
14/00332/FUL

**NORTH OF A129, EAST OF A130, OLD LONDON ROAD,
RAWRETH, ESSEX**

**CHANGE USE OF LAND FROM AGRICULTURAL TO USE
FOR 8 NO. FOOTBALL PITCHES. PROVIDE AREA FOR
CAR PARKING, PROVIDE FOUR STORAGE CONTAINERS
FOR USE AS CHANGING ROOMS AND TOILETS AND
CONSTRUCT 6.5M HIGH BALL CATCH FENCING TO
BOUNDARY OF SITE WITH A129 AND A130**

APPLICANT: ACADEMY SOCCER

ZONING: METROPOLITAN GREEN BELT

PARISH: RAWRETH

WARD: DOWNAHLL AND RAWRETH

1 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 1.1 This application is to a site to the immediate east of where the A130 crosses the A129 Old London Road. The site at present is an agricultural field irregular in shape of some 4.74ha.
- 1.2 The site is bounded to the west and south by the A130 and A129.
- 1.3 To the east is the alignment of a former highway immediately beyond which is an area in use for football pitches with various containers providing storage and changing rooms.
- 1.4 To the north of the site is a disused section of former road now a bridle way with dwellings beyond and an arable field and detached housing fronting Old London Road.

2 THE PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The proposal is to change the use of the field to provide 8 football pitches of varying size and which would be managed by Academy Soccer Football Club and used as a home for all their teams on one site. Generally the pitches would not be used at the same time but would be used in rotation to protect the playing surface.

-
- 2.2 The application details show a layout for a general arrangement and an alternative layout for an annual tournament event that occurs outside the season over one or two weekends.
- 2.3 The general layout would provide 2 adult pitches of the same size and 6 junior pitches of varying sizes. The general layout shows the provision of 125 car parking spaces along the eastern boundary of the site on a surface of type one chippings. The car parking area would be laid out to provide a one way direction of travel with a turning circle at the far southern end in order to manage site traffic flow.
- 2.4 At the northern end of the site a group of 7 containers would provide changing facilities and toilets for teams and officials.
- 2.5 The two team changing facilities would comprise a double container unit 12.6m in length and 5m wide to a height of 2.7m. These units would also feature eight roof lanterns a further 0.15m in height.
- 2.6 The two containers providing changing facilities for officials and toilets would be in containers 12.6m in length and 2.5m in width and to a height of 2.7m.
- 2.7 The group of containers would also include 3 storage containers each 2.5m in width and 2.7m in height but two of which would be 12.9m in length slightly longer than the 12.6m length of the others.
- 2.8 A further single container 12.9m in length, 2.5m in width and 2.7m in height would be provided at the southern end of the car park layout to provide storage for those pitches at the far south of the site.
- 2.9 All the containers would be painted green or subject to any other colour specified by the Council. The applicant would also be willing to plant shrubs or provide screening to help blend the containers into the backdrop of hedging adjoining their siting.
- 2.10 The changing room and toilet facilities would drain to a septic tank of 7,150 litres capacity stated to be in excess of the 5700 litres required in order to ensure adequate capacity. The septic tank would be located behind and to the north of the group of containers proposed but outside the areas at higher risk of flooding as identified by the Environment Agency.
- 2.11 The application also includes the provision of a ball stop protection fence along the site boundary to the west with the A130 and to the south with the A129. This fence would be to a height of 6.5m and made from heavy duty black polythene netting between green coated galvanised metal posts, sited 5m apart.
- 2.12 The regular pitch layout would be used during the football season September to May. The 14 teams that would operate from the site would generally expect

to hold one adult home match on a Saturday afternoon and seven children's matches at different times on Sunday morning/early afternoon. The application form seeks permission for all day Saturday and all day Sunday and Bank Holidays between 9.00 am – 5.00 pm for setting up and site cleaning afterwards. The Bank Holiday inclusion has not, however, been justified in the application particulars.

- 2.13 The proposal also includes an alternative layout for a tournament event. Those details show a revised pitch layout for 7 pitches and the south part of the site given over to additional parking on the grassed playing area for an additional 362 cars. The applicant advises this is an annual event, which is played over two weekends on both Saturdays and Sundays during the summer outside the main playing season.
- 2.14 The current application is a revision to a very similar application withdrawn from consideration earlier this year. Unlike the previous application, the current application has re-sited the proposed storage containers and changing rooms deeper into the site and out of the Environment Agency flood zones 2 and 3a, which cover a very small part of the site to the very northern extent.

3 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 Application No. 13/00767/ADV

Provide two non-illuminated goal post type signs to site entrance.
Permission refused 11 February 2014 for reasons of proliferation of signage detrimental to visual amenity.

3.2 Application No.13/00727/FUL

Change use of land from agricultural to use for 8 No. football pitches. Provide area for car parking, provide three storage containers for use as changing rooms and toilets. Provide catch fencing 6.5m high to western and southern boundary of the site.

Application withdrawn prior to decision.

3.3 Application No. 14/00331/ADV

One non-illuminated goal post type sign to site entrance.
Application pending and the subject of a report referred from the weekly list and elsewhere on the Agenda for this Committee.

- 3.4 Other than the above applications, the site has no relevant planning history and has been used for agriculture for a number of years.

Also of relevance are the following applications relating to the adjoining site to the east:-

- 3.5 Application No. 05/00432/FUL
Change Of Use From Agriculture To Provision Of Four Junior And One Full Size Football Pitches, Access And Parking Areas.
Permission refused 16 August 2005 for reasons that the scale and use and likely level of car parking required is considered inappropriate, the site being in an unsustainable location and that the level of activity being likely to be detrimental to residential amenity.
- 3.6 Application No. 05/01043/FUL
Change Of Use From Agriculture to Provision of Two Junior and One Full Size Football Pitches, Access and Parking Areas.
Permission granted 28 March 2006.
- 3.7 Application No. 09/00282/FUL
Retain storage container and three portacabin changing facilities.
Permission granted 24 September 2009.
- 3.8 Application No. 09/00417/FUL
Provide Additional Storage Container and Additional Eight Youth Football Pitches.

Permission refused 23 November 2009 for reasons that, notwithstanding the appropriateness generally of outdoor sport uses within the Green Belt, the scale of the use and the level of car parking required is considered detrimental to openness, undesirable use of a substandard access, lack of visibility, increase in unnecessary traffic, lack of footways intensification detrimental to amenity.
- 3.9 Application No. 10/0087/FUL
Provide 8 (Additional) Football Pitches, Provide Extension to Existing Car Park and Provide Storage Container.
Permission granted 25 May 2010.
- 3.10 Application No. 10/00805/FUL
Retrospective Application to Retain Metal Storage Container Incorporating Ladies And Gents Toilet Facilities.
Permission granted 31 January 2011.

4 CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

Rawreth Parish Council

Object on the following grounds:-

- 4.1 The land at Old London Road lies in the heart of the Metropolitan Green Belt neighboured by residential properties. The proposed use of the land for outdoor sport falls within a category of development generally considered appropriate within the Metropolitan Green Belt. In this case, the scale of the

use and the likely level of traffic flow, the car parking required to serve the use, along with the noise and general disruption, is considered to affect the openness of the Metropolitan Green Belt, contrary to Policy R1 of the Rochford District Local Replacement Plan and as no special circumstances have been demonstrated the application should not be permitted.

