

Corbridge Middle School

Report on consultation proposing the provision of an artificial grass pitch at Corbridge Middle School

18th July 2019

1. Introduction

This report sets out the results of the consultation carried out in the Summer Term of 2019. The consultation sought views on a proposal to install an artificial grass pitch on the top playing field of Corbridge Middle School.

The Governing Board would like to thank everyone who took part in the consultation. We appreciate the level of detail included in responses and can confirm that all members of the governing board have had sight of all responses.

Sections 2 & 3 of this report describe the consultation process and number of responses received. There were a wide variety of responses so not all can be summarised however the most common views have been identified in Section 4. All responses were confidential and therefore no individual stakeholders have been identified. The conclusions drawn by the governing board at this stage have been set out in section 5 with our proposed next steps in section 6.

Since carrying out the consultation, the school has been informed that approval has been given by the Secretary of State for Education, to Northumberland County Council, for the disposal of playing field in order to allow an access road to be created for the Milkwell housing development.

2. Consultation process

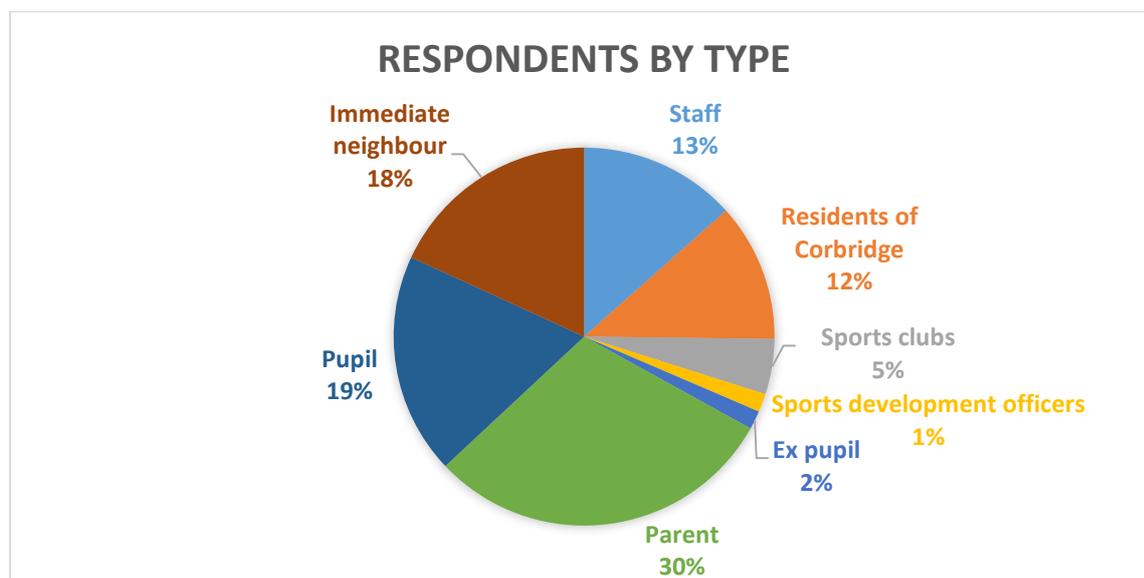
The consultation took place for four weeks from 3rd June to 1st July 2019. The consultation was publicised in the following ways:

- meeting with teaching staff
- assembly with pupils
- school communication with parents
- posted on school Facebook page
- leaflet drop to all immediate neighbours (circa 55)
- posted on "Visit Corbridge" Facebook page
- open meeting for direct neighbours
- article in Hexham Courant

The consultation document and response form were available on the school website to enable all stakeholders to respond. Consultees were asked to complete a short questionnaire. The vast majority of responses were provided electronically via the school website. A few responses were delivered by hand and manually input by school staff.

3. Number of responses

127 responses were received with a breakdown as follows:



Respondents as % of key stakeholder groups

Stakeholder group	No. responses	% of group who responded
Parent	38	12%
Pupil	24	7%
Immediate neighbour	23	42%
Staff	17	38%
Residents of Corbridge	15	1%
Local rugby & football clubs	6	100%

4. Outline of responses

a) 51% supported the artificial grass pitch proposal, 49% did not support the proposal.

