

Pirton Parish Council



Parish Clerk:
Dr Janine Budd
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Mr Ben Glover,  
Planning Officer,  
NHDC,  
Gernon Road  
Letchworth Garden City  
14 August 2026

Dear Mr Glover

**Re: 25/02064/OP Land Adjacent to 10 Hambridge Way, Pirton**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the recently amended plans. We will also comment on the report of the North Herts Ecology Consultee, Liz Anderson.

Clearly, the applicant is trying to respond to comments which have asked for play space on the proposed development. Also, it seems that efforts are being made to make this development more connected to the village and other developments with the use of pedestrian accesses from Hambridge Way and into the Recreation Ground, as well as introducing "sight lines" across the development and into the Recreation Ground.

Integration of this development into the wider Pirton community is welcome; however, the proposals as they are come at an unacceptable environmental cost, as well as raising concerns about the potential for objections from new residents to activities on the Recreation Ground.

There is no indication that the important central hedgerow will be retained in part or at all. The applicant's own ecological reports highlight the importance of this central hedge to wildlife generally, but in particular to the astonishing variety of bat species that use the hedge for foraging and as a corridor out into the countryside. The NHDC Ecologist explains this clearly and we support their comments.

The additional pedestrian routes into and out of the site require the removal of parts of the remaining outer hedgerows, with, we are assuming, more needing to be removed to create the sightlines. Overall, the loss of biodiversity at 19% is totally unacceptable, particularly in a village that is, for the most part, a green village. Please see the Pirton Neighbourhood Plan Policies PNP 4 and 5 and the justification for them.

This loss of biodiversity is driven by the attempt to maintain 50 dwellings on the site. As you know, the Pirton Neighbourhood Plan limits the number of dwellings on any one site to 30. We have raised this before. Reducing the number of dwellings would enable a re-design of the site, the retention of the central hedgerow and the enlargement of gardens and open space, sufficient to enable the loss of outer hedgerow for pedestrian access and sightlines. We also support the conditions requested by Liz Anderson.

Regarding possible objections by new residents to activities on the Recreation Ground, we would suggest that a condition to any planning permission could require the applicant to ensure that all properties are subject to a covenant preventing objections to normal and reasonable activities on the Recreation Ground and the use of the Pirton Pavilion.

We are still concerned about the issue of drainage, and must maintain our objection whilst there remains a possibility that current plans may lead to flooding on the Recreation Ground. We are unsure of what is meant by "a dry attenuation feature". The proposal appears to be to channel surface water into the ditches surrounding the site; these ditches belong to and are maintained by the Pirton Parish Council or local farmers. These ditches can become dangerously full in

winter, and there is a likelihood that one or more will be overwhelmed if additional water is pumped into them from this site.

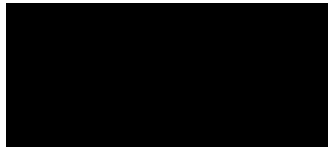
Access to the Recreation Ground:

When we asked for the extension of time to respond to this latest consultation, we mentioned that we were consulting the residents of Cotman End. This we have done. I attach a copy of their letter to the Parish Council.

We have previously raised the issue of access to the Recreation Ground using the current access/Right of Way for vehicular and pedestrian traffic. It is very close to the entrance to Cotman End. We remain concerned about the potential for confusion and accident as a result. It is not clear to us that Highways in their advice has addressed the planned increase in sporting and community activity resulting from the opportunities presented by the new pavilion. Any decision should be postponed to allow Highways to consider the new "reality" of expanded sport and community activity and the effect on traffic and safety..

Finally, attention is drawn to Pirton Development Plan policy PNP 9 of the Pirton Neighbourhood Plan – Community Facilities (paragraphs 9.1 and 9.3). These support the sustainment and enhancement of community and recreational facilities and the promotion of health and wellbeing, with a focus on facilities for young people. This application does not demonstrate that the Recreation Ground and Pavilion, as important community assets, would be protected from increased pressure arising from the development or from the risk that their lawful use could later be constrained by complaints from nearby residents. We have raised the issue before.

Yours sincerely,



Jill Rogers  
Chairman, Pirton Parish Council