123 through Pocket Park, which is owned by the Parish Council. A gated opening would be made between the site and Pocket Park although it is envisaged the hedge would remain intact as a barrier/screen between the Recreational Area and the houses in New Town Road. The second option would be via Bury Lane and into the field through an existing gate access. It is intended that consultation will be carried out with residents as to the preferred access once outline permission has been granted”.
- 2.4 Haddenham Parish Council advised Officers that after receiving pre-application advice they would undertake consultations (an event) with the local community, given the number of concerns raised around the time of their first application (LPA Ref 20/00152/FUL). However, this has not been undertaken this year given the COVID 19 pandemic this year and the need to socially distance. Hence, the application is submitted as an Outline Planning Application to establish the principle of development to allow more specific details to be agreed at a later date through a Reserved Matters Application.

2.5 The application has been called to Planning Committee by Councillor Wilson because he has been asked by Haddenham Parish Council to do so. Councillor Wilson has commented that he feels that “the Highways objection is based on a misunderstanding of the use by our children’s football teams. As this project is already part of East Cambs Sporting Strategy and we are already fairly sure of a Football Foundation grant of up to £750,000 to help pay for football pitches and pavilion on the only flat field that we have been able to find after a three year search in Haddenham. Haddenham has 13 youth teams but only three pitches”.

2.6 The full planning application, plans and documents submitted by the Applicant can be viewed online via East Cambridgeshire District Council’s Public Access online service, via the following link <http://pa.eastcambs.gov.uk/online-applications/>. **Alternatively a paper copy is available to view at the East Cambridgeshire District Council offices, in the application file.**

3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 A previous application was submitted under LPA Ref 20/00152/FUL; however, this application was withdrawn on the 8th April 2020 with Haddenham Parish Council advising that they would re-submit at a later date once the necessary public consultation had taken place and when they had more detailed documentation to support the application.

4.0 THE SITE AND ITS ENVIRONMENT

4.1 The application site is located to the west of the village framework of Haddenham. The site can be accessed from a single track off Bury Lane from Aldreth Road to the south-east. To the north of the application site lies New Town Road which leads into Pocket Park to the south which is adjacent to the application site. The application site comprises an agricultural field.

4.2 It is noted that Haddenham Parish Council has an existing recreational ground within the village framework in the centre of the village. The existing facility has 2 pitches which are shared with the cricket ground. Given the existing shortage of pitches for the existing local teams, several have to play outside of the village in other locations.

5.0 RESPONSES FROM CONSULTEES

5.1 A site notice was displayed at the site on the 17th September 2020 and the proposal was advertised in the Cambridge Evening News on the 27th August 2020. Responses were received from the following consultees and these are summarised below. The full responses are available on the Council's website.

Environmental Health - 21 August 2020- “We have given comments on this site in the past and I include these below for reference.

In principle I have no objections to raise for the change of use of the site but I would request a condition which stipulates that there is no external floodlighting to be installed without prior written approval from the LPA.

Other comments- I have read the Design and Access Statement and it states that “We envisage no floodlighting to the pitches on the site in this phase” but reading on it would appear as though this is something which may be considered in the future. In principle I have no objections to make for the change of use of the site but in any subsequent applications for the elements mentioned in the D&AS it is likely I will be requesting times of use as well as requesting evidence that the development will not affect the residential amenity of nearby residential properties. Until that time I would request a condition which stipulates that there is no external floodlighting to be installed without prior written approval from the LPA”.

Technical Officer Access - 3 September 2020- “All signage to be clear and good contrast. Accessible parking bays to be provided. Gravel road surface not suitable for wheel chairs. Please provide an approach path in a suitable surface for wheelchair supporters. Accessible toilet to be provide in the changing rooms with a ramp to the building”.

Community & Leisure Services - 3 September 2020- “The limitations of the existing recreation ground facilities in Haddenham have been recognised by users and stakeholders, and the Parish Council has addressed many of the qualitative weaknesses through improvements to the current site. They are making the most of what they have. But there are also limitations of space there: the Parish Council noted in its consultation response to our recent District playing pitch and outdoor facilities review that 6 of the 11 junior football teams currently play away from the village, and increasingly rely on the goodwill of those external host facilities. These limitations have been recognised in our strategy, and by the FA's draft Local Football Facilities Plan, which served both to review and build upon that work in respect of football in particular. The proposal to create a new playing field, to supplement the existing site, is a logical response to those limitations, and wholly consistent with these wider strategies. And the intention to broaden the scope of use to include other leisure activities, based on consultation with local residents, is potentially important in ensuring that the new facility helps to increase activity levels across the local community as a whole.

