

Report of the Head of Development Management and Building Control Committee Report

Case Officer: Sally Robbins	9556/APP/2026/461
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Date Application Valid:	03.03.2026	Statutory / Agreed Determination Deadline:	12.06.2026
Application Type:	Full	Ward:	Northwood Hills

Applicant: **Robert Jones, Haydon School**

Site Address: **Haydon School, Wiltshire Lane, Eastcote
HA5 2LX**

Proposal: **Construction of a Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) with
perimeter fencing, hardstanding areas, storage
container, floodlights and an access footpath.**

Summary of Recommendation: **GRANT planning permission subject to
conditions**

Reason Reported to Committee: **Required under Part 4 of the Planning Scheme of
Delegation (20 plus objections received)**



Summary of Recommendation:

GRANT planning permission subject to the conditions set out in Appendix 1.

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This application seeks planning permission for the construction of an Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) and associated development at Haydon School, including perimeter fencing, floodlighting, hardstanding areas, access pathways, engineering operations and associated landscaping works. The proposed AGP would provide enhanced all-weather sports provision for both Haydon School and the wider community to support curricular and extracurricular sport during school hours together with community use outside school hours.
- 1.2 The principle of enhanced sports provision at the school is supported by national and local planning policies, which seek to promote healthy communities including increased participation in sport and improved access to recreational facilities. Whilst the proposal would result in the reconfiguration of the existing running track arrangement and reduction in grass playing field, Sport England raises no objection and considers that the sporting and community benefits of the proposal outweigh the limited loss of existing grass playing field provision.
- 1.3 Due regard has been given to local residents' objections and all other material considerations. It is concluded that the proposal complies with the Development Plan and no material considerations indicate that a contrary decision should be taken.
- 1.4 The proposal would introduce additional built form, engineered landform changes, fencing and floodlighting within an existing open playing field area and would therefore give rise to some localised visual and amenity impacts. However, the application is supported by technical assessments relating to landscape and visual impact, noise, lighting, highways, drainage and ecology, which demonstrate that, subject to conditions and mitigation measures, the development would not result in unacceptable harm to residential amenity, highway safety, flood risk, biodiversity or the wider character and appearance of the area. The Council's Highway Authority and Noise Officer have raised no objection to the proposal and Sport England supports the development subject to conditions.
- 1.5 It should be noted that the current proposal has been reduced in scale and repositioned further away from nearby residential properties compared to the previously refused scheme and it is considered that the scheme has overcome the previous reasons for refusal.
- 1.6 Taking all relevant matters into account and giving due regard to all representations received, it is considered that the proposal complies with the

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Development Plan when read as a whole and no material considerations indicate that a contrary decision should be taken. The planning application is therefore recommended for approval, subject to the conditions set out in Appendix 1.

2 The Site and Locality

- 2.1 The wider Haydon School site occupies an approximately 9.9 hectare irregularly shaped and sloping plot located on the northeast side of Wiltshire Lane in Northwood. The school comprises a number of large linked and detached classroom blocks, ranging from single-storey to three storeys in height, located towards the northwest corner of the site. Various hard surfaced games courts are located close to the main school buildings and playing fields occupy the eastern and southern parts of the site. It is understood that the school caters for 11- to 18-year-olds and currently has approximately 1,549 pupils on roll.
- 2.2 The school falls within a predominantly residential area. To the southwest it is bounded by Wiltshire Lane, beyond which are residential properties. Norwich Road bounds part of the northwest boundary, beyond which are also residential properties. All other boundaries are directly abutted by residential properties and their gardens.
- 2.3 The school car park is located at the southeast of the main school buildings and the main vehicular and pedestrian access into the site is via Wiltshire Lane. The southeast and northeast boundaries are planted with trees and shrubs. Some tree planting also exists around the northeast and southeast boundaries and limited tree planting is present within the school site.
- 2.4 The application site itself comprises an area of 0.65 hectares located to the east of the school buildings and comprising a part of the existing school playing field. The site gradient falls to the south and east with a fall of approximately 6m between its outer northwest and southeast corners.

Figure 1: Location Plan (application site edged in red).

