

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Regulatory Committee
Date:	19 March 2014
Title:	Change of use of a horse paddock to an all weather Synthetic Turf Pitch (STP) with floodlighting and associated works, including a grass rugby pitch (Swanmore College of Technology) at Lower Chase Road, Swanmore. (Application No. 12/02419/HCS) (Site ref: WRE005)
Reference:	5720
Report From:	Head of County Planning

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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. Planning permission is sought for the change of use of a horse paddock to an all weather Synthetic Turf Pitch (STP) with floodlighting and associated works, including a grass rugby pitch for use by Swanmore College of Technology at Lower Chase Road, Swanmore.
- 1.2. The main issues arising from the application are the effect of the proposed development on the character of the area, the visual impact, departure from land-use policy, amenity impact from noise and light pollution, biodiversity impact and habitat enhancement, need for the development due to the loss of existing playing fields for college use and provision of an additional community facility.
- 1.3. The proposed development is located within the countryside on agricultural grade 4 land which has not been previously developed and is therefore contrary to policy MTRA4. Whilst the fencing and lighting columns associated with the STP will introduce physical structures into the Settlement Gap, the structures are not in a location or of a scale that they will have a significant visual impact or be physically intrusive when considering the wider setting of the site when unlit (CP18). However, it is recognised that the nature of the development will, in the evenings and at night, change the character and setting of the area through a reduction in the tranquillity of the area and the introduction of light in the night sky (CP20). The noise and lighting levels identified will not have a significant adverse amenity impact on local residents or users of the locality and

appropriate mitigation measures have been put in place (CP20 and saved policy DP10). The operation of the facility would not have a significant impact on the local highway network (CP10), the construction of the development would not increase flood risk potential off site as appropriate mitigation measures are proposed on site to ensure run off rates reflect the current greenfield rates (CP17). The development will provide appropriate landscaping to reflect the current planting along Lower Chase Road and in turn this will provide a net biodiversity gain and there will not be a negative impact on the nature conservation status of the bats through the additional planting provision (CP16). The need for the development has been recognised by Sport England, the Football Association as well some local residents, parents of pupils at the college and potential users of the facility (MTRA2, CP6 and CP7). The development will benefit the college and wider community and provide wider opportunities for sport which will contribute to the health and well-being of the local and wider rural community (para 73 NPPF). It will also further strengthen the community presence that the college currently has within the village and wider rural community. It is considered that there would not be a significant adverse impact on the countryside or locality and the proposal has significant benefits which are material considerations and therefore on balance it is considered that this proposal is an acceptable departure from policy MTRA4.

2. Site

- 2.1. The proposed 2.85 hectare development site (detailed on the location plan attached) is currently an undeveloped greenfield site which is managed grassland, used for horse paddocks. The site slopes from east to west. The eastern corner of the site is adjacent to housing in Crofton Way. The site's eastern/south eastern boundary is bound by the Swanmore College of Technology's existing rugby and football pitches. The southern corner of the site is adjacent to the college's buildings and the land to the south/south west are further rugby and football pitches utilised by the college. Lower Chase Road runs along the western/north western boundary of the proposed development site and currently the paddock's access is onto Lower Chase Road. Lower Chase Road connects Swanmore to Waltham Chase. All of the boundaries of the site, except for the north eastern boundary, are delineated by a mixture of semi-mature trees and hedgerows. A 1.2 metre high post and rail fence demarcates the northern/north eastern boundary of the site. To the south of the college, within the college grounds, is an existing all weather pitch that has floodlighting; this is not a full sized pitch.
- 2.2. The nearest residential properties to the proposed development site, White Cottage and Oakleigh, are on the opposite side of Lower Chase Road and overlook the site. Collingwood House lies to the north and is separated from the site by an area of rough grassland. The rear gardens of properties on Crofton Way back onto the eastern corner of the site.

Some gardens of the proposed new houses abut the site; the houses would be approximately 11 metres from the site boundary.

- 2.3. The site is located within the Settlement Gap. The settlement boundary of Swanmore runs along the south eastern boundary of the proposed development site and incorporates some of the college's existing playing fields and the buildings.
- 2.4. The site lies within flood risk zone 1. The nearest Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) is approximately 190 metres to the south east, beyond the school's campus and New Road. Approximately 550 metres to the North West is the South Downs National Park (SDNP) and The Moor's, Bishop Waltham Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The site has an agricultural land classification of Grade 4.

3. Site History

- 3.1. In November 2012 the planning application before Members was submitted and taken to a Members Committee Site Visit on 28 January 2013. At this time a planning application (12/02344/FUL) was being considered by Winchester City Council for 75no. dwellings with associated access off New Road, parking and landscaping. The residential planning application was refused by Winchester City Council.
- 3.2. A revised residential planning application (13/02774/FUL) has been submitted to Winchester City Council. The planning application sought approval for the erection of 70 no. dwellings comprising of 2no. one bed flats, 4no. two bed flats, 10no. two bed houses, 40no. three bed houses, 6no. four bed houses and 8no. five bed houses with associated access, parking and landscaping. The decision is to be taken by Winchester City Council on 6 March 2014, the officer recommendation is for approval.
- 3.3. Both planning applications (sports pitches; Hampshire County Council and residential development; Winchester City Council) have been submitted as part of a land swap opportunity. The proceeds of sale from this proposed land 'swap' will provide the college with the necessary funding to implement the works proposed within the application, together with funding for further educational improvements to the college.
- 3.4. Members visited the site for the Hampshire County Council planning application again on 3 March 2014.

4. Proposal

- 4.1. Planning permission is sought for the change of use of a horse paddock to an all weather STP with floodlighting and associated works, including a grass rugby pitch at Swanmore College of Technology, Lower Chase Road, Swanmore. The pitch is to be used by Swanmore College of

Technology and will also be open to the Community outside of normal school hours.