Clearly there is further work to be done in respect of the layout and design detail, and the phasing of the development; but I would be fully supportive of the proposal at this stage. I hope that these comments are of some assistance, but please let me know if you wish me to clarify or elaborate upon them in any way”.

ECDC Trees Team - 17 September 2020- “No objections to the change of use on any tree issues”.

ECDC Trees Team – 28th September- “Further to previous comments the access from New Town Road should ideally use as much of the existing track that provides access to the pumping station, this would significantly reduce to amount of tree lost to enable this development as illustrated on the plan below. Conditioning a soft landscaping scheme to include suitable mitigation planting and screening to aid the integration of this development into the surrounding landscape and reduce noise and light pollution will be advantageous”.

Sport England - 28 September 2020- "The Government, within their Planning Practice Guidance (Open Space, Sports and Recreation Facilities Section) advises Local Planning Authorities to consult Sport England on a wide range of applications. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/open-space-sports-and-recreation-facilities-public-rights-of-way-and-local-green-space#open-space-sports-and-recreation-facilities>.

This application falls within the scope of the above guidance as it relates to the creation of new playing fields.

Sport England assesses this type of application in light of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and against its own planning objectives, which are Protect - To protect the right opportunities in the right places; Enhance - To enhance opportunities through better use of existing provision; Provide - To provide new opportunities to meet the needs of current and future generations. Further information on the objectives and Sport England's wider planning guidance can be found on its website: <https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/planning-for-sport>

The Proposal and Assessment against Sport England's Objectives and the NPPF

This application seeks outline planning consent for new playing fields on 2.7 hectares of land to the south of New Town Road, Haddenham.

The East Cambs Playing Pitch Strategy (2020) identified a need for additional sports pitches in Haddenham, particularly for youth/mini football, and also identified the existing pitches at Haddenham Recreation Ground as being of poor quality. Some Haddenham teams therefore have to travel to pitches outside the village. Haddenham Rovers Colts FC run 12 teams at mini/youth level but have to use pitches at Wilburton Recreation Ground to meet their needs. They also use Haddenham Primary School. The need to improve Haddenham Recreation Ground is a high priority within the PPS, as is the need for additional pitches in Haddenham.

The application is only outline at this stage, and shows indicative pitch markings as well as additional car parking and a small pavilion.

I have noted that there are concerns from local residents regarding this application, with regard to additional traffic along New Town Road, and the loss of part of the pocket park at the southern end of this road.

By providing new pitches that could help address established local playing pitch deficiencies, the proposal would meet objective 3, and therefore Sport England supports this application in principle, though we accept that the use of this land would cause problems for local residents on match days.

Sport England recommends that a ground conditions assessment is undertaken by a sports turf specialist/agronomist who can recommend a scheme for preparing the playing fields to the required specification. The recommended scheme should then be implemented. Detailed guidance on the issues that require consideration is set out in Sport England's guidance 'Natural Turf for Sport', and .

A copy of this guidance can be found at:

<https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/design-and-cost-guidance/outdoor-surfaces>

As the application is only in outline form, full details of site layout, pitch markings, pavilion details etc would need to be approved at reserved matters stage, if the application is approved.

Conclusion

This being the case, Sport England offers its support for this this application, as it is considered to meet Objective 3 as set out above.

Sport England recommends, based on our assessment, that if the Council is minded to approve the application, the following planning conditions should be imposed.

1. No development shall take place unless and until:
 - a. A detailed assessment of ground conditions of the land proposed for the new playing field land shall be undertaken (including drainage and topography) to identify constraints which could affect playing field quality; and
 - b. Based on the results of this assessment to be carried out pursuant to (a) above of this condition, a detailed scheme to ensure that the playing fields will be provided to an acceptable quality (including appropriate drainage where necessary) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority after consultation with Sport England.

The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme within a timescale to be first approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority after consultation with Sport England.

*Reason: To ensure that site surveys are undertaken for new or replacement playing fields and that any ground condition constraints can be and are mitigated to ensure provision of an adequate quality playing field and to accord with LP Policy ***

2. The playing field/artificial grass pitch shall be used for Outdoor Sport and for no other purpose (including without limitation any other purpose in Class D2 Use Classes Order 2005, or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification).

*Reason: To protect the [playing field/artificial grass pitch] from loss and/or damage, to maintain the quality of and secure the safe use of sports pitch/es and to accord with LP Policy **.*

3. Prior to the bringing into use of the playing fields a Management and Maintenance Scheme for the facility including management responsibilities, a maintenance schedule and a mechanism for review shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority after consultation with Sport England.