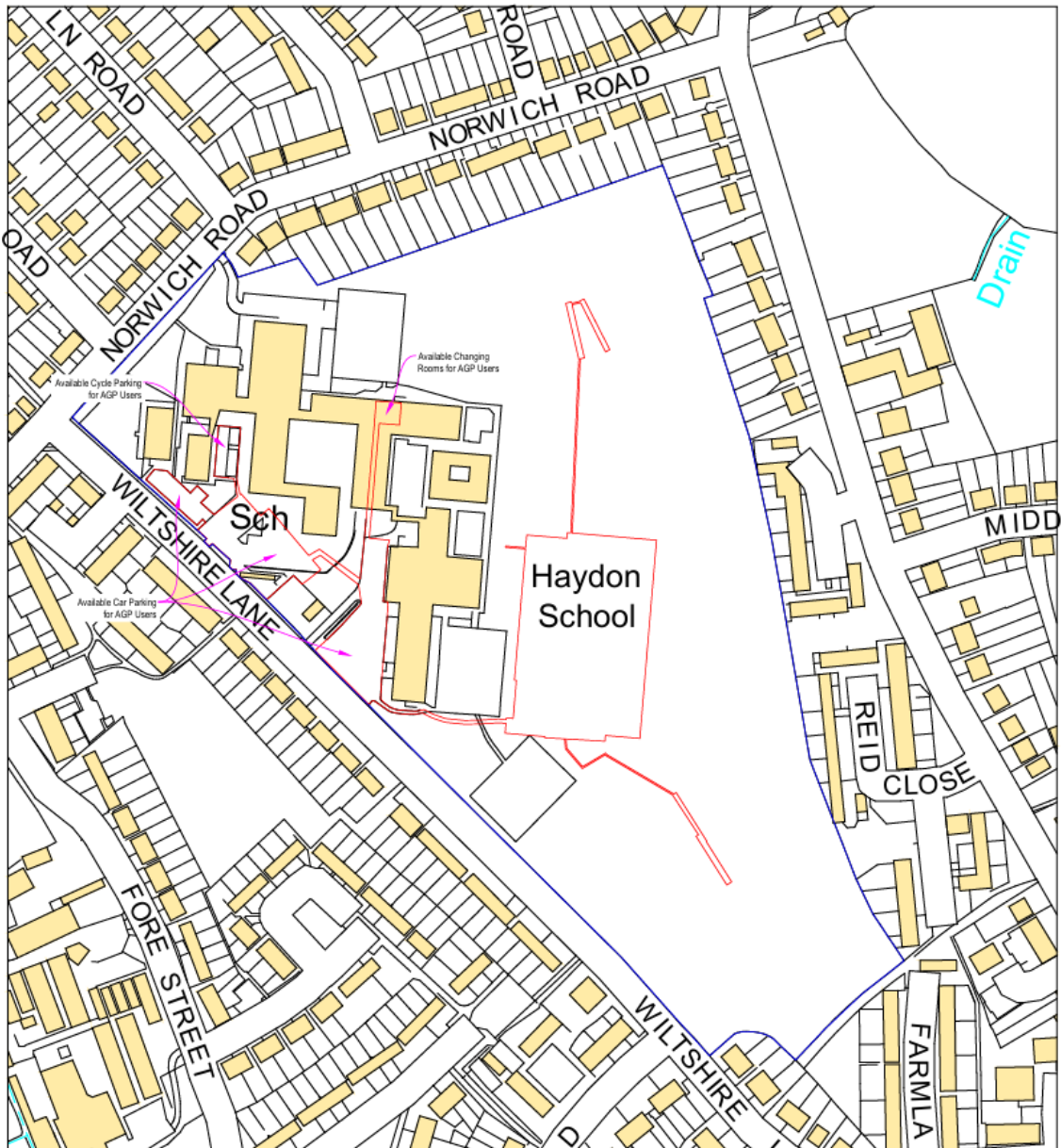


Figure 2: Aerial view of application site



Figure 3: Aerial view of application site



Figure 4: Photo taken from within site looking west



Figure 5: Photo taken from within site looking northwest



Figure 6: Photo taken from within site looking south



Figure 7: Photo taken from within site looking east



3 Proposal

- 3.1 The application seeks planning permission for the construction of a 3G artificial grass pitch (AGP) measuring 97m x 61m and associated development, including: a hardstanding viewing and goal storage areas; 4.5m-high fencing to the perimeter of the facility with a 1.2m-high internal fence; six 13m-high floodlighting columns; maintenance / sports equipment store located within the fenced facility enclosure; access pathways; and the relocation of two existing artificial cricket wickets within the wider playing field area.
- 3.2 The proposed AGP would require engineering operations to regrade the existing landform in order to create a level playing surface, including both cut and fill earthworks. The submitted details indicate that the development would involve excavation of up to 1m at the highest part of the site and raising of land levels by up to 2.5m at the lowest part of the site through the importation of fill material.
- 3.3 The proposed AGP would be used by Haydon School during normal school hours for curricular and extracurricular sport, with community use proposed outside school hours through pre-arranged bookings and organised sports activities. The proposed hours of use are 08:00 - 21:00 Monday to Friday (with a final curfew at 21:15), 08:00 - 20:00 on Saturdays (with a final curfew at 20:15), and 09:00 - 18:00 on Sundays and Bank Holidays (with a final curfew at 18:15), following which the floodlighting would be extinguished and the facility secured.