- 4.2. The proposed layout of the site is detailed on Plan Y0649-L-201 revP3. The STP is to be located in the eastern section of the site. The natural ground slope is to be remodelled so that the finished level of the pitch in the eastern corner, nearest the housing on Crofton Way, will be approximately 1.5 metres lower than the existing ground levels. The pitch is to measure 100 x 65 metres with an additional three metres run off margin and goal recesses being incorporated. The carpet of the pitch is to be a synthetic 3rd generation 60 millimetre thick pile turf carpet, infilled with sand and rubber crumb and incorporating a 15 millimetre shock absorbing layer applied to an open textured macadam base. The STP is to be enclosed with a 4.5 metre high fence, rigid twin-wire panel fencing, polyester powder-coated moss green (RAL6500). Gates are to be incorporated into the fencing. The STP will require the installation of eight 15 metre high floodlights which will produce an average of 200lux light levels across the pitch. Shock absorbent washers (rubber grommets) are to be incorporated onto the fence panels to muffle the sound of balls rebounding off the fence.
- 4.3. A grass rugby pitch is to be laid to a uniform 1:100 fall across the diagonal from east to west on the western section of the site. The pitch is to be constructed of imported topsoil and ameliorated with sand in line with the Sport England's Design Guidance Note for Natural Turf for Sport.
- 4.4. The landscaping proposed for the site is detailed on plan Y0649-L-701 RevP3 and comprises woodland edge planting along Lower Chase Road and the western/south western boundary. Additional hedgerow planting is proposed along the northern, eastern and south eastern boundary of the site. Further tree planting is to be provided along the northern boundary and will include Oak and Field Maples. This boundary will have a 1.2 metre high post and three rail fence to ensure clear delineation of the site. In the western corner of the site a swale (temporary pond) is to be created, this will be left un-mown. Adjacent to the rugby pitch areas of wildflowers are to be planted and other areas are to be laid to general purpose outfield mix grass. A 2.4 metre high acoustic fence is to be erected along the south eastern/eastern boundary of the site adjacent to the properties in Crofton Way and the proposed new houses.
- 4.5. There is to be no vehicle access off Lower Chase Road; the existing access is to be removed. A gap through the hedgerow on the southern boundary is to be created to provide emergency vehicle access between the proposed site and the college site. A 2.5 metre wide pedestrian footpath link will also be created from the southern corner of the proposed site and into the college. All users of the STP will be required to utilise the existing car parking for the college which is accessed off New Road. There are currently 111 marked car parking bays located within the four car parks. When there is an exceptional demand on car parking spaces it

has been indicated that there are additional unmarked areas that can be made available.

- 4.6. Construction access for the development is proposed to be taken from Lower Chase Road. It has been stated that there will be an average of 12 delivery construction vehicle movements accessing the site each week.
- 4.7. The proposed hours of use for the STP are 0900 to 1700 for the college then 1700 to 2200 for the Community Monday to Friday, 0900 to 1400 on Saturday and Sunday for the Community. The rugby pitch would solely be used by the college between 0900 and 1700 Monday to Friday.
- 4.8. There is an existing Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) located to the south of the college and this has been let to the community for around six years. There have been expressions of interest for a full size STP in the Swanmore area. To facilitate the use of the STP by the community there is the need for floodlighting to enable evening use outside of college hours. Alternative locations within the existing college grounds have been considered and are detailed on plan Y0649-L-103 revP1.
- 4.9. A bat and reptile report was submitted with the application that concluded that there were three types of bats (Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle and Myotis Bats). It is stated that there are no roosts within the existing boundary planting however the vegetation is utilised by the bat species for commuting and foraging. Overall the number of bats and foraging bats recorded was low. On the site one species of reptile, slow worms, were recorded with a peak adult count of ten in any one day. There were records confirming the presence of a breeding population on the site. The landscape management plan works in a number of the recommendations of the report such as un-mown grassland and log piles to enhance the bat and reptile populations.

5. Development plan

- 5.1. The appropriate development document for consideration is the Winchester District Local Plan Part 1 Joint Core Strategy (2013) and the Winchester District Local Plan Review (Adopted 2006) – Saved Policies.
- 5.2. The relevant policies within the Core Strategy are MTRA2 (Market Towns and Larger Villages), MTRA4 (Development in the Countryside), CP6 (Local Services and Facilities), CP7 (Open Space, Sport and Recreation), CP10 (Transport), CP16 (Biodiversity), CP17 (Flooding, Flood Risk and the Water Environment), CP18 (Settlement Gaps) and CP20 (Heritage and Landscape Character). The relevant saved policies are DP10 (Pollution Generating Development) of the Local Plan Review.
- 5.3. Open Space, Sports and Recreation Study for Winchester City Council (2008) is a material consideration. Provides a summary of access standards for Synthetic Turf Pitches (20-30 minutes walking and 20-30

minutes driving). Part 3 of the study identifies that there is an undersupply in junior football pitches within the Bishops Waltham area. It recognises the need for Community Use Agreements when STPs are on land within the ownership of schools. Furthermore it identifies the need for facilities to be located near to appropriate changing facilities.

- 5.4. The Winchester District Community Strategy (2010 to 2020) is a material consideration. One of the key principles of the Winchester District Strategic Partnership is to draw on the power of sport in addressing their priorities.
- 5.5. Winchester District Local Plan Part 2 – Landscape Sensitivity Appraisal (Swanmore) (November 2013) is a material consideration.
- 5.6. The National Planning Policy Framework is a material consideration. Paragraph 73 recognises the importance of access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities.