Reason: To ensure that new facility/ies is capable of being managed and maintained to deliver a [facility] which is fit for purpose, sustainable and to ensure sufficient

*benefit of the development to sport (National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) para 97) and to accord with LP Policy ***

If you wish to amend the wording of the recommended condition(s), or use another mechanism in lieu of the condition(s), please discuss the details with the undersigned. Sport England does not object to amendments to conditions, provided they achieve the same outcome and we are involved in any amendments.

The absence of an objection to this application, in the context of the Town and Country Planning Act, cannot be taken as formal support or consent from Sport England or any National Governing Body of Sport to any related funding application, or as may be required by virtue of any pre-existing funding agreement.

If this application is to be presented to a Planning Committee, we would like to be notified in advance of the publication of any committee agendas, report(s) and committee date(s). We would be grateful if you would advise us of the outcome of the application by sending us a copy of the decision notice”.

Parks And Open Space - 28 October 2020- “I think all should be ok (in relation to the ditch along Bury Lane), as I have access from the track way to maintain the ditch. Is the POS going to the parish, if its likely to come to us, we will need access from adopted roads to enter the POS”.

Local Highways Authority - 20 October 2020- “The highways authority has the following comments on the proposal:

- This application is for all matters reserved. As such the access with New Town Road and the internal arrangement is to be determined at a later date and I therefore can only comment on the broader highways impacts
- New Town Road is a narrow residential street with no parking restrictions and high levels on-street parking occupation. There is no current enforceable powers to restrict parking on either side of the road and therefore the access road to this development is in my opinion unsuitable
- It is likely that coaches will be required to gain access to these facilities. However, given the above New Town Road is not suitable for such vehicles. If permitted it is likely that coaches will have to park on A1123 / West End which will obstruct the free flow of traffic and be detrimental to highways safety
- The shown internal parking layout has no turning or parking for coaches and therefore is not suitable for its proposed use. The access has no measurements so I am unable to determine if this would be suitable for all sized vehicles required
- ECDC as the parking authority and should make sure during the reserve matters stage that there is adequate parking and turning on site for a facility all required parking and vehicles sizes. New Town Road appears to have no additional or limited on-street parking capacity.

On balance and given the information submitted it is my opinion that New Town Road is not suitable for the numbers and vehicle type of use that would be required to facilitate this development”.

Local Highways Authority – 27 October 2020- “This is an outline application with all matters reserved so there is very little to comment on. Bury Lane was not shown

as vehicle access? This is also just a single track un-metalled road. If this was to be used it would have to be made up to a two way adoptable road with footways. I cannot provide comments on everything that has not been included and that is outside of the application and the approval sort. I don't believe that the New Town Road is suitable or there is enough room internally to provide the parking needed. In my opinion there would be a negative impact on the highway if permitted. However, I can only advise you on what I believe to be the impacts to the highway and on what has been submitted".

Local Highways Authority- 3 November 2020- "New Town Road is not suitable as an access road to a sports facility of this size and the number and sizes of vehicles that will be needed for it to function as such. Bury Lane might be ok but this application does not seek access arrangements. This is really more of an amenity issue at this stage as there is not enough information associated with all matters reserved access to properly consider all of the impacts to the highways. Personally I do not think this is the correct application type for this kind of development and a full application should have been submitted".

Cambridge Ramblers Association - No Comments Received

Haddenham Parish Council - No Comments Received as they are the applicant.

Ward Councillors – Councillor Wilson- "I have been asked by the Parish Council to call in this application, because we feel that the Highways objection is based on a misunderstanding of the use by our children's football teams. As this project is already part of East Cambs Sporting Strategy and we are already fairly sure of a Football Foundation grant of up to £750,000 to help pay for football pitches and pavilion on the only flat field that we have been able to find after a three year search in Haddenham. Haddenham has 13 youth teams but only three pitches".

5.2 Neighbours – A total of 49 neighbouring properties were notified and the responses received are summarised below. A full copy of the responses are available on the Council's website.

31 New Town Road- Objection- Concerns for parking on New Town Road and the number of parking spaces (30) proposed given the number that three football matches would generate- everyone will drive. Concerns for queuing on the A1123 and space available on New Town Road. Concerns for noise and loss of privacy, anti-social behaviour and flood lights. Concerns for the loss of pocket park, concerns for biodiversity, planting and flooding.

