

Item No. 10

APPLICATION NUMBER	CB/15/01657/OUT
LOCATION	Samuel Whitbread Community College, Shefford Road, Clifton, Shefford, SG17 5QS
PROPOSAL	Outline Application: enhancement of sporting facilities including new '4G' floodlit pitch, tennis courts, improved grass pitches and new changing rooms. Construction of up to 64 new homes on land south west of the main school buildings and new access from Hitchin Road.
PARISH	Clifton
WARD	Arlesey
WARD COUNCILLORS	Cllrs Dalgarno, Shelvey & Wenham
CASE OFFICER	Alex Harrison
DATE REGISTERED	19 May 2015
EXPIRY DATE	18 August 2015
APPLICANT	Bedfordshire East Schools Trust
AGENT	Phillips Planning Services Limited
REASON FOR COMMITTEE TO DETERMINE	Change in 5 year housing land supply position. Parish Council objection to an application for major development
RECOMMENDED DECISION	Outline Application - Granted

Reason for Recommendation:

The proposal for residential development is within the settlement envelope and results in the loss of school playing field and designated Important Open Space. However the applicant has demonstrated that the scheme is compliant with policy DM5 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Document 2009 and has addressed replacement sporting provision concerns raised by Sport England. The proposal would have an impact on the character and appearance of the area however this impact is not considered to be of such significance that it is demonstrably harmful when considered against the benefits of the scheme. The proposed sports and leisure development is considered to provide an enhanced facility at Samuel Whitbread Academy that would enhance leisure facilities in the area as it would be available for community use which is not apparent at present. The proposal would provide affordable housing and the whole scheme would make a contribution towards maintaining the Council's 5 year housing land supply as a deliverable site within the period. The proposal is also considered to be acceptable in terms of highway safety, providing that the new access is not used by school buses, and neighbouring amenity and therefore accords with Policies DM3, DM4 and DM5 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Document (2009) and the Council's adopted Design Guidance (2014) and the NPPF. These benefits are considered to add weight in favour of the development and therefore the proposal is considered to be acceptable.

Introduction

This application was resolved by Members to approve at the Development Management Committee meeting of 20 June 2016 subject to the completion of a S106 agreement which remains incomplete. On 18 April 2017 the Council published its quarterly housing monitoring statement which concluded that the Council is able to demonstrate a deliverable housing land supply in excess of 5 years (currently at 5.75 years). As a result the Council's housing supply policies are not considered to be out of date and the weight that is applied to schemes proposing housing development is affected. Prior to the April monitoring statement the Council was unable to demonstrate a deliverable 5 year housing land supply and therefore in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) significant weight was given to the provision of housing through applications that would otherwise be contrary to the Council's policies that determine the supply of housing.

This was the case with this application and the Council's ability to now demonstrate a deliverable 5 year housing land supply means that the weighting and material considerations have materially changed. As a result the previous resolution to grant, through giving significant weight to the supply of housing, is out of date and inaccurate given the current position. Any applications resolved to approve on this basis that have not had a decision therefore need to be reviewed and re-determined against the current material considerations.

This report will therefore assess and make a recommendation on the individual merits of the scheme and any other material considerations to reflect the current housing land supply position.

Site Location:

The application site is the Samuel Whitbread Academy and the residential curtilage of 99 Hitchin Road, Clifton.

The school site is within the settlement envelope for Shefford although it is within Clifton Parish and Arlesey Ward. 99 Hitchin Road is outside of any settlement envelope and its curtilage is therefore considered to be located in open countryside. The majority of the school site is designated as Important Open Space.

99 Hitchin Road is a modern detached chalet bungalow serving as a single dwelling with existing access onto Hitchin Road.

The Application:

Outline planning permission is sought for the construction of up to 64 dwellings on the school site on land that is currently playing field and the reconfiguration of the remaining playing field to provide a floodlit 4G artificial playing pitch, tennis courts and new changing rooms. The proposed pitches and changing facilities would be available for community use as well as the school.

All matters are reserved aside from access which is proposed to be constructed following the demolition of 99 Hitchin Road and a priority junction created at the point the site joins that road.

The application is submitted including a number of indicative layouts but it is noted that access is the only matter for consideration over the whole of this scheme. Therefore layout of the pitches, while agreed with Sport England in principle, are not for formal determination with this application.

The application has been amended since its initial submission. The original proposal included taking the school bus traffic on the proposed access road, away from the existing Clifton Road entrance. However following concerns from Highway Officers this element was withdrawn from the application and the proposed access now serves the residential development and community use access only.

RELEVANT POLICIES:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (March 2012)

Core Strategy and Development Management Policies - North 2009

CS1 Development Strategy

CS5 Providing Homes

DM1 Renewable Energy

DM2 Sustainable Construction of New Buildings

DM10 Housing Mix

DM4 Development Within & Beyond the Settlement Envelopes

DM5 Important Open Space within Settlement Envelopes

CS14 High Quality Development

DM3 High Quality Development

CS7 Affordable Housing

CS2 Developer Contributions

Development Strategy

The Council is currently consulting on its Draft Local Plan (Regulation 18). The Plan outlines the overarching strategy for growth and also sets out more detailed policies which will be used to determine planning applications. A substantial volume of evidence gathered over a number of years supports this document. These technical papers are consistent with the aspirations of the National Planning Policy Framework and therefore will remain on the Council's website as material considerations, which will, along with the direction of travel of the Local Plan, inform development management decisions.

Supplementary Planning Guidance/Other Documents

Central Bedfordshire Design Guide (March 2014)

Central Bedfordshire Sustainable Drainage Guidance (May 2015)

Relevant Planning History:

Application Number CB/10/00625/FULL

Description	Full: Erection of new nursery building and office complex with associated car parking
Decision	Approve
Decision Date	04/05/2010

Beyond this reference the site has a detailed planning history following initial construction of the school in 1974. Notable since initial construction are a number of applications for temporary classrooms, with a large expansion to the school granted in 2002, for the erection of a two storey detached classroom block with sports hall, the erection of a first floor extension and a two storey extension to the main school building.

Consultees:

Clifton Parish Council

The Parish welcome the potential removal of many of the school buses that pass four times each school day through Clifton village and the subsequent safety benefits to the 'Travel to School Routes' of our parish pupils journeying to Clifton All Saints, Henlow Middle and indeed SWCC, that new access road onto Hitchin Lane could bring. It is however key that the bus companies be instructed to travel via the by-pass whenever possible.

We also realise that Parishioners would benefit from access to the new sporting facilities.

However as the safety of schoolchildren is our first priority, we object to this application on the basis of the lack of a safe turn around area for school buses once on the SWCC site.

The on site bus route as shown would necessitate school buses undertaking three-point turns at the drop off point. This is clearly unsafe. Whilst the agent has advised us that this issue is under discussion with CBC Highways department, we can only make our decisions on the plans as presented.

Perhaps the applicant might wish to re-submit a plan with;

- All bus access and egress via Hitchin Road
- A safe turning circle on the school site.

Following access amendments:

Strongly object to the proposal on two grounds:

- The safety of children travelling to SWCC and on foot to other local schools. Despite previous assurances from the agent that the key issue of ensuring all buses to and from SWCC use the new Hitchin lane road it seems this is not the case. There are over 100 double decker bus movements every school day around this site. Once again we are concerned that issues of self interest and

minor economies are taking precedence over the safety of children

Much work has been undertaken by Clifton Parish Council, CBC and SWCC to improve the road safety outside SWCC in the last year but the failure now of SWCC, the developer and CBC to define a safe and comprehensive onsite transport plan on a site with c2000 children, prior to submission of this application is of conservable concern. The application should be rejected on this alone. We know from experience that conditions count for little or nothing.

- The proposal seeks to significantly reduce the area of playing fields in this area at a time when new housing demand and building in both Shefford and Clifton are at unprecedented levels. SWCC and surrounding schools are also generally over subscribed. Set this against a backdrop of National Government concerns regarding growing obesity and the lack of exercise that children currently undertake, and again, this proposal does not make sense and is simply not sustainable.

Following access amendments:

Clifton Parish Council does not object to the changes to the proposed road junctions with Hitchin Road.

However there are concerns about the vagueness of the proposed routes for buses within the campus. There needs to be space for two buses to pass easily and this is not adequately demonstrated. This is important because any problems would inevitably lead to bus companies demanding to revert to the old access off Shefford Road.