6. Consultations

- 6.1. **Councillor Huxstep** has been made aware of the planning application.
- 6.2. **Winchester City Council** raise no objection to the principle of the development but the local planning authority has the following concerns which should be addressed i) Hampshire County Council is asked to review and revise the proposals in relation to the physical works including floodlights, fencing and the engineered bank in order to reduce and mitigate the landscape and visual impacts of the proposal to accord with the countryside protection policies of the adopted development plan policies.
- 6.3. **Winchester City Council Environmental Health Officer** raises no objection to the proposed development. The background noise levels used in the report represent the 'worst case scenario' and the noise level measured up to 22:00 hours. The calculation of peak noise levels were taken from noise measurements made from an STP in Winchester and includes noise from ball impact and shouting between players and is therefore representative of the proposed change of use. The report demonstrates that the residential properties along Lower Chase Road will be adequately protected from the noise levels from the STP during the weekend and late evenings. For those properties in Crofton Way and the proposed residential development, the noise levels will be higher and an acoustic fence has been proposed to reduce the noise impact to an acceptable level. It is recommended that an hours of use condition is included if planning permission is granted. The recommended hours of use are 0800 to 2200 Monday to Friday, 0900 to 1800 Saturdays and 0900 to 1600 on Sunday.

- 6.4. **Rights of Way** do not wish to make any comments on the planning application.
- 6.5. **Sport England** supports the planning application in principle subject to the inclusion of conditions. It has been confirmed that the submitted Management Plan is acceptable with regards to the requested community use condition.
- 6.6. **Environment Agency** raises no objection to the proposed development and state that the greenfield runoff rates and storage volumes required calculated seem reasonable. The proposed hydrobrake control restricts flows to existing rates and the proposed pond/swale is large enough to provide the necessary storage volume. As such, the drainage should reduce the risk of flooding downstream.
- 6.7. **Highway Authority** raises no objection to the proposed development subject to the inclusion of conditions to prevent mud being deposited on the highway, the submission of a Construction Traffic Management Plan and the completion of a Conditions Survey of the road.
- 6.8. **Swanmore Parish Council** wish that a Management Plan, considered by all the relevant stakeholders, must be approved before a decision is made on the application. The Management Plan must address the method of operation of the facility and deal with any misconduct or breached. It should also include the times when the facility is open. Swanmore Parish Council recommends that the facility is open for the following periods: Weekdays from 9am to no later than 9pm, Saturdays 9am to no later than 4pm and Sundays 9am to no later than 1pm. Previous comments were such that more screening was required for existing houses especially in Lower Chase Road around the site to counter light pollution from the proposed floodlights, that concerns were expressed regarding the adequacy of the drainage proposals to meet current and future demands and that there should be restrictions put in place to prevent parking/dropping off in Lower Chase Road.
- 6.9. **Airport Safeguarding** raise no objection to the proposed development.

7. Representations

- 7.1. 51 representations have been received in support of the proposed development the reasons are given as:
- (a) great opportunity for the College;
 - (b) increase the number of children that will have access to sports facilities;
 - (c) require improved sports facilities provision to benefit the college curriculum and also the wider community;

- (d) social and health benefits;
- (e) the current sports pitches that the college use are frequently waterlogged and therefore unusable for much of the academic year; and
- (f) provide benefits to a wide number of people within and beyond the local community.

7.2. 36 representations have been received in opposition to the proposed development and the issues raised are:

- (a) contrary to the Local Plan policies that relate to the Local Gaps protection – approving the development would set a precedence and would both physically and visually diminish the Local Gap;
- (b) site lies within the Shedfield Heathlands Landscape Character Area;
- (c) urbanisation of the edge of the Village of Swanmore;
- (d) development not located in a sustainable location;
- (e) amendments to planting desired- evergreen planting along northern boundary, thicker hedgerow planting along the northern boundary, semi-mature trees to be planted as otherwise there would be no sufficient screening for 30 years, and planting to take place prior to construction beginning on site;
- (f) proposed hours of use would have an adverse amenity impact;
- (g) lack of acoustic fencing for properties on Lower Chase Road;
- (h) impact on the tranquillity of the rural area;
- (i) light pollution and glow;
- (j) those that have been stated as having an interest are not local community users;
- (k) no real demonstrated need for the development to outweigh the impact on the Local Gap;
- (l) floodlights should not remain on when the site is not in use;
- (m) visibility splays for construction vehicles utilising Lower Chase Road;
- (n) use of Lower Chase Road by construction vehicles is not appropriate
- (o) the College does not require the floodlighting, this is simply required for the generation of an income to go towards maintenance costs;

- (p) facilities only essential if the housing planning application is approved.
- (q) impact of additional traffic on New Road and insufficient College car parking is available;
- (r) improved wording of the Management Plan is required – switching off of floodlighting, ability of residential to raise concerns to on site duty staff etc);
- (s) impact on the enjoyment of the rural countryside location;
- (t) not appropriate for a business to be set up on agricultural land within the Local Gap;
- (u) potential flood risk;
- (v) potential for cars dropping off pupils on Lower Chase Road;
- (w) biodiversity impact;
- (x) negative impact on the value of properties in Lower Chase Road;
- (y) safety of residents along Lower Chase Road as there is not appropriate fencing; and
- (z) floodlighting will be a waste of energy and impact on global warming.

8. Commentary

- 8.1. Swanmore is recognised within the Winchester District Joint Core Strategy as a larger village. As previously stated the site lies adjacent to, but outside of the settlement boundary and therefore within the countryside. Consideration should be given to policies MTRA 2 and MTRA 4. Policy MTRA 2 states that there is support for the evolution of the larger settlements to maintain and improve their role and function to meet a range of local development needs. It identifies that development opportunities should first be sought within the existing settlement boundaries with developments outside the boundaries only being acceptable when they are shown to be meeting a community need.
- 8.2. There are a number of objections from local residents that question the need for the development due to there already being an all weather pitch on the college site. On the contrary there are a number of local residents or parents of college pupils that have written in support of the development stating that it is a facility that is needed by the college to improve sports education provision and also to improve the local community sports provision. Within the supporting documentation to the planning application, it was stated that frequent requests are made for a full sized floodlit sports pitch for training purposes. Part 3 of the Open

Space, Sports and Recreation Study for Winchester City Council (2008) supports this as it recognises that there is a lack of provision within the immediate and wider area for STPs, in particular for junior use. Bishops Waltham is identified as an area with an STP deficit; this is within a 30 minute drive which is recognised within the study as an appropriate drive time to a facility such as this. Furthermore, Sport England were consulted on the planning application and they confirmed that the Football Association have identified that there is a need for a 3G artificial grass pitch in the local area. They are in support of the proposal. Policy CP7 supports new and improved sports provision that provides access for all.