- 4.2 Members note that the applicants feel a precedent has already been set by allowing the existing 10 pitches nearby, however Members disagree as they still feel strongly that permission should never have been granted for these pitches in the first instance as Policy R1 and LT21 were not taken into consideration.
- 4.3 Since the original pitches were granted planning permission in 2009 local residents have suffered excessive traffic, noise, disturbance and because of this the Council is insisting that special notice is taken of both Policy R1 and LT21, both of which are retained policies with the Rochford District Local Replacement Plan.
- 4.4 Policy LT21 states that proposals for sport and leisure facilities and activities likely to cause noise or disturbance will be permitted where there will be no serious adverse effects on:-
- i. occupiers of nearby residential properties/plots;
 - ii. existing flora and fauna (for example over wintering birds);
 - iii. traffic impact or highway safety by virtue of the scale, siting, design, construction or operation of the activity.”
- 4.5 Council considers that In the case of these proposed pitches there is clearly an adverse effect on all three parts of the policy, residents, wintering birds, and highway safety by virtue of the sheer size of the overall combined total of pitches. If the application is permitted this rural area will have no less than 18 football pitches in one road. If Council refers back to an application for the neighbouring land by Rayleigh Boys, Essex County Council made a recommendation for refusal ESH/SPD/DE/ROC/0087/10 dated 10 April 2010 and stated in its recommendation that there was an undesirable intensification of access to Old London Road and an increase in unnecessary traffic movements to and from the site. If the existing site was deemed to have this effect on the area, the increase in required access and traffic to Old London Road will only be increased by the addition of ten more pitches on neighbouring land, therefore this recommendation, although ignored the first time, should have some real bearing on this application.

- 4.6 Council must also stress that the site is not considered to be within reasonable walking distance of any major settlement, or railway station, nor is the site well served by buses. The remote location of the site and lack of public transport will mean that virtually all journeys to and from the site will be car borne. The nearest bus stop is a 15 minute walk from the site and the nearest main road is the A129, not the A132 as referred to by the applicant. In Council's opinion, as there is no alternative mode of transport to the site other than by car, the movements to and from the proposed site will represent a 100% increase on those for the existing pitches and the site in its current use as agricultural land. The proposal is therefore not considered by Council to be sustainable due to reliance upon the use of private cars.
- 4.7 Council also notes that under policy LT2 of the Rochford District Replacement Local Plan there is a public playing pitch provision stating that new proposals for public playing pitches, including the provision of synthetic playing pitches, will be required to meet all of the following criteria and have regard for LPSPD3:-
- i. The finished site should be level, free draining and of sufficient size to accommodate the proposed pitches;
 - ii. It should be located where there is convenient access for the local communities;
 - iii. The proposed pitches are for public use;
 - iv. Vehicular access to the site from the highway can be accommodated without creating a highway hazard;
 - v. It should not have an adverse impact on residential amenity, nature conservation interests or the character of the countryside;
 - vi. The Local Planning Authority is satisfied that provision has been made for the area's long term retention and maintenance.
- 4.8 In Council's opinion, this policy should also apply to proposed pitches for private club use and hire, and in the case of this application, points ii, iv, v and vi cannot be substantiated.
- 4.9 Rochford District Council is very aware of the existing 10 football pitches in the vicinity, which already cause heavy traffic flow over weekend periods, and have on many occasions in the past led to a gridlocked road. Rochford District Council and Essex County Council are also fully aware that Old London Road is a de-restricted road with a speed limit of 60mph and no pedestrian footpath. In addition, situated between the existing Rayleigh Boys pitches and the proposed Academy Soccer pitches is an Essex County Council chippings bay, which has access 7 days a week by 44 ton lorries. At peak use, lorries accessing the site have queued in Old London Road waiting their turn to load

or unload; one 44 ton lorry takes up over half the road width, when two are travelling in opposite directions they barely have room to pass, causing a danger to pedestrians and other motorists, when they are queued awaiting access to the site the road is blocked. In addition, the only alternative route to the site is via Church Road, an extremely unsuitable road as it is a narrow, semi-rural road, with housing and stables sporadically placed each side and a width restriction at the end nearest the site.

- 4.10 Members also note that the applicants have still not supplied a Flood Risk Assessment, despite the fact the site lies within flood zone 3a as determined by the Environment Agency. This area is already subject to flooding; London Road, Old London Road and Church Road have all flooded within the last six months. The site is in very close proximity to a water course, being the Benfleet Brook, and the whole area is always at risk from fluvial and tidal flooding as the brook runs into the River Crouch. On numerous occasions land, the road and properties flood in this location; the most recent being in December 2013 when the area was put on a Green state of alert by the Environment Agency, the highest level you can be on and the area remained on this status for 2 days. Members are concerned by the size of the car park and the area of hard standing that will replace a natural green field, which currently aids water runoff. Council is concerned that because there is already a risk and history of flooding in the area, creating any hard standing would have a detrimental effect. Council also understands that using a permeable surface does not work when placed on the top of clay, which is the total make up of soil in this area and the applicant has provided no specification to prove otherwise. Council notes that a Flood Plain line has been drawn onto the applicants' plans yet there is no supporting information as to how this line has been determined and where it extends beyond the site.
- 4.11 Council also notes that there is a lack of mains drainage on the site and that a septic tank is proposed; again Council is concerned about the implications this would have when the area floods and Council is concerned that the site would not be suitable for a septic tank as it would have to be installed above ground level to stop effluent escaping in the event of a flood.
- 4.12 Council also considers that this application is contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework in which the Government attaches great importance to the Green Belt. Under section 79 of the Framework it states that the fundamental aim of the Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open and therefore inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt. Section 9/88 states that when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt, by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations. Section 9/89 states that a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in Green Belt. Exceptions to this are: appropriate facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation and for cemeteries, as long as it preserves the openness of the

Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it, Council does not consider that the openness of the Green Belt will be preserved by this application.

4.13 In addition under PPG2 Green Belts it states that applications often involve the erection of high fences, which is the case in this application. It is considered that such a high fence will intrude in the Green Belt. In addition under policy GB22 Outdoor Sports Facilities it states that proposals for the use of land for outdoor participatory sport and recreation will only be allowed in the Green Belt where the following criteria is met:-

- i) The proposal will not have an unacceptable detrimental impact on other persons' enjoyment of the countryside.
- ii) It would not result in the permanent loss of the best or most versatile agricultural in accordance with policy IR3
- iii) It would not require unacceptably prominent ancillary facilities, eg, fences, flood lighting, car parking, etc.

4.14 Council would also like to refer back to the addendum dated 27 February 2014, which was written with regard to the previous application made for the site. Council notes from the addendum that a neighbourhood representation was submitted "fraudulently" and would therefore ask that Rochford District Council gains confirmation as to the authenticity of information supplied with this current application. Council noted that there were a number of neighbourhood representations in favour of the application and are concerned how many of these were submitted by the signee?

4.15 **Essex County Council Highways**

No objection to raise, subject to the following heads of conditions:-

- 1) Prior to the commencement of the development, submission of a pitch layout providing a minimum of 15m non-play area between the pitch edge and the fencing alignment.
- 2) Prior to the first beneficial use, provision of 6.5m high ball stop fencing/net protection along the edge of the field immediately adjacent to the A130 and A129.
- 3) Parking spaces shall be provided in accordance with the parking standards.
- 4) Prior to first beneficial use submission of details for the provision of a vehicular turning facility.
- 5) Any gates shall be inward opening and set back a minimum of 6m from the nearest edge of the carriageway.

Environment Agency

- 4.16 Have no objection. However, we have the following advice on flood risk and foul water disposal:-

Fluvial Flood Risk

- 4.17 Our maps show some of the site is located in Flood Zone 3a, but this is only a small proportion of the site to the north, with the majority of the site within Flood Zone 1, the low risk zone. We are pleased to see that a sequential approach has been applied, with all development, including buildings/containers, septic tank and parking, located in low risk areas. We therefore have no objection in this regard.