Keys reason given in support of proposal (number of responses):

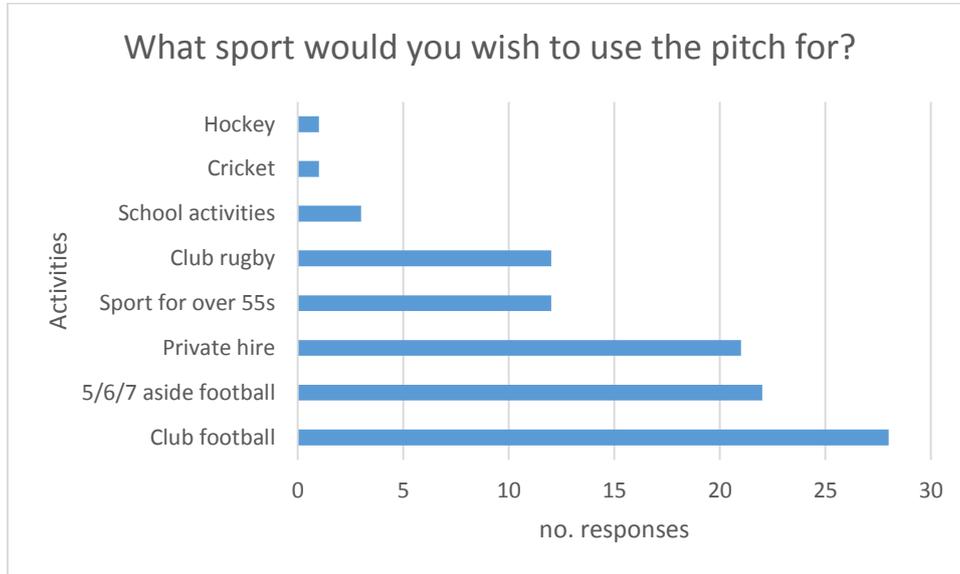
- great facility for Corbridge, supporting strong healthy community (21)
- all year round use of pitch (16)
- opportunity for local sports clubs to use facility (15)
- asset for school (12)
- extra space always available at break time (7)

Key reasons given against the proposal (number of responses):

- environmental impact (19)
- impact on wildlife, especially rabbits (18)
- made of plastic (17)
- increase in traffic (16)
- the school has greater needs for investment (12)
- impact of artificial lighting (12)
- impact of increased noise (10)

- at odds with school’s aspiration to be an eco-school (8)
- majority of community won’t use it (8)
- village against Milkwell housing development; school collaborating with developer (6)
- more injuries than on grass (6)

b) 35% of responders would be interested in using the pitch as follows:



5. Conclusions of the governing board

The governing board were pleased with the overall level of response to the consultation. An initial review of the responses took place at the summer term meeting of the full governing board. The following conclusions were drawn by the governing board:

- investing £450,000 at Corbridge Middle School is a once in a lifetime opportunity for both the school and local community and needs careful consideration. The outcome of 51% in support of and 49% against this proposal, does not currently provide confidence that the proposal in its current format is necessarily right for Corbridge or its Middle School. The board will be considering whether changes could be made to the proposal to mitigate some of the concerns raised, whilst also reflecting on other alternatives.
- some of those involved directly with the school have shown concern that installing an artificial grass pitch would have a negative environmental impact; did not want to replace grass with a plastic playing surface and felt the money available could be better spent on other school facilities
- those involved in sport and local sports provision view the installation of an artificial grass pitch as a great facility for Corbridge that will support further development of a healthier community
- the impact of decisions on climate change and our world are taking a higher priority than ever before and it was agreed need to be taken into account
- the role of Corbridge Middle School in connection to the Milkwell development has not been fully understood by some respondents

6. What happens next

- a) The governing board has been informed by Northumberland County Council that the Secretary of State for Education has approved the disposal of a strip of playing field. This means that pending completion of all planning, legal and highways approvals and documentation, it is expected that work will commence during the school holidays on the access road to the development site. The start date is not yet confirmed.
- b) Over the next six months, the school needs to ensure that the safety of children is not compromised whilst building work commences at the Milkwell site. Home to school transport and the route into school for pupils will be changing and must be managed.
- c) At the same time further advice is being sought from sport facilities specialists and others to explore how best to invest the money being provided to the school.
- d) Over the past two years much work has been done to refresh the curriculum at the school. We now need to examine whether any alterations are required to our school facilities in order to build on our many strengths and future priorities.
- e) Further discussion is to take place regarding how the school develops it's work to support the UN sustainable development goals.
- f) It is expected that we will be able to present our recommendations during 2020.

Moving forward, the views expressed have been useful in directing our work. The governing board wish to thank everyone who has been involved in this consultation process.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Jo Holmes
Chair of Governors

APPENDIX 1 Detailed responses to consultation

Do you support the proposal to install an artificial grass pitch at Corbridge Middle School? If possible, please expand on your answer

Sounds like an excellent idea - year round use by the pupils, extra parking, win-win!

This would be such a benefit to the school and the community as a whole.

There is a need for good facilities in the village and it will be good that the school can use this pitch also.

