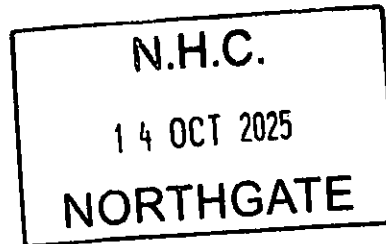




Pirton Sports and Social Club Ltd.

www.pirtonssc.co.uk



Please reply to:
The Old Post Office
6 Great Green
Pirton, Hitchin
SG5 3QD

Attn. Ben Glover
Planning Dept.
North Hertfordshire District Council

9th October 2025

Re: Application Ref. 25/02064/OP
Land Adjacent to 10 Hambridge Way, Pirton

Dear Mr Glover,

Pirton Sports and Social Club Ltd. ("PSSC") are the operator of the Pavilion and the Recreation Ground and arrange the many recreational, sporting and community events that take place there. These are very important facilities for the village and the surrounding area and include a Multi Use Games Area with two Tennis Courts, 4 football pitches, a cricket pitch and a large children's play area. The overall size of the Recreation Ground has not changed in the hundred years since this was first secured for the village, notwithstanding the significant increase in demand for its use over that time and the expansion of the village.

A new Pavilion is currently under construction and is due for completion early next year to replace the original dated Pavilion.

Numerous community and social events take place at the Pavilion and on the Recreation Ground including a large Fireworks Display, Boxing Day Run, Summer Fair, BrewFest, Car Show and regular social and community events.

The sporting facilities are heavily used with 14 football teams being based there with around 265 players from youth to Veterans (including 170 youth players). The Cricket and Tennis Clubs are also very active, providing facilities for both adults and youth players.

The Recreation Ground provides an important open space for the village and is popular and well used for informal recreational activities.

The new Pavilion will allow for significantly increased activities and provides the focus for the future enhancements to the Recreation Ground that the PSSC would like to undertake to meet

Registered in England; Company No, 16597334.

Registered Office: c/o Streets, Suite B1 Building 210, Butterfield, Great Marlings, Luton, Bedfordshire, LU2 8DL

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the needs of the village, particularly following the recent housing developments, but also to meet the requirements of the Football Foundation Grant of around half a million pounds for the Pavilion and the increasing importance of fitness and activities for the mental and physical health of our Community.

The proposed development area is outside the village boundary and adjoins the northern boundary of the Recreation Ground. This area currently comprises 2 grassland meadows.

Our activities are therefore currently unrestricted by the meadows, which not only provide an attractive setting for the grounds, but also provide a logical area for the future expansion of our playing areas which would be considered in the future plans for Pirton. We are therefore concerned over the proposed development and believe that any consideration of the application is premature until our comments have been fully considered and addressed in any planning application and the required conditions, S106 and landowner agreements concluded.

We object to the current application and request refusal, as it does not meet the community's needs, there is insufficient mitigation of its impact and it does not comply with planning requirements.

We summarise our comments below:

1. Access and Highway Safety.

No improvements are provided to the Recreation Ground access. An unrestricted Full Highway and Pedestrian access is required from the Development area to the Recreation Ground.

The existing access to the Recreation Ground is restricted to a one way route and the adjacent access of Cotman End causes significant confusion and safety concerns. Any increased use of Cotman End to give access to the new proposed development will only compound this.

Discussions with landowners to improve this in the past have not reached a satisfactory conclusion and we still only have a single-track access at present. We consider this is critical to allow consideration of any development on the Meadows and is also crucial to the future financial success of the Pavilion project and the PSSC. A vehicular access to the Recreation Ground could easily be provided from the new proposed road with minimal impact on the development.

2. Provision of a Youth Football Pitch in the development area.

Further playing areas are required to meet the need for younger players and particularly for Girls', Women's, Mixed Ability and Informal games to meet the requirements for the Club's growth as set out by the Football Foundation as part of their Grant conditions. Our existing pitches (and car parking at the Recreation Ground) are fully committed at weekends.

A suitable pitch is approximately 90 x 55 yards and we believe that a provision could be made for this on land adjoining the existing playing fields in the development area.

3. Provision of Public Car Parking.

We believe that a provision for 30 spaces in the development area adjoining the Recreation Ground and new pitch is achievable. This would reflect the increased use of the grounds and will also allow the cricket provision to be enhanced (as recommended by the England & Wales Cricket Board).