Figure 8: Proposed site plan

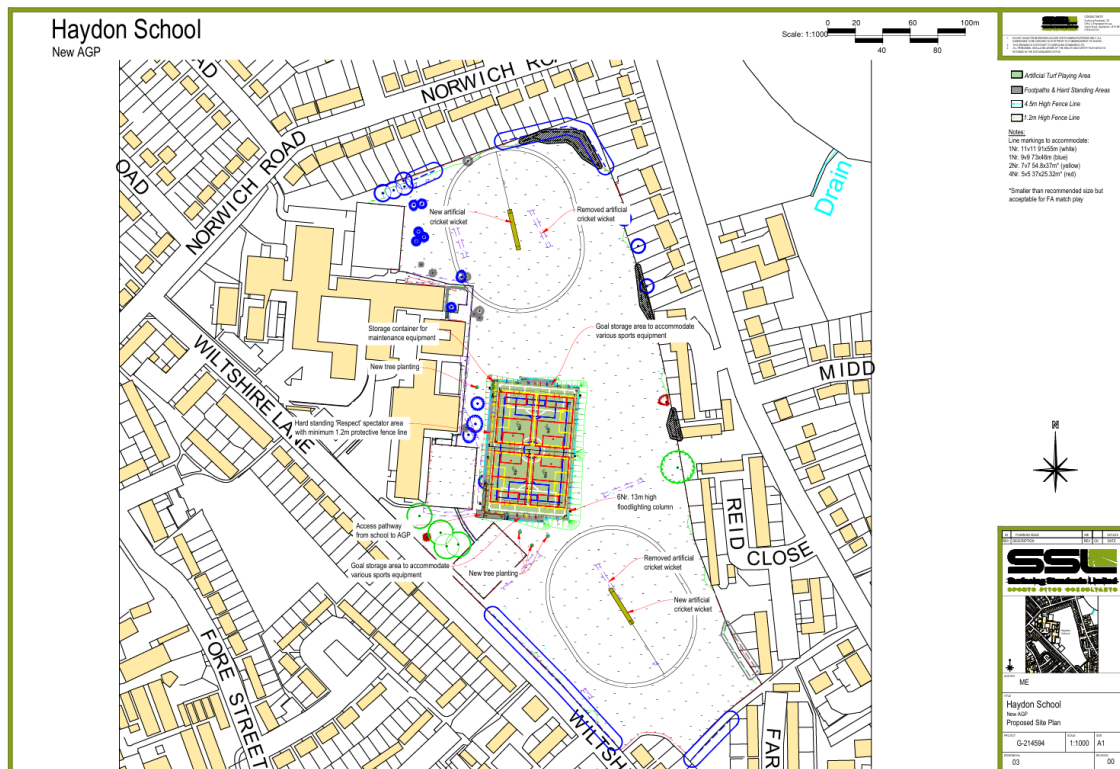


Figure 9: Proposed AGP plan

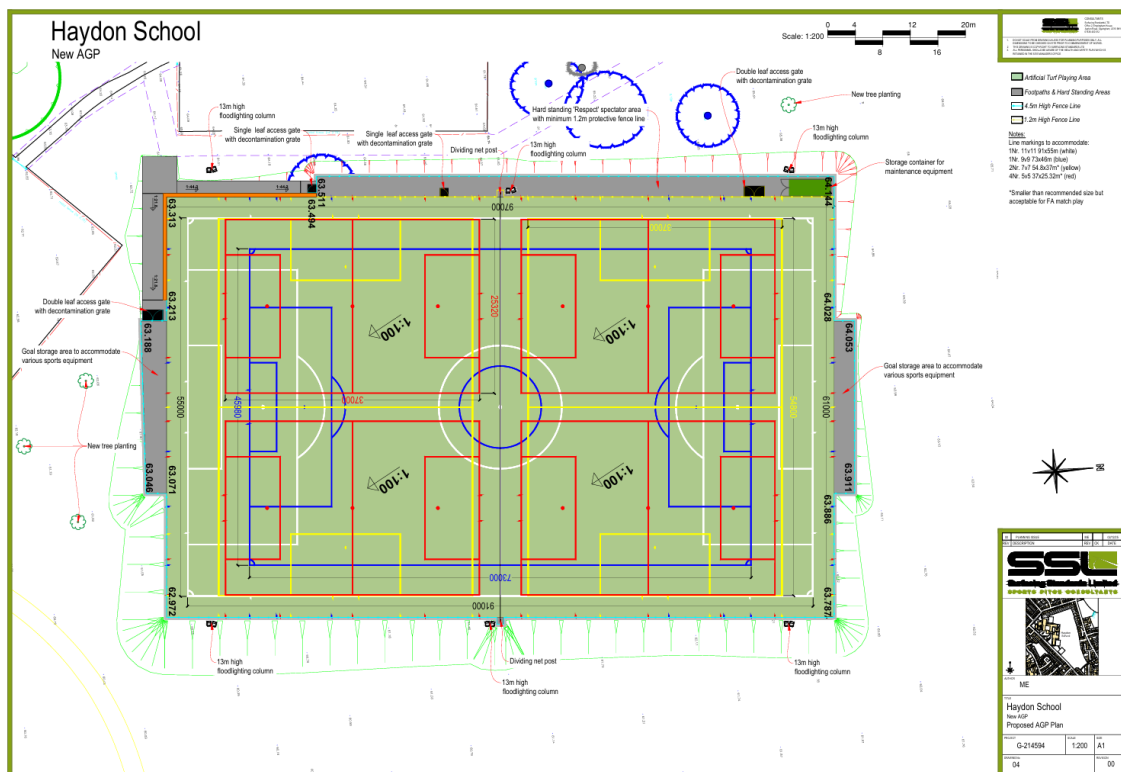


Figure 10: Proposed elevations

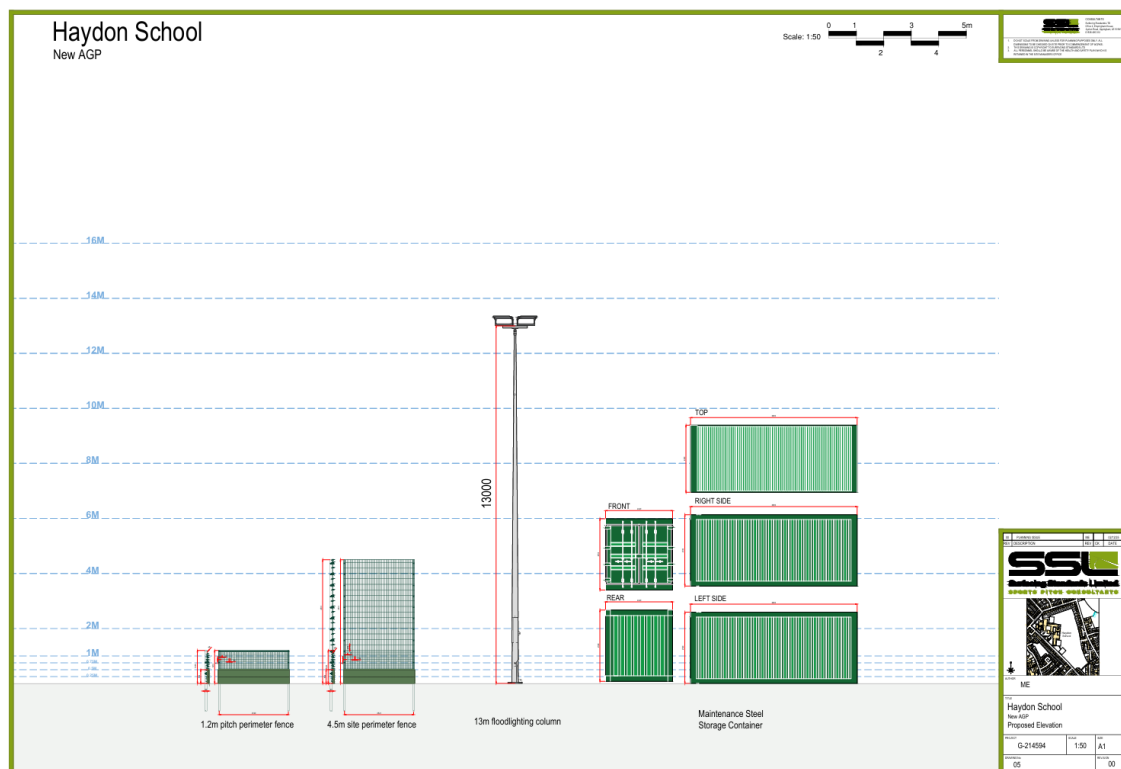


Figure 11: Proposed site sections

3.6

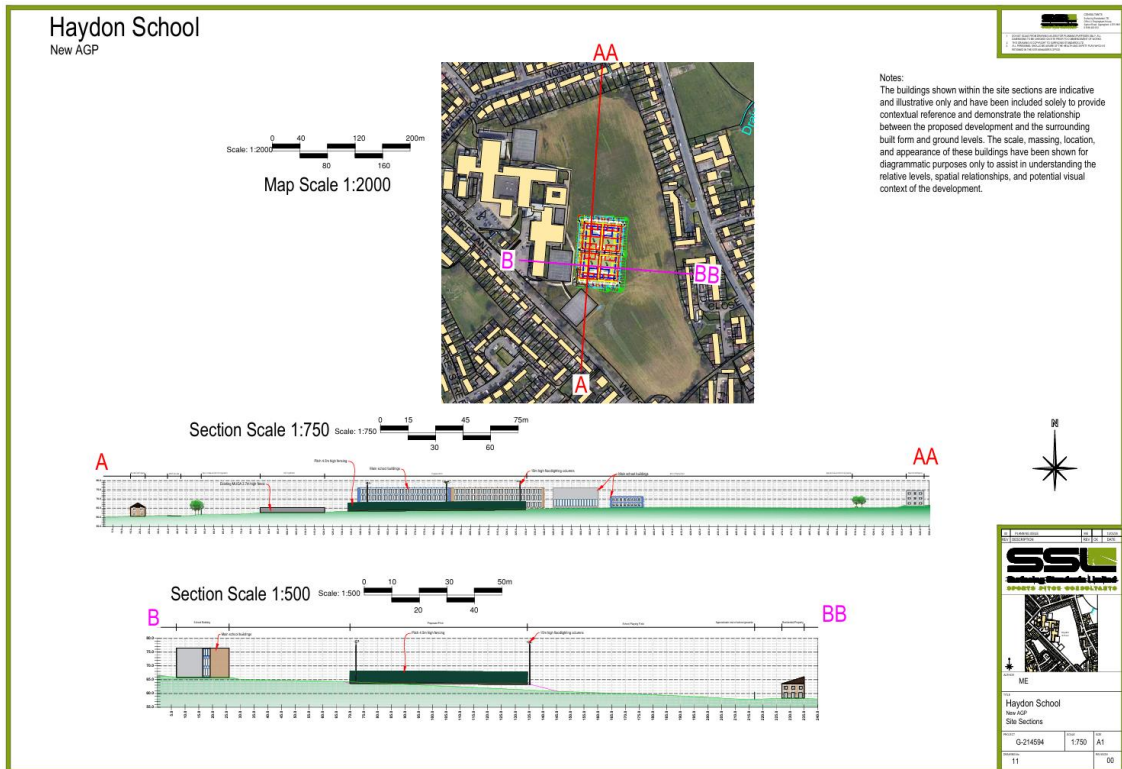
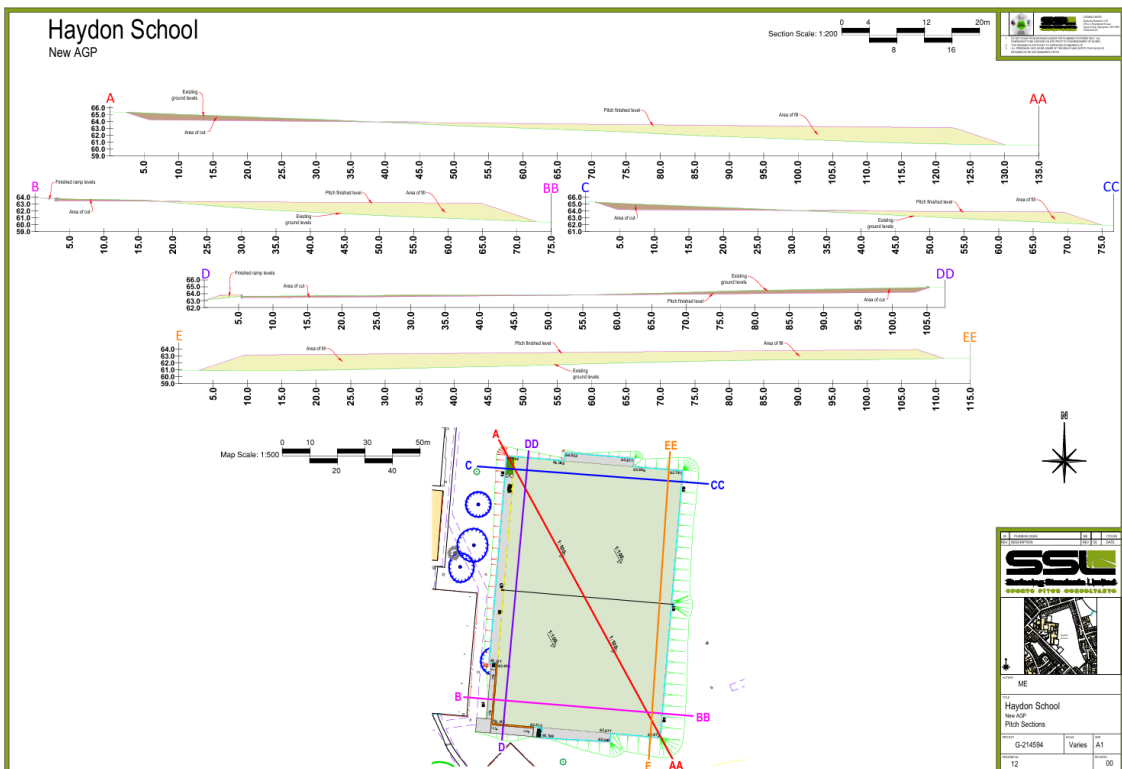