Fantastic idea, providing much needed facilities for sporting clubs

Having access to an all year round sports facility will greatly enhance the opportunities for children to take part in physical activity both during school lessons and during free time.

only if it used for girls and boys equally and not just for boys football team

Has an up to date environmental assessment be undertaken in relational to the impact of the materials used to construct this type of pitch and the loss of soil flora and fauna?

The loss of school land for Development I understand but then even more for an artificial pitch seems a shame at a time when the school should be using its land to promote wildlife and so many exciting projects could be undertaken.

Corbridge desperately needs this type of facility not only for pupils of the school but for the whole community

Should support enhanced sports provision year round

This will be an excellent asset for the pupils in school and allow for continued awareness and taking part in fitness and physical activity.

A pitch, yes, terrific: an artificial grass pitch, no. These things are environmental horrors, worsening flood risk, suppressing wildlife and raising carbon emissions. To say nothing of the impact on the school's sense of itself as a principled community. I'd strongly support a natural alternative. At the very least there must be a full and publicly accessible environmental impact assessment.

It would be a great facility for both the school and the village.

I believe the school has greater needs than an artificial grass pitch and I would question how often the pitch would ne used by the community.

With the state of the present pitch after rain which turns into a mud bath, it would facilitate the ability to play all year round instead of just the drier month, it will also help with sporting fixtures and sports clubs in Corbridge again down to weather condition and enable the school to build up funds in a similar way to Prudhoe High school

this is a facility that has been needed in the area for too long

A much needed village asset

Positive asset for both school and community benefit

Although I agree in general with measures that promote more time playing outdoors for children and the local community, I do not feel able to support this proposal because of my concerns about the environmental impact of replacing a grass based ecosystem with a large area of plastic. I am also concerned about the environmental and community impact of the lighting system and user noise after school hours. These environmental concerns are already more acute due to the loss of habitats that will be caused by the large scale house building planned for the adjacent field and the loss of hedgerows due to the proposed road widening. I was already concerned to see anti bird netting on the hedge that bounds the front of the school and although this has now been removed, I remain worried about the detrimental environmental impact of all these developments. If the plan for the all weather pitch does go ahead, I would ask that the school tries to ensure that the installation is done by a company with good eco credentials and that the pitch materials can be recycled as far as possible after use. I would further ask that funds by sought from the developers or other sources to create a number of new garden areas around the inside of the school perimeter, to be planted as wildlife buffer zones, with bee, insect and bird attracting species. The area of these zones should at least equate to the area of the artificial pitch. In their own right these zones could provide a great teaching resource and further enhance pupils'

opportunities for outdoor learning. These areas could also be a useful community resource and perhaps form the basis of an all-age community gardening project after school hours.

It would mean extra space and less balls in one area

All year round sports

More space for the children

Corbridge has long needed an artificial pitch, but full size is needed, and i think increasing traffic to this corner of the village could be dangerous. It would be far better to situate this much needed facility at Tynedale along with other football/rugby/tennis/toilet facilities & parking.

Better use of outside space all year round for pupils

Yes as we can play on field all year round

I think it will be slippery and it won't look natural

bad for wildlife and enviroment!

Whilst I am for the funding for recreational facilities for the school and the village (I have lived in the village most of my life), I believe that the funding that needs to be provided by the school could be used more effectively on other areas within the school and curriculum. We are constantly striving to achieve the best for our pupils but there are areas within school budget which are very much underfunded and I don't believe that this 50-60k is being put to its best use.

We have hundreds of kids playing sport in corbridge. As a coach for football I am constantly having to move my team away from corbridge to undertake training I the winter months, it makes logistical sense to have a facility here and not be moving kids around the countryside to have an hours training session. It costs a lot of money and is made of plastic

Increase in the usable area of the school site. Community use and income. Added facilities for PE.

An artificial pitch would be a great asset to the school - the school will be able to provide and enhanced sports curriculum and use the pitch to generate income through renting it to outside organisations.

plastic, effects wildlife and surrounding nature, unnecessary money being used that could be used for something more pressing

It is a waste of plastic when we really don't need it. It is reducing the habitat space for many animals and plants. It is a sweetener for if it's a sunny day and it makes you look forward to hotter days. It reduces space for the people who want to use the field for non ball sports and/or catching up with friends. If you fall onto artificial grass it hurts more than falling into normal grass (i have experienced this) this increasing the chance of injury. My final point is that the grass will have to be replaced in the future and it will cost more to do that

The council should be spending money on things that stop the plastic problem rather than things that destroy the environment like making rabbits die because of eating plastic.

adds to plastic waste.