- 8.3. Policy MTRA 4 restricts development within the countryside to specific uses that are either appropriate to the countryside setting because of their nature or those that are utilising existing buildings. The planning application is therefore a departure from this policy. The application was advertised as such. It is worth noting that the policies supporting text does recognise that there may be some recreational uses that may require a countryside location.
- 8.4. With planning permission being recommended for the residential housing development on the existing sports fields there would be a need under policy CP6 to provide improved local services in an equally accessible location. Supporting text for this policy recognises the importance of local facilities and their contribution to the overall sustainability of a neighbourhood or wider rural area. Again it is recognised that the larger villages provide this function as a service centre for the more remote communities. Swanmore College is already a well established community facility; it is home to Swanmore Leisure. Through locating the STP and rugby pitch on this parcel of land there will remain good connections with the college and other community facilities. It will enable the use of current car parking spaces and changing facilities therefore removing the need for additional infrastructure associated with this development.
- 8.5. Policy CP18 identifies that the site lies within the Settlement Gap between Swanmore and Waltham Chase. Proposed developments within the Gap should only be approved where it will not physically or visually diminish the Gap. The proposed development does not require the erection of any buildings. The fencing and lighting columns will be physical structures that could be considered to physically diminish the Gap and therefore compromise its integrity. When considering the setting of the site, it is useful to consider the Winchester District Local Plan Part 2 – Landscape Sensitivity Appraisal (Swanmore) (November 2013). The recent appraisal of the landscape sensitivity between Lower Chase Road and New Road (north of Swanmore College) sets out the context of the site as being flat, low-lying predominantly pasture adjacent to the village edge. Sports fields are noted as being within the local gap between Swanmore and Waltham Chase but surrounded by development. The character of the area is stated to be tranquil with sports fields benefiting from mature boundary hedgerows with trees. There are no notable panoramic views and skyline

features are identified as being pylons. Therefore when considering the potential impact of the STP's fencing and the lighting columns it is acknowledged that there will be the addition of structures on the site. When taking into consideration the context of the site the Local Planning Authority are of the opinion that they will not have a significant impact on the integrity of the Gap. There is substantial boundary planting proposed around the boundary of the site to reflect the recognised boundary planting of the existing sports fields. Taking this into consideration and the location of the STP, i.e. it being set back from the road, the facility will not have a significant visual impact for residents or users of Lower Chase Road. Views of the structures will be through existing tree planting with the further planting acting to appropriately screen the development, albeit this will take time.

- 8.6. The design of the site is such that all emergency vehicles and users of the facility will access the site through the college grounds. There is to be no means of access from Lower Chase Road and the landscaping clearly demonstrates this. The car parks which are accessed off New Road have appropriate provision to accommodate the potential increased demand associated with this development. There will not therefore be a detrimental impact on the local highway network. Furthermore the additional traffic generated by the proposal will not have a significant detrimental impact on the safety or operation of the local highway. Minimal vegetation clearance will be required to achieve the construction access visibility splays onto Lower Chase Road, this will be undertaken to ensure the appropriate splays can be met. The Highway Authority are satisfied that Lower Chase Road is appropriate for use by the construction vehicles subject to a Construction Traffic Management Plan being secured through condition. Due to the nature of the road and the type of traffic associated with the construction work the Highway Authority request that a Road Conditions Survey is secured through condition also with the requirement for any damage caused being remediated. The proposal is in accordance with policy CP10.
- 8.7. Policy CP16 supports development which maintains, protects and enhances biodiversity, delivering a net gain. The proposal adequately shows how the existing boundary vegetation is to be retained. It is noted that there are low numbers of bats that use the existing vegetation for commuting and foraging. The additional planting will provide additional commuting routes. Whilst there will be low levels of light spill in the eastern hedgerow there are no bat roosts located here so the nature conservation status of the bats should not be negatively impacted. The landscape plan demonstrates that recommendations within the bat and reptile report have been incorporated into the overall design with areas of log piles and un-mown grass. This provides ecological enhancement which is supported.
- 8.8. The concerns of the local residents of Lower Chase Road regarding flooding are noted. A flood risk assessment accompanied the planning

application. There is to be a swale (temporary pond) designed into the proposal. The Environment Agency have concluded that this appropriately demonstrates that current greenfield run off rates will not be altered through the development of this site due to the appropriate mitigation measures that have been incorporated into the overall design. The proposal therefore accords with Policy CP17.