Figure 12: Proposed pitch sections



4 Relevant Planning History

- 4.1 A list of the relevant planning history related to the application site can be found in Appendix 2.
- 4.2 The wider school site has an extensive planning history associated with educational buildings, sports facilities, fencing, parking and ancillary infrastructure works. The most recent permissions include the installation of replacement perimeter fencing and alterations to car parking and access arrangements under ref. 9556/APP/2013/626, approved on 3rd June 2013; and the erection of a replacement school activity hall under ref. 9556/APP/2013/735, approved on 20th May 2013. Additional permissions across the wider site relate to school extensions, temporary classroom accommodation, sports fencing, floodlighting to tennis courts, accessibility improvements, and ancillary educational infrastructure.
- 4.3 Of particular relevance to the current application is planning application ref. 9556/APP/2014/3306 for the 'construction of an external 3G Artificial Turf Pitch (ATP) with fencing, floodlighting and a storage container', which was refused permission on 10th December 2014. The application was refused for the following two reasons:
- 4.4 *1. The submission fails to fully address how the effects of the change of levels across the site will affect the installation of the astro turf pitch, and flood lights, such that it can be demonstrated that it would not have an unacceptable impact on visual and residential amenity. As shown, the proposed pitch, including the associated fencing, floodlights (both structure and illumination) and grass bund, would, due to its height associated with the change in levels across the site, appear as an overly dominant feature, which would be out of keeping with the character and appearance of the surrounding area and detrimental to visual and residential amenity. The proposed floodlights and grass bund would, in particular, be viewed as artificial and alien features in this location, contrary to the aims of policies BE13, BE19, BE21, BE38 and OE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 Saved UDP Policies (November 2012) and Policy 7.4 of the London Plan (2011).*
- 4.5 *2. The application fails to demonstrate how the demand for parking associated with visitors to the site will be accommodated and managed, particularly in light of the fact that the site already provides indoor and outdoor sports and other facilities for the school and other external user groups, and the proposed Astro-Turf Pitch will clearly intensify the use at the site. Accordingly, the scheme fails to comply with policies AM2 and AM7 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 Saved UDP Policies (November 2012) and Policy 6.3 of the London Plan (2011).*
- 4.6 To support the application, the applicant has submitted comparison plans illustrating the differences between the previously refused scheme and the current proposal, including the revised siting, reduced dimensions and altered relationship with nearby residential properties (see figures 14 and 15). In addition, a Transport Assessment has been submitted to address the previous

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concerns relating to parking demand, traffic generation and the management of intensified use of the site associated with community use of the AGP.

Figure 13: AGP size comparison

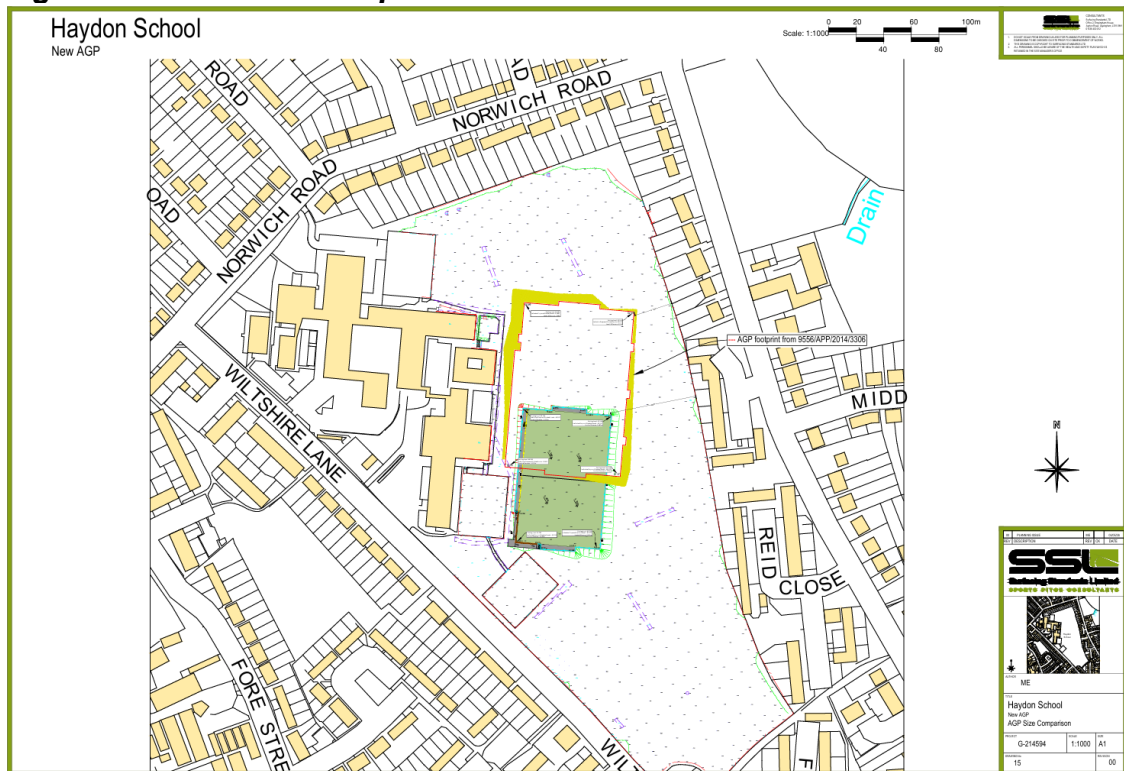
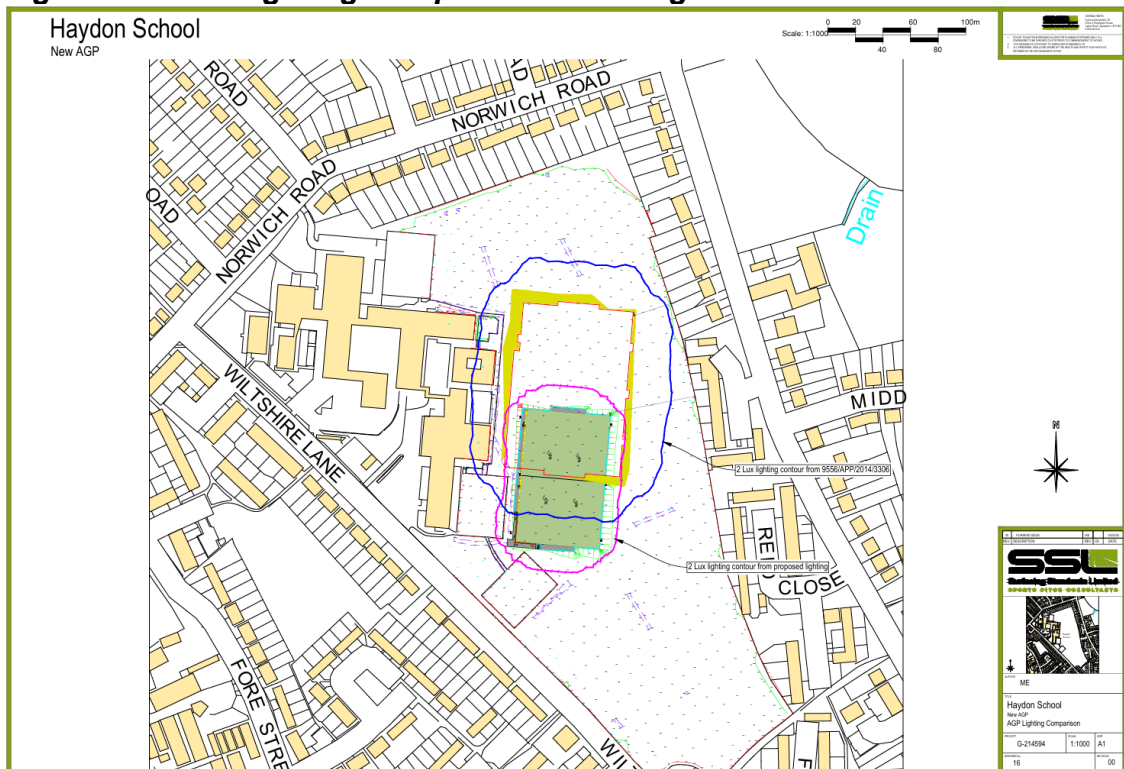


Figure 14: AGP lighting comparison showing 2 Lux contours



5 Planning Policy

- 5.1 A list of planning policies relevant to the consideration of the application can be found in Appendix 3.