Surface Water Management

- 4.18 It is our understanding that a car park for year round use of 124 cars is proposed alongside the hedge to the east and this will be surfaced in type 1 mix. Type 1 mix will be granular and should allow some infiltration so it is not expected that there will be large amounts of runoff from this, although as it gets compressed over time, the amount of infiltration will reduce. If you have concerns about runoff then suggest a permeable parking surface which will provide enough stability for cars but also allows grass to grow through the surface, keeping the infiltration as close to the existing situation as currently stands.
- 4.19 The other 300 parking spaces are proposed for an annual tournament event held over two weekends in the summer. For this event, we understand some of the playing field will be used, with no permanent surface.
- 4.20 In light of the above, we consider that although the total site area is over one hectare, the actual amount of impermeable development proposed is much less than this. The application will therefore be covered by our Flood Risk Standing Advice and we have no further comment to make on surface water management on the site.

Environmental Permitting Regulations 2010

- 4.21 It should be noted that an Environmental Permit may be required for certain activities under the Environmental Permitting Regulations 2010. Based on the information provided we are not able to say whether these would be granted, and the granting of planning permission does not guarantee the granting of a permit. A permit will be granted where it can be demonstrated that the risk to the environment is acceptable.

Construction Phase

- 4.22 A waste exemption or environmental permit may be required for the spreading of any excavated or imported material. Excavated material arising from site

remediation or land development works can sometimes be classified as waste. Businesses and other organisations need to know if the materials they produce, or intend to use, are waste. This is important as they may need to hold environmental permits and follow other waste controls if they are dealing with waste. The producer of the excavated material (spoil) is responsible for determining whether it is classified as waste. If the excavated spoil is deemed to be waste then the following will apply: - If any controlled waste is to be used on site or elsewhere, the applicant/developer will be required to ensure that the appropriate waste exemption or environmental permit is obtained from us. We are unable to specify exactly what may be required at this stage, due to the limited amount of information provided. The applicant/developer must apply the waste hierarchy in a priority order of prevention, re-use, recycling before considering other recovery or disposal options.

- 4.23 If any controlled waste is to be removed off site, then the site operator must ensure a registered waste carrier is used to convey the waste material off site to a suitably permitted facility.
- 4.24 The Environmental Protection (Duty of Care) Regulations 1991 for dealing with waste materials are applicable for any off-site movements of wastes. The producer of the waste has a duty of care to ensure all materials removed go to an appropriate permitted facility and all relevant documentation is completed and kept in line with regulations. The applicant/developer may be able to benefit from our waste position statements which state our regulatory position when dealing with certain wastes. In particular, the applicant should refer to our waste position statement regarding the Definition of Waste: Development Industry Code of Practice (V2). We will take account of the Code of Practice in deciding whether to regulate excavated materials to be used in development projects as waste. If materials are dealt with in accordance with the Code of Practice we consider that those materials are unlikely to be waste at the point when they are to be used for the purpose of land development. The applicant/developer may be able to demonstrate that the excavated /imported material is not classified as waste. If the material is not waste it may be easier for them to use it in their own business. This can also help them to use resources more efficiently reducing costs and the demand for raw materials. It is possible for a material made from waste to reach a stage where it is no longer waste. This is known as end of waste status. There are three main ways through which a waste can achieve end of waste status: - through an end of waste submission - compliance with End of Waste Regulations (currently only available for some scrap metals) - meeting a quality protocol.

Surface Water Quality

- 4.25 Surface water and groundwater have legal protection. It is an offence to pollute them. Silt and oil are the most common construction site pollutants to water. It is recommended that all run-off from the vehicle parking areas should be directed through an oil separator (interceptor) to prevent contamination of

surface water. Oil separators are recommended at car parking sites larger than 800m² or 50 or more parking spaces. If the water is clean surface run-off, for example, from a roof, road, pathway or clean hard standing area, an environmental permit is not required. The applicant/developer needs to make sure any proposed discharge of surface water from the development stays clean and uncontaminated. If surface water does become contaminated we will only issue a permit if stopping the contamination is unsustainable and the contamination would not pollute the receiving water.

Foul Water Disposal

- 4.26 We have produced a pollution prevention guide 'treatment and disposal of sewage where no foul sewer is available: PPG4' which provides details about the different options available. It also contains a table to help calculate the volume of effluent that will be generated:
- 4.27 Depending on the volume being discharged it could be covered by our regulatory position statement on registration of small sewage discharges: If the operator can comply with this position statement they don't need to apply for an environmental permit. If the operator was unable to comply with the regulatory position they would need to apply for an environmental permit.

Building Regulations

- 4.28 Guidance on the foul drainage systems can be found in the technical guidance supporting your local Building Regulations. The Building Regulations 2000, Drainage and Waste Disposal - Approved Document H 2002 Edition (see section H2, Waste water treatment systems and cesspools and appendix H2-A Maintenance). Careful planning of foul drainage is required to prevent misconnections of toilets, showers and sinks into surface water.

Sport England

- 4.29 As the site is not considered to form part of or constitute a playing field Sport England has considered this a non-statutory consultation and makes the following comments:-
- 4.30 Sport England has assessed the application in the light of guidance consistent with the NPPF and which, amongst other things, seeks to ensure that the provision of facilities and opportunities for sport and recreation meets the needs of the local community, including new facilities. The proposal would seek to address the club's future needs. Understand from the Football Association (FA) and the Essex County FA who have advised there is a clear need for additional pitches in the Rayleigh area to meet the needs of the applicant. As such the proposal would clearly meet Sport England's planning policy objective and therefore Sport England supports this application.

- 4.31 Advise that the application would accord with the relevant aspects of Government policy in the NPPF and paragraph 70 in particular. Confirm that playing fields and their ancillary facilities are an appropriate use of land in the Green Belt in accordance with paragraph 81 of the NPPF. It is not necessary for the applicant to demonstrate very special circumstances to justify permission being granted.
- 4.32 Consider that a four team changing facility as proposed is a modest facility for supporting a playing field where up to four pitches may be used at the same time. Sport England's guidance argues that changing facilities should be large enough to accommodate the largest number of players likely to use the changing room. Individual changing rooms are preferred. The four team changing facilities proposed are therefore the minimum required for a playing field of this size. Any reduction would not be fit for purpose.
- 4.33 The officials' changing facilities are also considered to be modest in size and proportionate to the level of demand generated from the use proposed.
- 4.34 Sport England requests a pre-commencement condition requiring an assessment of ground conditions and constraints such as drainage, surface quality, and maintenance issues so that a suitable playing surface can be developed.

Natural England

- 4.35 No objection to raise in terms of statutory nature conservation sites. Advises that the proposal is unlikely to affect any statutorily protected sites or landscapes.
- 4.36 Advises that Natural England has not assessed the application for impacts upon protected species and refers the Council to its standing advice.
- 4.37 Advises that if the site is on or adjacent to a local site e.g. Local Wildlife Site, the Council should ensure it has sufficient information to fully understand the impact of the proposal upon the local site before it determines the application.
- 4.38 Advises further that the site may provide opportunities for biodiversity and landscape enhancement such as bird nesting boxes and giving access to nature.

Rochford District Council Engineer

- 4.39 No objections but wish to raise that the septic tank installation will require a percolation test to determine the length of outlet drainage required.

Rochford District Council Head of Environmental Services

- 4.40 No adverse comments to make, subject to the Standard Informative SI 16 (Control of nuisances) being attached to the grant of permission.

Neighbour Representations**Objections**

- 4.41 22 letters have been received from the following addresses within the District:-

Church Road: “Braemar” (2 letters) 1 Clarkes Cottages, Tufty Lodge (2 letters) “Ivy Cottage” (6 letters) “Forge Nurseries” (2 letters) 2 Burrells Cottages,

Hambro Hill: 12,

Old London Road: “Goymers Lodge” “Mardenor” (2 letters) “Tethers End” “Claremont”

Sheridan Close: 1

London Road: “Rockhaven”

- 4.42 And 1 further letter from outside the district.