Following further access amendments

The various schemes at this site were rooted on the premise that they would remove the twice a day School bus cavalcade through Clifton at a time when the village is becoming increasingly congested due to new development

The revised Planning Statement marked "updated April 2016" now states clearly under Introduction 1.2

"Bus Traffic would continue to utilise the existing site access" The various other documents are a muddle some saying that the new entrance off Hitchin Road is for buses other plans say not for buses.

Just what exactly is the situation? There seems to be an

indication that CBC officers agreed such a change. If this is the case then it seems likely that Clifton Parish Council will wish to reconsider its views on this matter. Please may we have urgent clarification?

[Requested clarification was provided to the Council on 10 May 2016 and no further comments have been received.]

Shefford Town Council

Object on the following grounds:

- Unacceptable access to Hitchin Road
- Unsustainable, overcrowding of Plot
- Insufficient school places
- The Infrastructure will not support 64 houses.

Highways

Initial comments

There is no fundamental concern with the capacity of the proposed junction but there are issues with the general layout and information submitted;

- Fails to demonstrate access for 11.9m coaches at the proposed junction without conflict with other vehicles or encroachment in opposing carriageways (TN drawing 522-22)
- Fails to demonstrate access for 11.5m refuse vehicle at the proposed junction without conflict with other vehicles or encroachment in opposing carriageways (TN drawing 522-22)
- Why does the through lane on the southern most taper reduce to 2.0m (drawing 522-21 revision H)
- Tracking diagrams for vehicles accessing just the sports facilities have not been shown. Also parking and turning areas (for cars and team coaches) independent of the school area, as it is suggested in the technical notes that the school access will have a barrier outside of school times. Please note the parking arrangements differ on various plans (TN drawing 522-30)
- Need to clarify parking provision to demonstrate that peak demands can be met
- 3.0m wide footway/cycle linkage to Hitchin Road must extend up to SWA site (drawing no. 522-25)
- Please confirm acceptance of the need for Sec 106 contribution toward parking restrictions within the residential development (TN 3.28)

Following initial amendments

As you will be aware we still have concerns in respect of the access arrangements as submitted. We are exploring the suitability of removing the ghost island arrangement and reverting to a simple priority junction. To this end the

applicant's highway consultants are preparing a revised plan and obtaining a new Road Safety Audit.

Following final amendments

A revised planning statement has been submitted that summarises the application as follows:

- The enhancement of the schools sporting facilities to include the provision of a new floodlit all weather (4G) sports pitch, the provision of new tennis courts, the provision of enhanced and properly drained and levelled grass pitches and the provision of a new sports pavilion with changing facilities.
- The provision of a new access road from Hitchin Road and the development of a portion of the school grounds (approximately 2.4 hectares) to provide up to 64 new homes. Bus traffic would continue to utilise the existing site access on Shefford road

Following detailed discussion with Highways officers a revised TA has been submitted (April 2016) that cites that

- The proposed access off Hitchin road will not be used for school bus access as originally proposed – this will be conditioned as part of this outline application. Note that the proposed layout plan on page 21 of the TA is out of date as it indicates that the entrance off Hitchin road will be for schools buses and that the existing access off Shefford Road will have restricted access. This is now out of date.
- The design for the originally proposed site access has been amended to provide a standard priority junction.
- Access between the residential development and the school will be controlled by the school such that through traffic will not be permitted, including for school transport, – this will be secured as part of the reserved matters application upon receipt of the required Traffic Management Plan.

Hitchin Rd at the point of access is currently 40 mph, a 40 mph buffer zone having been recently installed at this location. The proposal would move the extent of the 30 limit to encompass the new access, relocating the existing gateway feature in the process.

The proposed junction would conform to Manual for Street guidance with acceptable levels of forward visibility and can be implemented within the existing highway boundary.

The access can be delivered in conjunction with the consented roundabout scheme to Shefford FC and an initial proposal to provide a right turning lane has now been discounted in favour of a priority junction only due to the fact that the proposal is no longer required to serve the school itself and more importantly school buses. The junction did not meet the required standard for one which would be used by a large number of large vehicles on a daily basis.

The proposed access is 5.5 metres wide with a 2 metre footway connecting to the existing on Hitchin Rd but which then crosses over the access to join a 3 metre shared footway/cycleway which continues into the Academy site. This is in line with discussions with the developer and considered acceptable by this authority.

A footpath will also link through the academy site to the Shefford Road, the proposal therefore enabling pedestrian and cycle access from the Hitchin road area of Shefford and beyond without necessitating a longer route round onto Shefford road. This also facilitates access to the more frequent public transport routes which operate along the Shefford Road.

In order to further facilitate access for pedestrians the residential development needs to link to Southfields which would also improve permeability and further facilitate access to the health centre, Shefford Road and Hitchin Road. The land at the end of Southfields is in the ownership of Central Bedfordshire Council and therefore access for pedestrians and cyclists is entirely practicable. A S106 contribution will be required.

The proposed junction has been modelled using industry standard software and an assessment of the number of trips generated by both the residential development and the proposed sports facility made the methodology for which the team does not make any objection. The application demonstrates that the proposed junction will operate well within its capacity.

Transport Strategy

Thank you for inviting the CBC Highways Integrated Delivery team to comment on the above application. Having worked with the school, parish council and local residents on highways issues for a considerable time we

have various comments to make about the outline planning application which has been submitted.

Shefford Road access for staff only

The proposal in the Transport Assessment outlines that once the redevelopment is complete that the Shefford Road access will be downgraded for use by staff only. This is inappropriate as this access is a clear desire line for a huge number of pupils accessing the site by foot and bicycle and also when dropped off by private car. This entrance to the school site has recently had a significant amount of highway improvements to make this area safe for high levels of vulnerable road users such as pedestrians and cyclists travelling to and from the school using this access.

The plans that have been submitted currently do not accommodate suitable facilities for the number of pedestrians or cyclists that would have to travel along Hitchin Road in order to access the school.

School buses serving the site

There are currently 19 buses (most of which are 88 seat double deckers), and taxis which use this site entrance and operate to and from the site at the start and end of the regular school day as well as a number of late bus services that use this access. The Shefford Road access to the school site has been purpose built for buses that arrive and depart at the same time of day and that cater for the number of passengers that they carry. The system for organising this has long been established and it is unsuitable to re-organise a working system for the number and type of buses that use this entrance to the school.

Again, the plans submitted do not accommodate suitable facilities for school bus use to the rear of the school site as proposed or at the new junction on Hitchin Road.

Based on this, it is viewed that it is inappropriate to limit access from Shefford Road to staff access only.

Pedestrian access and safety

The application lacks any detail as to how pedestrian safety and the impact of displaced pedestrian trips have been considered. It is difficult to assess what this might be without this detail included in the application. Owing to the fact that that Samuel Whitbread Academy is the biggest pedestrian trip attractor in Clifton and second largest in Shefford information about how this group of road users will be catered for needs to be provided.

The framework travel plan (despite no mention in the Transport Assessment) sets out that there will be a high quality shared footway/cycleway alongside the new access road from Hitchin Road which is welcomed.

There is no mention in any of the documents submitted the likely number of pedestrians that will be transferred to access the school on Hitchin Road. If it is all of the pedestrians that currently use the Shefford Road entrance there will insufficient capacity of the footway to accommodate the demand on the Hitchin Road footway and improvements must be made to accommodate this increased demand.

The travel plan outlines that there is to be a footpath between the new residential site and Shefford Road but the Transport Assessment details that this would not be available to pupils or the general public as it is proposed that the Shefford Road access is to be for staff only. This would be particularly difficult to discourage pedestrian traffic from Shefford Road accessing the site.

Access for all pedestrians and cycling users from Shefford Road serves a useful purpose and should remain in place and actively promoted through travel plan measures.

Cyclist access and safety

There is a lack of detail as to how cyclists accessing the residential development and the school site (as proposed) will be catered for. There are significant concerns for vulnerable road users who would access the school from Hitchin Road. The safety requirements for these users need to be outlined in more detail and provided for.

CBC Transport Policy

Policies that relate to travel and transport to, from and between school sites were adopted as part of Central Bedfordshire's Local Transport Plan and included below are the policies which should be taken into consideration when developing the site.

Education

In response to the planning application at Samuel Whitbread Academy, an assessment of the current and proposed school site has indicated that the area will still be large enough to meet BB103 guidelines if this proposal goes ahead.