6 Consultations and Representations

- 6.1 143 neighbouring properties, Eastcote Residents Association and Northwood Hills Residents Association were consulted on 9th March 2026. The consultation period expired on 30th March 2026. In total, 178 representations have been received from local residents: 21 in objection, 146 in support and 11 neutral. In addition, Northwood Hills Residents Association have objected to the proposal.
- 6.2 Representations received in response to public consultation are summarised in Table 1 (below). Consultee responses received are summarised in Table 2 (below). Full copies of the responses have also separately been made available to Members.

Representations	Summary of Issues Raised	Planning Officer Response
21 individual letters of objection have been received.	1. Noise and disturbance to nearby residential properties, particularly from evening and weekend use.	This is discussed at paragraphs 7.19-7.30 of this report.
	2. Light pollution from floodlights, into nearby homes and gardens. Extended hours of illumination and that the existing lighting is already intrusive.	This is discussed at paragraphs 7.24-7.27 of this report.
	3. Traffic, parking and congestion. Proposal would exacerbate existing parking and congestion problems around the school.	This is discussed at paragraphs 7.31-7.35 of this report.
	4. Flooding and drainage – artificial surfacing may worsen runoff as the existing surface water runoff affects neighbouring gardens,	This is discussed at paragraphs 7.50-7.56 of this report.

	particularly during heavy rainfall.	
	5. Loss of residential amenity. Concerns that the proposal would result in loss of privacy and be visually intrusive.	This is discussed at paragraphs 7.11-7.18 and 7.19-7.30 of this report.
	6. Impact on wildlife and environment. Concerns that floodlights and activity would disrupt habitats and local wildlife.	This is discussed at paragraphs 7.40-7.49 of this report.
	7. Use outside school hours – third party / community use would intensify the impact beyond normal school operations.	This is discussed at paragraphs 7.19-7.30 and 7.31-7.35 of this report.
	8. Personal / health impacts, in terms of noise and light affecting wellbeing, particularly people with health issues and neurodiversity.	This is discussed at paragraphs 7.29-7.30 of this report.
146 individual letters of support have been received.	I. Improved sports provision and upgrade to existing facilities, all-weather use, consistent playing surface and reduction in cancelled matches / lessons.	This is discussed at paragraphs 7.1-7.10 of this report.
	II. Beneficial for students to increase participation in sport, year-round PE.	This is discussed at paragraphs 7.1-7.10 of this report.
	III. Community benefits, including for local football clubs, addressing a shortage	This is discussed at paragraphs 7.1-7.10 of this report.

	of all-weather pitches locally.	
	IV. Improved facilities would promote gender-equality in sport, including increased opportunities for girls' football.	The wider sporting and community benefits of the proposal are acknowledged and form part of the planning balance. This is discussed at paragraphs 7.1-7.10 and 9.1-9.5 of this report.
	V. More reliable than existing grass pitch, which is frequently water-logged and unusable.	This is discussed at paragraphs 7.7-7.9 of this report.
	VI. Social benefits – encourage active lifestyles, reduce opportunities for antisocial behaviour and increased community engagement.	This is discussed at paragraphs 7.1-7.10 and 9.1-9.5 of this report.
	VII. Income generation for the school and financial reinvestment into school facilities and education.	The proposal would support enhanced school sports infrastructure and community use. This is discussed at paragraphs 7.1-7.10 and 9.1-9.5 of this report.
Northwood Hills Residents Association	i) Harm to residential amenity, noise and disturbance particularly during evenings / weekends. Conflict with residents rights Article 8 of the Human Rights Act.	The impact on residential amenity is discussed at paragraphs 7.19-7.30 of this report. Whilst it is acknowledged that the proposal would result in some increased activity associated with the use of the AGP, it is not considered that the impacts would be so significant as to result in an unacceptable interference with neighbouring residents' rights under

		Article 8 of the Human Rights Act. This is discussed at paragraph 8.1 of this report.
	ii) Traffic and parking – fails to demonstrate parking provision, will lead to increased traffic and parking pressure.	This is discussed at paragraphs 7.31-7.35 of this report.
	iii) Visual impact on character of the area, particularly from floodlighting.	This is discussed at paragraphs 7.11-7.18 and 7.24-7.27 of this report.
	iv) Conflicts with planning policy relating to design, amenity & traffic / parking.	This is discussed throughout Sections 7 and 9 of this report.
	v) Ecology concerns, badger activity on the site and impact on habitats.	This is discussed at paragraphs 7.40-7.49 of this report.
	vi) Lack of consultation from the school, local residents not consulted prior to submission.	Consultation undertaken by the applicant is not a statutory requirement for this type of development. The application has been subject to statutory consultation by the Local Planning Authority.
	vii) Northwood School received permission for floodlights on their playing fields there was a restriction on height. Also, those floodlights had to be portable and stored away when not in use.	These comments are noted. However, each application must be assessed on its own merits having regard to the site context and supporting technical evidence. In this case, the proposed floodlighting is considered acceptable subject to conditions. This is discussed at paragraphs 7.24-7.27 of this report.

Table 2: Summary of Consultee Responses

Consultee and Summary of Comments	Planning Officer Response
Highways Officer: No objection. The Highways Officer acknowledged that the development would increase patronage at the site; however, the submitted parking accumulation study demonstrated that the existing on-site parking provision of approximately 140 spaces would be sufficient to accommodate the forecast peak demand associated with the combined use of the proposed and existing pitches, without resulting in unacceptable overspill parking onto the surrounding highway network. The Highways Officer also concluded that, due to the proposed hours of operation, the development would not significantly impact peak weekday traffic conditions and any uplift in vehicle movements could be accommodated within the local road network without detriment to highway safety or congestion. A condition requiring the submission of a Construction Management Plan is recommended.	The Highway Authority's comments are noted and the proposal is considered acceptable in highway and parking terms subject to conditions. This is discussed at paragraphs 7.31-7.35 of this report.
Urban Design & Landscape Officer: Concerns raised concerns regarding the visual and landscape impacts of the proposal. The officer noted that the site is visually exposed and that the proposal would introduce a prominent form of development into the existing open grassland setting. Concern was raised regarding the raising of land levels along the eastern edge of the pitch, which was considered to increase the visual prominence of the development, especially from Joel Street and the adjacent public footpath. Concerns were also raised regarding the loss of two trees, including one Category A and one Category B tree, with no mitigation planting proposed as part of the scheme. The officer advised that, should the application be approved, replacement tree planting and additional landscape mitigation would be required to help offset the visual and landscape impacts of the development.	The visual and landscape impacts of the proposal have been assessed. Additional landscaping and replacement tree planting are proposed to mitigate impacts. This is discussed at paragraphs 7.11-7.18 and 7.36-7.39 of this report.
Sport England: No objection, subject to conditions. Sport England acknowledged that the proposal would result in the loss of some natural playing field land and impacts to existing cricket wickets, athletics markings and a rugby pitch; however, it considered that there is an identified need for additional AGP provision within the Borough and that the proposal would provide benefits	Sport England's support and the wider sporting and community benefits of the proposal are given significant weight. This is

to both the school and wider community sport provision. Support from the Football Foundation and Rugby Football Union was noted, including the potential use of the facility by local clubs. Overall, the sporting benefits of the proposal outweigh the loss of playing field land and the development accords with Exception 5 of Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and paragraph 104 of the NPPF. Conditions were recommended requiring compliance with World Rugby Regulation 22 standards, replacement cricket wickets prior to commencement of development, and the submission of a Community Use Agreement to secure community access and management arrangements.	discussed at paragraphs 7.1-7.10 and 9.1-9.5 of this report.
Noise Officer: Given the nature and context of the proposed development apparent from the information provided I consider it unlikely that a significant adverse noise impact would be caused by the proposed development.	This is discussed at paragraphs 7.23-7.30 of this report.

