

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Regulatory Committee
Date:	25 January 2017
Title:	Application for Construction of one grass sports pitch and one open access grass space for community recreation benefit, including associated earthworks, fencing and drainage at Bufton Field adjacent to Robert Mays School, West Street, Odiham, RG29 1NA. (Application No. 16/02232/HCC) (Site ref: HRE006)
Reference:	7972
Report From:	Head of Strategic Planning

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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. The planning application is for the change of use of an area of land known as Bufton Field to playing fields, together with associated engineering and landscaping works to provide one grass sports pitch and one open access grass space for community recreation benefit at land adjacent Robert May's School, Odiham.
- 1.2. This application is being considered by the Regulatory Committee as the proposal constitutes 'major development' and as a Regulation 3 application (a Local Planning Authority applying to itself for consent) it is subsequently required to be determined by the Regulatory Committee.
- 1.3. Key issues raised are;
 - The need to address a shortfall in playing field provision at Robert May's School;
 - The design of the proposal and subsequent impact on the Odiham to North Warnborough Local Gap;
 - Loss of part of an area of public open space; and
 - Impact on trees, flora and fauna.
- 1.4. A committee site visit by Members took place on 13 October 2016.
- 1.5. The proposed development is not an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) development under the [Town & Country Planning \(Environmental Impact Assessment\) Regulations 2011](#).

1.6. The development is considered to be in accordance with the relevant policies included in the [Hart District Local Plan \(2006\)](#) and the emerging [Odiham and North Warnborough Neighbourhood Plan \(2014 - 2032\)](#) and would:

- Provide additional grass sports pitches to address an existing shortfall in playing field provision at Robert May's School and in other settlements in the vicinity as supported by Policy DEV 19 (Land between Dunley's Hill, North Warnborough and Robert Mays School, Odiham);
- Not lead to the coalescence or damage to the separate identity of the neighbouring settlements of Odiham and North Warnborough;
- Be in keeping with local character in terms of scale, design, landscaping and layout and avoid any material loss of amenity to adjoining residential uses;
- Not have a significant adverse effect on protected plant or animal species or their habitats and would protect the countryside through the creation and enhancement of features of nature conservation by providing compensatory habitat to mitigate that to be lost;
- Not give rise to traffic flows which would cause material detriment to the amenities of nearby properties or to highway safety and have adequate arrangements on site for the parking of vehicles;
- Not unacceptably increase the risk of flooding on other land;
- Include new planting to maintain the value of trees and hedgerows affected by the proposal;
- Not seriously detract from the amenity and consequent recreational value of well-used footpaths and other public rights of way; and
- Include provision for a Community Use Plan setting out how and when the main pitch will be made available for community.

1.7. It is therefore recommended that planning permission be granted subject to the conditions listed in integral Appendix B.

2. The Site

- 2.1. Robert May's School is an eight Form-Entry Academy Secondary school which lies to the north-west of the village of Odiham.
- 2.2. The school currently has capacity for 1,200 pupils and employs 152 members of staff. The school lies approximately 800 metres to the north-west of the village centre and is accessed from West Street immediately to the south.
- 2.3. The school is situated in a predominantly rural area with a subsequently wide catchment area between Basingstoke in the west, Farnborough in the east and bounded by the A31 to the south and A33 to the north.

- 2.4. Bufton Field occupies approximately 2.6 hectares of land which abuts Robert May's school to the west, existing housing areas to the north and south and agricultural land to the east. The field currently comprises an unmanaged area of land formed of rough grass and scrub habitats.
- 2.5. The nearest residential properties lie adjacent to the northern and southern boundaries of the application site. The pitches, at their closest point, would be 23 metres from the curtilage of properties on the northern boundary and 34 metres from properties on the southern boundary.
- 2.6. The [Hart District Local Plan \(2006\)](#) identifies the site as lying within the Odiham-North Warnborough Local Gap.
- 2.7. A shared use footway / cycleway between West Street and Bufton Field (Public Right of Way (PROW) footpath Odiham 7) lies adjacent and parallel to the western boundary of the site.
- 2.8. There are no ecological designations on or surrounding the site. The site is not identified as being at risk from flooding from rivers or the sea or known to be susceptible to surface water flooding.

3. Planning History

3.1. The planning history of the site is as follows:

01/00739/REM	Construct 60 no. 2 storey 1,2,3 and 4 bedroom houses, garages, open space and associated infrastructure	3 Sept 2002	Granted
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- 3.2. The above permission was determined by Hart District Council in their role as Local Planning Authority. The permission did not involve development of the land subject of this application, but required it to be retained as 'open land' for public access. This was secured through a section 106 legal agreement as part of the permission.
- 3.3. The site is identified in the adopted [Hart Local Plan 1996 - 2006](#) (Saved Policies) under Policy DEV 19 as a safeguarded site to provide for public recreation and additional playing fields for Robert May's School.

4. The Proposal

- 4.1. The proposal is for the change of use of an area of land known as Bufton Field to playing fields, together with associated engineering and landscaping works to provide one grass sports pitch and one open access grass space for community recreation benefit at land adjacent Robert May's School, Odiham.
- 4.2. The applicant states that the existing school land was assessed against school playing field requirements set by the Department for Education. The results of the assessment showed that the school playing fields are currently under the recommended area for playing field provision for a 1350 capacity school.