The development will have the educational benefit of enabling the development of new sports facilities at Samuel Whitbread, however, there is high demand for

school places in the area as a result of a growing local population and financial contributions will be required for early year, lower, middle and upper school places.

The academy should seek Section 77 approval for the disposal of playing fields from the Secretary of State before proceeding with any development on site.

Leisure Officer

With regard to the holding objection submitted by Sport England with regard to the application; in particular the loss and suitable replacement of grass pitches, the local need for, the design/layout of the proposed facilities and the community use agreements to permit access for the community.

Further detailed information is required to address the issues raised by Sport England in order to evaluate the application.

Sport England

Initially requested further information, issuing a holding objection.

Following amendments

Sport England raises no objection to this application as a statutory consultee, subject to a range of matters being addressed through a section 106 agreement and planning conditions if planning permission is forthcoming as set out in this response. If these matters are not addressed through a planning permission, our position would be an objection and the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2009 would apply

Public Protection

Initial response

I understand from the Planning Statement that the existing sports pitches are only used for the school itself during school hours and are not floodlit. In addition many of the school sports activities are undertaken off site due to the inadequacy of the existing facilities.

In contrast the proposed sports facilities will be for both school and community use and also used in partnership with Northampton Saints Rugby Club. The proposed 4G pitch will also be floodlit and this will also illuminate adjacent sports pitches for use all year round. The applicant has indicated an intention to open the new facilities for public use from either 6am or 7am - depending on demand- to 10pm every day of the week.

The proposal also includes a new access road to the school and sports facilities which appears to be adjacent to an existing house and garage premises located to the

west of the medical centre off Hitchin Road and also runs along the boundary of the proposed new dwellings.

In the summer months a cricket pitch and athletics track is proposed along the boundary with the new residential and in the winter football and rugby pitches will be provided in this location.

Lighting

I have considered the Abacus 4G Rugby Pitch lighting assessment and based on the information submitted I consider that lighting levels from the sports lighting at new and existing houses will be meet the ILP guidance notes for the reduction of obtrusive light standards except for the luminaire intensity after curfew. The horizontal light spillage chart shows no impact on residential.

The maximum vertical illumination is stated in the report as 0.11 lux which is lower than the E2 Environmental Zone (Rural) limits pre curfew of 5 lux and post curfew of 1 lux.

The maximum source intensity at residential is given as 3251 cd. This is less than the E2 pre curfew limit of 7500 cd but greater than the luminaire intensity post curfew of 500 cd. The curfew time is not stated but is the time after which stricter lighting controls should apply. In other guidance documents designed to safeguard residents amenity such as the World Health Organisations guidelines for noise and the now repealed PPG24 a restricted time of 2300 hrs to 0700 hrs was given as a time when the majority of people would wish to rest and sleep. Therefore the proposed development would not meet the ILP guidance standards between 0600 hrs and 0700 hrs each day. (It is assumed from the information provided that floodlights may be used in the mornings during wintertime.)

The applicant has not provided details of other lighting and therefore I assume that the car park extension, pavilion and other sporting facilities will not have external lighting.

In conclusion I consider that satisfactory lighting levels could be achieved by either modifying the lighting scheme to reduce the maximum source intensity at residential properties to less than 500 cd or limiting the hours of operation of the lighting to ensure that it is not used outside 0700 hrs to 2300 hrs. The applicant should verify with the lighting engineer if the post curfew level can be achieved at residential properties without compromising the levels required on the pitches.

Noise

The applicant has submitted a noise assessment dated 24th October 2014 by Sound Acoustics Ltd. I have considered the noise assessment and would like to make the following comments;

Sports Noise

The noise assessment states in its summary that the noise levels from the proposed sporting facilities will not be any higher than the existing houses will be exposed to. However the report is based upon measurements of noise levels at football pitches measured at two sites in the Ipswich area (Gainsborough Sports Centre and Holbrook Academy). I understand that multiple football matches were taking place at the time of measurement and the players ranged from under 10s to adults. The report author does not say what surface the pitches had or how many spectators attended both of which would potentially influence the noise levels as would the "importance" of the match or tournament.(E.g friendly or cup final etc) They have assumed this level applies to noise levels at source from the football (2)/rugby and 4G pitches. Noise from the summer layout of tennis courts/cricket pitch/athletics track/4G rugby pitch and football pitch does not appear to have been assessed separately.

The report gives the highest maximum noise levels outside 141 and 143 Southfield as around 65 to 70 dB. Allowing for a 10dB reduction through an open window. This level of 55- 60 dB would significantly exceed the World Health Organisations (WHO) Guidelines for community noise level of 45 dBA Max at night (Revised down by WHO in 2009 to 42dBA Max based on sleep disturbance research) This is a significant concern for both existing and proposed dwellings because it means that residents sleep in the late evenings and early mornings may be adversely affected by the proposed sports facilities. Although the report author says this is not considered to be any worse than levels from the existing sporting facilities as stated above the existing facilities are not used as frequently or for the same times and duration as those proposed. For example high maximum noise levels at 2130 hrs after children have gone to bed or at 0600 hrs in the morning or 0700 on a Sunday morning will have a much more significant impact than the noise same levels during normal school hours Monday to Friday.

The report author had not measured noise levels from the existing sporting facilities in use at the school for

comparative purposes. No background noise levels have been measured at the existing houses or at the location of the proposed houses. I would anticipate existing background noise levels to be low during the early mornings, evenings and weekends when the school is closed.

No noise mitigation measures are proposed for the existing houses. For the new houses acoustic screening is only advised if they are closer than 30m from the nearest pitch. A net fence rather than chain or timber is recommended for stray balls. This would not act as a noise barrier but would reduce potential impact noise from balls hitting the fence.

In conclusion I am concerned that increased sports noise would be detrimental to residential amenity of new and proposed dwellings, particularly in view of the intensive and extended use proposed and the applicant currently has no proposals to mitigate impact. Potential mitigation measures would include, amongst others, reducing hours of use, particularly early mornings; careful design of the layout of the new houses to minimise habitable rooms, particularly first floor bedrooms overlooking the sports facilities; acoustic barriers close to sports pitches or at residential boundaries.

Parking activity noise

The noise assessment has used noise data from a retail park car park rather than measuring noise from the existing parking facility and calculating the increase from the extension and increased use.

The Maximum noise level at southfields has been calculated as 59dBA (external) Allowing 10 dB reduction for an open window this would give an internal noise level of 49 dBA. This level exceeds the WHO guideline noise level (as amended) of 42dBA max by a significant margin. Based on the submitted information the car park would be used from 0600 to 2200 hrs and potentially a margin beyond that to allow people to arrive before facilities open and leave after the facilities shut. The applicant has not proposed any noise mitigation measures to minimise the impact of parking noise on existing properties.

Traffic noise

The noise assessment merely considers the impact of increased traffic on the surrounding road network. However the proposed development introduces a new access road into the school site and this appears to run pass one or possibly two (if garage has residential part) existing dwellings located off Hitchin Road and adjacent

to many of the proposed dwellings. The noise impact from this new access road has not been assessed.

Changing Pavilion

Noise from the use of the changing pavilion has not been considered but given its location and the lack of any large function room or catering facilities, meaning that large social events and music events are unlikely, I do not anticipate that any noise impact from this facility will be of significance.

In conclusion I am concerned that the noise impact from the proposed development has not been comprehensively assessed and that having considered the monitoring data provided maximum noise levels from the sports facilities and car parking will not meet the councils noise standards. Therefore based on the submitted information I would like to object to the proposed development.

Following amendments

I have considered the additional information from Sound Acoustics in Appendix 1 of the PPS Addendum dated September 2015 and would like to comment as follows;

Sports Noise

There is likely to be more sports noise from the use of an all weather pitch than a grass pitch because of the increased impact noises on the pitch surface and the ability to use the pitch for extended hours and in most types of weather. I understand the report relies on data from the use of 4 football matches on grass pitches. I understand from section 6.11 of the Planning Statement that Northampton Saints Rugby Club intend to use the facilities for training and summer coaching courses along with other community uses. The statement proposes that the facilities will be open from 6 or 7 am dependant on demand to 10pm every day with appropriate use during the school day. Therefore a robust assessment of the cumulative effect of all the pitches and facilities operating is required.

Noise impact at 141 and 143 Southfield and proposed residential

The WHO 2009 value for maximum noise levels at night is 42 dBA based on sleep disturbance research and this level has recently been accepted by a planning inspector at an appeal within the CBC district.