7 Planning Assessment

Principle of Development

- 7.1 Paragraph 95 of the NPPF states that Local Planning Authorities should give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools through the preparation of plans and decisions on applications. Furthermore, Section 8 of the NPPF promotes healthy and safe communities and paragraph 93 states that to provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as sports venues) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments.
- 7.2 Policy EM5 of the Local Plan Part 1 seeks to safeguard, enhance and extend sport and leisure facilities across the Borough and recognises the role of artificial playing surfaces in supporting year-round participation in outdoor sport. Policy CI1 supports the retention and enhancement of community infrastructure, including schools and leisure facilities, whilst Policy DMCI 2 of the Local Plan Part 2 supports new community facilities which maximise shared use and community access.
- 7.3 At a strategic level, Policy S5 of the London Plan supports the provision and enhancement of sports and recreation facilities, including AGPs, particularly where they maximise shared use between schools and the wider community.

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The supporting text to Policy S5 identifies a significant shortfall in AGP provision across London.

- 7.4 The proposal would result in the partial reconfiguration of the existing playing field layout and some loss of natural grass playing field. However, Sport England has raised no objection and considers that the sporting benefits of the proposal outweigh the loss of playing field land, subject to conditions and a Community Use Agreement. Accordingly, the principle of development is supported in policy terms, subject to an assessment of the detailed impacts of the development, which are assessed below.

Loss of Playing Field / Existing Sports Provision

- 7.5 Paragraph 104 of the NPPF seeks to protect existing playing fields and sports land unless one of the stated exceptions applies, including where the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use. Policy S5 of the London Plan similarly seeks to protect sports and recreational land whilst supporting enhanced sports provision where benefits outweigh any loss of existing facilities.
- 7.6 The proposal would result in the partial redevelopment and reconfiguration of existing grass playing field land in order to facilitate the AGP. The submitted information confirms that the proposal would affect part of the existing athletics track layout together with areas currently used for rugby and cricket activity.
- 7.7 Sport England has been consulted and raises no objection to the proposal, acknowledging that the development would result in some loss and reconfiguration of existing playing field provision. However, Sport England considers that the proposal would provide significant qualitative improvements to sports provision through the creation of a modern all-weather AGP capable of supporting year-round use by both the school and wider community. Sport England further advises that the proposal accords with Exception 5 of its Playing Fields Policy, as the sporting benefits of the development outweigh the loss of the affected playing field land.
- 7.8 The proposal would provide a more reliable and intensively usable sporting facility than the existing grass pitch, which is currently subject to weather-related limitations and periods of unavailability. The development would also support increased participation in sport, including community use outside school hours, and improve the quality and resilience of sports provision available at the school.
- 7.9 Whilst it is acknowledged that the proposal would alter the existing arrangement of sports facilities within the site, including impacts to the running track configuration, it is considered that the overall sporting, educational and community benefits associated with the provision of the AGP outweigh the limited loss and reconfiguration of existing playing field land.

- 7.10 Accordingly, the proposal is considered to comply with paragraph 104 of the NPPF and Policy S5 of the London Plan.

Design / Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area

- 7.11 Paragraph 135 of the NPPF, Policies D4 of the London Plan, BE1 of the Local Plan Part 1 and DMHB 12 of the Local Plan Part 2 require development proposals to be of high-quality design and seek to ensure that new development delivers buildings and spaces that are sympathetic to local character and distinctiveness, including the surrounding built environment and public realm. Policy DMHB 11 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2 seeks to ensure that new development harmonises with the surrounding area in terms of scale of development, considering the height, mass and bulk of adjacent structures.
- 7.12 The application site forms part of the wider Haydon School playing fields and is located within an established residential area. The playing fields are bordered by residential properties along Wiltshire Lane, Joel Street and Norwich Road, with rear gardens backing onto parts of the school grounds. The site itself comprises a large open area of playing fields which slope downwards from northwest to southeast and contains various existing school buildings, hard surfaced playing courts, Multi-Use Games Areas (MUGAs), fencing, floodlighting and associated sports infrastructure. Whilst the playing fields provide an open landscape setting locally, the wider character of the area is influenced by the established school campus and associated built form.
- 7.13 The proposal would introduce a 3G AGP with associated 4.5m-high perimeter fencing, internal fencing, six 13m-high floodlighting columns, hardstanding areas and associated engineering operations to regrade the site and create a level playing surface. As outlined above, the development would involve both cut and fill earthworks, including raising of land levels across part of the site. As such, the proposal would inevitably introduce a more formalised and engineered form of development into the existing open playing field area.
- 7.14 A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been submitted in support of the application. The LVIA assesses the impacts of the proposal from a range of surrounding viewpoints, including Wiltshire Lane, the adjacent public footpath and nearby residential properties off Joel Street and Norwich Road. The assessment concludes that the proposal would result in generally minor landscape and visual impacts overall, noting that the site already forms part of an established school sports campus containing existing development and associated infrastructure. The LVIA concludes that the proposal would not result in significant harm to the wider landscape character of the area and that the principal visual effects would be limited to more localised views from nearby residential properties and public vantage points.
- 7.15 The Council's Urban Design and Landscape Officer raised concerns regarding the visual prominence of the development, particularly the engineered landform, floodlighting columns and fencing, together with the exposed nature of the site and the loss of two trees. Concern was also raised that the proposal would be

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visible from Joel Street, the adjacent public footpath and neighbouring residential properties, particularly due to the change in levels associated with the pitch platform.

- 7.16 It is acknowledged that the development would be visible from surrounding vantage points, including Wiltshire Lane, the public footpath and surrounding rear gardens, and that the proposal would alter the appearance of this part of the playing fields. However, it is also noted that the development would be viewed within the context of the wider school campus, which already contains a variety of buildings, sports courts, fencing, floodlighting and other sports / recreational infrastructure. The proposal has also been reduced in scale compared to the previously refused scheme, repositioned further away from nearby residential properties and incorporates modern directional LED lighting.
- 7.17 In response to the comments from the Urban Design and Landscape Officer, additional mitigation tree planting and landscaping has been sought from the applicant in order to soften views of the development and help mitigate visual impacts, particularly from the public footpath and neighbouring residential properties. Details of replacement tree planting and landscaping would be secured by planning condition. However, it is acknowledged that, unless a substantial level of new tree planting and landscaping is secured and successfully established over time, the AGP and associated floodlighting columns would remain visible from surrounding viewpoints and would not be fully screened. Notwithstanding this, the development would continue to be viewed within the context of the wider established school campus and associated sports infrastructure and, on balance, it is considered that the visual impacts of the proposal are outweighed by the educational, sporting and wider community benefits of the scheme.
- 7.18 Overall, whilst the proposal would result in some localised visual harm and a moderate change to this part of the site, it is not considered that the development would result in significant harm to the overall character and appearance of the area. Subject to appropriate landscaping mitigation, the proposal is considered to comply with paragraph 135 of the NPPF, Policy D4 of the London Plan and Policies BE1 and DMHB 11 of the Hillingdon Local Plan.

Residential Amenity

- 7.19 Paragraph 135(f) of the NPPF and Policy D3 of the London Plan outline the importance of planning in securing good standards of amenity for existing and future occupiers of land and buildings. Policy DMHB 11 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2 seeks to ensure that new development does not result in a detrimental impact upon adjacent properties and their amenity space in terms of outlook, privacy, noise and daylight / sunlight. Policy D14 of the London Plan seeks to avoid significant adverse noise impacts on health and quality of life.
- 7.20 The proposed AGP would be located within the existing school playing fields and would be surrounded by residential properties to the north, east and south. The

proposal would introduce additional activity, noise, lighting and visual presence associated with the use of the pitch, floodlighting columns and perimeter fencing. The development would also involve engineering operations and changes in levels to create the pitch platform.