- 4.3. Planning permission was recently granted for the expansion of the existing school ([16/02229/HCC](#)). The acquisition of Bufton Field therefore seeks to increase playing field provision at the school to cater for the existing shortfall in formal grass sport area and to provide for a planned expansion of 150 additional pupils in September 2019.
- 4.4. The new main pitch is proposed to be sized to accommodate the major full sized sports pitches (rugby, football or hockey) as required by the school on a curriculum need basis. The smaller pitch will be sized to accommodate a junior football pitch or alternatively could be marked out as a practice or training area for any sport again as desired by the school.
- 4.5. Delivering the new landform will involve a cut and fill exercise requiring the clearance of approximately 1.7 hectares of land.
- 4.6. The main pitch will be constructed to a 1 in 100 diagonal cross-fall from south-west to north-east and engineered to make maximum use of the existing soil materials on site. The embankments will be set at a 1 in 3 gradient to reduce land take whilst ensuring they are able to be machine mowed. To meet requirements, topsoil will be manufactured on site using a screening process. This will result in only a small amount of high quality topsoil being imported. No sub-soil will be required to be exported from the site.
- 4.7. A Sustainable drainage solution (SuDS) is proposed to retain the run-off and pitch drainage. Land drainage will be incorporated into the playing area to maintain playability for as much of the winter months as possible and to intercept run-off from up-hill embankments. These will drain to soak-aways which will sit within the existing chalk sub-strata.
- 4.8. During the school day the site will be used exclusively by the school and students will walk to the site. Outside of school hours, the site will be made available in the evenings and weekends for community bookings made via the school.
- 4.9. The northern part of the site will be enclosed by a 1.8 metre high 'Zaun Duo-sport Lite' boundary fence and accessed from the school via a new pedestrian and maintenance access gate across the shared use footway/cycleway.
- 4.10. The southern open area will be accessed from the school via a further new pedestrian gate and an additional maintenance access at the southern-most part of the site. Three metre high 'Zaun Duo-sport ball stop' fencing will be required in some areas due to the proximity of the 1 in 3 gradient embankments that surround the pitches. The layout of the development and location of this fencing is shown on drawing [P10998 - L-7100 Revision P4](#).
- 4.11. No external lighting is proposed as part of this application.
- 4.12. Approximately 0.9 hectares of undisturbed habitat will be retained and protected/enclosed by a one metre high post and rail habitat protection fence with stockproof mesh as part of the proposal. On completion of the development the southern open access land is to be re-instated to managed grassland with wildflower borders.

- 4.13. Compensatory habitat measuring 0.21 hectares (2,100 square metres) is proposed on the adjacent main school site in the form of two areas of planting/management; one 1,300 square metres in area and another 800 square metres. It is proposed that retained on-site habitat be enhanced through ecological management.
- 4.14. Vehicular access during construction will be by temporary arrangement in the south-western corner of the site. Construction vehicles will access the site by crossing hard-surfaced areas of the school site from the existing vehicular access and parking areas.
- 4.15. The proposal does not constitute development requiring an Environmental Statement under the [Town & Country Planning \(Environmental Impact Assessment\) Regulations 2011](#).

5. Development Plan

- 5.1. The following plans and associated policies are considered to be relevant to the proposal:

[National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\) 2012](#)

- 5.2. The following paragraphs are relevant to the proposal:

- Paragraph 11: Determination in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise;
- Paragraph 14: Presumption in favour of sustainable development;
- Paragraph 17: Set of core land-use planning principles should underpin both plan-making and decision-taking; and
- Paragraph 72: Ensuring that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities.

[Hart District Local Plan \(2006\)](#):

- 5.3. The following policies are relevant to the proposal:

- Policy DEV 19 (Land between Dunley's Hill, North Warnborough and Robert Mays School, Odiham);
- Policy GEN 1 (General Policy for Development);
- Policy GEN 4 (General Design Policy);
- Policy CON 5 (Species Protected by Law);
- Policy CON 8 (Trees, Woodland & Hedgerows: Amenity Value);
- Policy CON 11 (Archaeological Sites and Schedule Monuments);
- Policy CON 21 (Local Gaps);
- Policy CON 23 (Development affecting Public Rights of Way);
- Policy RUR 3 (Development in the open countryside – control);
- Policy RUR35 (Social Infrastructure and Services); and
- Policy T14 (Transport and Development).

[Odiham and North Warnborough Neighbourhood Plan \(2014 - 2032\) \(Emerging\)](#)

5.4. The following policies are relevant to the proposal:

- Policy 10 (Education).

5.5. The Odiham and North Warnborough Neighbourhood Plan was submitted to Hart District Council in August 2016 and is currently undergoing independent examination. The Plan is therefore considered to be 'emerging' for the purposes of this planning application and regard should subsequently be had to the policies of the Plan whilst recognising its un-confirmed and un-adopted status.

6. Consultations

6.1. **County Councillor Glen:** Was notified of the proposal.

6.2. **Hart District Council:** Has no objection.

6.3. **Odiham Parish Council:** Has no objection.

6.4. **Hart Environmental Health Officer (EHO):** Was notified of the proposal.

6.5. **Natural England:** Has no objection.

6.6. **Sport England:** Has no objection. In their non-statutory role, they recommend a number of conditions relating to repair of any damage to the access, playing field quality and specification, alternative uses and community use.

6.7. **Local Highway Authority:** Has no objection.

6.8. **Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA):** Has no objection.