It would be a fantastic addition to not only the school but Corbridge as a whole. The football facilities at present in the village are poor when compared to other areas.

I do not support the installation of a synthetic pitch for the following environmental reasons: Biodiversity In the first year I spent at Corbridge Middle School I often saw hedgehogs. The last time I saw one was two years ago. The use of glyphosate weed killer around the site has quite probably wiped out the last resident hedgehog. Several large trees and a amount of hedging has also been removed. Destruction of natural habitats around the world are causing havoc to biodiversity. Natural grass offers habitats for insects, plants, and other organisms, and provides food for birds. Natural grass and the topsoil are home to zillions of beneficial organisms that break down and recycle organic and inorganic products that fall into the grass. Plants absorb gaseous pollutants into their leaves and assimilate them, helping to clean the air and create oxygen. Synthetic turf does nothing to enhance biodiversity, though most synthetic turf fields have drainage systems, they do not contain microorganisms that can break down pollutants. If floodlights are used in addition to the pitch then nocturnal animals are detrimentally affected. Their feeding patterns, navigation by the light of the moon and reproduction cycles are all disrupted. Carbon sequestration of soil Natural grass helps remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere through photosynthesis and stores it as organic carbon in soil, making them important "carbon sinks." A typical lawn (250 m²) converts enough carbon dioxide from the atmosphere to provide adequate oxygen for a family of four. Another recent study that concludes "After reviewing the direct carbon

sequestration of grasses and their root systems, we found that managed lawns sequester, or store, significant amounts of carbon, capturing four times more carbon from the air than is produced by the engine of today's typical lawnmower. The study also finds that well-managed natural grasses that are cut regularly and at the appropriate height, fed with nutrients left by grass clippings, watered in a responsible way, and not disturbed at the root zone actively pull pollutants from the air, creating a greater carbon benefit." Stormwater and runoff A field's ability to take in storm water is another environmental consideration. There are several environmental problems associated with storm water runoff. In general, natural habitats absorb storm water better than impermeable surfaces. There is little groundwater retention when the soil surface is bare or when there are impervious surfaces such as streets, driveways, parking lots, rooves and synthetic turf. However, synthetic turfs can include drainage systems that compensate for their inability to take in water. A thick, healthy area of natural grass reduces rainwater runoff to practically nothing. The natural grass areas and the soil beneath create a good quality medium to purify water as it leaches through the root zone and the soil into underground aquifers. Studies in relation to the water quality of the runoff from synthetic turf compared to natural grass are conflicting and depend on the type of synthetic turf used. There are reports available that show the run-off into waterways from natural grass (that contain pesticides and fertilisers) compares poorly with the quality of runoff from synthetic turf. However, other studies show that leaching of zinc and other metals from rubber infill can be found in runoff from synthetic turf which may affect water quality and aquatic organisms. Carbon footprint When comparing the carbon footprint of natural grass and synthetic turf the whole life cycle of the product, not just the maintenance component needs to be investigated. The carbon footprint for natural grass tends to come from the installation and maintenance stage (fertiliser production, mowing and lawn management), whereas for synthetic turf it is derived from production, transportation and disposal of materials. Synthetic turf is a petro-chemical product which requires the use of virgin materials, high levels of processing and production, transportation and disposal at end of life. When considering the entire life cycle, these material impacts of synthetic turf significantly increase the total emission of this product and far outweigh the emissions that occur from maintaining natural grass. In 2007, a Canadian study set out to estimate the greenhouse gases emitted during the life cycle of the synthetic turf system as opposed to a natural grass surface. The study also determined the number of trees to be planted to achieve a 10-year carbon neutral synthetic turf installation. This was a very complicated process and many assumptions were made, but the findings give an indication of the greenhouse gas emissions related to the life cycle (from raw material acquisition through manufacturing, transportation, use and maintenance, and end-of-life disposal) of the synthetic turf field. In conclusion, the study found for a 9,000 square metre facility over a 10-year period, a total CO₂ emission of 55.6 tons plus additional greenhouse gases. The tree planting offset requirements to achieve a 10-year carbon neutral synthetic turf installation for the same sized facility was estimated to be 1861 trees (based on a medium growth coniferous tree, planted in an urban setting allowed to grow for 10 years). Carbon sink Natural grass helps remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere through photosynthesis and stores it as organic carbon in soil, making them important "carbon sinks." A typical lawn (232 m²) converts enough carbon dioxide from the atmosphere to provide adequate oxygen for a family of four. Another recent study that concludes "After reviewing the direct carbon sequestration of grasses and their root systems, we found that managed lawns sequester, or store, significant amounts of carbon, capturing four times more carbon from the air than is produced by the engine of today's typical lawnmower. The study also finds that well-managed turfgrasses (natural) that are cut regularly and at the appropriate height, fed with nutrients left by grass clippings, watered in a responsible way, and not disturbed at the root zone actively pull pollutants from the air, creating a greater carbon benefit." It must also be noted that whilst synthetic turf does not require mowing, it still does require ongoing maintenance, often using fuel powered machinery to help keep it clean and performing well. Ride on mowers with brushes rather than mowing blades are used to brush the surface and leaf blowers are also used to remove leaves from fields. This maintenance equipment produces greenhouse gas emissions but unlike natural grass there is no carbon sink to counter balance it. Often artificial turf replaces a natural grass surface, so another contribution synthetic turf makes to global warming is the removal of a natural grass surface that reduces carbon dioxide, by converting it into oxygen. Materials Some of the key environmental issues related to synthetic turf revolve around the

