



Pirton Sports and Social Club Ltd.

www.pirtonssc.co.uk

Please reply to:

The Old Post Office
6 Great Green
Pirton, Hitchin
SG5 3QD

Planning Dept.
North Herts District Council
planning.control@north-herts.gov.uk

23rd July 2026

**Ref: 25/02064/OP Land Adjacent to 10 Hambridge Way, Pirton
Pirton Parish Council Objection to Outline Planning**

We refer to the objections submitted by the Pirton Sports and Social Club Ltd ("PSSC") dated 9th October 2025. PSSC operates the Pavilion and the Recreation Ground on behalf of Pirton Parish Council ("PPC"). PSSC considers that the applicant has not addressed those concerns. The applicant had declined to meet PSSC and also the PPC to discuss the comments and those of the PPC. As you are aware, Alistair Strathern MP encouraged this to take place, but to no avail.

The PSSC therefore considers that the application should be refused.

If NHDC is nevertheless minded to grant planning permission, PSSC requests that the matters set out below, as proposed by PSSC, be secured by condition and/or section 106 obligation, as appropriate, together with others made in our other objections.

For the avoidance of doubt, PPSC considers that the proposal conflicts with the development plan and national policy and fails to demonstrate that its adverse impacts can be satisfactorily mitigated.

The proposal conflicts with Pirton Neighbourhood Plan Policy PNP1 – Meeting Local and Wider Needs (paragraph 1.2), which supports development of no more than 30 dwellings per site. At 50 dwellings, the scheme materially exceeds that threshold and correspondingly increases the likely impacts on infrastructure, recreation provision, drainage and residential amenity.

The proposal also conflicts with Pirton Neighbourhood Plan Policy PNP9 – Community Facilities (paragraph 9.3), which supports the protection and enhancement of community and recreational facilities and the promotion of health and wellbeing. The 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.

Registered in England; Company No, 16597334.

Registered Office: The Recreation Ground, Walnut Tree Road, Pirton, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG5 3PX

Chairman: Stephen Smith ■ 6 Great Green, Pirton, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG5 3QD
Secretary: Rosemary Manders ■ 10 Priors Hill, Pirton, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG5 3QA

For similar reasons, PSSC considers the proposal to be inconsistent with North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011–2031 Policy SP10 – Healthy Communities and Policy SP7 – Infrastructure Requirements and Developer Contributions, in that the application does not adequately provide for, or mitigate, the additional demands likely to be placed on local recreation infrastructure.

PSSC also considers the proposal contrary to paragraph 200 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024), as it has not been demonstrated that noise arising from occupation, and use of the adjoining Recreation Ground and Pavilion can be managed to an acceptable level without prejudicing the continued lawful use of those existing recreational facilities.

In relation to drainage, PSSC considers the proposal to conflict with North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011–2031 Policy NE7 – Reducing Flood Risk and paragraphs 181 and 182 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024). The submitted material does not demonstrate that the development would avoid adverse effects on the drainage, condition or usability of the adjoining Recreation Ground. PSSC notes that Turley’s response of 5th November addressed on-site drainage matters but did not resolve PSSC concerns regarding potential off-site effects on the Recreation Ground.

PSSC also considers the scheme to be inconsistent with North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011–2031 Policy CGB1 – Rural areas beyond the Green Belt, having regard to its scale, infrastructure implications, environmental effects, and relationship to the village and its facilities.

Accordingly PPC objects to the application and requests refusal.

If permission is nevertheless granted, it should not be issued unless the following matters are secured by condition and/or section 106 obligation:

1. Access from Cotman End to the Recreation Ground

The current access to the Recreation ground runs parallel to the existing Cotman End from Walnut Tree Road. The proposed development will create increase traffic risks and confusion to users.

With the existing long single track access to the Recreation Ground, a car meeting another vehicle has to reverse out either onto the road or back into the Recreation Ground creating a significant safety risk.

This also risks blocking emergency vehicle access to the sports field and also endangers pedestrian and cycle, sports or recreational users (particularly unaccompanied children walking or cycling to the playground or pitches).

The new development can resolve this by providing suitable vehicle access from Cotman End from within the new development area into the Recreation Ground. The existing Recreation Ground access owner, 19 Walnut Tree Road, is also prepared to consider amendments to the combined access to to give potential for a significantly improved and safer access for all parties, as we believe are the PPC.

A section 106 obligation should secure the provision and permanent retention of vehicle access from the extended Cotman End in the development area to the Recreation Ground, including

any necessary land rights and delivery mechanisms. This is necessary to ensure compliance with PNP11 paragraph 11.2, PNP12, PNP9, Policy SP10 and Policy SP7, and to provide safe and effective access to the Recreation Ground and connectivity between the development and an important village recreational facility.

2. Safeguarding land for a future sports hall and associated car parking

A planning condition should require the reserved matters layout to safeguard land for a future sports hall and associated car parking adjacent to the existing Pavilion and a section 106 obligation should secure any necessary rights and/or transfer of land.

This is necessary to ensure that the development does not prejudice the future delivery of community sports infrastructure and to address the requirements of Policy PNP9, Policy SP10 and Policy SP7.

3. Drainage impacts on the Recreation Ground

A planning condition should require the applicant to demonstrate, through appropriate technical evidence, that the development, including its drainage strategy, detailed design, construction and implementation, will not adversely affect the drainage, condition or usability of the Recreation Ground, and to implement any mitigation measures shown to be necessary.