6.9. **Public Health:** Was notified of the proposal.

6.10. **Rights of Way:** Has no objection. There should be a temporary closure in place during works that would prevent access along the right of way. There are a number of routes that would be acceptable for alternative access so no overall negative impact on the network. Any damage caused by vehicular access to the footpath should be repaired to the 'countryside specification' or returned to its original standard.

6.11. **County Ecologist:** Has no objection subject to conditions requiring the submission of a Construction Ecological Management Plan and a Biodiversity Management Plan for on-going management.

6.12. **County Archaeologist:** Has no objection subject to conditions requiring the submission and implementation of a programme of archaeological assessment in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI).

6.13. **County Arboriculture:** Has no objection, subject to conditions requiring the development to be implemented in accordance with the Arboricultural Method Statement and the submission of a planting and aftercare plan for the proposed mitigation planting.

7. Representations

- 7.1. Hampshire County Council's [Statement of Community Involvement \(2014\)](#) (SCI) sets out the adopted procedure and publicity requirements associated with determining planning applications.
- 7.2. In complying with the requirements of the SCI, Hampshire County Council:
- Consulted all statutory and non-statutory consultees in accordance with [The Town and Country Planning \(Development Management Procedure\) \(England\) Order 2015](#); and
 - Complied with the requirements for publicity set out within [The Town and Country Planning \(Development Management Procedure\) \(England\) Order 2015](#).
- 7.3. The applicant also states that the following parties were consulted on the scheme through site strategy workshops and public meetings prior to submission of the planning application:
- Key School personnel and governing body;
 - Onward, Odiham and North Warnborough community group;
 - Pupils, staff and other stakeholders;
 - Ranil Jayawardena MP;
 - Local councillors; and
 - Members of the public.
- 7.4. As of 12 January 2017, a total of three representations (from two members of the public) have been received. These object to the proposal on the following grounds:
- Lack of need for the development;
 - Impact on Local Gap and coalescence of settlements;
 - Loss of public greenspace;
 - Landscape & visual impact;
 - Impact on flora and fauna;
 - Impact on Public Rights of Way;
 - Flood risk;
 - Noise impact;
 - Increase in traffic; and
 - Litter.
- 7.5. The above issues will be discussed and addressed primarily within the following commentary.

8. Commentary

Principle of the development

- 8.1. Applications for planning permission are required to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Paragraph 14 of the [NPPF \(2012\)](#) contains a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision-taking this means approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay.
- 8.2. Paragraph 72 (Promoting healthy communities) of the [NPPF \(2012\)](#) states that the provision of a sufficient choice of school places is of great importance to meet the needs of existing and new communities. As such the [NPPF \(2012\)](#) states that Local Planning Authorities should give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools and that Local Planning Authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement.
- 8.3. The proposal will provide additional grass sport pitches to cater for an existing shortfall in formal grass sport area at the school and provide for 150 additional pupils in September 2019. The proposed sport pitches would be outside of the complex of the existing school, located on land outside the settlement boundary but within an area identified as being a Local Gap defined within Policy CON 21 (Local Gaps) of the [Hart Local Plan 1996-2006 \(Saved Policies\)](#).
- 8.4. The land immediately outside of settlement boundaries are important to the form and character of a settlement, providing both the foreground and background views of the settlement for a distance. Saved Local Plan Policy CON21 states that development which would lead to the coalescence or damage to the separate identity of neighbouring settlements will not be permitted in the following local gaps: vi) Odiham to North Warnborough.
- 8.5. Saved Local Plan Policy RUR35 (Social Infrastructure and Services) of the [Hart Local Plan 1996-2006 \(Saved Policies\)](#) sets out that proposals which will improve or provide new schools and playing field, inter alia, will be permitted within or on the edge of the rural settlement or where existing facilities are adjacent to the urban areas provided that the location is well related to the catchment area served, subject to addressing other material considerations.
- 8.6. It is acknowledged that the development would result in the loss of an area of publically accessible unmanaged greenspace within the district. Notwithstanding this, Saved Local Plan Policy DEV19 safeguards and supports the development of the land at Bufton Field to provide public recreation and additional playing fields for Robert Mays School. The policy states that the provision of land for informal recreation and sports pitches could help to meet the shortage of public recreational provision in Odiham and North Warnborough and other settlements in the vicinity and specifically the shortfall of playing fields experienced by Robert May's School.