- 4.43 And which in the main make the following comments and objections:-

- The previous application was shown to be a flood risk and surely must still be a risk. Flooding may not be a hot topic in June but it will rain again and flooding could well be the result.
- I also note from the previous application that there was an accusation of fraudulent support for the plans. If this is the case then it must cast doubt on the integrity of the application and, assuming these accusations were confirmed, the clarity of the proposals.
- Rayleigh Boys already have 8 pitches next door to the proposed site but cannot run them all at the same time due to the congestion it causes.
- If approved it will create an extremely dangerous five way junction on a tight bend with a national speed limit and no pavements. The entrance is 10 metres or less from the entrance to Rayleigh Boys site.
- There are serious drainage and flooding issues in the area.
- The application appears to hang on the fact that a precedent has been set but I dispute this as Rayleigh Boys is a voluntary organisation whilst Academy Soccer is a business. Rayleigh Boys applied for their ground because the pitches in Rayleigh were over-subscribed. As Rayleigh Boys vacated many hours of pitch time in Rayleigh when they moved it means

that Academy Soccer does not have issues with pitch availability. When Rayleigh Boys applied for their pitches there was not already another club in almost the same location. I therefore suggest that there is no precedent as the applications are based on totally different circumstances.

- Increase in traffic and access along a very narrow country road. There are already 10 football pitches in the next door field. These pitches are already responsible for a huge increase in cars each weekend - approximately 300 movements.
- All players have to use cars as the nearest public transport is approximately 15 minutes walk away and there is no footpath for children to use along Old Church Road.
- The organisers of Rayleigh Boys Soccer have expressed their concern that a further 100% increase could cause a very serious and potentially dangerous situation. They have stated that they had seriously underestimated the amount of traffic they would generate. Academy Soccer is asking for 130+ parking spaces, therefore generating a huge increase in traffic.
- This country lane is also used by approximately 10 x 44 ton lorries daily, entering and exiting the Essex Highways chippings bay, which is immediately adjacent to the proposed application site. These lorries can use this bay every day, every week of the year and have great difficulty in passing each other due to the narrow lane. There is absolutely nowhere at all to go, except climb into the hedges to avoid being struck by one of these huge lorries.
- When the original application, ref: ESH/SPD/DE/ROC/0087/10 for Rayleigh Boys Soccer was submitted, Essex Highways recommended refusal stating there was an undesirable intensification of access to Old London Road increasing unnecessary traffic movements to and from the site - although this concern was omitted from the information supplied to Members. Surprisingly, no concern was expressed by Essex Highways when this original application was submitted by Academy Soccer earlier this year.
- The proposed site is within a known flood plain - Area 3a. As recently as December 2013 the field next door, the farm, the houses and the A130 underpass were flooded to a depth of between 2 and 4ft. This whole area was completely flooded - the police closed all the approach roads for 2 days - with the local Parish Council supplying and helping to fill sandbags to prevent ingress of water to the houses.
- There is a network of brooks converging and meeting here, including one running immediately alongside the proposed site, which would be badly affected if further restrictions are placed here - car parking for 130+ cars,

even though the application now states that a permeable surface will be constructed. It is a well known fact that as this whole area consists of solid clay the water will just collect and cause "run off" into the brooks and nearby land and properties.

- This area is in the heart of the Metropolitan Green Belt and is neighboured by residential properties. This application is completely contrary to policy R1 of the Rochford District Local Replacement Plan as the scale of use, the excessive level of traffic flow, the car parking, the 6.5 metre fencing, 8 storage containers, together with the noise and general disruption, would seriously affect the openness of the Metropolitan Green Belt.
- The residents in this area are entitled to expect to enjoy the level of peace, quiet and enjoyment that they are used to. Policies R1 and LT1.
- Has potential for a further 224 vehicles when existing pitches have potential for 280 vehicles.
- Increased traffic.
- Added danger to the horse riding fraternity.
- Speeding cars are more prevalent than would otherwise be since the previous pitches were allowed.
- Sharp narrow bend just before stables exist onto Church Road.
- Old London Road is de-restricted; the speed is 60mph.
- There is no footpath useable between "Cherlyn" and the Council chippings bays.
- Not possible for two lorries to pass giving concern for access by emergency vehicles.
- No adequate bus service to the site and car sharing does not happen.
- Applicants have pitches in Priory Chase easily accessible.
- Existing 10 pitches, together with the 8 pitches proposed, will equate to over 1000 car movements per day to be mixed up with horse riders, pedestrians and 44 ton lorries to the chippings bay.
- Through our own experience (Rayleigh Boys) we can only have six games in total – otherwise the car park fills up.
- The original application for Rayleigh Boys was recommended for refusal by Rochford planners due to levels of traffic. How can this not be an issue with a further 8 pitches?

-
- Not happy with the car parking area. Type 1 and road chippings do not comply with the surface water management act as it clearly says no more surface water into the water course than is naturally intended; so there needs to be a risk assessment pps 25 even if the run off is from zone 1 to zone 3a there should be control not to increase flooding.
 - I see that there has been a sequential test; this is to ensure that all development should be in the lowest risk and is normally followed with an exception test. The land shows zone 1 on your map that is wrong as fluvial and pluvial water is a problem that we can prove in Rawreth as you have photos that the Parish Council has sent you and proof that there has been flooding 19 times in 14 years.
 - Lidar is wrong because it does not show flooding in Rayleigh at the back of Makro and Asda more at the old E-On energy site. So is modeling wrong? Permeable driveways do not work because of rapid run off with clay and balancing ponds fill up when the water table rises; local information is vital.
 - When the winter comes and the water table rises a sequential test should then be done as brooks are high and they back fill up the land drains, then you get ground water flooding with pluvial and pluvial flooding.
 - I draw your attention to page 12 3.4.3 page 21 5.4.4 and page 40 0.2.2 of your strategic flood risk assessment; topography clearly shows that we live in the lowest part; Basildon, Rayleigh, Castle Point and parts of Chelmsford where water courses are run towards Rawreth.
 - Swales, basins, and permeable drives do not work because clay has rapid run off and very high water table.
 - Each year Benfleet Brook and Chichester Brook flood at least 3 times.
 - The whole area is in Flood Zone 3a with the highest risk of flooding. The previous application was withdrawn for this reason. Previous flooding occasions flood the road and cut the area off for six hours each time because the flooding can only abate when the tide turns.
 - The existing pitches were flooded with standing water for 2 months this winter and Chichester guests were evacuated by boat.
 - Noise
 - Litter
 - Pollution
 - Spoiling of village way of life.

- Existing pitches allowed are of no benefit to the village.
- Over provision of pitches in the area. 24 acre site of pitches just next door in neighbouring district.
- Fence unsightly and will detract from openness.
- Believe this to be a money making venture run for profit and to lead to further expansion and not as a non-profit making company training young children. Strong suspicion that the site will be rented out.
- Residents to Old London Road and Church Road are entitled to their historic right to peace and quiet and the proposal will violate further the residents' human rights.
- Sports events on the adjoining site are allowed to play on Saturday and Sunday. RTBY FC is allowed to play on Sundays with only occasional Saturdays. The current application is for Saturday and Sunday. Playing times should be Sunday only and monitored.
- Give Rawreth a break. We have been carved up by new roads, countless houses and more proposed.