- 8.9. Policy CP20 gives particular emphasis to conserving the natural landscape and local distinctiveness including trees, tranquillity and setting. Residents are concerned that this development would impact on the current tranquillity of the site and its setting and that the fencing and lighting columns would alter the local distinctiveness of the area. The introduction of the rugby pitch and STP will introduce a level of noise into the area. It should be recognised that whilst the area is noted as being tranquil at present, there are existing sports fields to the south and east of the proposed development site and therefore during school days there will be an element of noise already existing in the area. The main concerns are therefore associated with the use of the STP during the evening and into the weekends as this does not currently occur in the local area. Advice has been sought from Environmental Health who raise no objection to the proposal and who are satisfied that the correct calculations have been undertaken to appropriately demonstrate that there will not be a significant adverse impact for residents of Lower Chase Road. It was recognised that for residents of Crofton Way that the noise levels would be higher but the officer is satisfied that the construction of an acoustic fence will appropriately mitigate against the noise. Whilst it can be concluded that there will not be a significant adverse impact to affect the amenity of local residents, it is likely that the use of the site will be audible and therefore reduce the tranquillity of the area. It is noted that the hours of use are requested to be until 2200 Monday to Friday, whilst no objection from Environmental Health is raised there are a large number of residents concerned about the proposed end time with many requesting a reduction in the hours. It is therefore proposed that, in line with other developments in more sensitive locations, that the hours of use are restricted to 21.15 Monday to Friday.
- 8.10. Residents are raising strong objection to the introduction of floodlighting into this area. In the daylight only the lighting columns will be visible and when taking into the wider setting, the pylons that run across Lower Chase Road and the existing sports fields, the columns will not be a significant visual intrusion. However, once the lights are on during the hours of darkness there will be a 'light box' effect which, due to the location of the site, will have an impact in the night sky of the area and will consequently change the local character and setting. Whilst there is significant planting proposed, it will not grow to a height that would screen the lighting columns or lighting and it is deciduous in type therefore providing less screening during the winter months. If planning permission is granted it is recommended that the lighting should be turned off by 2130

Monday to Friday and there shall be no lighting used on Saturday or Sundays.

- 8.11. Saved policy DP10 states that development that generates light pollution will only be permitted where the Local Planning Authority is satisfied that it has been designed to reduce the impact to an acceptable level. Lighting spill plans (horizontal and vertical) have been provided and demonstrate that there will not be an unacceptable level of light spill off the site. The nearest existing property on Crofton Way would experience a vertical light spill level of two lux at the edge of their garden. Level two can be appropriately compared to the light given off by a full moon. There is to be no horizontal light spill within the Crofton Way garden. The new proposed houses along the eastern boundary would be exposed to higher light spill levels within their gardens, at the boundary edge this could be 10 lux. The levels being proposed will not have a negative amenity impact as light spill will not encroach into the residential properties. Environmental Health have not raised any concerns and the Local Planning Authority are satisfied that the lighting columns are of such a height to ensure that the lighting is as directional as possible, and that all appropriate mitigation measures such as baffles/cowls have been installed to minimise light spill.
- 8.12. In conclusion, the proposed development is located within the countryside on agricultural grade 4 land which has not been previously developed and is therefore contrary to Policy MTRA4. Whilst the fencing and lighting columns associated with the STP will introduce physical structures into the Settlement Gap, the structures are not in a location or of a scale that they will have a significant visual impact or be physically intrusive when considering the wider setting of the site when unlit (CP18). However, it is recognised that the nature of the development will, in the evenings and at night, change the character and setting of the area through a reduction in the tranquillity of the area and the introduction of light in the night sky (CP20). The noise and lighting levels identified will not have a significant adverse amenity impact on local residents or users of the locality and appropriate mitigation measures have been put in place (CP20 and saved policy DP10). The operation of the facility would not have a significant impact on the local highway network (CP10), the construction of the development would not increase flood risk potential off site as appropriate mitigation measures are proposed on site to ensure run off rates reflect the current greenfield rates (CP17). The development will provide appropriate landscaping to reflect the current planting along Lower Chase Road and in turn this will provide a net biodiversity gain and there will not be a negative impact on the nature conservation status of the bats through the additional planting provision (CP16). The need for the development has been recognised by Sport England, the Football Association as well as some local residents, parents of pupils at the College and potential users of the facility (MTRA2, CP6 and CP7). The development will benefit the college and wider community and provide wider opportunities for sport which will contribute to the health and well-being of the local and wider rural community (para 73 NPPF). It will also further strengthen the community

presence that the college currently has within the village and wider rural community. It is considered that there would not be a significant adverse impact on the countryside or locality and the proposal has significant benefits which are material considerations and therefore on balance it is considered that this proposal is an acceptable departure from Policy MTRA4.

9. Recommendation

- 9.1. That planning permission in respect of the change of use of a horse paddock to an all weather Synthetic Turf Pitch (STP) with floodlighting and associated works, including a grass rugby pitch for use by Swanmore College of Technology at Lower Chase Road, Swanmore (Application number: 12/02419/HCS) (Site Reference: WRE005) be approved for the above reasons, subject to the conditions listed in Integral Appendix B.

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

Links to previous Member decisions:		
<u>Title</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Date</u>
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives		
Development Plan Document comprises of Winchester District Local Plan Part 1 Joint Core Strategy (2013) and the Winchester District Local Plan Review (Adopted 2006) – Saved Policies.		<u>Date</u>
Open Space, Sports and Recreation Study for Winchester City Council (2008), Winchester District Community Strategy (2010 to 2020), Winchester District Local Plan Part 2 – Landscape Sensitivity Appraisal (Swanmore) (November 2013) and The National Planning Policy Framework (Paragraph 73) are material considerations.		

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>
Change of use of a horse paddock to an all weather Synthetic Turf Pitch (STP) with floodlighting and associated works, including a grass rugby pitch (Swanmore College of Technology) at Lower Chase Road, Swanmore. (Application No. 12/02419/HCS) (Site ref: WRE005)	County planning QE II West The castle Winchester

CONDITIONS

Commencement

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

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

Plans and Particulars

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out and completed strictly in accordance with the approved plans, specifications and written particulars identified within the decision notice.

Reason: To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Hours of Working

3. No work relating to the construction of the development approved, 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 1300 on Saturday and not at all on Sunday or recognised public holidays.

Reason: In the interests of amenity of local residents.

Protection of Water Environment

4. No development shall take place until a surface water drainage scheme for the site, based on sustainable drainage principles and an assessment of the hydrological and hydro geological context of the development, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall subsequently be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the development is completed. The scheme shall also include details of how the scheme shall be maintained and managed after completion.

Reason: To ensure adequate drainage of the site in accordance with Policy CP17 of the Winchester District Local Plan Part 1 Joint Core Strategy (2013).