I agree that the WHO value for maximum noise levels at night is normally applied to the hours 2300 to 0700, however WHO additionally advise that;

The time base for LAeq for "daytime" and "night-time" is 16 h and 8 h, respectively. No separate time base is given for evenings alone, but typically, guideline value should be 5 –10 dB lower than for a 12 h daytime period. Other time bases are recommended for schools, preschools and playgrounds, depending on activity.

I accept that the WHO allow 15 dB for an open window, however other research and standards allow other values for open windows.

The level difference through an open window partially open for ventilation can vary significantly depending on the window type and the frequency content of the external noise. Therefore because the potentially affected houses at Southfield are existing CBC have assumed a value of 10 dB for an open window to ensure that residents are adequately protected from noise. In new properties the actual values can be used in calculations where the data is available.

Existing ambient and background noise levels

A comparison of the predicted noise levels from the proposed development to the existing background and ambient noise levels is a useful tool to assess the potential impact of the development. In my experience of investigating noise complaints over many years, where source noise levels are well below background noise levels complaints are unlikely. Conversely if the background level is low, the noise source might be below the WHO guideline values but still be significantly intrusive to residents, especially where the character of the noise attracts attention.

Parking Noise

As noted above the Planning Statement indicates that the facilities will be open from 0600 hrs to 2200 hrs every day and therefore the car park will be in use for this period and presumably a margin either side to allow customers to arrive for opening and leave after closing.

I have not been advised that the proposed hours have been revised. Therefore noise from car parking will exceed the 42 dBA Lmax level in existing properties at Soutfields and no mitigation has been proposed.

Traffic Noise

I accept that there is some screening of the dwelling at Howes motors from the proposed entrance road and that noise attenuation measures could be incorporated into the new dwellings fronting the road.

In conclusion the additional information has failed to demonstrate that the proposed development will achieve acceptable noise levels at existing houses and therefore I wish to maintain my objection to the proposed development.

Sustainable Drainage

We consider that outline planning permission could be granted to the proposed development and the final design, sizing and maintenance of the surface water system agreed at the detailed design stage following an appropriate Surface Water Drainage Strategy and finalised Maintenance and Management Plan being submitted, I would therefore recommend conditions are applied as recommended below.

Reason for position

It is noted that the FRA submitted takes the form a desk top study which provides an overview of the site and recommended SuDS. At the detailed design stage it is expected that a comprehensive Surface Water Drainage Strategy outlining design, operation, construction and maintenance considerations for the proposed surface water management system be submitted.

The revised surface water drainage strategy should rectify discrepancies in the FRA as submitted at Outline. A 30% allowance for climate change should be applied, as the site proposes residential development, and the assumptions made in Appendix F should be revised accordingly. Comparison of the existing and proposed rates must be made, based on the ratio of impermeable to permeable area, with appropriate calculations and finalised method for the management of proposed flows to the pre-development rate given.

Appendix E shows the possibility of the drainage system connecting the existing ditch, if discharge is to an ordinary watercourse, evidence will need to be provided to ensure that the system can accept the proposed flows to an acceptable downstream point without increasing risk to others. Section 4.0 of the FRA acknowledges the need for more detailed site assessment and the applicant should demonstrate at the detailed stage the results of a site specific ground investigation, demonstrating the current drainage regime of the site suitability for infiltration based on soil types and geology, which should account for:

- The presence of constraints that must be considered prior to planning infiltration SuDS.
- The drainage potential of the ground.
- Potential for ground instability when water is

infiltrated.

- Potential for deterioration in groundwater quality as a result of infiltration.

Evidence of infiltration tests (i.e. BRE 365), particularly at the location of any intended infiltration device, and groundwater level monitoring is also required.

It is also advised that full use of the SuDS management train is made and the proposed sustainable principles will maximise the benefits of the proposed land use. It should be made clear therefore, where relevant, how the drainage system will integrate into the landscape or required publicly accessible open space, providing habitat and social enhancement.

Landscape Officer

I have strong concerns regarding the development of the site regarding coalescence of villages, reduction in effect of landscape spatial buffer especially the eastern portion / sports pitches areas and therefore I object to the proposals as described in this application.

The school site forms the eastern development edge of Shefford separated from Clifton's western development edge by @ 100ms along Shefford Road, the landscape - 'green gap' - between resists coalescence of the two settlements at this point.

The Mid Beds Landscape Character Assessment specifically comments on the potential for Shefford and Clifton to form a continual settlement and recommends the need to retain individual villages, avoiding merging (Mid Beds LCA 4C Upper Ivel Clay Valley).

Whilst playing fields / sports pitches are often located on the edge of settlements, acting in part as green buffers between development and wider landscape, such facilities can present an urban fringe image via posts, fencing, car parks and signage, etc.

Lighting of sports pitches can accentuate further the visual impact and influence of urban development at dusk / night time and during winter months.

My Pre App advice included ' If the application were to be progressed landscape mitigation would be required along the eastern / southeastern site boundaries as a treed shelter belts of a scale to accommodate native tress which would mature to form an effective screen. The Clifton local Parish Green Infrastructure Plan describes community aspirations for GI including creating a woodland corridor between the school site / Knoll's Farm

and to the north, it may be opportune to consider landscape mitigation of the pitches with this aspiration.'

The proposed inclusion of a lit rugby practice area along the south eastern site boundary is not acceptable; lightning can have a seriously urbanising effect especially against darker skies at rural edges and can result in detrimental visual impact especially at night time and in winter months.

The outline application shows no landscape mitigation along the south eastern boundary edge - and shows little opportunity for a wooded edge given the proposed layout of pitches and practice areas. This is not acceptable in terms of landscape character, visual impact and effect of coalescence of villages

The proposed residential development area also raises concern regarding proposed design of access, landscape layout to the existing urban edges and rural edges along with concerns relating to layout and internal landscaping within the proposed residential development:

- The design and character of the junction on Hitchin Road requires further exploration regarding visibility splays and possible removal of hedgerow, along with highway design and signs / lighting and need for review of in terms of urbanising influence along this low key rural approach.
- The design and quality of landscape, boundary treatment and general environment within the access road to the residential development needs to be explained further via sections given the very narrow linear access shown.
- The proposals extend development beyond the existing settlement boundary and into open countryside; the proposed landscape mitigation to development edges with open countryside require a more substantial landscaped 'treed' boundary treatment to screen development, reduce visual impact, contain physical intrusions in to countryside and protect visual coalescence effect of development.
- The development interface with the existing urban edges to the north and west are shown including a treed edge - it is essential that any new landscape / treed edge is maintained within the public realm to ensure longevity - the orientation of development as shown in the suggested site layout would need to be revised orientating landscaped edges and development frontages within the public realm to make this aspect of the proposed development acceptable.

- The lack of public space within the residential area is of concern along with the limited number of trees within POS / public realm ; a local green area would be required to provide a communal public open space and opportunity for planting of trees of species and type which can mature to a size of significance influence / coalescence effect of development. Where children will play is not clear - it appears the residential site offers informal recreation opportunity for existing residents - but it is not clear where recreation opportunities for existing residents will be transferred to ?
- The proposed 'SuDS' appear reliant on piping water to attenuation basins - piping of surface water is not acceptable in terms of landscape and appropriate integration of sustainable drainage; if the application were to be progressed SuDS would need to be linked to landscape features within the development including bio retention areas ('rain water gardens') filter strips and swales combined with hard SuDS including permeable paving and linked to attenuation areas which include a subtle change in levels and integrated within the over all site landscape design.

I note the application refers to levelling of and drainage of sports pitches - further information is required on regrading and opportunity to link to SuDS to pitches if the application is progressed.

Following amendments

I reiterate my comments made previously regarding landscape mitigation:

Significant landscape / planting mitigation will be required to the south / south eastern site boundaries to the playing fields.

Design and character of accesses associated with residential development will require careful design.

The design and quality of landscape to the site boundaries and within the proposed residential development / general environment will need to ensure effective integration of development within the landscape setting and quality design.

Ecologist

I have looked at the submitted documents and note that this is an outline application. I commented on the earlier pre-application for sports pitches and there are some differences between that and the current application. The 2014 Ecology report identifies the southern boundary hedgerow and associated scattered broadleaved trees as

likely to support nesting birds and really as the main feature of ecological interest on the school site. As such I am keen to ensure that this corridor is retained, buffered and enhanced. I am concerned that the pitch orientation has altered from the preapp, resulting in the 4G pitch lying immediately adjacent to this hedge. Indeed the floodlighting plan appears to show lighting columns in the hedge.