production, transportation and disposal of materials. The crumb rubber used as infill in synthetic turf fields is often made from recycled tyres. Products made from recycled content are generally preferable to those made from virgin material in two respects, firstly, they do not draw on resources that may be limited, and secondly they address issues of waste. It is estimated that a large synthetic soccer pitch uses approximately 27,000 tyres. Many see the use of recycled waste products for field infill as one of the primary environmental benefits of synthetic turf and whilst this is an environmental positive, synthetic turf also requires the use of many virgin materials in its production.

Material safety There has been some concern over the use of recycled car tyres as rubber infill. Whilst it is considered sustainable to use recycled tyres, it has been suggested, but not yet proven, that tyres have the ability to leach out volatile organic hydrocarbons and other toxic materials causing concern for human health (if ingested or absorbed) and also concern over leaching toxic chemicals into soil and groundwater. A review of existing literature points to the relative safety of crumb rubber fill playground and athletic field surfaces. Generally, these surfaces, though containing numerous elements potentially toxic to humans, do not provide the opportunity in ordinary circumstances for exposure at levels that are actually dangerous. Numerous studies have been carried out on this material and have addressed many different aspects of the issue. For the most part, the studies have identified it as a safe, cost-effective, and responsible use for tyre rubber. Additionally, lead exposure remains an object of some concern. The results of experimental evaluation of lead in these fields have been thus far inconclusive. Most studies have cleared the fields as safe in terms of lead risk, but others have noted an elevated presence of lead. Given the fact that lead levels in tyres varies significantly, according to production processes, it is advisable, as part of the tender process to insist upon suppliers that all materials are lead-free. Finally, and most significantly, repeated testing has shown that the presence of zinc in leachate from crumb rubber fields remains problematically high. It would appear that levels of zinc leaching into groundwater from crumb rubber fields are significant. Further research needs to be conducted into this question to determine whether it is a real issue, and if it is, greater innovation needs to be carried out at the level of product development to eliminate this issue.

Transportation Generally speaking, synthetic turf is transported long distances (usually all or part of the product is made overseas), whereas 'instant' natural grass fields have short shelf lives and can only be transported shorter distances, or are planted from seeds which have minimal transportation costs and the associated reduced carbon footprint.

End of life disposal An additional environmental (and financial) challenge associated with synthetic turf comes in its disposal. Synthetic turf is not designed to breakdown quickly (that is one of its advantages) which means that when the surface has passed its useful life it has the potential to stay in landfill for long periods of time. Removal, transportation and landfill charges (which are generally based on weight, and synthetic turf is a relatively weighty product), making the disposal of a disused surface a significant expense. It is beneficial to try and re-sell or recycle parts of the synthetic turf wherever possible, for example often community groups can utilise different aspects of an elite playing surface that is being replaced. Whilst this enables the surface to achieve a greater life span it is important to note that this option does not remove the disposal issue, it just delays it, and at some point in time the surface will need to be disposed of. Currently in the United Kingdom, there are cement plants that turn disused synthetic turf surfaces into a clean burning energy source by using it to fuel kilns and furnaces in the production of their products – releasing tonnes of CO₂. Natural grass surfaces have no end of life costs as it is naturally renewing and regenerating. Other environmental considerations

Topsoil takes thousands of years to develop. It is lost quickly by wind and water erosion. Natural grass sends many fine rootlets into crevices of the soil where they grow and, as they decay, add organic matter to the soil. Natural grass is the most effective plant in conditioning the soil. Natural grass roots are continually developing, dying, decomposing and redeveloping. By leaving clippings on the lawn and by allowing them to decay, the equivalent of three applications of lawn fertiliser is made. This process builds humus, keeps soils microbiologically active and, over time, improves soils both physically and chemically. Natural grass improves the soil by stimulating biological life and by creating a more favourable soil structure. On the other hand, before installing synthetic turf it is recommended that all soil be heavily compacted. This damages soil structure, soil microbes and soil life. It can also significantly damage any tree roots in the vicinity. Healthy, well maintained natural grass helps with dust stabilisation and soil erosion control. Healthy grass surfaces capture dirt and dust from the atmosphere.