Tree Protection

5. The trees to be retained shall be protected during building operations by the erection of sturdy protective fencing in strict compliance with BS 5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction to ensure their protection. The existing trees shall not be lopped, topped, felled.

Reason: In the interests of visual and residential amenity and the safeguarding of the nature conservation interests of the site and adjoining land in accordance with Policy CP20 of the Winchester District Local Plan Part 1 Joint Core Strategy (2013).

Hours of Use

6. The Synthetic Turf Pitch 'STP' shall only be used between the following hours:
 - 0900 to 2115 Monday to Friday
 - 0900 to 1400 on Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays

Reason: In the interests of amenity of local in accordance with CP20 of the Winchester District Local Plan Part 1 Joint Core Strategy (2013) and saved policy DP10 of the Winchester District Local Plan Review (2006).

7. The floodlights for the hard court play area shall only be switched on when necessary and then only between the following hours:
 - 0900 to 2130 Monday to Friday

Reason: In the interests of amenity of local accordance with CP20 of the Winchester District Local Plan Part 1 Joint Core Strategy (2013) and saved policy DP10 of the Winchester District Local Plan Review (2006).

Floodlighting

8. The floodlights shall be installed in accordance with the Abacus lighting specifications (Challenger 1 AL5760 series) and results shown in the Abacus vertical overspill plan UKS7714/2 and plan UKS7714/1.

Reason: In the interests of amenity of local residents and minimising the visual impact on the character of the area and setting in accordance with Policy CP18 and CP20 of the Winchester District Local Plan Part 1 Joint Core Strategy (2013) and saved policy DP10 of the Winchester District Local Plan Review (2006).

9. Before the floodlights are erected and brought into use, written details of how the lighting shall be monitored for overspill within the first 12 months of use shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority. Any overspill (outside of the area detailed in the Lighting Plans by Abacus vertical

overspill plan UKS7714/2 and plan UKS7714/1) from the lantern shall be reduced by adjusting them as soon as possible from the date of notification of the overspill and within a maximum of 10 days to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority. The monitoring process shall be subsequently carried out including after the lighting has been lowered and re-erected following any necessary maintenance.

Reason: To ensure the impact of the lighting is minimised on the occupiers of nearby properties and in the interests of amenity of local residents and minimising the visual impact on the character of the area and setting in accordance with Policy CP18 and CP20 of the Winchester District Local Plan Part 1 Joint Core Strategy (2013) and saved policy DP10 of the Winchester District Local Plan Review (2006).

Landscaping

10. No works shall start on site until a detailed landscape strategy for the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This strategy shall include the measures to protect existing trees/vegetation, details of the exact plant and tree species, location, number, and management measures for the trees, hedgerows and wildflower margins. Once approved, the strategy will be implemented in full in the first available planting season. Any planting removed, dying, becoming seriously diseased or damaged within a five year period from date of planting shall be replaced with planting as originally required to be provided.

Reason: In the interests of visual and residential amenity and provide a biodiversity net gain in accordance with policies CP16, CP18 and CP20 of the Winchester District Local Plan Part 1 Joint Core Strategy (2013).

Nature Conservation

11. Works shall be carried out in accordance with the measures set out within section 5.6 (outline mitigation and enhancement measures) of the Ecological Assessment Report (December 2011).

Reason: In the interests of nature conservation of the site in accordance with Policy CP16 of the Winchester District Local Plan Part 1 Joint Core Strategy (2013).

12. A Reptile Mitigation Strategy shall be designed and submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval. It should be based on *in situ* translocation to an area of retained grassland. The Mitigation Strategy shall be implemented as approved.

Reason: In the interests of nature conservation of the site in accordance with Policy CP16 of the Winchester District Local Plan Part 1 Joint Core Strategy (2013).

Community Use

13. No development shall take place unless and until:
- a. A detailed assessment of ground conditions of the land proposed for the new playing field land as shown on drawing number Y0649-L-701 revP3 shall be undertaken (including drainage and topography) to identify constraints which could affect playing field quality; and
 - b. Based on the results of this assessment to be carried out pursuant to (a) above of this condition, a detailed scheme to ensure that the playing fields will be provided to an acceptable quality (including appropriate drainage where necessary) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority after consultation with Sport England.

The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme within a timescale to be first approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority after consultation with Sport England.

Reason: To ensure that site surveys are undertaken for new playing fields and that any ground condition constraints can be and are mitigated to ensure provision of an adequate quality playing field in accordance with Policy CP6 and CP7 of the Winchester District Local Plan Part 1 Joint Core Strategy (2013).

14. The playing field/artificial grass pitch shall be used for Outdoor Sport and for no other purpose (including without limitation any other purpose in Class D2 Use Classes Order 2005, or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order or without modification).

Reason: To protect the playing field/artificial grass pitch from loss and/or damage, to maintain the quality of and secure the safe use of sports pitches in accordance with Policy CP6 and CP7 of the Winchester District Local Plan Part 1 Joint Core Strategy (2013).

15. The playing field, including the natural turf pitch and artificial grass pitch shall be constructed and laid out in accordance with the planning application statement Section 4 and Drawing No. Y0649-L-201 revP3 and with the standards and methodologies set out in the guidance note "Natural Turf for Sport" (Sport England, 2011), and shall be made available for use before first use or occupation of the development of the adjacent housing site (Winchester City Council planning application reference 13/02774/FUL)

Reason: To ensure the quality of pitches is satisfactory and they are available for use before development in accordance with Policy CP6 and CP7 of the Winchester District Local Plan Part 1 Joint Core Strategy (2013).

16. Prior to the bringing into use of the grass pitch and artificial grass pitch a Management and Maintenance Scheme for the facility including

management responsibilities, a maintenance schedule and a mechanism for review shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority after consultation with Sport England. The approved Management and Maintenance scheme for the AGP shall include measures to ensure the replacement of the artificial surface within a specified period. The measures set out in the approved scheme shall be complied with in full, with effect from commencement of use of the pitches.