6 Mill Yard- Objection- Concerns for parking on New Town Road and the number of parking spaces (30) proposed given the number that three football matches would generate- everyone will drive. Concerns for queuing on the A1123 and space available on New Town Road. Concerns for noise and loss of privacy, anti-social behaviour and flood lights. Concerns for the loss of pocket park, concerns for biodiversity, planting and flooding (same letter as 31 New Town Road).

17 New Town Road- Objection- Concerns for access. No public consultation event has taken place from the Parish Council. Concerns for biodiversity, emergency services having access, anti-social behaviour, noise pollution, light pollution (flood

lights). Concerns for highway safety along the A1123 and New Town Road. Cycling is not possible along New Town Road. Concern for the loss of pocket park as open space.

The Ark Baby and Toddler Group, Aldreth Village Centre- Objection- Concerns for the loss of pocket park as a green space, concerns for biodiversity. Increase in traffic New Town Road is unsuitable for the increase in traffic this proposal will bring. No public consultation from the Parish Council has taken place. Access should be provided from Bury Lane to the south.

18 New Town Road- Objection- Traffic relation concerns, significant concerns for the loss of pocket park and open space, there will be more than 30 vehicles needing to park and New Town Road is not suitable to support to level of cars as a result of the recreational ground on match days and training. Concerns for biodiversity loss and loss of species.

19 West End- Objection- Concerns for land ownership. Any alteration to the maintenance, surface or layout of Bury Lane will have serious and unacceptable consequences on the access to as well as the safety and security of all the land adjacent to Bury Lane. Concerns for flooding and drainage, concerns for trees, wildlife and biodiversity at pocket park. Concerns for noise pollution.

27 New Town Road- Objection- Pocket park is an established green space used by a lot of people, concerns for the noise impacts.

38 Aldreth Road- Objection- Concerns for historic views in Haddenham, concerns for species in pocket park, loss of habitat. Bury land junction is unsuitable for amount of traffic, light pollution from flood lights, antisocial behaviour, noise pollution in evening.

11 New Town Road- Objection- Concerns for the loss of pocket park and wildlife, increase in traffic to a small road, concerns for access.

30 New Town Road- Objection- Concerns for biodiversity, surface water, concerns for the loss of pocket park. Concerns for increase in traffic, level of parking proposed, highway safety and no cycle facilities. Council have chosen pocket park access rather than upgrading Bury Lane due to the costs. No public consultation event to get residents views on access options.

32 New Town Road- Objection- Loss of privacy, congestion, loss of trees, loss of wildlife, loss of pocket park.

50 High Street- Objection- Concerns for disruption to wildlife and many species including bats and badgers- no details in the planning submission in relation to biodiversity and net gain. Concerns for surface water drainage and flooding.

6 Tunbridge Lane- Objection- Newtown Road is a narrow, quiet cul-de-sac, with many cars already parking on the street – as there is not space width-ways for a car outside each house, we often have to park outside other peoples' houses, and the access can be greatly hindered when delivery vehicles, refuse collection lorries or emergency service vehicles are needed. Concerns for loss of pocket park and

wildlife. 30 car parking spaces if not sufficient for the number of pitches, access arrangements are unclear. Should alternative access not be made, all construction vehicles will have to access the recreational area through Newtown Road – this road is simply not suitable for such heavy traffic.

27 New Town Road- Objection- Concerns for the loss of pocket park, the proposal does not comply with COM4 of the Local Plan 2015. This not an accessible location, a significant level of traffic will be generated, no Transport Impact Assessment has been submitted, New Town Road is not suitable to the increase in traffic, inadequate parking facilities will put pressure on New Town Road. The proposals will have a huge impact on the character and appearance of the area. No public consultation has been carried out. Concerns for biodiversity, trees and habitats. The application is not supported by sufficient evidence. “This planning application should be refused as it is contrary to Policies COM3, COM4, ENV1, ENV2, ENV7, COM7 and COM8 of the ECDC Local Plan due to the inadequate road access, unacceptable impact upon traffic safety and parking issues, adverse and significant change of landscape character of the edge of the settlement and the loss of Pocket Park which is an important village open space. Additionally, increased noise, disturbance, loss of privacy, and emissions will all affect my enjoyment of my property adversely. These issues will all worsen further if future development as envisioned is proceeded with. These impacts cannot be mitigated against by planning conditions given the nature of the development. The Pocket Park is a well established village green space, and should be considered as such with regard to losing it to become access for the recreational ground. Not only does the park have an important social role for residents, it also contains many wildlife habitats and species, some of which are protected or endangered. There are also significant environmental impacts to consider both in the loss of at least a large section of the park, and the change in use of the field from agricultural to recreational land. In my view, no exceptional circumstances have been submitted which warrant a loss of our Pocket Park”.