- 8.7. The application site would be fenced off from the adjacent open land and would include new gated link paths from the main school campus across the public footpath to the pitches. The fencing will change the character of the open countryside. However, whilst the fencing would be up to three metres high in places, it would not be a solid structure and views across the application site would largely be retained by virtue of the transparency of the wire-mesh design. It is considered that the open, light weight and sympathetic appearance of the fencing will reduce any impact regarding the openness of the Local Gap and any concerns regarding potential coalescence of adjacent settlements as a result of the application.
- 8.8. The proposed new school sport pitches are therefore considered to be in accordance with Policies RUR35, DEV19 & CON21 of the [Hart Local Plan 1996-2006 \(Saved Policies\)](#).
- 8.9. Policy 10 (Education) of the emerging [Odiham and North Warnborough Neighbourhood Plan \(2014 - 2032\)](#) states that land adjoining Robert May's School should be safeguarded for educational uses, provided that the use is confined to outdoor recreational facilities and a legal obligation is made to secure the shared use of such facilities with the local community.
- 8.10. The application seeks the provision of one enclosed main pitch and an adjacent second publically accessible area of amenity grassland. As set out above, the proposed playing pitches are required to address a shortfall in existing playing field provision at the Robert May's School site. The main pitch is therefore required to be enclosed to ensure that it is available during the school day for educational purposes associated with the school.
- 8.11. The Neighbourhood Plan is 'emerging' and therefore its policies are not formally confirmed nor adopted. Notwithstanding this, regard should be had to the provisions of the emerging Plan. In this instance it is considered reasonable that a planning condition be attached to require the submission of a Community Use Plan setting out how the main pitch will be made available for community use and when. It is considered that this would be proportionate and adequate to address the aspiration of the community identified in the emerging Neighbourhood Plan. This condition is included in integral Appendix B.
- 8.12. As identified in section 3 (Planning History) of the report, the land comprising Bufton Field is subject to a section 106 legal agreement between Hart District Council and the land owner/s for the land to be retained as 'open land'. The proposal for the enclosure of the main pitch will necessitate the removal of this 'open land' restriction on the northern part of the site. This would be required to be achieved through a variation to the existing legal agreement held by Hart District Council. An advisory note is therefore recommended to be attached to any subsequent decision notice to inform the developer that implementation of the proposal would be subject to the developer securing a variation to the existing legal agreement.

Design

- 8.13. The applicant states that the following key principles emerged from the Site Strategy Workshop's consultation with the parish council and public meetings:
- Provide grass pitches that will make up for the shortfall in flat grass sports area on the school site currently, but do not include floodlighting as it would be a nuisance to neighbours and would be overly intrusive within the green gap between Odiham and North Warnborough;
 - Retain large areas of the existing natural habitat and develop them as study and wildlife protection areas;
 - Provide fencing to control access and to provide new gated link paths from the main campus across the public path to the pitches, but do not provide direct access from Bufton Field housing estate to deter nuisance parking from potential weekend pitch users;
 - Provide a carefully designed land drainage scheme to make sure that lower lying land is not at risk of flooding; and
 - Retain the existing informal path network around the field and provide for public open space subject to further consultation with the Parish Council.
- 8.14. Saved Local Plan Policy GEN1 (General Policy for Development) states that proposals will be permitted where they are in keeping with local character in terms of scale, design, landscaping and layout, avoid any material loss of amenity to adjoining residential uses and avoid the installation of lighting which is visually damaging to the character of the area.
- 8.15. Saved Local Plan Policy GEN 4 (General Design Policy) states that development proposals will be permitted where they sustain or improve the urban design qualities of villages and other settlements which derive from their layout and form, scale, character or appearance, special features, or the arrangement, scale and design of buildings and spaces.
- 8.16. The siting of the sports pitches adjacent the school grounds will provide access from the main school facilities. The applicant states that the playing fields have been designed to be fully accessible allowing inclusion for all staff, pupils and visitors.
- 8.17. Given the separation distances and mature vegetation between the fencing and sports pitches and the neighbouring dwellings, any impact regarding loss of amenity would be limited. The application proposal does not include any floodlighting and therefore hours of use would be limited to daylight hours. It is therefore considered that the development will not be harmful to the residential amenities of occupants of Bufton Fields, Laurel Close, Dunley's Hill, West Street and Western Lane.
- 8.18. The proposal includes the provision of landscape planting to mitigate the impact of the development and enhance its setting following completion. Existing habitat offering vegetative screening between the site and dwellings on Queens Road to the north will also be retained to limit the initial visual impact of the development from this aspect.

- 8.19. Planning conditions are recommended to prevent the installation of any external lighting on site without prior approval, to require the submission of a detailed landscaping scheme, protect the existing tree group between the northern pitch and residential properties to the north of the site for the duration of the development and to ensure the development is implemented in accordance with the approved plans. These are included in integral Appendix B.
- 8.20. The development is subsequently considered to be in accordance with saved policies GEN1 (General Policy for Development) and GEN4 (General Design Policy) of the [Hart Local Plan 1996-2006 \(Saved Policies\)](#).

Ecology

- 8.21. Saved Policy RUR 3 (Development in the open countryside – control) of the [Hart Local Plan 1996-2006 \(Saved Policies\)](#) states that: developments in the countryside will be permitted where the countryside is protected through the retention, creation or enhancement of features of nature conservation.
- 8.22. Saved Policy CON 4 (Replacement and Habitats) states that where development is permitted which would be likely to have a material adverse effect on features of nature conservation interest in a habitat referred to in Policy CON 5, that adverse effect should be reduced where it is practicable to do so by the provision of adequate replacement habitat on the site or in other appropriate location.
- 8.23. In addition, saved Policy CON 5 (Species Protected by Law) states that planning permission will not be granted for development that would have a significant adverse effect on plant or animal species or their habitats protected by law unless conditions are attached or planning obligations entered into requiring the developer to take steps to secure their protection.
- 8.24. The application was accompanied by an [Ecological Appraisal](#) of the site assessing the impact of the development on on-site and off-site ecology.
- 8.25. The applicant asserts that the proposed cut and fill exercise has been carefully designed to minimise loss of existing habitat. The following measures are proposed in association with the application:
- Vegetation clearance is to be undertaken outside of the breeding bird season (i.e. March-August inclusive);
 - Further reptile surveys will be carried out prior to clearance of any ground cover;
 - A precautionary method of works will be employed when clearing the habitats in order to avoid killing or injury of reptiles, which would be in contravention of legislation pertaining to this species group;
 - Permanent habitat protection fencing will be constructed;
 - Off-site tree and shrub planting of a total area of 0.21 ha will be re-planted;