Reason: To ensure that new facility is capable of being managed and maintained to deliver a facility which is fit for purpose, sustainable and to ensure sufficient benefit of the development to sport (NPPF) para 73 and in accordance with Policy CP6 and CP7 of the Winchester District Local Plan Part 1 Joint Core Strategy (2013).

17. The Management Plan for the Proposed Use of the Synthetic Turf Pitch produced by Swanmore Leisure shall be implemented in advance of first use of the STP.

Reason: To secure well managed safe community access to the sports facility, to ensure sufficient benefit to the development of sport in accordance with Policy CP6 and CP7 of the Winchester District Local Plan Part 1 Joint Core Strategy (2013).

Highway

18. No mud shall leave the site and be deposited on the public highway during the construction works.

Reason: In the interest of highway safety in accordance with Policy CP10 of the Winchester District Local Plan Part 1 Joint Core Strategy (2013).

19. Prior to commencement of the development a Construction Traffic Management Plan shall be submitted in writing to, and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The agreed Plan shall be fully implemented for the duration of the construction works.

Reason: In the interest of highway safety in accordance with Policy CP10 of the Winchester District Local Plan Part 1 Joint Core Strategy (2013).

20. Prior to implementation of development, a Condition Survey of the local highway network, including Lower Chase Road, shall be undertaken and submitted to the Planning Authority. Upon cessation of the development, any remedial works to the local highway network made necessary as a result of the site traffic as reasonably required by the Local Planning Authority shall be undertaken to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interest of highway safety in accordance with Policy CP10 of the Winchester District Local Plan Part 1 Joint Core Strategy (2013).

Advice note

1. In determining this planning application, the Local Planning Authority has worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner based on seeking solutions to problems arising in relation to dealing with the planning application by liaising with consultees. This approach has been taken positively and proactively in accordance with the requirement in the NPPF, as set out in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Amendment No.2) Order 2012.

*Annexe to Reasons for Conditions
(as required by Article 31 of the Town and Country Planning
(Development Management Procedure) (England) Order
2010)*

WINCHESTER DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN PART 1 JOINT CORE STRATEGY

Policy MTRA 2 - Market Towns and Larger Villages

The Local Planning Authority supports the evolution of the larger settlements in the Market Towns and Rural Area to maintain and improve their role and function and to meet a range of local development needs through :-

In Bishops Waltham and New Alresford, provision for about 500 new homes in each settlement and provision for about 250 new homes in each of the following settlements:- Colden Common, Denmead, Kings Worthy, Swanmore, Waltham Chase, and Wickham.

Economic and commercial growth will be supported to maintain and improve the shopping, service, tourism and employment roles of these settlements where consistent with their role in the hierarchy of retail centres. Proposals for new floorspace of 500 sq. m. or more outside defined centres will need to demonstrate that it would not have a harmful impact on the centre. There should be improvements to public transport provision, where possible, and development should be appropriate in scale and result in a more sustainable community by improving the balance between housing, employment and services. Existing facilities, services and employment provision should be retained or improved to serve the settlements and their catchment areas.

Housing, employment, retail and services should be accommodated through development and redevelopment opportunities within existing settlement boundaries in the first instance. Sites outside settlement boundaries will only be permitted where, following an assessment of capacity within the built-up area, they are shown to be needed, or to meet a community need or realise local community aspirations identified through a Neighbourhood Plan or other process which demonstrates clear community support. Uses which are essential to the role and function of the settlement, or to maintaining the balance between housing, employment and services, may be relocated if they can be re-provided in a location which is as at least as suitable and accessible and if proposals for the re-use of vacated land and premises are also acceptable.

All new development should be appropriate in scale and design and conserve each settlement's identity, countryside setting, key historic characteristics and local features, particularly as identified in Village Design Statements, the District Landscape Assessment or other guidance. Development should protect areas designated for their local, national, or international importance, such as Gaps and the South Downs National Park.

Policy MTRA 4 - Development in the Countryside

In the countryside, defined as land outside the built-up areas of Winchester, Whiteley and Waterlooville and the settlements covered by MTRA 2 and 3 above, the Local Planning Authority will only permit the following types of development:

- development which has an operational need for a countryside location, such as for agriculture, horticulture or forestry; or
- proposals for the reuse of existing rural buildings for employment, tourist accommodation, community use or affordable housing (to meet demonstrable local housing needs). Buildings should be of permanent construction and capable of use without major reconstruction; or
- expansion or redevelopment of existing buildings to facilitate the expansion on-site of established businesses or to meet an operational need, provided development is proportionate to the nature and scale of the site, its setting and countryside location; or
- small scale sites for low key tourist accommodation appropriate to the site, location and the setting.

Development proposed in accordance with this policy should not cause harm to the character and landscape of the area or neighbouring uses, or create inappropriate noise/light and traffic generation.

Policy CP6 - Local Services and Facilities

The Local Planning Authority will support proposals for the development of new, extended or improved facilities and services in accordance with the development strategies set out in Policies WT1, SH1 and MTRA1.

The Local Planning Authority wishes to retain and improve the facilities and services available across the District. Development proposals should not threaten or result in the loss of premises or sites used to provide services and facilities unless it can be demonstrated that:

- the site/premise is not required because the service or facility has been satisfactorily relocated or is no longer needed to serve the locality ; and
- the site or building has no reasonable prospect of being used for an alternative service or facility which would benefit the local community.

When considering proposals, account will be taken of:

- whether the loss of the service or facility would cause harm for those living within the neighbourhood, settlement, or rural catchment with a reasonable need to access such facilities in the future; and
- whether the loss of the facility would have a detrimental impact upon the overall vitality and viability of the settlement; and
- whether the loss is part of an agreed plan to provide improved local services in equally accessible locations.