During severe drought periods and tight water restrictions, natural grass can deteriorate and loss of natural grass can create 'dust bowls'. During prolonged periods of drought synthetic turf has an advantage in this area. Heat dissipation Most synthetic turf surfaces absorb rather than reflect sunlight, causing the emission of heat. These high temperatures not only impact the surrounding environment, but they can also affect the health and safety of athletes and children who use the synthetic turf grounds. They can become an uncomfortable playing surface very quickly, especially for summer sports like cricket. Recent research suggests that in hot conditions, an artificial grass sporting area can be up to 40% hotter than a natural field, although this increased heat dissipates quickly on a windy day.

Natural grass plays an important role in controlling climate. Natural grass is one of the best exterior solar radiation control ground covers, because it absorbs radiation and converts it to food for growth through photosynthesis. Natural grass surfaces reduce temperature extremes by absorbing the sun's heat during the day and releasing it slowly in the evening. The replacement of natural grass with synthetic turf has the opposite effect and can contribute to rising temperatures.

Noise and glare reduction Natural grass provides greater noise abatement and glare reduction when compared with synthetic turf. Natural grass plants have the ability to absorb sound. Noise levels are affected by the softness or hardness of the surface over which sound travels. Because grassed areas present such an irregular soft surface, they are very effective at reducing noise levels. To help reduce glare from synthetic turf fields it is important in the design stage, that the pitch is orientated correctly to avoid high sun glare during peak playing times, it is also important to place lights in the correct position to avoid glare. Feedback from my own kids on the artificial pitch at QEHS "It hurts when you fall or skid on it."

Finally, synthetic turf is often promoted as being a 'green' alternative to natural grass. The main ecological benefits of synthetic turf that are promoted are that it

- Conserves water (research in the US has shown that each full-sized rectangular field saves between 1.8 million to 3.7 million litres of water each year).
- No mowing (mowing, especially large areas of natural grass, use fossil fuels and contribute carbon dioxide into the atmosphere).
- No pesticides or herbicides for pest and disease management are required (reducing harmful chemical inputs) – but other chemicals may be added to the environment from the plastic including phthalates which are linked to causing genetic mutations.
- Recycled materials are often used (rubber granules are often used in the base of synthetic turf as infill, these rubber granules are usually made from recycled tyres, keeping them out of landfill).

Summary I feel that the huge number of environmental disadvantages far outweigh the benefits. In short, I strongly object to the proposed development. If the school does decide to proceed I would very grateful if a full environmental impact assessment for the life cycle of the pitch from production, installation, maintenance and eventual disposal of the plastic materials. I would also like the school to consider planting around 1861 trees to mitigate the damage caused.

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It will be good for pe and when we are on the field there won't be balls flying around
Benefit for children playing

It will ruin many habitats for animals and rabbit seeds will lose their homes, also it will use tones of plastic which isn't bad for the environment. It will also hurt if a pupil falls over.

We are supposed to be an environmental friendly school, reducing the use of plastics in particular. Is there really the need to cover replace a grass field with plastic?

During manufacturing, it contributes to carbon emissions, and natural resources are also used. Most fake grass is made overseas which means it has to travel long distances using fossil fuels emitting harmful gases. Basically, we would be helping speed global warming up, and we're trying to be an Eco-school! Also, we are replacing real grass for plastic. Who wants to play on plastic?! There will be no wild flowers so the pollinators will be affected. Rabbits and other animals will lose their habitats, even though they were there first. Artificial turfs generally last 10-15 years at best before needing to be replaced. When the artificial pitch gets replaced, the old turf will either go to landfill for 450 years before it breaks down or be burnt, releasing CO2. These are just some of the effects on the environment. Here are some reasons why they are bad for us: an MRSA infection is more likely to be caught from artificial turf than grass because of the 5 C's: crowding, frequent skin to skin contact, compromised skin (cuts, scrapes, small abrasions), contaminated Items (sweaty towels, clothes, mats, synthetic turf) and cleanliness. Only one is needed for MRSA to be present and artificial turf has all 5! MRSA is a dangerous infection because it is resistant to many antibiotics. It can lead to pneumonia, sepsis and bloodstream infections that can prove fatal. People are 1.39 times as likely to be injured when playing on modern artificial turf as they are when playing on grass. There is also studies into the health impacts of carbon fibres used in artificial turf and if inhaled how they can potentially be as detrimental to one's health as Asbestos. Healthy grass generates oxygen for improved air quality. It reduces noise and air pollution as the grass plant ecosystem serves as a natural filter for the environment. Natural grass also provides excellent soil erosion control. Lawns improve recharge and quality protection of groundwater and provide flood control. Dirt can strengthen your immune system. Numerous studies have pointed to the decreased incidence of allergies and asthma when children are exposed to a variety of microbes. Getting dirty is good for your Mental Health. Getting dirty may also make you happier and less stressed. The half a million spent on the turf could be used for more science equipment or for a better hand dryer in the KS3 girls' bathroom, but no, we're spending it on more space for football! Also we don't need Astro turf, real grass works fine already. If you're not careful, there will be people protesting about having no room to play if they don't like football. Finally, the money from the sale of our land will go