The light spillage diagram shows maximum lit impact completely engulfing the hedge and this level of impact is not acceptable. I understand there are issues with fitting a full size pitch into the site but given the desire for floodlighting I am not satisfied that this layout will ensure minimum impact to the biodiversity of the site and surrounding area and would urge reconsideration to positioning closer to the school and the road where there is existing lighting impacts. Ideally all trees should be retained and this corridor enhanced with a minimum 8m buffer from development.

The ecology report also notes the likelihood of bats using the area for foraging and recommends in 8.6 that a bat transect survey is undertaken. Such a survey should be a condition of any outline planning permission so result as able to inform reserved matters for layout to minimise impacts.

With regards to the housing proposal which is also outline I would wish to see the inclusion of integrated bat and bird bricks in line with NPPF requirements for development to deliver a net gain for biodiversity. Further opportunities for enhancement, for example through the use of native, wildlife friendly plants in landscaping schemes, are detailed in the CBC Design Guide.

I am also concerned over Option 1 and 2 for the justification of the loss of playing field space - utilising an area of land adjacent to Etonbury Academy. This would not be an appropriate use for this piece of land which in itself is to act as an important buffer to a biodiversity rich site so I would object to it being a viable option for increased pitch provision.

Following amendments

I have looked at the amended plans and welcome the new position of the 4G pitch which means that it, and it's associated floodlighting has far less of an impact on the hedgerow corridors of the site. As such I no longer have an issue with this aspect of the application.

However, as the supporting information remains unchanged I still have concerns over paragraph 6.62 in the planning statement which discusses justification of the loss of playing field space - utilising an area of land adjacent to Etonbury Academy. This would not be an appropriate use for this piece of land which in itself is to act as an important buffer to a biodiversity rich site so I would object to it being a viable option for increased pitch provision.

With regards to the housing proposal which is also outline I would wish to see the inclusion of integrated bat and bird bricks in line with NPPF requirements for development to deliver a net gain for biodiversity. Further opportunities for enhancement, for example through the use of native, wildlife friendly plants in landscaping schemes, are detailed in the CBC Design Guide.

Green Infrastructure

No consideration appears to have been given to the Green Infrastructure policies, or the guidance within the Design Guide in relation to green infrastructure.

The design and layout does not demonstrate an integrated approach to designing access, open space, ecological mitigation / enhancement and landscaping in order to deliver green infrastructure benefits. As such, the proposal is unacceptable.

Although the assessment of the SuDS from a flood risk perspective indicates the scheme is acceptable, the design of the SuDS scheme does not meet policy requirements. The Drainage Strategy indicates that infiltration drainage is possible, but the Flood Risk assessment shows that infiltration testing has not taken place. The design of a SuDS scheme without this basic verification is questionable.

The proposed drainage scheme relies on piped conveyance and underground storage tanks taking water to shallow swales on the edge of the site. Whilst the use of swales is welcome, the primary conveyance and storage in pipes and tanks is unacceptable, and contrary to CBC's adopted SuDS Guidance.

The use of underground storage and conveyance, and the location of the swales on the edge of the site regrettably minimise the potential benefits the SuDS scheme could deliver for green infrastructure benefits. The SuDS should be designed as an integral part of the development, not hidden underground or at the edges of the site. They should be designed to complement areas of public open space, and to complement landscaping

and biodiversity proposals. There is no evidence of this joined up approach to design, and the result is unacceptable.

Following amendments

The applicant's suggestion that a condition requiring future reserved matters submissions demonstrates a sustainable drainage system as part of an integrated strategy for the site's open space and ecological enhancement, demonstrating compliance with CBC's adopted sustainable drainage SPD would be acceptable.

This condition, suggested by the applicant, would be in addition to conditions on sustainable drainage required by colleagues in the Flood Risk team.

Internal Drainage Board	Had no comments to make.
Sustainable Officer	Growth Policy DM1 requires all new development of more than 10 dwellings to meet 10% energy demand from renewable or low carbon sources. The proposed development is above the policy threshold and therefore all dwellings should have 10% of their energy demand sources from renewable or low carbon sources.

Policy DM2 requires all new residential development to meet CfSH Level 3. The energy standard of the CfSH Level 3 is below standard required by the Part L2013 of the Building Regulations. All new development should therefore as minimum comply with the new Part L2013 of Building Regulations and deliver 10% of their energy demand from renewable sources.

In terms of water efficiency, the development should achieve 110 litres per person per day (105 litres for internal water usage and 5 litres for external water usage). It is proposed that this standard will be met through installation of water efficient fittings such as low flow taps and dual flush toilets. I would also encourage the applicant to fit all houses with water butts.

The above policy requirements have been acknowledged by the applicants, however to ensure that the policy requirements are met I would like the following conditions to be attached:

- 10% energy demand of the development to be delivered from renewable or low carbon sources;
- Water efficiency to achieve water standard of 110 litres (including 5 litres for external use) per person per day.

Housing Development Officer I would expect to see 35% affordable housing or 23 affordable homes of mixed tenures of 63% Affordable Rent and 37% Intermediate Tenure as per the Strategic Housing Market Assessment, this equates to 15 units for Affordable Rent and 8 units of Intermediate Tenure/Shared Ownership. I would like to see the units dispersed (pepper-potted) throughout the site and integrated with the market housing to promote community cohesion & tenure blindness. I would also expect all units to meet at the very minimum meet all HCA design and quality standards. If these comments are taken on board, I would support this application

Other Representations:

Neighbours 44 letters have been received. 3 parties object to the application, 7 making comments and 34 in favour. Additionally there have been in excess of 120 letters of support from students of the Samuel Whitbread school. 1 petition in favour of the application has been received.

The letters of objection have been received from the occupier of 100 Glebe Road, 39 Hitchin Road and the owner and consultant representing him as adjacent landowner. The following panning objections are raised:

- Housing development should not be built on playing fields as children do not get enough exercise.
- Pollution to students during construction and from resident's cars.
- Land adjacent to the application site could be used as replacement playing field.
- The proposed access junction is narrow and affects the agricultural access for the adjacent field.
- Access should be gained as an arm from the approved roundabout location further south on Hitchin Road.
- Increase in traffic on Hitchin Road.
- More information is required as to how traffic on Clifton Road would be controlled.

In terms of the letters of support the following comments were made:

- support for the proposed leisure development and its community use element.
- support of the new residential development.

Determining Issues:

The main considerations of the application are;

1. Principle

2. Affect on the Character and Appearance of the Area
3. Neighbouring Amenity
4. Highway Considerations
5. Other Considerations

Considerations

1. Principle of development

- 1.1 At the time of writing the Council is able to demonstrate a five year supply of housing land in excess of the 5 year requirement. Therefore the Council's policies concerned with the supply of housing are not considered to be out of date and can command significant weight when considering such proposals. Proposals should still be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 1.2 However the application site in terms of the location of the proposed housing is located within the settlement envelope for Shefford. Shefford is designated as a minor service centre within which housing development is considered to be acceptable in principle. The access to the residential scheme is located within the open countryside. However the access area is within an existing residential curtilage and the site of the demolished dwelling would be regarded as previously developed land although the garden would not be classified as such. Therefore the proposal will include development in the open countryside. Its location is such that it is not isolated and the access road would not be prominent. The provision of housing should be regarded as a benefit of the scheme and independent access is required to achieve this. On balance the impact on the open countryside is considered to be negligible and the scheme is therefore considered to be acceptable in respect of Core Strategy DM4 given that the Council is able to give some weight to this policy as a consideration.
- 1.3 However consideration has to be given to the fact that the site is designated as important open space. Core Strategy DM5 states that redevelopment of an important open space would only be acceptable where proposals would result in enhanced provision in functional terms, where there are exceptional circumstances resulting in overall community benefit and there would be no adverse impact on the visual quality of the settlement.
- 1.4 The applicant has provided an argument to take account of this policy restriction. In terms of enhanced provision the provision of a 4G pitch, changing rooms and improved sports provision on the remaining school can be considered in a positive light. It should also be noted that currently, in spite of its designation the land is not accessible to members of the public. The scheme includes a proposal to make the 4G pitch and changing rooms independently accessible from the school and available for community use. Therefore the accessibility of the open space would be increased which is considered to be an enhancement and provide exceptional circumstances resulting in overall community benefit .
- 1.5 In terms of the visual quality of the settlement the development of the site would result in increasing the built form towards the open countryside. The important open space designation would act as a green buffer within the

settlement envelope and the redevelopment of the land would remove this. However when balanced against the sustainable location within the settlement envelope, the need for housing and the leisure enhancements of this proposal loss of the green buffer is not considered to be significant. The provision of more housing would sit comfortably in this area and would not, in principle, be out of character to a harmful extent. As a result the proposal is not considered to be contrary to policy DM5.