6 Hinton Way- Objection- New Town Road is not suitable nor is Bury Lane. No public consultation has been undertaken by the Parish Council.

43 West End- Objection- The land is not suitable for football pitches, safety of access and along New Town Road. Concerns for the loss of pocket park, concerns for biodiversity and wildlife.

43 Aldreth Road- Supportive- Fully support the need for the facility and the essential need for the Colts Football Club which supports 200 children in the village, sport is essential for health and mental wellbeing.

9 Metcalf Way- Supportive- Should encourage sport and healthy activities, the facility will be an asset to the community.

29a Lode Way- Supportive- Haddenham Rove has around 200 children participating and 75 volunteers, benefits of football for children, there is a need for the facility.

44 Duck Lane- Supportive- The proposal will provide a much needed facility.

6.0 The Planning Policy Context

6.1 East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015

GROWTH 2	Locational strategy
GROWTH 5	Presumption in favour of sustainable development
ENV 1	Landscape and settlement character
ENV 2	Design
ENV 7	Biodiversity and geology
ENV 8	Flood risk
ENV 9	Pollution
COM 4	New community facilities
COM 7	Transport impact
COM 8	Parking provision

6.2 Supplementary Planning Documents

Design Guide
Flood and Water
Natural Environments
Contamination

6.3 National Planning Policy Framework 2019

8	Promoting healthy and safe communities
9	Promoting sustainable transport
11	Making effective use of land
12	Achieving well designed places
14	Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
15	Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

7.0 PLANNING COMMENTS

The main planning considerations relate to the principle of development, the impact upon character and appearance of the area, residential amenity, highways safety and parking provision, flood risk, drainage and biodiversity.

7.1 **Principle of Development**

7.2 The need for the scheme has been clearly demonstrated by the applicant. Haddenham has a Youth Football Academy with 11 teams and an adult club with 2 Men's teams. They share the two current pitches on the Parish's existing recreation ground. The recreation ground is also shared with the cricket club and this creates additional issues due to overlapping seasons. Despite the football clubs utilising Haddenham's Primary School pitch, 6 out of the 11 Academy teams have to source pitches in other villages and Haddenham Parish Council have advised that is becoming increasingly difficult year on year with increasing demand. Haddenham Parish Council is therefore keen to ensure that memberships do not drop as a result of the lack of space and facilities within the village.

7.3 In terms of the principle of development, Policy COM4 of the Local Plan 2015 is relevant and states as follows:

Proposals for new or improved community facilities should be located within settlement boundaries wherever possible. In exceptional circumstances facilities may be permitted in the countryside, where there is a lack of suitable and available land within settlements, or where a rural location is required.

Proposals for all new or improved community facilities should:

- *Be well located and accessible to its catchment population (including by foot and cycle).*
- *Not have a significant adverse impact (itself or cumulatively) in terms of the scale or nature of traffic generated.*
- *Not have a significant adverse impact on the character of the locality, or the amenity of nearby properties.*
- *Demonstrate that opportunities to maximise shared use have been explored; and*
- *Be designed to facilitate future adaptation for alternative community uses or shared use.*

7.4 While the site is not located within the settlement boundary of Haddenham, it is clear that there are no other suitable or available sites within the development envelope of Haddenham that would be able to facilitate the proposed recreational ground and football pitches. It is also considered that the site would be well located to its catchment population given that there is existing access from Bury Lane and the site is located directly to the south of Pocket Park. Therefore, the most appropriate foot and cycle links are from New Town Road leading into Pocket Park to access the site. Therefore, in relation to the first requirement of Policy COM4 of the Local Plan 2015, the facility would be well located.

7.5 In terms of traffic generation, Haddenham Parish Council have noted that the football pitches will be used Saturdays and Sundays during the football season and evenings for training when daylight permits and occasionally during the week for other activities such as “walking” football or exercise classes and other clubs for example Archery. During the pre-application stages County Highways commented in relation to the proposals that advised that “the proposal will create a significant demand for parking which unless sufficient dedicated parking is provided is likely to be displaced onto adjacent streets. While this may not have safety issues, it is likely to have a detrimental impact on the amenity of adjacent streets”. The matter of highways safety, access and car parking is addressed further below.

7.6 In relation to the impact upon the character and appearance of the locality and neighbour amenity, this would depend on the extent of development above the change of use of the land in isolation- which given that the application is for Outline Planning Consent, these details are indicative. Nonetheless, given the distances retained to the settlement boundary and New Town Road to the north of the application site, it does not appear that the proposed football pitches would result in significant harm to visual amenity. Moreover, given the distances retained to neighbouring dwellinghouses, the proposed development does not appear to result in harm to neighbour amenity. However, these matters are fully addressed below.