towards the rebuilding of QEHS, and they tried to close us down and are an academy, so should pay for it themselves.

because of the rabbits

It is very clear that the proposal is too small for the needs of Corbridge, before gifting the land to the developers the school governing body should have investigated the proposal with more thought but sadly since 2014 the School have only been interested in what's in it for them and not how much the community were against the development and still are.

A good idea and something that can be used all year round by the community and school

I think this would be a fantastic outcome on a number of fronts. Not only would it increase the availability, quality and accessibility of resources for pupils at Corbridge Middle School, but would also create a wealth of much needed opportunities for the wider local community. The all-weather nature and lighting would enable an increase in sports playing and participation on a year round basis and encourage and facilitate more young people and members of the community taking up and being involved with sports. My personal belief is that sports offers so many vitally important opportunities across a community like Corbridge - not just the physical dimension, but also the sense of teamwork, community, belonging and involvement that is vital to the sustaining and building of a strong, vibrant and healthy community.

opportunity to use pitch for all weather matches and training

I think that it's unbelievable to think of an artificial surface. This is not only detrimental to the environment in terms of its production, but also in taking up a large area of natural grass and destroying the important ecosystem there, alongside with its carbon bonding properties.

No because you would have to chop down all the trees and it is bad for the environment

I don't want to lose the field as I enjoy playing there during break times. I am not interested in using the pitch. I am also worried about the environmental impact of the pitch.

the rabbits will lose their burrows plus it's not good for the environment.

Yes because having it means we can be on the grass all year round.

no because it is wasting a lot of money and it is a treat to play on the field when it's sunny. It would also look terrible and artificial grass is made of plastic and it would wreck habitats.

As a school which is encouraging us to teach about sustainable living I do not think that installing an artificial grass pitch fits with our school values. We have beautiful wildlife and we need to protect it. The maintenance cost associated with this pitch are high. Instead of creating a pitch that we do not need we could upgrade the school. I feel that other areas of our school should be higher up in the agenda. The Science lab needs updating and other classrooms could benefit from getting new equipment.

Unsure whether yes or no

We have two good GRASS pitches already. Selling land for profit and installing SMALL artificial pitch - NO

The installation of an artificial grass pitch would be damaging to the environment and would not be available to play on during the winter months, just as the natural pitch is now. It would also injure people more than natural grass if they fell over; it is also possible that the proposed pitch would be more damaging to pupils' health. It has been proved that mud and natural grass is healthy for you can boost your immune system.

Because the animals such as rabbits will have no home. After a while I also know that artificial grass flakes away and it will just blow plastic away into the environment. It is also going to take ages to put down and we won't be allowed on the field for a long time while you're putting it down

It will be a good training venue for Tynedale RFC

a great facility available for community sport and for the people and clubs in Corbridge to increase participation in sport and physical activity

Fantastic opportunity to improve the sporting facilities in the area.

Would provide a much needed facility

As Tynedale RFC we support this proposal. We will be looking to secure time on the new pitch during the winter months when our own pitches become unusable due to the weather.

Sports Facilities are limited in the Tyne Valley and the numbers of children who require them are vast. The need to have the sports clubs and training is vast from youth involvement to keep them busy and also healthy right through to adult facilities.