- Species rich grass seed will be used on the newly constructed embankments;
 - A variety of bird and bat boxes will be installed within retained habitats;
 - Felled trees will be used to create log piles.
- 8.26. The retained habitat on site will be protected by habitat protection fencing and additional tree protection fencing following the alignment of the Root Protection Areas on site.
- 8.27. The County Ecologist has reviewed the application and considers that the existing habitat on site is of limited intrinsic value, and does not support a significant assemblage species. Although there would be an overall net loss of existing habitat, the proposed compensatory and enhanced retained habitat would provide habitat of greater value in terms of species and structural diversity.
- 8.28. The overall provision of new scrub/tree areas within the main school site and the enhancement of on-site habitat would provide a mosaic of tree, scrub and open species-rich grassland which will serve to mitigate and compensate for the losses from the creation of the pitch and public open space. The location and design of these will retain habitat connectivity across the landscape, preserving the ecological network.
- 8.29. The County Ecologist has no objection to the proposal subject to conditions requiring the submission of a Construction Ecological Management Plan and a Biodiversity Management Plan which would specify the appropriate species and planting density/distribution for the effective establishment and future management of on and off-site habitat. These conditions are included within the recommended conditions in Appendix B of this report.
- 8.30. The development is subsequently considered to be in accordance with Saved policies RUR 3 (Development in the open countryside – control), CON 4 (Replacement and Habitats) and CON 5 (Species Protected by Law) of the [Hart Local Plan 1996-2006 \(Saved Policies\)](#).

Arboriculture

- 8.31. Policy CON 8 (Trees, Woodland & Hedgerows: Amenity Value) of the [Hart Local Plan 1996-2006 \(Saved Policies\)](#) states that where development is proposed which would affect trees, woodlands or hedgerows of significant landscape or amenity value planning permission will only be granted if new planting is undertaken to maintain the value of these features.
- 8.32. The application was accompanied by an [Arboricultural Impact Assessment \(IAI\)](#) and [Arboricultural Method Statement](#) informed by a Tree Survey (included in AIA). The Tree Survey identified that the following will be lost as a result of construction of the scheme and access improvements from Robert May's School:
- Three Category 'C' (trees of low quality) tree groups comprising of approximately 230 young trees consisting of birch, maple, pine and sycamore (stem diameters 40mm-140mm); and
 - Four Category 'C' semi-mature sycamore trees (access improvements).

- 8.33. The mature individual trees and groups of young trees along the boundaries of Bufton Field will be unaffected by the proposal.
- 8.34. Two areas of new tree and shrub planting are proposed in order to compensate and mitigate for the loss of these trees on the site and in the vicinity. Area one (1,300 square metres) will be located on the embankment immediately adjacent the field within the main school campus. Area two (800 square metres) will be located on the opposite boundary on the existing sports field.
- 8.35. The County Arboriculturist has reviewed the proposal and considers that the proposed on-site habitat enhancement and areas of off-site compensatory habitat would adequately mitigate for the loss of individual juvenile tree groups associated with the clearance of habitat. The County Arboriculturist therefore has no objection subject to conditions requiring the development to be implemented in accordance with the Arboricultural Method Statement and the submission of a planting and aftercare plan for the proposed mitigation planting/habitat areas. These conditions are included within the recommended conditions in Appendix B of this report except where already imposed in association with the ecology section above.
- 8.36. The proposal is subsequently considered to be in accordance with Policy CON 8 (Trees, Woodland & Hedgerows: Amenity Value) of the [Hart Local Plan 1996-2006 \(Saved Policies\)](#)

Highway Safety and Capacity

- 8.37. Policy GEN 1 (General Policy for Development) of the [Hart Local Plan 1996-2006 \(Saved Policies\)](#) states that proposals for development will be permitted where they do not give rise to traffic flows which would cause material detriment to the amenities of nearby properties or to highway safety and have adequate arrangements on site for access, servicing or the parking of vehicles.
- 8.38. The application was accompanied by a [Transport Technical Note](#). This identified that based on the proposed size of the pitches there would be a maximum of 88 community users on the site at any one time if the new pitches were used to maximum capacity. There is an all-weather pitch also available for community use within the school site which can accommodate around 35 users. That means that a total of 123 potential users could be at the Robert May's School site at any given time. Trips to the pitches for community use will be outside of school hours and therefore outside of the AM and PM commuting traffic peaks.
- 8.39. As community use of the pitches will be outside of school hours, the staff parking at Robert May's School will be available to users of the site. There are currently 91 available spaces (including two accessible) which will increase to 102 spaces (including three accessible) when the school expands in accordance with recently granted planning permission [16/02229/HCC](#). The school's coach bays will also be available for parking which will provide an additional 31 parking bays, taking the total parking bay provision on site to 133 spaces.

8.40. The Highway Authority reviewed the application and is subsequently satisfied that there is sufficient parking on site to accommodate all users in the event that all pitches are booked simultaneously. The proposal is therefore considered to be in accordance with Policy GEN1 (General Policy for Development) of the Hart Local Plan 1996-2006 (Saved Policies).