Comments in Support

- 4.44 73 letters have been submitted in support from the following addresses within the district:-

Ashingdon Road: 249 (2 letters)

The Approach: 46

Bardfield Way: 11

Blackmore Walk: 12

Buckingham Road: 39 (2 letters)

The Chase: 125

Cheapside East: 54

Cheapside West: 53

Church End (Foulness Island): 13

Clayspring Close: 3

The Courts: 5

Durham Way: 9

Eastern Road: 23

Ferry Road: 194

Golden Cross Road: 70b (5 letters)

Grosvenor Road: 11

Hamilton Mews: 9 (5 letters)

Hatfield Road: 66

Hawkwell Road: 45a (2 letters)

High Road: 8

Hillside Road: 16

Hockley Road: 139, 141 (2 letters)

Kingfisher Crescent: 6

Kingswood Crescent: 2 (2 letters)

Laburnam Way: 21

London Hill: 38

Louis Drive East: 29

Louis Drive: 40

Louis Road: 42

Love Lane: 10 (2 letters)

Lower Road: "Willow Pond Farm"

Magnolia Road: "Wayside" (2 letters)

Moat Rise: 32

Nelson Gardens: 21 (2 letters)

Orchard Avenue: 3 (2 letters)

Osborne Avenue: 19 (2 letters)

Paignton Close: 14 (3 letters)

Padgetts Way: 29

Pooles Lane: 3

Priory Chase: 98

Salisbury Close: 3

Southbourne Grove: 33 (2 letters)

Stambridge Road: 46 (2 letters)

Station Avenue: 4 (2 letters)

Temple Way: 19

Tendring Avenue: 18

Upway: 37

Willingale Avenue: 9

The Westerings: 53

Western Approaches: 124

4.45 And a further 70 letters from addresses outside the district.

4.46 And 5 unaddressed letters.

4.47 And which in the main make the following comments in support of the application:-

- I have played at academy for 9 years and they have taught me about respect, discipline and self control.
- More pitches needed for the expansion of Rayleigh.
- The new ground would give us a base to build on and become the best club in Essex.
- Benefits that children would take from this surely outweigh objections from neighbours who would only be affected at weekends.
- We would not have to check for dog poo, as our current pitches are covered in it.
- The coaches are far better than at other clubs.
- Our tournament is the best in Essex.

-
- I have been involved with academy soccer over the past 10 years, and they have been child orientated at all times, and have always had the parents' and local neighbours' interests in their minds.
 - This is proved by their yearly tournament, and their current venue, albeit too small now, keep asking them to come back.
 - I fail to see how having another football field will add to the flooding issues that may be there at the moment, as a grassed field could not possibly add to this.
 - The positives that academy soccer bring to the community as a whole, with regard to boys playing football, coaches, the FA affiliation, by far outweigh the issue with traffic. The noise level will be no greater than the A130 or the existing pitches next door.
 - I fully support the application and feel a great injustice would be done if this was not permitted.
 - So many schools have lost their playing fields to housing developments. Any extra facilities that can be provided is to be welcomed.
 - Need open spaces and Green Belt to keep fit and healthy.
 - It is clear that the club is being held back by not having its own premises and this seems like an ideal location.
 - I am sure local residents will be less than happy but I would simply refer them to the state of the Rayleigh Leisure Centre pitches and surrounding areas after Academy Soccer play, compared to other facilities as parents and officials take pride in leaving the pitches in the condition (and usually tidier) than they found them.
 - I do not accept that the area will be over-used by football pitches and would flag that any objections from Rayleigh Boys are likely to be based on an historic dispute which led to the setting up of Academy Soccer in its current form.
 - Getting our children out into the open air playing sport in a safe, controlled environment is of paramount importance.
 - A well run highly respected Football Club trying to do the very best for its players and the environment at the same time.
 - It will stay as green fields for the majority of the time week in week.
 - There are playing fields close by, which I have visited on match days a number of times; the access road was never what I would call even

remotely busy so the issue of traffic jams, I believe to be false.

- Having lived opposite the pitches on Priory Chase since their inception I have found Academy Soccer nothing but polite, helpful and considerate to the needs of the community it serves. We have had parking issues which Academy Soccer corrected themselves and is no longer a problem. That problem was caused by the Council in not providing sufficient parking for the site in Priory Chase. Academy Soccer has recognised this in its application and provided adequate parking.
- For those worried about flooding they do not care to mention that the site that this application is for was one of the only fields not flooded last time due to the benefits of the A130 drains that border its edges.
- Those worried about the loss of view and noise and disturbance, you will still have an uninterrupted view of the A130 and the noise of traffic will not be drowned out by the sound of children enjoying themselves outdoors.
- Once again it is the 'nimby' brigade who, being well practised in the art of complaining, seem to be the ones objecting for selfish reasons rather than thinking of the community as a whole.
- Rochford District Council should be applauded if they do the right thing and support an application which means that someone is adding to the youth sport facilities within the district without the cost of that facility being borne by the Council or its tax payers.
- I know this area well and we know there are local residents with their own concerns (which we all understand) but it's hardly Wembley.
- I believe that we should be supporting and encouraging the development of sport for children in Rayleigh. At the moment we do not have enough facilities and our children have to go outside the area to participate in their sport. When Park School closed some years ago we were promised a swimming pool. Needless to say this never materialised. Instead we got several hundred houses and a leisure centre which offers very little for children at a reasonable cost.
- The junior football pitches in Rayleigh are over used at present, with some clubs using them for training, which makes them unsuitable for playing on at the weekend.
- I have been an athletics coach for many years now and give up my time freely to encourage children to participate in sport. I believe that through sport we can instil integrity, fair play, self confidence and respect for others. By participating in sport our children are encouraged to lead a healthy lifestyle.

- It has saddened me to hear rumours that there has been what can only be described as an orchestrated campaign by another youth football club in Rayleigh to have this application rejected by the Council. I really cannot understand why anyone who is interested in the development of children in sport would carry out such a spiteful campaign, but it appears from the number of 'negative' letters that this must be the case as many of those objecting have nothing to do with the area surrounding the proposed pitches.
- We are about to have a development of a further 600 homes in the east of Rayleigh, built on Green Belt/agricultural land, which will necessitate more leisure facilities especially for children and this would be an ideal opportunity to supply these facilities, at no cost to the Council or the residents of Rayleigh.
- Academy Soccer is a responsible football club, who has recently been awarded the prestigious FA Charter Standard Community Club Award. They have been established many years now and offer coaching to all regardless of ability.
- I wish to express my support for the above application to provide football pitches for children in the surrounding area of Rayleigh and Rochford. Soccer is the main sport of Britain and there are too few provisions to play this in a competitive manner with the necessary amenities. All too often we hear that there are no up and coming players with the required skills to progress into major clubs and make the grade to represent our national teams. We are not going to do this by playing in a park, if there is one available, with some coats dropped on the ground. These pitches will be sized for the correct age group with the right size goals as defined by the FA to develop players as they grow under the guidance of qualified coaches. It will give them amenities to do this safely and correctly with modern clean toilets, hot and cold showers, drinking water and changing rooms within comfortable cabins/containers.
- To alleviate any inconvenience to the handful of local residents each boys match would be staggered to every other week with the home matches played at variable times to reduce the amount of traffic at any one time. More than adequate parking is provided with a two way flow and provision for turning all on a surface that will allow rainwater to permeate into the ground. This organised parking will prevent any vehicles being parked or left waiting in the road. The Highways Department has made no concerns over traffic , only that the afore mentioned criteria is fulfilled and that fencing 6.5 mtrs high is erected to prevent balls being lofted onto the A130 & A129. Provision has been made for this although with mini soccer pitches being sited in this area it would be surprising to see a child kick a ball that high.

- Academy Soccer YFC is a relatively young club but in a short space of time they have proved to be a club that does things properly and responsibly. They are now a Standard Charter Community Club awarded by Essex FA , not that common achievement, which ticks a lot of boxes to be a club dedicated to developing children in the correct manner and working with the community in general amicably.
- To deny the children and parents of Academy Soccer the chance of their own facilities would be a tragedy and so please pass this application.
- Appropriate use within the Green Belt.
- Academy Soccer FC will be in control of the site and will be managed to an exceptional standard.
- Academy Soccer is constantly progressing and has just reached Community Status Club.
- Instilling important life skills and team work to boys and girls.
- Will remove dependency on Council pitches.
- Pitches will not be used constantly so effect on neighbours will be minimal.
- The site is convenient and accessible.
- Will provide important community facilities.
- Will not create as much noise as the adjoining club which has more pitches and containers.
- Proven that the extra disruption will not be greater than for the other club as will be at a similar time.
- Location meets the requirements of national and local planning policies.