7.7 It is considered that the proposed development would not conflict with the last two points of the policy wording. As expressed above, while several of the requirements of Policy COM4 are met in relation to the location of the proposed recreational ground, others are not and therefore the principle of the development is not considered to be acceptable in relation to the scale and nature of traffic generated.

7.8 **Visual Amenity**

7.9 In terms of visual amenity, Policy ENV2 of the Local Plan 2015 requires proposals to ensure that location, layout, scale, form, massing, materials and colour relate sympathetically to the surrounding area and each other. The full details of the visual appearance, layout and scale have not been included within the application and would need to be assessed at reserved matters stage.

7.10 In terms of visual amenity, the application site is located within the open countryside and is surrounded by agricultural fields. Given this openness within the surrounding landscape any large buildings may result in visual harm to the countryside setting. The size, scale and location of the proposed changing room is not known; however a modestly sized building would not result in significant harm to visual amenity. Moreover, the provision of three football pitches alone are not considered to result in a significant degree of harm to visual amenity. The proposal is set back from the road well away from housing and the existing properties in New Town Road are screened from the development by the large mature hedge on the Boundary of Pocket Park with the new site.

7.11 Any lighting would need to be carefully assessed, however the applicant has expressed that they do not envisage floodlighting to the pitches on the site in this phase. Moreover, the applicant has expressed that they will provide 3m high (probably weld mesh or similar fencing) to the boundary with the rest of the field and as necessary behind goals and other areas as necessary to stop balls leaving the pitch/grounds. However, with detailed matters not being considered and the extent of the proposals unclear, it is difficult to fully assess the visual impact of fences within the application site.

7.12 The proposed change of use of the land in isolation from agricultural land to recreational land would not be significantly harmful to the rural character and appearance of the area. Therefore, the proposed recreational ground in this location could generally conform to the aims and objectives of Policy ENV2 of the Local Plan 2015 on these points alone and there is certainly enough space within the site for the desired use.

7.13 **Residential Amenity**

7.14 Policy ENV2 of the East Cambridgeshire District Council's Local Plan 2015 states that proposals should ensure that there are no significantly detrimental effects on the residential amenity of nearby occupiers. There is more than sufficient distance between the indicative recreational ground layout and the neighbouring occupiers at Aldreth Road to the east and New Town Road to the north of the application site. These distances are considered sufficient to prevent overlooking or overshadowing impacts to neighbouring occupiers and it has been demonstrated that there is

sufficient room within the application site to achieve an acceptable layout for a recreational ground. The full impact of the proposed dwelling on the residential amenity of nearby occupiers would be assessed at reserved matters stage once all of the details are submitted.

- 7.15 The applicant has stated in their submission that they do not envisage floodlighting to the pitches on the site in this phase. However, this could be provided as part of a Reserved Matters Application or Discharge of Condition submission. The introduction of flood lighting may be detrimental to the character and appearance of the area and to residential amenity to the southern dwellings on New Town Road.
- 7.16 Environmental Health have not objected in relation to noise pollution. As such it would be unreasonable to object to the development on the issue of potential noise pollution to residents as a result of the proposed recreation ground. However, with so many unknowns this may affect the future layout of the proposed scheme if the application was to be approved. In terms of the impact to residential amenity as a result of traffic generation, these matters are further discussed below.
- 7.17 **Highway Safety and Car Parking**
- 7.18 The proposed means of access is reserved for future consideration. However, in order to access whether the principle of the development is acceptable, the proposed development must comply with Policy COM4 of the Local Plan 2015 which states that proposals for new community facilities should not have a significant adverse impact (itself or cumulatively) in terms of the scale or nature of traffic generated or upon residential amenity.
- 7.19 Policy COM7 of the Local Plan 2015 requires applications to provide safe and convenient access to the highway network and provide a comprehensive network of routes, giving priority for walking and cycling. Furthermore, Policy COM7 states that development proposals shall be capable of accommodating the level/type of traffic generated without detriment to the local highway network and the amenity, character or appearance of the locality.
- 7.20 During the earlier pre-application discussion, Officers informally consulted County Highways in relation to the proposed development and they raised concern in relation to parking provision and the amenity of local residents given the influx of vehicles in the surrounding streets. Any discussions between Haddenham Parish Council and County Highways since the pre-application advice was issued and the submission of the current application are not known to Officers.
- 7.21 As expressed in the earlier part of this report, the applicants have provided options within their red line plan in relation to access arrangements to serve the recreational ground. There are potentially two options for vehicular access; via New Town Road off the A1123 through Pocket Park, or the second option would be via Bury Lane and into the field through an existing gate access. The applicants have stated that “it is intended that consultation will be carried out with residents as to the preferred access once outline permission has been granted”. As such, it is not clear whether both accesses are proposed to be used to serve the site.