At present when the Recreation Ground car park is full, there are a considerable number of cars parked on the adjoining roads. The provision of additional parking spaces would significantly reduce the pressure for on-street parking, which is a major issue and safety concern.

4. Appropriate Community Benefits.

The Pirton Parish Council (PPC) and the PSSC are building the new Recreation Ground Pavilion at a total cost of £1,400,000 (One million, four hundred thousand pounds), including a loan obtained from the Public Works Loan Board by the PPC of £400,000 (four hundred thousand pounds).

A Section 106 contribution of £365,000 (three hundred and sixty five thousand pounds) is required for the Pavilion and the future recreational plans for the recreation ground.

These would include:

- A. Future operation of new youth football pitch and other football initiatives.
- B. Racquet sports: New Padel and Pickleball courts.
- C. A Revised Cricket boundary and new hard wicket.
- D. Fitness and sporting equipment for use at the Pavilion and Recreation Ground.
- E. Outdoor exercise circuit.
- F. Improved access, landscaping, lighting, car carking and Pavilion enhancement.
- G. Enhancement and extension of play area.
- H. Refurbishment or replacement of the basketball court.
- I. Enhancement of drainage to the Recreation Ground.
- J. Supporting activities for all, but particularly for girls, women, elderly, disabled, etc..

5. Drainage and Infrastructure.

We have worked very hard to improve the drainage and overall condition of the Recreation Ground. Since 2020, the Football Foundation has provided around £30,000 for the improvement of the area under its Grass Pitch Improvement Scheme. The village football club (Lea Sports PSG) has matched this amount, resulting in verdant, weed-free pitches.

Any deterioration in drainage in the area will have a serious impact on the football club's ability to use the pitches, particularly through the winter months, which is unacceptable. So it is essential that the drainage conditions on the Recreation Ground and its system of drainage ditches are not adversely impacted by the development.

Consideration should be given as to how the proposed development could add to the improvement of the drainage in this area of the village.

From the application information, it appears that drainage is proposed to run through the

private Eastern Ditch, which was recently re-dug with funding provided by the the PSSC, with the assistance of the arable land owner, to address drainage issues particularly along the eastern boundary of the Recreation Ground.

When Blakeney undertook their initial development of Cotman End, they used an existing ditch on Walnut Tree Road for drainage. This seems to have added to the stress on the system, which resulted in significant flooding of the road in Winter and presented a restriction on access to the Recreation Ground as well as safety issues in the village, so we are concerned on their current drainage proposals.

Other Infrastructure in this area of the village is also restricted: for example electricity supplies which have failed, drainage resulting in flooding and these should be addressed in the proposals.

6. Connected Pirton.

To improve access to the Recreation Ground for local residents, appropriate pedestrian connections across to Hambridge way are required. There is also the need for emergency vehicular access into the Recreation Ground from the proposed development via Hambridge Way.

7. A Revised Development Proposal illustrative plan is required.

This should include our requirements for the road access, car parking, pitch provision, pedestrian accesses and an assurance that there will be no impact on the activities taking place at the Recreation Ground and Pavilion.

This should increase distances of the houses from the Northern Boundary and ensure Drainage does not impact on the Recreation Ground and its established drainage routes.

Conclusion.

We therefore do not consider the proposed development to be appropriate and believe that any consideration of the application is premature until these proper planning requirements have been fully considered and addressed in any revised planning application, and the required conditions and Section 106 funding have been met and landowner agreements separately concluded, together with the other benefits outlined in our comments, to meet the community needs, mitigate the proposed development's impact and comply with the statutory requirements, for example the sports policy references in the adopted Local Plan as follows:

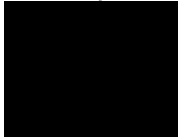
Strategic Objective SOC3: Improve access to, maintain and make provision for new facilities including community, sports, leisure, health and cultural facilities, that meet the needs of all North Hertfordshire's communities

Policy SP10 criterion b): Require appropriate levels of new community, cultural, leisure and built sport and recreation facilities to be provided in new development.

We therefore object to the current application and request refusal.

Regretfully, there has been no consultation with the PSSC by the developers of the Meadows. However, the PSSC is prepared to discuss with North Hertfordshire District Council, Pirton Parish Council and the Applicant our objections and possible solutions.

Yours sincerely,
Pirton Sports and Social Club Ltd.



Stephen Smith, B.Sc., CiLCA
Chairman