4.48 One letter has also been received from the applicant and one letter from the club secretary which make the following comments in response to the concerns raised:-

- The application consists of 8 pitches which vary in size to support new FA directives for youth football. There are no plans to use these pitches simultaneously, in fact the ideas of duplication of pitch sizes is to allow rotation, which will preserve the playing surface.
- When taken in context with League and FA directives, children are only allowed to play one competitive game over a weekend, 7 years and under only play every other week. Also when you consider teams play home and away matches it even further reduces perceived usage.

-
- The adult section of our club plays on Saturday afternoons and consists of two teams: an open age XI and a Veterans side. Both currently play at King Georges playing fields in Rayleigh, however this has been thrown into doubt due to new parking charges passed by Council.
 - There is an obligation from the League to provide free parking, which we will not be able to do at this site any longer on Saturday afternoons.
 - You may have seen in the local press recently Academy Soccer FC has been awarded Charter Standard Community Club Status. This is the highest award given to any club and Academy Soccer FC has had to prove we operate the highest possible standards across all aspects of the club and how we interact with the community as a whole.
 - Where there is change you will always find some resistance, but without change nothing would be achieved and we would not see any improvement to move forward.
 - From the outset above Academy Soccer explained the rotation of pitches and subsequent staggering of kick off times. The application (page 11) details this, along with expected number of car movements. I have seen comments posted calculating traffic movements in terms of thousands, which is totally inaccurate. Correct numbers as a maximum would be Saturday 22 cars and Sunday 102 cars. These are not skewed numbers; they are in line with what we currently see at our current site, but given the amount of car sharing and siblings playing within the club these numbers dramatically reduce. Furthermore, you should note that the ample car parking will operate a one way system with a parking system where spaces are made available in sections to ensure traffic flow is not restricted off Old London Road. Car park marshalling will be in place.
 - When looking at the location of the site in terms of distance to neighbouring properties and the proximity to the new A130, along with the density of natural screening, it is difficult to see how decibel levels will exceed those currently experienced in what has been described as a quiet rural area. Given that the A130 flanks the site, expectation has to be that the constant decibel level of this busy road will overshadow anything generated from this proposal. The noise study commissioned in the application (page 14) details this, along with current usage levels on adjacent pitches, which are used by Sporting Events (Saturdays and Sundays) and Rayleigh Boys YFC (Sundays). Current usage decibel levels will not be increased by this proposal.
 - Current natural screening surrounding the site is to remain; the height and density is already such that it is not possible to view the field without directly entering the field. Therefore from day one there will be no impact to the visual quality of the surrounding area.

- For two weekends during the football season I have taken the trouble to walk from the site down the Old London Road to the A129. On each occasion I have been able to walk the majority along a well trodden grass verge and pavement without difficulty, whilst applying common sense and observing the highway code at no time did I feel threatened by passing or oncoming traffic.
- A public footpath also exists through the adjacent field, which further takes the pedestrian away from the road.
- I am pleased to say that Academy Soccer has worked in conjunction with the Environment Agency to come to the point of this application and overcome any hurdles. When this application was previously submitted Councillors attended a site visit on Saturday, 22 January 2014, which was at the height of some of our wettest weather in recent times. They noted how well this field drains by the very notion you were able to walk around so freely and disproves the scare mongering on the issue of flooding in an attempt to block this application. I was able to walk freely around the field in trainers without slipping or sinking and was not covered in mud when leaving. Clearly the drainage ditches that circumference the site are adequately doing their job.
- The addition of car parking will be that of a porous nature, not tarmac, and therefore current drainage will not be compromised.
- Residents at their current site behind Rayleigh Leisure Centre are complimentary of the members' conduct. So residents of Rawreth do not be afraid; these are respectable, decent people.

5 MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Principle of the Development

- 5.1 The site is within an area allocated Metropolitan Green Belt in the Council's saved Local Plan (2006). The provision for playing pitches and appropriate buildings such as changing rooms and storage buildings are considered appropriate development in the Green Belt and do not require the applicant to demonstrate very special circumstances in order that permission might be exceptionally granted.
- 5.2 Paragraph 9.42 to Policy CLT 10 to the Council's adopted Core Strategy (2011) states that the District has a role to play within the wider geographical area with regard to playing pitch provision. Whilst the District relies, to a degree, upon the neighbouring urban areas for employment and retail services, there is a reciprocal reliance from these areas on the Rochford District to provide open space and recreational opportunities. The Council will therefore take a positive approach to the provision of pitches within the District. The policy goes on to state that Green Belt locations for additional playing pitches will be considered appropriate. Similar criteria are set out in Policy DM 12 and DM 16 to the Council's Development Management

Submission Document (April 2013), although this document is still awaiting the inspector's final report, but can nevertheless be given some weight.

- 5.3 The Council's Local Development Framework Playing Pitch Strategy Supplementary Planning Document (October 2011) concludes for the Rayleigh sub area (table 7.1 page 44) that whilst there is a surplus of 9 pitches for senior football, there is a deficit of 15 junior pitches and 16 mini soccer pitches. Although the applicant proposes two adult pitches, the remaining 6 junior pitches would improve upon the shortfall for junior and mini soccer. There is therefore a need identified for the pitches proposed.
- 5.4 The site is in a remote part of the District. This is at odds with the requirement for the use to be in an accessible location on the edge of a settlement set out in Policy CLT10 and DM16. There is, however, no objection raised in sustainability terms from the County Highway Authority. There is also a precedent for the same use to the adjoining site. Furthermore, from the supporting representations received the proposal would appear to serve a catchment to the west and south of the District and those neighbouring authorities such that the site location would be central to their members' location, thus representing a degree of sustainable vehicle movements at least for home games held at the site proposed.
- 5.5 The playing pitches would retain the openness of the site. The changing room and storage facilities would be provided in low rise containers, modest in scale and sited in a low lying location against a backdrop of hedging to the field margins, having a minimal impact upon the Green Belt.
- 5.6 Sport England has recommended a condition to require the submission of details to ensure the site is well drained and that the site preparation and seeding ensure a quality playing surface. The submission of these details can be the subject of a condition, given the strength of guidance from Sport England and that this requirement is part of the criteria set out at policy CLT 10 to the Core Strategy.

Flood Risk Issues

- 5.7 The Environment Agency has confirmed that a Flood Risk Assessment is not required. Only the very northern part of the site falls within Flood zones 2 (medium risk) and 3a (more likely risk), as identified by the Environment Agency in their land flood risk classification. These zones extend into the site from the very northern site boundary a distance of 20m-30m. The previous application located the then proposed changing rooms within these flood zone areas and this resulted in a holding objection from the Environment Agency. The applicant subsequently withdrew that previous application to address the objection raised. The current application would locate the changing rooms deeper into the site between 15m-39m and outside of flood zones 2 and 3a.

-
- 5.8 The remainder of the site falls within Flood Zone 1, which notwithstanding the nomenclature, comprises land which is least likely to flood. The changing rooms, storage containers, car parking area and pitches would all be located in Flood Zone 1.
- 5.9 The proposed car parking area would be constructed of 100mm thick type 1 surface over a geo textile filter membrane. The type 1 mix and filter membrane would be likely to restrict most contaminants from the car parking area from filtering into the water environment. The Environment Agency considers that although the total site is in excess of 1 ha, the actual amount of impermeable development proposed would be much less and that, as mentioned above, a Flood Risk Assessment would not therefore be required. They have no further comment to make with regard to the surface water management of the site. The foul water drainage would be subject to separate licensing and compliance with the Building Regulations.
- 5.10 The applicant has confirmed, in discussion with officers, agreement in principle to the provision of a means of drainage to the car parking area with pollutant interceptors and draining to a water holding facility such as below ground tanking or open swale/pond so that surplus surface water could be held back. The applicant has explained that a long term ambition would be to use this water for pitch irrigation during dry spells and routine maintenance. A condition to the grant of permission would allow for further consideration of these details.