- 7.21 The proposal would be viewed within the context of the wider school campus, which already contains existing MUGAs, sports courts, fencing, floodlighting and associated sports facilities. Whilst it is acknowledged that the proposal would increase the intensity of sporting activity within this part of the site, it is considered that outdoor sports use already forms an established characteristic of the area.
- 7.22 Furthermore, the current proposal has been reduced in scale compared to the previously refused scheme. In particular, the AGP would be positioned 63m from the nearest site boundary, compared with 28m under the previously refused proposal. As such, the pitch, fencing and associated activity would be located further away from neighbouring residential properties, thereby reducing the potential for adverse amenity impacts.
- 7.23 With regard to noise impacts, the applicant has submitted a Noise Impact Assessment and draft Noise Management Plan. The assessment considers noise associated with player activity, whistles and footballs striking fencing and concludes that predicted noise levels at surrounding residential properties would remain within accepted guidance and would not result in unacceptable impacts to neighbouring occupiers. The Council's Noise Officer has raised no objection to the proposal, noting that it is unlikely that a significant adverse noise impact would be caused by the proposed development.
- 7.24 With regard to lighting impacts, the applicant has submitted a Sports Lighting Statement, Floodlighting Performance Report and associated lux contour modelling. The proposed lighting would comprise six 13m-high columns fitted with LED luminaires designed to provide directional downward lighting with a 0% upward light ratio in order to minimise sky glow and light spill, designed in accordance with the Football Association, FIFA and the Institution of Lighting Professionals (ILP) guidance.
- 7.25 The submitted modelling demonstrates that light spill to surrounding residential properties would remain within accepted industry guidance and would not result in unacceptable impacts to neighbouring occupiers. The reports also confirm that the lighting system would incorporate automated controls and post-installation testing, which would be secured by condition.
- 7.26 In terms of hours of use, following discussions with the applicant, the Local Planning Authority has negotiated a reduction in the originally proposed operating hours in order to further mitigate potential impacts on neighbouring residential occupiers. The agreed hours of use, to be secured by condition, are 08:00–21:00 Monday to Friday (final curfew at 21:15), 08:00–20:00 on Saturdays (final curfew at 20:15), and 09:00–18:00 on Sundays and Bank Holidays (final

curfew at 18:15). These hours are considered reasonable within the context of a school sports facility located within a suburban residential area.

- 7.27 Conditions are recommended requiring the floodlighting to be installed and operated in accordance with the approved lighting reports and specifications, including controls over illumination levels, operating hours, automated curfew shut-off systems and ongoing maintenance. Post-installation testing would also be required to verify compliance with the approved lighting scheme. These controls are considered necessary to ensure that lighting impacts are appropriately managed in the interests of residential amenity and ecological protection.
- 7.28 In terms of privacy and overlooking, the proposal would involve raising land levels in order to create the AGP platform and, as such, the playing surface would sit at a higher level than parts of the existing playing field. However, given the minimum separation distance of the AGP to the nearest boundary of 63m, it is not considered that the proposal would result in unacceptable overlooking or loss of privacy to neighbouring occupiers.
- 7.29 Concerns have been raised regarding the potential impacts of noise and lighting on the health and wellbeing of nearby residents, including those with neurodiversity. These concerns are acknowledged. However, in planning terms, the proposal has been assessed having regard to the submitted technical assessments, relevant planning policies and proposed mitigation measures, including restrictions on hours of use and lighting controls. Subject to these safeguards, the proposal is not considered likely to result in unacceptable impacts on residential amenity to warrant refusal on those grounds.
- 7.30 It is acknowledged that some degree of residual noise and visual activity associated with the operation of the AGP would inevitably be perceptible from surrounding residential properties; however, this is not considered to rise to a level that would justify refusal. Overall, whilst the proposal would result in some increase in activity, lighting and visual presence associated with the operation of the AGP, it is considered that the revised siting of the pitch, the increased separation distances achieved, the proposed lighting technology and the operational controls secured by condition would ensure that the development would not result in significant harm to the residential amenity of surrounding occupiers. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Paragraph 135(f) of the NPPF, Policies D3 and D14 of the London Plan and Policy DMHB 11 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2.

Highways and Parking

- 7.31 Paragraphs 110 and 115 of the NPPF seek to ensure that development proposals provide safe and suitable access for all users and do not result in unacceptable impacts on highway safety or severe residual cumulative impacts on the road network. These objectives are reflected in Policies DMT 1 and DMT 2 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2 and Policy T4 of the London Plan. In terms of parking, Policy T6 of the London Plan and Policy DMT 6 of the Hillingdon Local

Plan Part 2 require parking provision to be appropriately assessed having regard to the nature of the development, accessibility of the site and likely parking demand. For schools and educational establishments, Appendix C of the Local Plan Part 2 requires parking provision to be assessed on an individual basis through a Transport Assessment.

- 7.32 The application is supported by a Transport Assessment which considers accessibility, trip generation, parking demand and highway safety. The site would continue to utilise the existing vehicular and pedestrian access from Wiltshire Lane and no alterations are proposed to the access or parking arrangements. The school currently benefits from 140 on-site car parking spaces (including 3 disability spaces), 3 motorcycle spaces, 124 cycle spaces and 6 minibus spaces.
- 7.33 The Highway Authority has been consulted and notes that the proposal would increase patronage at the site through community use of the AGP outside school hours. However, the submitted parking accumulation assessment demonstrates that the likely peak parking demand associated with the combined use of the proposed and existing pitches could be accommodated within the existing on-site parking provision without resulting in unacceptable overspill parking onto surrounding residential roads. The Highway Authority noted that peak demand would equate to approximately 56 vehicles, leaving a substantial residual parking capacity within the existing car park. It is considered that the supporting Transport Assessment and parking accumulation analysis satisfactorily demonstrates how parking demand associated with visitors to the site would be accommodated and managed. In that respect, the current proposal addresses and overcomes the second reason for refusal associated with the previous scheme.
- 7.34 The Highway Authority also concluded that, due to the proposed hours of operation, the development would not materially impact the weekday peak highway network periods and that any uplift in vehicle movements could be accommodated within the local road network without causing unacceptable impacts to congestion or highway safety.
- 7.35 In conclusion, the Council's Highway Authority reviewed the application and raised no objection subject to conditions, including the submission of a Construction Management Plan and additional cycle parking provision. It is therefore considered that the proposal complies with paragraphs 110 and 115 of the NPPF, Policies T4 and T6 of the London Plan, and Policies DMT 1, DMT 2 and DMT 6 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2.

Trees and Landscaping

- 7.36 Policy DMHB 14 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2 requires development proposals to retain and enhance existing trees, landscaping and natural features of merit wherever possible and to provide appropriate replacement planting where tree loss is unavoidable. Policies G1, G5 and G7 of the London Plan similarly seek to protect and enhance green infrastructure, secure urban

greening and ensure that existing trees of value are retained where possible, with appropriate replacement planting secured where removal is necessary.

- 7.37 The application is supported by a Tree Survey, Tree Constraints Plan and Arboricultural Impact Assessment, which confirms that two trees would be removed to facilitate the development, including a Category B Common Alder, and a Category A Swamp Cypress. Whilst it is acknowledged that the loss of the Category A tree in particular would result in some arboricultural harm, the submitted assessment concludes that the overall layout has sought to retain the majority of higher quality trees across the site and avoid incursions into the root protection areas of retained trees.
- 7.38 The Arboricultural Impact Assessment recommends replacement tree planting and additional landscaping in order to compensate for tree loss and provide long-term enhancement to the site's arboricultural and landscape value. As set out within the design section above, additional landscaping and mitigation planting has been sought by the Local Planning Authority to soften views of the development and enhance the visual appearance of the site. Full details of replacement tree planting, soft landscaping and long-term management would be secured by condition.
- 7.39 Overall, whilst the proposal would result in the loss of two trees, including one Category A specimen, it is considered that the majority of existing trees within the wider site would be retained and protected, and that appropriate replacement planting and landscaping mitigation can be secured. Subject to conditions, the proposal is therefore considered to comply with Policy DMHB 14 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2 and Policies G1, G5 and G7 of the London Plan.