Complete Hydraulic Separation is required. Sustainable Drainage Systems (such as attenuation basins or soakaways) must be fully contained, managed, and maintained within the spatial boundary of the application site. Under no circumstances should the adjoining Recreation Ground be utilized as an overspill zone for site drainage errors or heavy storm events, while still ensuring that the existing free and unrestricted surface and ground water drainage is protected from the whole Recreation Ground area into the development site.

This is required to address PSSC concerns regarding flooding, waterlogging and other off-site drainage impacts, and to ensure compliance with Policy NE7, paragraphs 181 and 182 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024), Policy PNP9, Policy SP7 and Policy SP10.

4. Noise impact, stand-off distance and protection of recreation use

The scheme fails to provide an adequate buffer zone to protect the sporting community and recreational facility, undermining the health and community objectives of Policy SP10.

Planning conditions should require:

- appropriate sound attenuation and sound insulation measures for residential units within at least 50 metres of the Pavilion; and
- a reserved matters requirements that ensures no dwellings are constructed within at least 25 metres of the southern boundary adjoining the Recreation Ground, and that the orientation, layout and glazing reflects the proximity of the Recreation Ground and Sports England guidance. Legal agreements should prevent any future objections from residents.

These measures are necessary to minimise the risk of noise conflict between future residents and existing lawful sporting and community activities, to protect residential amenity, and to

avoid placing unreasonable restrictions on the ongoing use of the Recreation Ground and Pavilion, consistent with paragraph 200 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024), Policy PNP9 and Policy SP10.

The proposed site comprises two meadows adjoining the Recreation Ground and have therefore imposed no restrictions on the activities - this must continue.

5. Section 106 contribution towards Recreation Ground enhancements

As part of the overall section 106 package, the Council should secure an appropriate financial contribution towards enhancements to the Recreation Ground and associated facilities. The Pirton Sports and Social Club has requested a contribution of £365,000 towards improvements and supports the principle of such a contribution, subject to the applicable statutory and policy tests and can review these with PPC and NHDC accordingly.

This is necessary to mitigate the increased demand arising from the development and is supported in principle by Policy PNP9, Policy SP7 and Policy SP10.

6. Youth pitch provision and plan-led consideration

The Pirton Sports and Social Club has proposed the provision of a youth pitch within the development area. Whilst that requirement is not currently reflected in the adopted Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan, as this site was not previously considered for development, PPC is preparing an update to the Neighbourhood Plan and PSSC intends to consider this and other recreational requirements through that process and that of the NHDC local plan .

PSSC therefore considers that the application is being promoted in advance of the proper plan-led assessment of the village's future recreation needs in relation to this site. If advanced then this requirement should also be included in the development.

The introduction of up to 50 residential properties immediately adjacent to an active, operational sports ground creates an irreconcilable conflict of use:

- **Amenity Conflict:** Future residents will be subject to established sports-ground realities, including evening training noise, floodlighting, whistle noise, and stray sports balls. The Recreation Ground is also a critical community facility. Regular social events with music take place inside the Pavilion and outside on the Recreation Ground itself. Major events include the Summer Fair, Brewfest and Fireworks Display. These are key community activities and fundamental to financially support the Recreation Ground and the new Pavilion.
- **Agent of Change Principle:** By placing sensitive residential receptors next to an active sporting asset, the development threatens the long-term operational viability, match schedules, and licensing of the existing sports clubs, as new residents may lodge future nuisance complaints.

Conclusion

For the reasons set out above, PSSC supports the objection by the PPC and considers that the proposal conflicts with:

- Pirton Neighbourhood Plan Policy PNP1 – Meeting Local and Wider Needs (paragraph 1.2);
- Pirton Neighbourhood Plan Policy PNP9 – Community Facilities (paragraph 9.3);
- North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011–2031 Policy SP7 – Infrastructure Requirements and Developer Contributions;
- North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011–2031 Policy SP10 – Healthy Communities;
- North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011–2031 Policy NE7 – Reducing Flood Risk;
- North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011–2031 Policy CGB1 – Rural areas beyond the Green Belt;
- National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) paragraphs 181 and 182; and
- National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) paragraph 200.

In summary, the application has not demonstrated that the proposed scale of development complies with the relevant planning policy framework. In particular, it has failed to provide sufficient evidence that adverse impacts on recreational facilities can be avoided, that drainage issues can be satisfactorily managed, or that noise and wider amenity impacts can be mitigated to an acceptable level. Accordingly, PSSC continues to object to the application and requests refusal accordingly.

PSSC (and we believe PPC) remains willing to engage constructively with the applicant and the Local Planning Authority to address these concerns. Should further information or amendments be submitted that satisfactorily demonstrate compliance with planning policy and adequately mitigate the identified impacts, PSSC would welcome the opportunity to review and reconsider its position.

Should the applicant wish to proceed we consider that appropriate conditions and S106 commitments can be agreed, as above, to allow the existing application to be determined.

I have copied this to the PPC, Alistair Strathern MP, Councillor Claire Strong and the Leader of NHDC so they are aware of the current position.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully
Pirton Sports and Social Club Ltd.



Stephen Smith, B.Sc., CiLCA
Chairman

chairman@pirtonssc.co.uk