Design Issues

- 5.11 The proposed container type changing rooms and storage facilities would be similar to those approved to the adjoining site. Whilst functional in appearance, they have the advantage of having a low rise minimal impact and in this case, but for one container at the southern end of the car park, would be grouped at the lower northern end of the site. Officers consider that the suggested colour green would be the most appropriate, but given the backdrop of hedging there would not be a requirement for further screen planting adjacent to the containers.
- 5.12 The provision of the catch fencing to the western and southern boundaries was a request of the County Highway Authority in response to the application previously withdrawn. This is required to mitigate against potential ball flight interfering with passing traffic on the major routes. The use of such netting is not without precedent such as the 5m high netting in use at the driving range at the Rayleigh Golf Club and which adjoins Hullbridge Road.
- 5.13 To the western boundary this fencing would have a limited impact against the backdrop of the A130, which rises northwards alongside the proposed fence line.

- 5.14 To the southern boundary the proposed fencing would have limited impact due to the depth of tree and hedge planting adjacent to the A129.
- 5.15 The impact of the proposed catch fencing upon the openness of the Green Belt has to be weighed against the wider recreational benefits and access to the countryside inherent in the application. The proposed fence would have limited impact against the backdrop of the existing landscape features and given the wider benefits and necessity for highway safety would not impact upon the openness of the Green Belt or the landscape to such an extent such as to justify withholding consent.

Highway Issues

- 5.16 The site is served by a narrow lane that historically connected the area but since the construction of the A129 and A130 has had a reduced role serving now to give access to local homes and businesses. The Chichester hotel exists further east of the site a short distance from the A129. The site is, however, further west from the junction with the A129 along which there is no footpath. Pedestrians therefore have to walk along the metalled road surface. The adjacent field hedging also hinders visibility from time to time, particularly around the bends in the street alignment.
- 5.17 No objection is raised by the County Highway Authority at the use of Old London Road to serve the site. Whilst the County Highway Authority previously held a view to the contrary with regard to the provision of pitches in 2005 on the adjoining site, their position has, however, changed in all subsequent applications. Various conditions are, however, recommended, including the setting back of any gates.
- 5.18 The general layout would require the provision of a maximum 160 car parking spaces at a rate of 20 spaces per pitch. No spectator seating is shown to the application and therefore no additional requirement for that is necessary. The proposal would provide 125 car parking spaces representing provision of 78% of the maximum required.
- 5.19 The County Highway Authority has no objection to raise against this level of provision provided details are submitted to show the effective working of the turn around facility supporting the one way routing of the parking management. Although the site is in a remote location away from alternative forms of transport, the County Highway Authority is satisfied at the level of parking provision proposed.
- 5.20 The tournament layout would provide a further 342 cars for only seven pitches requiring a maximum of 140 car parking spaces. This extra provision over and above that provided on the site would reflect the likely greater number of spectators attending this event held over two summer weekends and to which there is also no objection raised in highway terms by the County Highway Authority.

- 5.21 Members will note that whilst the County Highway Authority raises no Objection, its recommendation is conditional that an alternative pitch layout is submitted and agreed such as to achieve a minimum 15m safeguard zone between adult pitches and the catch fencing. This was also raised in response to consultation with the previous application. The current application is a revision to the layout, which previously proposed the adult pitches alongside the western and southern boundaries. In the current application the adult pitches are located to the eastern side of the site predominantly in excess of 25m and 30m from the adjoining A130 and A129. A small pinch point placing one adult pitch 13m from the proposed catch fencing to the A129 would, however, feature in this layout. The applicant considers that having revised the layout to provide the junior pitches adjoining the catch fencing, a more generous distance of up to 62m will result, more than satisfying the requirements to avoid stray balls from adult matches straying over the highway. The adjoining junior pitches will host matches for junior teams aged 6-11 years old without the physical force to cause ball flight over the catch fencing proposed. Further discussion has taken place with County Highway officers who agree that the location of junior pitches adjoining the catch fencing overcomes the need to maintain a buffer strip of 15m width, as originally requested. On this basis District officers consider that the proposed layout would make effective use of the site, overcoming the concerns of the County Highway Authority. A condition will, however, be required to ensure the provision of the proposed layout.

Residential Amenity Issues

- 5.22 Policy LT 21 to the Council's saved Local Plan identifies that a number of sporting and recreational uses give rise to noise and disturbance. Paragraph 6.57 to the preamble to Policy LT 21 identifies such uses to include motorised sports, war gaming, shooting and air sports. Paragraph 6.59 to the preamble identifies such sites and locations to be likely to be degraded land such as former mineral workings and set aside farm land. The provision of football pitches is not the type of development envisaged to which policy LT 21 would be directly applicable.
- 5.23 Policy CLT10 to the Core Strategy (2011) and part (iv) to policy DM16 to the emerging Development Management Submission Document both require that such proposals do not generate undue levels of noise and disturbance to harm residential amenity.
- 5.24 The dwellings "Rockhaven" and "Rawreth Lodge" front Church Road 115m and 121m respectively north of the proposed changing rooms and storage containers. "Cherlyn Lodge" fronts London Road 270m east of the site access. "Sunny view" also fronting Old London Road is located 200m south of the site. The area is remote giving varying degrees of quiet against a backdrop of traffic along the A130. A proportion of objections to the proposal raise concerns at the likely noise levels of matches interrupting the quiet,

particularly when taking into account the use of the adjoining site.

- 5.25 The adjoining site provides a total of 11 pitches and operates under a permission granted on 28 March 2006 under application reference 05/01043/COU for two junior and one full size pitches and for one day per weekend being either Saturday or Sunday, together with a later permission for 8 pitches granted on 25 May 2010 under application reference 10/0087/FUL, which allows those eight pitches to be used on Sundays and for up to eight Saturdays a year.
- 5.26 The proposal would provide a further eight pitches but further distant from most dwellings to Old London Road, but closer to those fronting Church Road and which are closer to the A130. In essence the background noise levels are higher in the location of the proposed site.
- 5.27 The applicant has provided an assessment of noise levels acknowledging that the human response to noise is subjective. The applicant's assessment concludes that the noise levels experienced by neighbours nearby are likely to be comparable to the equivalent of a conversation at home for those nearby residents and therefore acceptable. The Council's Head of Environmental Services has no objection to raise at the impact of the proposal. Officers conclude that, subject to limitations with regard to the extent of usage allowed to the adjoining site by way of conditions to the grant of permission and for weekends, the disturbance would not be so great as to justify withholding permission.

Ecological Issues

- 5.28 The site has been under arable cultivation until recently. At present the site has no crop and has a coverage of weeds beginning to establish. The field area has limited ecological value given that the site has been subjected to an agricultural crop management regime. Those weeds now establishing are likely to be black grass and other invasive weeds of limited ecological value. The hedgerows around the site will be retained.
- 5.29 Natural England has no objection to raise at the impact of the proposal upon the internationally over wintering birds in the Crouch Estuary.

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The proposed use of the site for football pitches is an appropriate use of land within the Metropolitan Green Belt. The proposed changing rooms would be appropriate facilities for outdoor sport and recreation in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and local policies for development in the Metropolitan Green Belt. The ball catch fencing will have an impact on the openness of the area generally but has to be weighed against the wider recreational benefits, access to the countryside inherent in the application and its necessity on highway safety grounds.