Ecology

- 7.40 Policy DME17 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2 requires development proposals on or near sites of ecological value to demonstrate that unacceptable impacts on biodiversity are avoided, and that any residual impacts are appropriately mitigated in accordance with the mitigation hierarchy. Policy G6 of the London Plan similarly requires biodiversity to be considered from the outset of the design process, with development expected to protect, enhance and, where possible, increase biodiversity value.
- 7.41 The site comprises modified grassland within the wider school playing fields and is physically separated from nearby designated ecological sites, including Ruislip Woods SSSI, by surrounding residential development. The application is supported by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and Phase II Bat Survey. The submitted surveys conclude that the affected grassland is of low ecological value and subject to intensive management and regular sporting use.
- 7.42 In terms of protected species, the ecological surveys identified no evidence of badger setts, pathways or other signs of badger activity within the application site. However, concerns have been raised by Northwood Hills Residents Association regarding anecdotal reports of badgers within the wider locality. The

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surveys also identified negligible impacts in relation to reptiles and amphibians, together with potential for hedgehog foraging within the wider playing fields. As such, conditions are recommended requiring precautionary ecological working methods during construction in order to safeguard badgers, hedgehogs and other protected fauna. Conditions are also recommended requiring vegetation and tree removal works to take place outside of the bird nesting season unless otherwise agreed following appropriate survey work.

- 7.43 Given the proposed floodlighting, a detailed bat survey was undertaken over a 13-night period. The findings demonstrate that the site supports a relatively low level of bat activity, and that subject to the proposed directional LED lighting, curfew controls and mitigation measures, the development would have a negligible impact on bats and would not adversely affect their favourable conservation status.
- 7.44 The proposal would incorporate floodlighting designed to minimise light spill onto surrounding vegetated boundaries, together with operational curfews secured by condition. Subject to the recommended conditions and implementation of the submitted mitigation measures, the proposal is not considered to result in unacceptable harm to biodiversity, protected species or ecological interests and is therefore considered to comply with Policy DMEI 7 of the Local Plan Part 2 and Policy G6 of the London Plan.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

- 7.45 Paragraph 187 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains where possible. This approach is supported locally by Policy EM7 of the Local Plan Part 1, which seeks to protect biodiversity features from inappropriate development and encourages biodiversity enhancements from all forms of development. In addition, Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 introduces a mandatory requirement for developments to deliver a minimum 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), subject to specific exemptions.
- 7.46 The application is supported by baseline and proposed habitat plans together with a submitted Biodiversity Metric. The submitted information demonstrates that the proposal would result in the loss of an area of modified grassland and two urban trees associated with the construction of the AGP and associated hardstanding. Whilst some replacement planting is proposed, the submitted metric identifies that the development would not achieve the required 10% biodiversity net gain wholly within the application site.
- 7.47 The applicant has confirmed that off-site biodiversity units are intended to be purchased in order to address the identified BNG deficit. The applicant has also advised that, following pre-application discussions with Sport England, on-site habitat creation within the playing field area is not supported due to the continued operational use of the land as playing fields.

- 7.48 A pre-commencement condition is therefore recommended requiring the submission and approval of a Biodiversity Gain Plan demonstrating how a minimum 10% biodiversity net gain would be achieved, including details of any off-site biodiversity units and their long-term management and monitoring arrangements.
- 7.49 Subject to the above condition, the proposal is considered capable of complying with the mandatory BNG requirements, Policy EM7 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 1 and Policy G6 of the London Plan.

Drainage and Flood Risk

- 7.50 Policies SI 13 of the London Plan, EM6 of the Local Plan Part 1 and DMEI 9 of the Local Plan Part 2 require development to manage surface water runoff sustainably and ensure that proposals do not increase flood risk on site or elsewhere.
- 7.51 The application site is located within Flood Zone 1 (lowest flood risk area), however is within a designated Critical Drainage Area. The application is supported by a Drainage Strategy and associated drainage layout and attenuation plans. The submitted information confirms that infiltration testing undertaken on site demonstrated that the underlying clay soils are not suitable for soakaway drainage.
- 7.52 Whilst the proposal would replace part of the existing grassed playing field with an AGP and associated hardstanding, the pitch itself would comprise a permeable construction designed to allow water to drain vertically through the artificial surface into the underlying stone sub-base. The proposed drainage design incorporates a permeable granular sub-base, perforated carrier drains, lateral drainage pipes, attenuation storage and a restricted discharge rate into the existing surface water drainage system.
- 7.53 The submitted drainage calculations demonstrate that the proposed system has been designed to accommodate up to a 1 in 100-year storm event including a 40% allowance for climate change, whilst restricting runoff rates to approximately greenfield equivalent rates. The submitted Drainage Strategy concludes that the proposed development would provide a more controlled and managed surface water drainage arrangement than the existing unrestricted runoff conditions currently experienced across the playing fields. The strategy also confirms that the attenuation capacity within the sub-base and engineered fill would exceed the required storage volumes for the critical storm event.
- 7.54 The proposed drainage system would therefore attenuate and slowly discharge surface water, rather than allowing unrestricted overland runoff towards surrounding residential areas. Overall, the submitted Drainage Strategy confirms that the development would not increase flood risk elsewhere and would ensure that runoff rates are no greater than existing conditions.

- 7.55 Conditions are recommended requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the approved drainage strategy and requiring ongoing maintenance of the drainage infrastructure in perpetuity.
- 7.56 Subject to the above conditions, the proposal is not considered to result in unacceptable flood risk or drainage impacts and is therefore considered to comply with Policy SI13 of the London Plan and Policies DMEI 9 and DMEI 10 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2.

8 Other Matters

Human Rights

- 8.1 The development has been assessed against the provisions of the Human Rights Act, and in particular Article 1 of the First Protocol and Article 8 of the Act itself. This Act gives further effect to the rights included in the European Convention on Human Rights. In arriving at this recommendation, due regard has been given to the applicant's reasonable development rights and expectations which have been balanced and weighed against the wider community interests, as expressed through third party interests / the Development Plan and Central Government Guidance.

Equality

- 8.2 Due consideration has been given to Section 149 of the Equality Act with regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty in the assessment of this planning application. No adverse equality impacts are considered to arise from the proposal.

Local Finance Considerations and CIL

- 8.3 The Council adopted its own Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) on 1st August 2014. The Hillingdon CIL charge applies to all proposals that add 100m² or more of new floorspace. The amount to pay is the increase in floorspace multiplied by the rate in the CIL charging schedule and is in addition to the Mayoral CIL charge. CIL rates are index linked. The proposal involves a minor increase in floorspace within the proposed ancillary store of less than 100m² and is therefore not CIL liable.

9 Conclusion / Planning Balance

- 9.1 The proposed development would provide enhanced all-weather sports facilities for Haydon School and the wider community, delivering significant educational, recreational and community benefits through increased year-round participation in sport. The proposal is supported in principle and Sport England has raised no objection, noting that the sporting benefits of the proposal outweigh the limited loss and reconfiguration of existing playing field land.
- 9.2 It is acknowledged that the proposal would result in some increased activity, lighting, noise and visual presence associated with the operation of the AGP,

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together with some localised visual change arising from the engineering works, fencing and floodlighting columns. The development would also result in the loss of two trees and some alteration to the appearance of this part of the playing fields.

- 9.3 However, the proposal has been reduced in scale and repositioned further away from neighbouring residential properties compared to the previously refused scheme, and is supported by technical assessments relating to visual impact, noise, lighting, drainage, ecology and highways. Subject to the recommended planning conditions, it is considered that the identified impacts would not result in significant or unacceptable harm.
- 9.4 The application has also satisfactorily addressed the previous reasons for refusal associated with planning application ref. 9556/APP/2014/3306 through a revised scheme that is reduced in scale and via the submission of detailed levels information, visual assessments and a Transport Assessment demonstrating that parking demand can be accommodated within the site and that the proposal will not result in unacceptable impacts on highway safety or cumulative impacts on the road network.
- 9.5 Taking all relevant considerations into account, it is concluded that the proposal accords with the Development Plan when read as a whole, and there are no material considerations which indicate that planning permission should be refused. The planning application is therefore recommended for approval, subject to the conditions set out in Appendix 1.

10 Background Papers

- 10.1 Relevant published policies and documents taken into account in respect of this application are set out in the report. Documents associated with the application (except exempt or confidential information) are available on the [Council's website here](#), by entering the planning application number at the top of this report and using the search facility. Planning applications are also available to inspect electronically at the Civic Centre, High Street, Uxbridge, UB8 1UW upon appointment, by contacting Planning Services at planning@hillingdon.gov.uk.