- 7.22 On consultation with County Highways several concerns have been raised in relation to broader highway safety matters, as specific details relating to access are currently not being considered. Their objections relate primarily to New Town Road not being suitable for the numbers and vehicle type of use that would be required to facilitate this development. While the applicant has expressed that no coaches would need to access the facility, County Highways have maintained their objections to the proposed development. As such, County Highways consider that New Town Road is not suitable as an access road to a sports facility of this size and the number and sizes of vehicles that will be needed for it to function. While County Highways expressed that Bury Lane might be a feasible option, this option was not preferable at pre-application stage by Highways or Officers given that this is a single track. Moreover, the applicant has expressed that Bury Lane is a Private Green lane and they would not want to upgrade it to the adoptable standard suggested by County Highways. As expressed there are many unknowns with the current application, with one of the main issues being the level of information provided. Whether Pocket Park or Bury Lane will be used as the key access point is not clear, however the significant number of third party comments relating to highway safety, access, capacity and car parking in relation to the use of New Town Road have been carefully reviewed and noted.
- 7.23 Overall, County Highways have expressed as part of their consultation that the proposed development would be a negative impact on the highway if permitted. They have also expressed that this is really more of a capacity and amenity issue at this stage as there is not enough information associated with all matters reserved access to properly consider all of the impacts to the highways. Therefore, the proposed development is not considered to comply with the aims of Policy COM4 of the Local Plan 2015 in terms of the scale or nature of traffic generated or upon residential amenity. As such, Officers consider that any further intensification of use of this road will become a serious amenity issue for residents.
- 7.24 As already expressed, Policy COM7 states that development proposals shall be capable of accommodating the level/type of traffic generated without detriment to the local highway network and the amenity, character or appearance of the locality. In the views of the Local Highway Authority, the level of traffic generated by the proposed development cannot be safely accommodated and it would cause significant detrimental harm to traffic movement on the public highway, as there is a high probability that it will overburden the capacity of New Town Road. The application is therefore considered to be contrary to Policy COM7 of the Local Plan 2015.
- 7.25 In relation to car parking, Officers are content that there is sufficient space within the application site to accommodate 30 cars. While the layout of the development is reserved for future consideration, the indicative layout demonstrates that adequate parking and turning could be provided on site to serve the proposed recreational ground and this is considered to comply with Policy COM8 of the Local Plan 2015. However, with this being a layout issue it would be for any future reserved matters to consider and provide adequate parking spaces for motor vehicles and cycles in order for the scheme to comply with Policy COM8 of the Local 2015.
- 7.26 **Flood Risk and Drainage**

- 7.27 The site is located in Flood Zone 1 where the principle of development is considered acceptable in terms of Flood Risk. A scheme for the disposal of foul and surface water drainage can be secured by condition to ensure that a suitable scheme is proposed which prevents the increased risk of flooding and improves and protects water quality, in accordance with policies ENV2 and ENV8 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015.
- 7.28 **Biodiversity**
- 7.29 Paragraph 170(d) of the NPPF advises that development proposals should minimise impacts on biodiversity and secure net gain. Additionally, the paragraph discusses the importance of establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures. Paragraph 175(d) advise that opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements should be encouraged, stating that development should be supported where the primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity. Policy ENV7 of the Local Plan 2015 seeks to maximise opportunities for creation, restoration, enhancement and connection of natural habitats as an integral part of development proposals, seeking to deliver a net gain in biodiversity proportionate to the scale of development. Policy ENV 7 also states that all applications for development that may affect biodiversity and geology interests must be accompanied by sufficient information to be determined by the Local Planning Authority, including an ecological report, to allow potential impacts and possible mitigation measures to be assessed fully. It also states that all development will be required to protect the biodiversity and geological value of land and buildings and minimise harm to or loss of environmental features, such as trees, hedgerows, woodland, wetland and ponds. Policy ENV7 goes on to state that Where there is reason to suspect the presence of protected species, trees and woodland, applications must be accompanied by a survey carried out by a qualified individual assessing their presence and, if present, the proposal must be sensitive to, and make provision for, their needs, in accordance with the relevant protecting legislation.
- 7.30 The Council adopted its Natural Environment SPD on the 24th September 2020 to help make sure new development in East Cambridgeshire both protects the current natural environment, but also creates new areas for wildlife to thrive. Furthermore, the Natural Environment SPD also seeks for biodiversity net gain under policy NE6. Under policy NE9 of the Natural Environment SPD, new planting must be an integral part of the design of a development rather than as an afterthought. Native new planting should be provided that reflects the local character and a suitable species mix should be provided that helps to promote a wide range of biodiversity and contribute to enhancing green infrastructure.
- 7.31 As layout is not being agreed, the impact upon habitats and biodiversity is difficult to review. As noted above, there are significant unknowns given that this is an Outline Planning Application. While the proposed recreational use in relation to the proposed football pitches alone may have a limited impact upon biodiversity, the buildings/changing room and parking areas may have more of substantial impact. While Officers have visited the site and did not see any substantial biodiversity issues, the number of third party comments associated with the loss of habitats, species and biodiversity have been reviewed and acknowledged. It has been reported that the