1.6 Loss of playing field/pitches

Although Policy DM5 is considered to be addressed, compliance with this policy does not address the loss of playing field and pitches. Sport England require compensatory provision within the area and initially issued a holding objection, advising that if the objection was not addressed any resolution to approve the application would have to be referred to DCLG. Following the objection the applicant undertook feasibility studies at 14 sites in and around Shefford for replacement provision which returned little potential for direct replacement. As a result the following off-site replacement playing field package has been agreed:

- The installation of a piped drainage system and associated improvements to part (the upper pitch) of Shefford Sports Club’s playing field (Hitchin Road) to improve the carrying capacity and quality of the pitches. This would address the existing deficiencies of the playing field and help meet Shefford Saints FC’s shortage of playing pitches.
- The provision of a new playing field adjoining Robert Bloomfield Academy’s existing playing field that would be suitable for accommodating a 9v9 junior football pitch (approximately 0.5 hectares of new provision)
- The installation of a piped drainage system and associated improvements to the lower playing field area at Robert Bloomfield Academy to improve the carrying capacity and quality of the pitches. This would address the existing deficiencies of the playing field for the Academy and help address Shefford Saints FC’s shortage of playing pitches.
- The provision of a new playing field adjoining the planned artificial grass pitch at Etonbury Academy in Stotfold. This would consist of an area suitable for accommodating a senior football pitch (approximately 0.75 ha) and would principally help meet Etonbury Academy’s future needs although it could be used for meeting future community football pitch needs in the Stotfold area if they arise.

1.7 Subject to the obligation of these commitments within a S106 agreement and other conditions, Sport England raises no objection to the application and therefore the loss of playing fields and sports pitches as a result of the residential development, and the Parish Council concerns are considered to be addressed.

1.8 Affordable housing

The proposal would provide 35% Affordable Housing in accordance with Policy CS7. Of the affordable homes proposed, 63% would be for affordable rent and 37% intermediate tenure secured via a S106 Agreement. The proposal is therefore considered acceptable in this respect.

1.9 Education

It is acknowledged that Shefford and Clifton are under significant strain in terms of education, particularly lower school places. Land has been secured through the previously allowed appeal CB/14/01726/OUT at Campton Road Shefford for the expansion of Shefford Lower school and there would be capacity created as a result. The Education Officer has requested financial contributions for education projects within the catchment area and these can be secured by S106 agreement.

- 1.10 In this case, the additional housing in a sustainable location, the provision of the affordable housing units and enhanced leisure provision would be benefits of the scheme and this would outweigh any adverse affects from the development. The proposal is therefore acceptable in principle as it would meet the sustainable development tests as set out in the NPPF.

2. **Affect on the Character and Appearance of the Area**

- 2.1 With regards to the residential scheme, detailed design considerations will be left for any subsequent reserved matters layout. An indicative layout was submitted with the application which shows a development of mixed dwelling types within the site. Little weight is given to this layout with this outline application but it does indicate that the site could accommodate the quantum of development proposed. Any reserved matters proposed would expect to provide a high quality development that is designed in accordance with the Council's adopted design guide and this would likely affect the indicative layout as garden and parking standards are taken account of. There is flexibility on the site to produce a high quality development as the application is for up to 64 dwellings, therefore allowing the flexibility to propose less if needed to make the design acceptable in planning terms.
- 2.2 Views from the open countryside to the site from can be mitigated against with the inclusion of strong landscaping on the southern boundary of the residential scheme. This would reduce the impact on the character of the area and can be secured through condition. The concerns from the Landscape Officer are noted however, while it is acknowledged that there would be a permanent impact on the character of the area and the landscaped, it is considered to be acceptable in this instance.
- 2.3 In respect of the leisure proposal the pitch development and changing rooms would sit close to the existing school buildings and would establish a visual relationship with the existing facility. As such this aspect of the development proposal would not look out of character and would not harm the character of the area as a result.
- 2.4 On the basis of the considerations made above the scheme is considered to not harm the character and appearance of the area when considering the principle of developing the site for residential purposes. Furthermore the indicative layout suggests that a development of 64 units on the site could be accommodated without having a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the area and the proposal is therefore considered acceptable in light of the policies of the NPPF and policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2009.

3. Neighbouring Amenity

- 3.1 With regards to the residential scheme the northern boundary of this part of the site sits adjacent to existing residential properties on Southfields. The existing dwellings are a mix of bungalows and two storey buildings containing flats. There will be a visual impact on these properties and while the countryside view will be lost the development is not considered to result in an overbearing or overly prominent impact on these properties and is therefore acceptable in principle.
- 3.2 Detailed design considerations are a reserved matter and this makes it difficult to ascertain specific impacts on neighbouring properties. It is considered that any subsequent reserved matters application would design a scheme that takes account of neighbouring properties to ensure there would be no harmful impact to existing residents. Taking account of the indicative layout submitted it is considered that a scheme could be achieved in principle that would not have a detrimental impact on neighbouring amenity.
- 3.3 The Pollution Officer has raised objections on the grounds that the scheme does not protect existing dwellings from noise impacts from the development. The concerns are noted however it is considered that they can be addressed by condition. In terms of impacts on the proposed dwellings, suitable noise mitigation measures can be conditioned to ensure that there would be no harm from noise impact. This can also be the case for existing dwellings on Southfield as attenuation measures such as acoustic fencing on the boundary of the site could be considered here. The concerns regarding parking noise are noted however the proposed community use car park is away from boundaries with residential properties, centrally located on the school site and not considered to be in a location that would give rise to significant noise impacts. The impact from vehicle movements are noted however it is considered that this would also not be significant and can be addressed through mitigation measures secured by condition.
- 3.4 In terms of providing suitable level of amenity for potential occupiers, any detailed scheme would be expected to be designed in accordance with the Council's adopted Design Guide and this guide includes recommendations to ensure suitable amenity levels are provided. Therefore it is considered that the adopted policy can ensure that a suitable level of amenity could be provided for new residents.
- 3.5 In terms of the Leisure use the location of this part of the proposal is considered to be a suitable distance from both existing and proposed residents to ensure there would be no harmful noise or disturbance. Floodlighting and hours of use can be secured by condition to ensure there is no harmful impact in this respect. The proposed access to the community use element is by using the residential access which would take traffic past the proposed housing estate. The layout is such that it is considered that there would be no harm in this respect.

4. Highway Considerations

- 4.1 The highway considerations have been subject to amendment with this application. Upon initial submission the proposal showed the access arrangement as is proposed now however the intention was to have this access

be used as a new entrance to the school for pupils and buses, moving the existing traffic from Clifton Road. However the nature of the access was such that it was not adequate to accommodate bus movements and the applicant has not been able to amend the arrangement to be able to safely accommodate these vehicles. As a result it was not possible to support the bus arrangement in planning terms and the applicant subsequently removed that aspect from the scheme.

- 4.2 The amended access proposal sees the new access from Hitchin Road serve the proposed dwellings and the community use of the sport pitch only. As a result the priority junction arrangement onto Hitchin Road is considered acceptable, but only on the basis that it does not take school bus traffic. Therefore it would be necessary to ensure that the detailed design includes measures to prohibit buses using the access. The access is located outside of the 30mph restriction within Shefford and therefore, in the interests of safety the applicant will be required to finance the relocation of the speed limit signs so that the 30mph restriction includes the proposal.
- 4.3 It is noted that the Parish Council were expecting the scheme to address existing traffic problems associated with the school on Clifton Road, however the limitations of the access proposal means that it cannot be safely achieved in planning terms. In respect of this application the proposal is not required, on its own merits, to address existing traffic situations at the school itself. The nature of this application is such that it is not likely to exacerbate any existing situation and therefore no objection can be raised in this respect. The applicant has stated an intention to leave a strip of land around the access undeveloped which can be safeguarded for if a suitable access arrangement is brought forward in the future. This would be subject to consideration at reserved matters stage and could be secured if it did not compromise the quality of development proposed here. However it should be noted that any access alterations in the future are likely to require planning permission and would result in the need to submit a new application for consideration.
- 4.4 In terms of parking the residential scheme will be required to meet the design guide parking standards for both residents and visitors but this is a design detail that would be considered at reserved matters stage.
- 4.5 In terms of integrating with the existing settlement the application proposes the provision of a walkway at the northern part of the site past the school car park, leading to Clifton Road. This is a positive aspect of the scheme and provides an alternative footway route other than Hitchin Road. However there are opportunities to enhance this connectivity. In the interests of increasing the connectivity of the site to the existing settlement the applicant will be required to facilitate a footway connection from the residential development to Southfields.
- 4.6 As a result there are no objections on the grounds of highway safety and convenience.