Water Environment

- 8.41. The application was accompanied by a [Geo-environmental Site Investigation](#) identifying soil and drainage characteristics on site. This indicates that the site is underlain by White Chalk Sub Group. Infiltration tests were undertaken in two of the investigative boreholes and these show that soakaways will be a suitable method for discharge of surface water from the site.
- 8.42. The development will involve the alteration of levels on site in order to create a topography and gradient desirable for use for recreational purposes. The resultant landform will however retain the natural surface water drainage direction on the site (south-west to north-east).
- 8.43. The applicant states that the development will include a land drainage system designed to drain the site without flooding during a 1 in 100 year storm plus climate change allowance, without putting the lower lying housing at and other third party land at risk from flooding. It is acknowledged that the installation of land drainage and the removal of established vegetation may result in a more efficient drainage of the land during storm events.
- 8.44. The Lead Local Flood Authority, who are responsible for managing the risk of future flooding from surface water, has reviewed the application and does not object to the proposal.
- 8.45. To ensure that on-site drainage infrastructure is adequately designed to prevent any increase in net surface water run-off from the site a condition is recommended to require the submission of surface water drainage details prior to commencement of the development. The details will be required to include the location and design of proposed drainage infrastructure and any necessary supporting calculations. This condition is included within Appendix B of this report.

Rights of Way

- 8.46. Policy CON 23 (Development affecting Public Rights of Way) of the [Hart Local Plan 1996-2006 \(Saved Policies\)](#) states that development will not be permitted which would seriously detract from the amenity and consequent recreational value of well-used footpaths and other public rights of way.
- 8.47. The boundary of Bufton Field which abuts the Right of Way is currently a mixture of un-managed self-seeded scrub and juvenile trees with the occasional informal path entrance. This will be replaced with a more defined but permeable, landscaped boundary formed from amenity grassland and uniform tree planting at set intervals adjacent the southern 'pitch'.

- 8.48. Adjacent the northern main pitch the boundary will comprise of a 1.8 metre high fence and continued tree planting at set intervals. A short section of this northern section will also be next to part of the embanking needed to form a level playing surface on site. This will slope down away from the Right of Way from behind the perimeter fence.
- 8.49. Two new pedestrian/maintenance accesses will be created along the eastern boundary of the Right of Way and a third formalised/enhanced as part of the proposal. The proposal will therefore result in a change to the enclosure of the existing Right of Way (Odiham 7) and landscape adjoining it and therefore a change to the way users of the Right of Way experience the route when travelling along it.
- 8.50. The County Councils Rights of Way team were consulted and have no objection to the proposal. They consider that during the construction phase there will be a number of routes that would be acceptable for alternative access so there would be no overall negative impact on the Right of Way network. A condition is recommended to require any damage caused by vehicular access to the footpath to be repaired to the 'countryside specification' or returned to its original standard following completion of the development.
- 8.51. It is considered that the alteration will not seriously detract from the amenity and consequent recreational value of the Right of Way and therefore that the proposal would be in accordance with Policy CON 23 (Development affecting Public Rights of Way) of the [Hart Local Plan 1996-2006 \(Saved Policies\)](#).

Archaeology

- 8.52. Policy CON 11 (Archaeological Sites and Schedule Monuments) of the [Hart Local Plan 1996-2006 \(Saved Policies\)](#) states that development that would adversely affect a site of archaeological importance or its setting will not be permitted.
- 8.53. The County Archaeologist was consulted and has no objection to the proposal subject to conditions requiring the submission and implementation of a programme of archaeological assessment in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI). These conditions are included within Appendix B to the report.
- 8.54. It is therefore considered that the proposal would be in accordance with Policy CON 11 (Archaeological Sites and Schedule Monuments) of the [Hart Local Plan 1996-2006 \(Saved Policies\)](#).

Sport England

- 8.55. Sport England is a non-statutory consultee in relation to this planning application but has been consulted in accordance with the recommendations contained within the [National Planning Practice Guidance](#).
- 8.56. It recommends a number of planning conditions relating to repair of any damage to the access, playing field specification, restriction on the future use of the land, a maintenance programme and community use strategy.

8.57. The applicant was approached in respect of these recommended conditions. A requirement for a Community Use Plan is identified separately earlier within this report. The primary use of the playing field will be reserved for PE and soft outdoor play. However, it is reasonable to assume that the school may make wider use of the playing field when it is not in use for PE by having outdoor lessons or school events for instance. It is considered that the conditions relating to a maintenance programme and restriction on the future use of the land proposed by Sport England would not be necessary in this instance. A condition relating to the playing field specification has been included within Appendix B of this report.

Construction Phase

8.58. Impacts arising from the construction phase of development (noise, dust, construction vehicles and hours of working) do not constitute a [material consideration](#) for the purposes of planning where these are covered by other legislation such as the Control of Pollution Acts. However, notwithstanding this the applicant states that during the construction phase, contractor's working hours will be limited to minimise disruption to the community and to avoid unnecessary Health and Safety risks and nuisance to neighbouring property owners.

8.59. A Site Waste Management Plan will be implemented to ensure that during construction the principles of minimising waste are maintained. The school day starts at 8:30am and finishes at 2:20pm. There are after school clubs which run from 2:30pm until 3:30pm Monday through to Thursdays. The contractor will be required to plan deliveries to avoid these peak times of movement. An advisory note is included within the recommendation to request that a Construction Management Plan and a Waste Management Plan be provided to mitigate any safety concerns regarding construction vehicles.