application site is high in ecological potential and potentially in the presence of protected species. Therefore, the ecological impacts of the proposed development cannot be fully assessed as no ecology survey has been provided with the application. Without such surveys it is not possible for the concerns raised to be overcome and without this level of information it is unknown if the proposed development will have a determinantal impact on biodiversity in the local area. All proposals are required to provide mitigation measures and to lead to deliver a net gain in biodiversity proportionate to the scale of development.

7.32 The proposal therefore fails to adequately demonstrate that there would not be any significant harm caused to ecology, contrary to policies ENV1 and ENV7 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 and the Natural Environments SPD.

7.33 **Trees**

7.34 In relation to trees, the Trees Officers have reviewed the proposals and have advised that any access from New Town Road should ideally use as much of the existing track that provides access to the pumping station, this would significantly reduce to amount of tree lost to enable this development as illustrated on the plan below. They also advised that conditioning a soft landscaping scheme to include suitable mitigation planting and screening to aid the integration of this development into the surrounding landscape and reduce noise and light pollution will be advantageous. The Applicant has stated in their submission that a tree planting scheme and/or any screening requirements will be carried out at the recommendations of ECDC Tree Officer. As such, it is considered that the requirements of Policy ENV7 of the Local Plan 2015 in relation to trees can be complied with subject to relevant conditions.

7.35 **Planning Balance**

7.36 The Outline Planning Application route was chosen by the applicant while they undertake public consultation and to agree the scheme with the Cambridge Football Association. The Outline Application seeks planning permission for the change of use of the application site from agricultural to recreational land for the provision of 3 new football pitches, access road and parking to provide for the increased demand within the village. There is no denying the need for the proposed development and there is support from the Councils Community and Leisure Services and Sport England. Comments were not received from the Cambridgeshire Football Association.

7.37 The application site is well related to the defined settlement envelope and is considered to be within a sustainable location. Furthermore, the proposed development would not cause any significant detrimental impacts to visual amenity however this would be further assessed as Reserved Matters Stage.

7.38 However, on balance, it is considered that these benefits do not outweigh the significant and demonstrable harm which would be caused in relation to capacity

and amenity issues of the public highway along New Town Road. Policy COM7 states that development proposals shall be capable of accommodating the level/type of traffic generated without detriment to the local highway network and the amenity, character or appearance of the locality. Policy COM4 of the Local Plan 2015 states that proposals for new community facilities should not have a significant adverse impact (itself or cumulatively) in terms of the scale or nature of traffic generated or upon residential amenity.

7.39 The level of traffic generated by the proposed development cannot be safely accommodated and would cause significant detrimental harm to traffic movement on the public highway, as there is a high probability that it will overburden the capacity of New Town Road. The application is therefore considered to be contrary to Policy COM4 and COM7 of the Local Plan 2015.

7.40 Finally, the proposed application site may contain protected species. However, no ecology report has been submitted with the application and therefore the ecological impacts of the proposed development cannot be fully assessed. The application is therefore considered to be contrary to Policies ENV1, ENV2 and ENV7 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 and the Natural Environments SPD, as it has not demonstrated how biodiversity impacts will be mitigated and a net gain secured.

7.41 For these reasons the application is recommended for refusal.

<u>Background Documents</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Officer(s)</u>
20/00880/OUT	Emma Barral Room No. 011 The Grange Ely	Emma Barral Planning Officer 01353 665555 emma.barral@eastc ams.gov.uk

National Planning Policy Framework -

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf

East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 -

<http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Local%20Plan%20April%202015%20-%20front%20cover%20and%20inside%20front%20cover.pdf>