5. Other Considerations

5.1 Community use

Sport England were consulted on the application and a number of sports pitch

layout amendments were made as a result. Sport England raise no objections to the proposed 4G pitch but have requested its community use be secured through an agreement which is conditional upon granting of permission. This is considered reasonable as it will confirm hours of operations, management procedures and access arrangements among other things.

5.2 Drainage

In terms of drainage, if a scheme were considered acceptable in principle it would be subject to ensuring details of suitable drainage systems are proposed and in place to accommodate drainage impacts. The application included details of sustainable urban drainage proposals and there are no objections to this in principle. It is necessary to condition the approval of drainage details on the outline consent to ensure the specific of a scheme are acceptable in accordance with the Council's adopted sustainable Drainage SPD and to ensure appropriate management and maintenance is secured.

5.3 Ecology

The Ecologist continues to have concerns over the potential use of land adjacent to a different school, Etonbury Academy, to be used as an area for increased pitch provision. The pitch provision at Etonbury is part of a number of measures required to address the loss of playing field and sports pitches that occur as a result of the proposed residential development. It is necessary to make the scheme acceptable in planning terms. While the impact on ecology value is noted and not ideal the benefits of the scheme are considered to outweigh this impact and therefore on balance there is not considered to be significant and demonstrable harm to biodiversity as a result of this proposal.

5.4 S106 agreement

Spending Officers were consulted and comments returned from Education and Leisure. In addition, comments were received from NHS England as well. The following contributions are requested and shall form heads of terms for the legal agreement that would be required if Members resolve to grant consent.

Education:

Early Years – £44,244.48

Lower school - £147,481.60

Middle School - £148,402.18

Upper School - £181,980.36

To aid Highway Safety in the area an obligation will be sought for the relocation of the 30mph speed limit signs.

To help with the connectivity of the site and its relationship to the existing town an obligation will be sought to provide a footway link from the site to Southfields to the north.

Sport and leisure requirements.

In accordance with the comments from Sport England the S016 will need to include obligations on the developer to

- Pay a commuted sum of £78,657 for drainage works and maintenance costs towards pitch improvements at nearby Shefford Sports Club.
- Approval of details for construction specifications for playing field works at Robert Bloomfield Academy with provision in the obligations for the delivery of the works, the delivery of an annual long term maintenance

- programme and a new or revised community use agreement.
- Approval of details for construction specifications for playing field works at Etonbury Academy with provision in the obligations for the delivery of the works, the delivery of an annual long term maintenance programme and a new or revised community use agreement.
- Appropriate triggers for the delivery of the leisure facilities proposed in this application.
- Community use and facility management of the proposed facilities and playing field maintenance.

5.5 Humans Rights/Equalities

Based on the information submitted there are no known issues raised in the context of Human Rights/Equalities Act 2010 and as such there would be no relevant implications with this proposal.

Recommendation:

That Outline Planning Permission be granted subject to the completion of a section 106 agreement and the following:

RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS / REASONS

- 1 Details of the layout, scale, appearance and landscaping, including boundary treatments (hereinafter called "the reserved matters") shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority before any development begins and the development shall be carried out as approved.

Reason: To comply with Article 3 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2015.

- 2 Application for approval of the reserved matters shall be made to the local planning authority not later than three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 3 The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than two years from the date of approval of the last of the reserved matters to be approved.

Reason: To comply with Section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 4 **No development shall take place until an Environmental Construction**

Management Plan detailing access arrangements for construction vehicles, on-site parking, loading and unloading areas, materials storage areas and wheel cleaning arrangements shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The construction of the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved Environmental Construction Management Plan.

Reason: In the interest of highway safety, to ensure a satisfactory standard of construction and layout for the development and to comply with Policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2009.

- 5 Any application for reserved matters shall include details of the existing and final ground, ridge and slab levels of the buildings. The details shall include sections through both the site and the adjoining properties and the proposal shall be developed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that an acceptable relationship results between the new development and adjacent buildings and public areas in accordance with policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (2009).

- 6 **No development shall take place until details of hard and soft landscaping (including details of boundary treatments and public amenity open space, Local Equipped Areas of Play and Local Areas of Play) together with a timetable for its implementation have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out as approved and in accordance with the approved timetable.**

The soft landscaping scheme, with particular emphasis on the tree planting on the site boundaries, shall include planting plans; written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment); schedules of plants, noting species, plant sizes at the time of their planting, and proposed numbers/densities where appropriate; and details of a scheme of management/maintenance of the soft landscaping areas. The soft landscaping areas shall be managed thereafter in accordance with the approved management/maintenance details.

The scheme shall also include an up to date survey of all existing trees and hedgerows on and adjacent to the land, with details of any to be retained (which shall include details of species and canopy spread). Notwithstanding the details submitted with the application hereby approved the measures for their protection during the course of development should also be included. Such agreed measures shall be implemented in accordance with a timetable to be agreed as part of the landscaping scheme.

Reason: To ensure that the appearance of the development would be

acceptable in accordance with Policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2009

- 7 No development shall take place until a Landscape Maintenance and Management Plan for a period of ten years from the date of its delivery in accordance with Condition 6 has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include details of the management body, who will be responsible for delivering the approved landscape maintenance and management plan. The landscaping shall be maintained and managed in accordance with the approved plan following its delivery in accordance with Condition 6.**

Reason: To ensure that the appearance of the site would be acceptable in accordance with Policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2009

- 8 No development shall take place until the detailed design and associated management and maintenance plan for the proposed surface water drainage for the site, based on the national Non-statutory Technical Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems and a detailed and site specific assessment of the hydrological and hydrogeological context of the development, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved drainage system shall be implemented in accordance with the approved detailed design and shall be managed and maintained thereafter in accordance with the agreed management and maintenance plan.**

Reason: To ensure the approved system will function to a satisfactory minimum standard of operation and maintenance, in accordance with Policy 49 of Development Strategy for Central Bedfordshire Revise Pre-Submission Version June 2014.

- 9 The details required by Condition 2 of this permission shall include a scheme of measures to mitigate the impacts of climate change and deliver sustainable and resource efficient development including opportunities to meet higher water efficiency standards and building design, layout and orientation, natural features and landscaping to maximise natural ventilation, cooling and solar gain. The scheme shall then be carried out in full in accordance with the approved scheme.**

Reason: To ensure the development is resilient and adaptable to the impacts arising from climate change in accordance with the NPPF.

- 10 No development relating to the construction of the dwellings or the community use of the sports pitches shall commence pursuant to this permission until details have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority of a scheme of noise mitigation that demonstrates how acceptable amenity levels will be maintained for existing and proposed residents as a result of the community use of the leisure facilities hereby approved. The works shall be carried out in**

accordance with the approved details and shall be in place prior to the occupation of the dwelling to which each works relate.

Reason: To ensure suitable levels of amenity are provided for residents in accordance with policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2009.

- 11 No development shall take place unless and until the following have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:
- a. A Phase 1 Desk Study incorporating a site walkover, site history, maps and all further features of industry best practice relating to potential contamination.
 - b. Where shown to be necessary by the Phase 1 Desk Study, a Phase 2 Site Investigation report further documenting the ground conditions of the site with regard to potential contamination, incorporating appropriate soils and gas sampling.
 - c. Where shown to be necessary by the Phase 2 Desk Study, a Phase 3 detailed scheme for remedial works and measures to be taken to mitigate any risks to human health, groundwater and the wider environment.

Any works which form part of the Phase 3 scheme approved by the local authority shall be completed in full before the use hereby permitted commences. The effectiveness of any scheme shall be demonstrated to the Local Planning Authority by means of a validation report (to incorporate photographs, material transport tickets and validation sampling), unless an alternative period is approved in writing by the Authority. Any such validation should include responses to any unexpected contamination discovered during works.