Summary

8.60. The development is considered to be in accordance with the relevant policies included in the [Hart District Local Plan \(2006\)](#) and [Odiham and North Warnborough Neighbourhood Plan \(2014 - 2032\) \(Emerging\)](#) and would:

- Provide additional grass sports pitches to address an existing shortfall in playing field provision at Robert May's School and in other settlements in the vicinity as supported by Policy DEV 19 (Land between Dunley's Hill, North Warnborough and Robert Mays School, Odiham);
- Not lead to the coalescence or damage to the separate identity of the neighbouring settlements of Odiham and North Warnborough;
- Be in keeping with local character in terms of scale, design, landscaping and layout and avoid any material loss of amenity to adjoining residential uses;
- Not have a significant adverse effect on protected plant or animal species or their habitats and would protect the countryside through the

creation and enhancement of features of nature conservation by providing compensatory habitat to mitigate that to be lost;

- Not give rise to traffic flows which would cause material detriment to the amenities of nearby properties or to highway safety and have adequate arrangements on site for the parking of vehicles;
- Not unacceptably increase the risk of flooding on other land;
- Include new planting to maintain the value of trees and hedgerows affected by the proposal;
- Not seriously detract from the amenity and consequent recreational value of well-used footpaths and other public rights of way; and
- Include provision for a Community Use Plan setting out how the main pitch will be made available for community use and when.

9. Recommendation

9.1 That planning permission be GRANTED subject to the conditions listed in integral appendix B.

Appendices:

Integral Appendix A – Corporate or Legal Information

Integral Appendix B – Conditions

Appendix C - Location Plan

Appendix D – Layout Plan

Appendix E - Proposed levels

Other documents relating to this application:

<https://planning.hants.gov.uk/ApplicationDetails.aspx?AppNo=16/02232/HCC>

Rpt/7972/RS

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:**Links to the Corporate Strategy**

Hampshire safer and more secure for all:	No
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
Maximising well-being:	No
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
Enhancing our quality of place:	No
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
OR	
This proposal does not link to the Corporate Strategy but, nevertheless, requires a decision because:	
The proposal does not link to the Corporate Strategy but, nevertheless, requires a decision because the proposal is an application for planning permission and requires determination by the County Council in its statutory role as the minerals and waste planning authority.	

Other Significant Links

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents	
The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)	
<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
16/02232/HCC	Hampshire County Council
HRE006	Elizabeth II Court West
	Sussex Street
	Winchester
Bufton Field adjacent to Robert Mays School, West Street, Odiham, HOOK, RG29 1NA	SO23 8UD
Construction of one grass sports pitch and one open access grass space for community recreation benefit, including associated earthworks, fencing and drainage	

CONDITIONS

Time Limits

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date on which this planning permission was granted.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 (as amended) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Hours of Working

2. No work relating to the construction of the development hereby permitted, (including works of preparation prior to operations, the delivery of construction materials, skips or machinery, nor the removal of waste materials) shall take place before 0800 or after 1800 Monday to Friday inclusive, before 0800 or after 1400 on Saturday and not at all on Sunday or recognised Public Holidays.

Reason: To protect the amenities of occupiers of nearby properties in accordance with GEN1 (General Policy for Development) and policy GEN4 (General Design Policy) of the Hart Local Plan 1996-2006 (Saved Policies).

Pre-Commencement

3. Prior to the commencement of development a Construction Ecological Management Plan (CEMP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The CEMP shall incorporate the following measures as set out in the ecology recommendations:

- the previously-agreed species mitigation measures (with particular reference to foraging bats and breeding / foraging opportunities for birds),
- additional precautionary measures relating to the tree felling,
- the detailed planting scheme for the compensatory habitat at the adjacent school and the enhanced retained on-site habitat;
- detailed fencing layout, and
- the locations and specifications of the various species-specific enhancements (bat / bird boxes etc.).

The development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details..

Reason: To ensure the development is in accordance with Policies RUR 3 (Development in the open countryside – control), CON 4 (Replacement and Habitats) and CON 5 (Species Protected by Law) of the Hart Local Plan 1996-2006 (Saved Policies).

4. Prior to the commencement of development a detailed scheme of landscaping for the areas of the site outside of the off-site compensatory habitat and the enhanced retained on-site habitat; shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall specify the types, size and species of all trees and shrubs to be planted; details of all trees to be retained; and details of fencing/enclosure of the site, phasing and timescales for carrying out the works, and provision for future maintenance. Any trees or shrubs which, within a period of five years from the date of planting, die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species. The development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure the development is in accordance with policies GEN1 (General Policy for Development) and policy GEN4 (General Design Policy) of the Hart Local Plan 1996-2006 (Saved Policies).

5. Prior to the commencement of development details of the RAL colour code of fencing to be erected on site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure the development is in accordance with Policies GEN1 (General Policy for Development) and policy GEN4 (General Design Policy) of the Hart Local Plan 1996-2006 (Saved Policies).

6. Prior to the commencement of development surface water drainage details including the location and design of proposed drainage infrastructure and associated supporting calculations shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that on-site drainage infrastructure is adequately designed to prevent any increase in net surface water run-off from the site and to ensure the development is in accordance with policies GEN1 (General Policy for Development) and GEN4 (General Design Policy) of the Hart Local Plan 1996-2006 (Saved Policies).