Policy CP7 - Open Space, Sport and Recreation

The Local Planning Authority will seek improvements in the open space network and in built recreation facilities within the District, to achieve the type of provision, space required and levels of accessibility set out in the Council's most up to date open space and built facilities standards. This will be achieved by new and improved provision, or by improving public access for all to existing facilities and educational provision.

New housing development should make provision for public open space and built facilities in accordance with the most up to date standards (currently set out in Tables 1 and 2), preferably through onsite provision of new facilities where feasible or by financial contributions towards off-site improvements.

There will be a presumption against the loss of any open space, sports or recreation facility (including built facilities), except where it can be demonstrated that :-

- alternative facilities will be provided and are at least as accessible to current and potential new users, and at least equivalent in terms of size, usefulness, attractiveness and quality; or
- the benefit of the development to the community outweighs the harm caused by the loss of the facility.

Policy CP10 - Transport

The Local Planning Authority will seek to reduce demands on the transport network, manage existing capacity efficiently and secure investment to make necessary improvements. Development should be located and designed to reduce the need to travel. The use of non-car modes particularly walking and cycling should be encouraged through travel plans, management and improvements to the existing network, and improvements to accommodate additional traffic should be undertaken (or funded) where necessary.

Policy CP16 - Biodiversity

The Local Planning Authority will support development which maintains, protects and enhances biodiversity across the District, delivering a net gain in biodiversity, and has regard to the following:

- protecting sites of international, European, and national importance, and local nature conservation sites, from inappropriate development.
- supporting habitats that are important to maintain the integrity of European sites.
- new development will be required to show how biodiversity can be retained, protected and enhanced through its design and implementation, for example by designing for wildlife, delivering BAP targets and enhancing Biodiversity Opportunity Areas.
- new development will be required to avoid adverse impacts, or if unavoidable ensure that impacts are appropriately mitigated, with compensation measures used only as a last resort. Development proposals will only be supported if the benefits of the development clearly outweigh the harm to the habitat and/or species.
- maintaining a District wide network of local wildlife sites and corridors to support the integrity of the biodiversity network, prevent fragmentation, and enable biodiversity to respond and adapt to the impacts of climate change.
- supporting and contributing to the targets set out in the District's Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) for priority habitats and species.

Planning proposals that have the potential to affect priority habitats and/or species or sites of geological importance will be required to take account of evidence and relevant assessments or surveys.

Policy CP17 - Flooding, Flood Risk and the Water Environment

The Local Planning Authority will support development which meets all the following criteria:-

- avoids flood risk to people and property by:-
 - applying a Sequential Test to the location, and the Exception Test if required, and applying the sequential approach at the site level60;
 - managing flood risk from new development to ensure risk is not increased elsewhere and that opportunities to reduce the causes and impacts of flooding within the District through development are taken;
 - safeguarding land and designated structures and features from development that is required for current and future flood management;
 - including sustainable water management systems such as Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) which should be designed to meet the relevant standards so as to gain approval by the SuDS Approval Body;
- does not cause unacceptable deterioration to water quality or have an unacceptable impact on water quantity (including drinking water supplies) by:-
 - protecting surface water and groundwater through suitable pollution prevention measures;
 - using opportunities to improve water quality where possible;
 - optimising water efficiency;
- is located at a sufficient distance from existing wastewater treatment works to allow adequate odour dispersion, or takes appropriate odour control measures;
- ensures that water supply, surface water drainage and wastewater infrastructure to service new development are provided and connect to the nearest point of adequate capacity.

The Local Planning Authority will support the development or expansion of water supply, surface water drainage and wastewater treatment facilities where they are needed to serve existing or new development or in the interests of securing long term supply, provided that the need for such facilities is consistent with other policies such as the development strategy, flood risk, contamination and protection of the natural and built environment.

Policy CP18 - Settlement Gaps

The Local Planning Authority will retain the generally open and undeveloped nature of the following defined settlement gaps:

- Bishop's Waltham – Swanmore – Waltham Chase – Shedfield – Shirrell Heath
- Denmead – Waterlooille
- Kings Worthy – Abbots Worthy
- Otterbourne – Southdown
- Winchester – Compton Street
- Winchester – Kings Worthy/Headbourne Worthy
- Winchester – Littleton

- Whiteley – Fareham/Fareham Western Wards (the 'Meon Gap')

Within these areas only development that does not physically or visually diminish the gap will be allowed.

To protect the individual character and identity of those settlements adjoining the proposed SDA at North Fareham, an area of open land is identified as a Gap to be maintained between the SDA and Knowle and Wickham (see Policy SH4). Development which would threaten the open and undeveloped character of this area will be resisted and the land should be managed to secure the long-term retention of its rural character.

Policy CP20 - Heritage and Landscape Character

The Local Planning Authority will continue to conserve and enhance the historic environment through the preparation of Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans and/or other strategies, and will support new development which recognises, protects and enhances the District's distinctive landscape and heritage assets and their settings. These may be designated or undesignated and include natural and man made assets associated with existing landscape and townscape character, conservation areas, scheduled ancient monuments, historic parks and gardens, listed buildings, historic battlefields and archaeology.

Particular emphasis should be given to conserving:

- recognised built form and designed or natural landscapes that include features and elements of natural beauty, cultural or historic importance;
- local distinctiveness, especially in terms of characteristic materials, trees, built form and layout, tranquillity, sense of place and setting.

WINCHESTER DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN REVIEW (Adopted 2006)

Saved Policy DP.10 – Pollution generating development

Development which may generate air, land, light, surface water or groundwater pollution, and which accords with other relevant policies of this Plan, will only be permitted where the Local Planning Authority is satisfied that it has been designed to reduce the impact to an acceptable level. Proposals should comply with statutory standards of environmental quality and environmental protection policies required by the pollution control authorities, and include a statement setting out how the requirements have been met in designing the proposal.