The British Standard for Topsoil, BS 3882:2007, specifies requirements for topsoils that are moved or traded and should be adhered to.

Applicants are reminded that, should groundwater or surface water courses be at risk of contamination during or after development, the Environment Agency should be approached for approval of measures to protect water resources separately, unless an Agency condition already forms part of this permission.

Reason: The details are required prior to commencement to protect human health and the environment in accordance with policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (2009).

- 12 No development shall begin until details of the junction between the proposed estate road and the highway in accordance with the approved plan number 422-44 Rev B, including the provision of foot and cycleway as indicated have been approved by the Local Planning Authority and no building shall be occupied until that junction has been constructed in accordance with the approved details. The visibility splays shall remain for the perpetuity of the development and shall remain free of any obstruction to visibility.

Reason: In order to minimise danger, obstruction and inconvenience to users of the highway and of the proposed estate road in accordance with policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management policies 2009

- 13 No dwelling shall be occupied until a 3 m wide foot/cycleway has been constructed on the north side of the access road between Hitchin Road and the Academy in accordance with details of the approved scheme to be submitted to and approved by the Council. Any statutory undertakers' equipment or street furniture shall be re-sited as required to provide an unobstructed footway.

Reason: In the interests of road safety and pedestrian movement in accordance with policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2009.

- 14 **Notwithstanding the details in the approved plans, no development shall take place until details have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority of a schedule of proposed traffic calming works to the access road hereby approved that would prohibit the ability for buses to use the road and to ensure that there is no direct vehicular access between Hitchin Road and the Academy in perpetuity. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and thereafter be retained.**

Reason: To ensure the safe operation of the surrounding road network in the interests of road safety in accordance with policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management policies 2009

- 15 Any reserved matters application shall include:
- A traffic management plan that details procedures for managing access to the academy site such that there is no vehicular link to the Hitchin Road
 - Details of the pedestrian route linking the Hitchin Road development to Shefford Road.
 - Details of the pedestrian/cycle route linking to Southfields from the residential development and its mechanism for delivery.
 - Estate road design to geometric standards appropriate for adoption as public highway.
 - Cycle parking and storage in accordance with the council's standards applicable at the time of submission.
 - Vehicle parking and garaging, inclusive of visitor parking in accordance with the councils standards applicable at the time of submission.

Reason: In the interests of road safety and pedestrian movement in accordance with policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management policies 2009

- 16 **No development shall commence at the site before a phasing plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Applications for reserved matters and for the approval of details pursuant to a planning condition shall be made with reference to the relevant phase as shown on the phasing plan.**

Reason: To ensure that different elements of the development can come forward at the appropriate time.

- 17 **No development shall take place until details of the design and layout of the Tennis/Netball Court, Cricket Facilities, Athletic Facilities and Sports Pavilion have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority after consultation with Sport England. The development hereby approved shall not be constructed other than substantially in accordance with the approved details.**

Reason: To ensure the development is fit for purpose and sustainable and to accord with policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2009.

- 18 The community use of the sports facility shall not begin until a scheme setting out the type, design, lux levels and measures to control glare and overspill light from sports lighting and measures to ensure sports lights are switched off when not in use has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority after consultation with Sport England. The scheme shall accord with Sport England's "Outdoor Sports Lighting" Briefing Note published in September 2010. After commencement of use of the sports facility the sports lighting shall be operated in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason: To balance illuminating the sports facility for maximum use with the interest of amenity and sustainability and to accord with policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2009.

- 19 Unless otherwise agreed in advance and in writing by the Local Planning Authority after consultation with Sport England, the sports facility and its associated sports lighting shall not be used outside the hours of:

- 8 a.m. and 10 p.m. Monday to Friday;
- 8 a.m. and 10 p.m. on Saturday; and
- 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. on Sunday and public holidays.

Reason: To balance illuminating the [sports facility for maximum use with the interest of amenity and sustainability and to comply with policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2009.

- 20 **No development shall take place until a playing field construction specification (including a delivery programme) for the reconfigured pitches at the Samuel Whitbread Academy, prepared in consultation with Sport England, has been submitted to and approved in writing by**

the Local Planning Authority. The approved specification shall be complied with in full prior to the completion of the development unless otherwise agreed with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the playing field is prepared to an adequate standard and is fit for purpose and to with policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2009.

21 No development shall take place until the following documents have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, after consultation with Sport England:

(i) A detailed assessment of ground conditions (including drainage and topography) of the land proposed for the playing field which identifies constraints which could affect playing field quality; and

(ii) Based on the results of the assessment to be carried out pursuant to (i) above, a detailed scheme which ensures that the playing field will be provided to an acceptable quality. The scheme shall include a written specification of soils structure, proposed drainage, cultivation and other operations associated with grass and sports turf establishment and a programme of implementation.

The approved scheme shall be carried out in full and in accordance with a timeframe agreed with the Local Planning Authority [after consultation with Sport England] [or other specified time frame – e.g. before first occupation of the educational establishment]. The land shall thereafter be maintained in accordance with the scheme and made available for playing field use in accordance with the scheme.

Reason: To ensure that the playing field is prepared to an adequate standard and is fit for purpose and to with policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2009.

22 No development shall take place until a scheme to ensure the continuity of the existing sports use on the playing fields and facilities shown edged within the red line area on Drawing No. 14-01 during construction works is submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority after consultation with Sport England. The scheme shall ensure that the sports facilities remain at least as accessible and at least equivalent in terms of size, usefulness, attractiveness and quality to the existing playing fields and facilities and shall include a timetable for implementation. The approved scheme shall be implemented and complied with in full throughout the carrying out of the development.

Reason: To protect the playing fields from damage, loss or availability of use and to accord with Policy E4 of Sport England's Playing Field Policy.

23 Any future reserved matters application shall be accompanied with a bat transect survey which shall be carried out prior to submission with its

recommendations taken account of in the detailed designs of the scheme.

Reason: To ensure development takes account of bat potential in the area in accordance with the recommendations of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal by Landscape Planning Ltd that accompanies the application and in the interests of policy DM15 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2009.

- 24 **No development shall take place until details of the design and layout of the Artificial Grass Pitch, as proposed in accordance with Appendix 4 of the document Sport England Response to comments (January 2016 revision) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority after consultation with Sport England. The development hereby approved shall not be constructed other than substantially in accordance with the approved details.**

Reason: To ensure the development is fit for purpose and sustainable and to accord with policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2009.

- 25 The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out except in complete accordance with the details shown on the submitted plans, numbers 14-01 and 522-44 Rev B.

Reason: To identify the approved plan/s and to avoid doubt.

INFORMATIVE NOTES TO APPLICANT

1. This permission relates only to that required under the Town & Country Planning Acts and does not include any consent or approval under any other enactment or under the Building Regulations. Any other consent or approval which is necessary must be obtained from the appropriate authority.
2. The applicant is advised that in order to comply with both Condition 1 and 2 of this permission it will be necessary for the developer of the site to enter into an agreement with Central Bedfordshire Council as Highway Authority under Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980 to ensure the satisfactory completion of the access and associated road improvements. Further details can be obtained from the Development Control Group, Development Management Division, Central Bedfordshire Council, Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford SG17 5TQ.
3. The applicant is advised that the requirements of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 will apply to any works undertaken within the limits of the existing public highway. Further details can be obtained from the Highways Help Desk tel: 0300 300 8049

4. All roads to be constructed within the site shall be designed in accordance with Central Bedfordshire Council’s publication “Design in Central Bedfordshire A Guide to Development” and the Department for Transport’s “Manual for Streets”, or any amendment thereto.
5. The applicant is advised that the design and layout of the sports facility should comply with the relevant industry Technical Design Guidance, including guidance published by Sport England, National Governing Bodies for Sport. Particular attention is drawn to:
 - Artificial Surfaces for Outdoor Sports guidance note (2013)
 - England & Wales Cricket Board’s TS6 document on Performance Standards for Non-Turf Cricket Pitches Intended for Outdoor Use
 - Sport England’s Athletics design guidanceSport England’s Pavilions and Clubhouses design guidance

Statement required by the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 - Part 5, Article 35

The Council acted pro-actively through positive engagement with the applicant during the determination process which led to improvements to the scheme. The Council has therefore acted pro-actively to secure a sustainable form of development in line with the requirements of the Framework (paragraphs 186 and 187) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

DECISION

.....
.....
.....
.....