7. No development shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological assessment in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) that has been submitted to and approved by the Planning Authority in order to recognise, characterise and record any archaeological features and deposits that may exist within the proposed development area. The assessment should consist of the excavation of four 15 metre-long trial trenches, located in the 'Archaeology interest area' as shown on Plan P10998-L-7002 that is included among the documents attached to the application.

Reason: To assess the extent, nature and date of any archaeological deposits that might be present and the impact of the development upon these heritage assets in accordance with Policy CON 11 (Archaeological Sites and Schedule Monuments) of the Hart Local Plan 1996-2006 (Saved Policies).

8. No development shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological mitigation of impact, based on the results of the trial trenching, in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation that has been submitted to and approved by the Planning Authority.

Reason: To mitigate the effect of the works associated with the development upon any heritage assets and to ensure that information regarding these heritage assets is preserved by record for future generations in accordance with Policy CON 11 (Archaeological Sites and Schedule Monuments) of the Hart Local Plan 1996-2006 (Saved Policies).

9. Following completion of archaeological fieldwork a report will be produced in accordance with an approved programme including where appropriate post-excavation assessment, specialist analysis and reports, publication and public engagement.

Reason: To contribute to our knowledge and understanding of our past by ensuring that opportunities are taken to capture evidence from the historic environment and to make this publicly available in accordance with Policy CON 11 (Archaeological Sites and Schedule Monuments) of the Hart Local Plan 1996-2006 (Saved Policies).

Operational

10. Within three months of occupation of the development a site wide Biodiversity Management Plan (BMP) shall be submitted to the Local

Planning for approval in writing. The BMP shall demonstrate how the site will be managed in the long term, including details of personnel / organisations responsible for undertaking and reviewing this, at least two biodiversity monitoring visits and periodic checks and repairs of the post and rail fencing.

Reason: To ensure the development is in accordance with Policies RUR 3 (Development in the open countryside – control), CON 4 (Replacement and Habitats) and CON 5 (Species Protected by Law) of the Hart Local Plan 1996-2006 (Saved Policies).

11. The playing field and pitch shall be constructed and laid out in accordance with the standards and methodologies set out in the guidance note "Natural Turf for Sport" (Sport England, 2011).

Reason: To ensure the quality of pitches is satisfactory in accordance with Policies GEN1 (General Policy for Development) and GEN4 (General Design Policy) of the Hart Local Plan 1996-2006 (Saved Policies).

12. There shall be no external lighting on site.

Reason: To limit the landscape and visual impact of the development within the Odiham-North-Warnborough Local Gap and to limit the impact of the development on the amenity of local residents in accordance with Policies GEN1 (General Policy for Development), GEN4 (General Design Policy) and CON 21 (Local Gaps) of the Hart Local Plan 1996-2006 (Saved Policies).

13. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the 'Arboricultural Impact Assessment' and 'Arboricultural Method Statement' for 'Robert May's School Remote Field' (dated 9th August 2016) submitted with the application.

Reason: To ensure the development is in accordance with Policy CON 8 (Trees, Woodland & Hedgerows: Amenity Value) of the Hart Local Plan 1996-2006 (Saved Policies).

14. Tree groups G5 and G6 as identified within the 'Arboricultural Impact Assessment For Robert May's School Remote Field' (dated 9th August 2016) submitted with the application shall be retained for the duration of the development. The trees shall not be lopped, topped, felled or destroyed unless advised as necessary by a qualified arboriculturist.

Reason: To ensure the development is in accordance with saved policies GEN1 (General Policy for Development) and GEN4 (General Design Policy) of the Hart Local Plan 1996-2006 (Saved Policies).

15. Any damage caused by vehicular access to Public Right of Way Odiham 7 shall be repaired to the 'countryside specification' or returned to its original standard following completion of the development.

Reason: To ensure the development is in accordance with Policy CON 23 (Development affecting Public Rights of Way) of the Hart Local Plan 1996-2006 (Saved Policies).

16. Prior to occupation of the development hereby permitted, a Community Use Plan shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval in writing. The Plan shall include details of how and when the pitch will be made available for use by the community. The development shall subsequently be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that consideration is given to the provision of the enclosed pitch for community use in accordance with emerging policy 10 (Education) of the Odiham and North Warnborough Neighbourhood Plan (2014 - 2032).

Plans

17. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: **P10998-L-7000 RevP2, P10998-L-7002 RevP2, P10998-L-7101 RevP4, P10998-L-7100 RevP4, P10998-L-7102 RevP1, P10998-L-7103 RevP1**

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

Note to Applicants

1. In determining this planning application, the Local Planning Authority has worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner in accordance with the requirement in the National Planning Policy Framework (2012), as set out in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.
2. The applicant is advised that a legal agreement exists requiring the land the subject of this application be maintained as open land. Implementation of the proposal would therefore be subject to a developer securing a variation to the existing legal agreement.

3. The preparation of a Construction Traffic Management Plan to be submitted and approved by the Highway Authority, including lorry routes, parking and turning provision to be made on site and measures to prevent mud from being deposited on the highway is advised in order to ensure the safety of school children and the general public.
4. This decision does not purport or convey any approval or consent which may be required under the Building Regulations or any other Acts, including Byelaws, orders or Regulations made under such acts.