- 6.2 The use proposed would provide sufficient off street car parking and would not give rise to adverse conditions of highway safety or residential amenity that would weigh against the merits of the proposal.

7 RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**

That planning permission be approved, subject to the following conditions:-

- (1) SC4B – Time limits standard 3 years
- (2) The site shall only be used for the purposes of football and for no other purpose, including any use otherwise permitted within Class D2 of the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (including any order revoking or re-enacting that order, with or without modification) or such uses ordinarily incidental to the use hereby permitted.
- (3) The use hereby permitted shall be undertaken on Saturdays and Sundays all day and no other weekday than specified in this condition.
- (4) No amplified speech/music or other form of public address system shall be broadcast or operated on the site.
- (5) No floodlights or other means of artificially illuminating any part of the site shall be installed and/or operated, whether or not in association with the use of the site hereby permitted.
- (6) The development hereby approved shall be implemented in accordance with the pitch layout shown on Drawing No. 14-field-002 or such other layout as shall be submitted to and may be agreed in writing by the local planning authority prior to being provided on the site.
- (7) Prior to the first use of the development hereby approved the 6.5m high ball stop catch fencing net protection system hereby approved and as shown on Drawing No. 13-field-013 shall be provided along the edge of the site immediately adjacent to the line of the A130 and A129.
- (8) Prior to the first use of the development hereby approved, the applicant shall submit details to and obtain agreement in writing by the Local Planning Authority for the design of a vehicular turning facility to be provided to serve the one way traffic management system to be provided at the southern end of the parking area. The development shall be implemented in accordance with such details as may be agreed, including appropriate markings or signage; the vehicular turning facility shall be available on first commencement of the use hereby approved and be kept free of impediment for its intended use.

- (9) Any gates to be provided at the vehicular access shall be inward opening only and shall be set back a minimum of 6 metres from the nearside edge of the carriageway.
- (10) No development shall commence until the following have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority after consultation with Sport England:-
- (i) A detailed assessment of ground conditions (including drainage and topography) of the land proposed for the football pitches, which identifies constraints that could affect football pitch quality; and based on the results of that assessment to be carried out a detailed scheme which ensures that the football pitch will be provided to an acceptable quality. The scheme shall include a written specification of soils structure, proposed drainage, cultivation and other operations associated with grass and sports turf establishment and a programme of implementation.
 - (ii) The approved scheme shall be carried out in full and in accordance with a timeframe agreed with the Local Planning Authority after consultation with Sport England. The land shall thereafter be maintained in accordance with the scheme and made available for football pitch use in accordance with the scheme.
- (11) Prior to the commencement of the development the applicant shall submit details to the Local Planning Authority for a scheme to provide for the drainage of the permanent car parking areas of the site. Such details shall include the provision of interceptors and filters to capture contaminants and details for a water holding facility such as a pond, swale or tanking and details for the overflow into the main water course. The development shall be implemented in accordance with such details as may be agreed prior to the first use of the pitches hereby approved.



Shaun Scrutton

Head of Planning and Transportation

Relevant Development Plan Policies and Proposals

Rochford District Council Local Development Framework Core Strategy Adopted
Version December 2011

CLT 10.

Rochford District Replacement Local Plan (2006) as saved by Direction of the
Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and dated 5 June 2009 in
exercise of the power conferred by paragraph 1(3) of schedule 8 to the Planning and
Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

LT 2,LT 10, LT 21.

Rochford District Council Local Development Framework Development Management
Submission Document (April 2013)

DM 12, DM 16

Parking Standards: Design and Good Practice Supplementary Planning Document
adopted December 2010

Standard D2

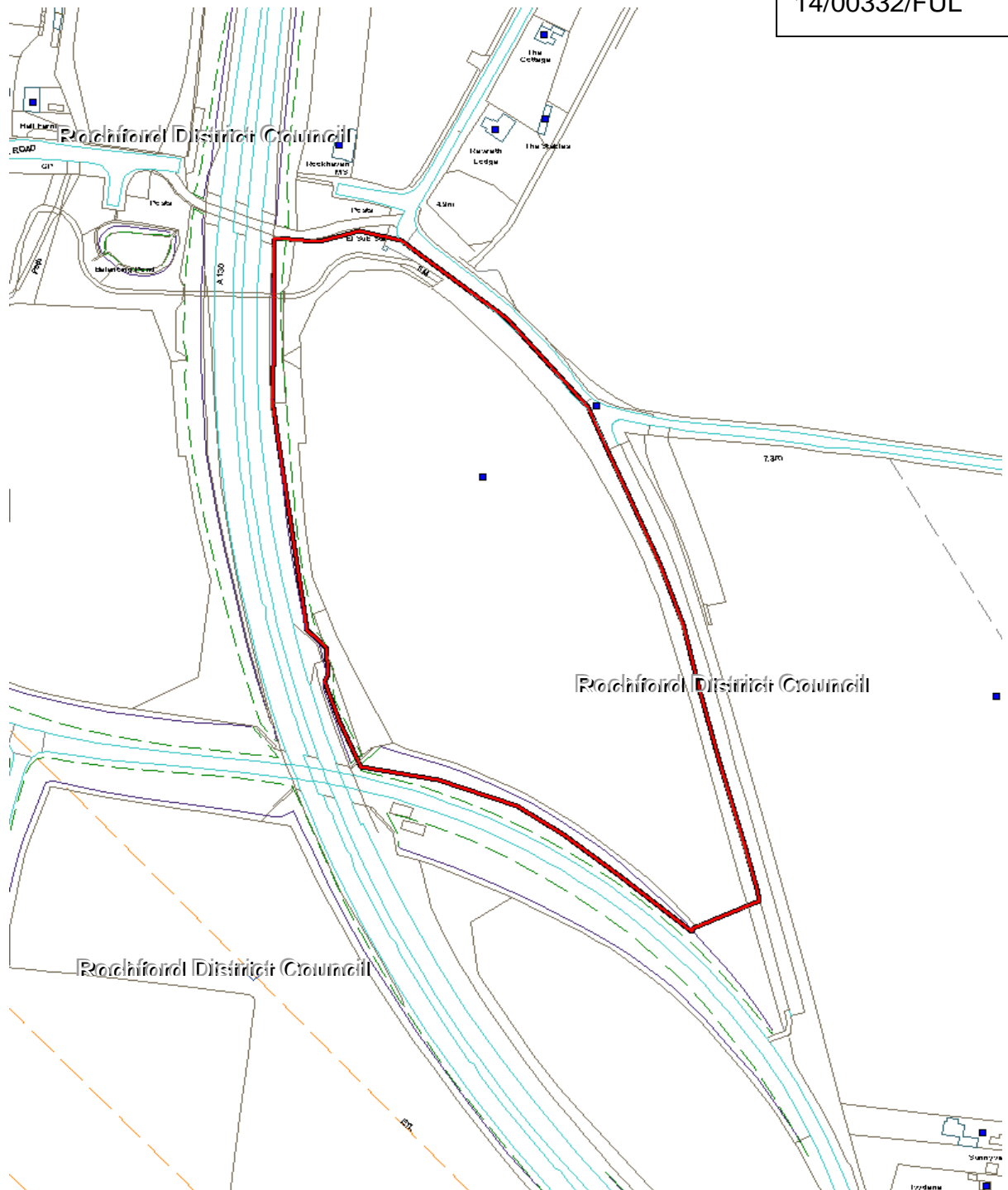
For further information please contact Mike Stranks on:-

Phone: 01702 318092

Email: mike.stranks@rochford.gov.uk

If you would like this report in large print, Braille or another
language please contact 01702 318111.

14/00332/FUL



Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. This copy is believed to be correct.

Nevertheless Rochford District Council can accept no responsibility for any errors or omissions, changes in the details given or for any expense or loss thereby caused.

Rochford District Council, licence No.LA079138