We don't need it

The AGP may be of benefit to the school but it is not a community requirement. All sports are currently grouped around Tynedale Park (rugby, tennis, football, cricket) and any AGP would be more appropriate to that area. It appears as though the AGP is a way forward for Northumberland County Council to support its application to the Dept of Education to dispose of part of the school playing fields. It's a stupid idea. For one you will have to put it over the ground already there and I know for a fact, because I've seen them, rabbits are still currently using the burrows on the top field and will be destroying their home. Another reason is even if it is made out of recycled materials, once it is worn out beyond use you will not be able to recycle it and it would then go into landfill or be burned which will just contribute to global warming. Real grass is so much nicer than PLASTIC. there would be real flowers for bees to get their pollen and again place for rabbits to live. It's horrible to sit on, horrible to fall on and is basically just another place to be hit in the head but a football. And this would be all year round so even more risk. Ages ago you proposed that a portion of the yard was going to be a no ball zone but no one has been bothered to stop people taking over that space for playing games that involves flying balls that hurt people. It's bad enough if you don't want to play football that your already restricted to the very edge of the field like we don't belong on the rest of it or aren't welcome. Honestly it's particularly not a very nice atmosphere to spend most of your only breaks in.

It will adversely affect my enjoyment of my home

Large numbers of vehicular use at all times of the day, weekends, holidays , There will be too many types of vehicle, residential, construction vehicles for many years, participants , groups for competitions . The whole area is currently a quiet peaceful area of use to the whole village as a green exit . The roads are too narrow and parking will be needed. The local street fills up now with school in use . To and fro traffic causes complete hold ups when traffic tries to come in and out of the main road. There is not room for two buses or trucks to pass.

Floodlights,traffic,noise and public toilets cause concern as my home backs onto this area

Bribe

See later comments

I object to the additional use of these facilities, resulting in more traffic and the usage of floodlights

Additional traffic outside of school times will be even more unbearable.

Against the floodlights ,noise and additional traffic which this proposed facility Will entail in a residential street which would be more appropriate sited at a leisure centre for public use on a regular basis.

live adjacent to the proposed site

Additional traffic and noise

Traffic and light pollution issues

The facility of having the artificial pitch will be a plus point to Corbridge, although due to the size of the actual pitch it limits the usage for older children. I do think the impact it will have on the residents of Priory Gardens along side the impact of traffic created by 181 houses and all the school traffic and buses only having the one access point will be immense. I do have great concerns over the safety of pedestrians trying to access the school via Priory Gardens or Cow lane and wonder what traffic calming measures are going to be put in place (if any) The notes say that the pitch will be available from 9am-9pm Monday/Friday and till 6pm on Saturday. During winter months the impact of having the floodlights on from potential 3pm will illuminate the houses who will back on to the pitch. It also states noise barriers if required?? Knowing all well and good that once built and if not provided at the time will never be paid for or installed in retrospect. The below question of using the pitch is not applicable for the age of my children as the age group stipulated who can use it for football matches are younger than my children.

I do not want floodlights nearby, plus the additional noise and the potential of anti-social behaviour in addition to the increase in traffic.

i object to having floodlights in the vicinity and excessive use of road.

I'm concerned that plastics from the pitch will come loose during use and be breathed in by the students. I've heard this has been an issue for other plastic sports pitches.

Destruction of habitat !

Very poor negotiations if the developer will not pay for all costs and upkeep

I think the all weather pitch will be off limited value given the size ! .also I object to the destruction of the natural habitat .

We object as we believe the increased usage will cause additional traffic and noise disturbance during the day and in the evenings. We are also concerned about the impact of the floodlighting.

This will increase traffic in the area which is already at a high and as a parent of young children around the area I feel this is extremely unsafe.

In principle I support the idea. Making the facility available to the wider community is to be welcomed as something that enriches Corbridge as a whole. My objection comes from the traffic along Cow Lane.

Presently this is largely restricted to school pick up and drop off times. However if used in the evenings for team sports, the level of traffic down Cow Lane will continue potentially into the late evening.

Assurances that cars will not use Cow Lane, instead exclusively accessing the site via Priory Gardens are not credible. When Priory Gardens access is congested, Cow Lane will be used by instead. We

already have our share of SUVs travelling well beyond 25mph past our house putting small children at risk. The depth of potholes on Cow Lane belies causation by resident traffic alone. It would be my

preference not to have that traffic extended into the late evening. All of these objections could be readily overcome by a physical barrier at the top of Cow Lane. Indeed the project would have my full support.

As a parent I would prefer my children to play on a natural surface that is its own ecosystem. My children are very aware of the need to look after the environment and putting a plastic surface in is at odds with that ethos. At the moment the area also acts as a water store which helps to reduce localised flooding.

Whilst I appreciate you wish to improve sporting facilities at Corbridge middle school, in my opinion historically parents don't send children to you for your sporting credentials we send them for all of the other great opportunities you afford our children, I therefore wonder if this is the best use money for Corbridge Middle, you already have a multi use cage area and a huge back field which for whatever reason isn't utilised much. I don't believe you need an artificial surface in school to deliver great PE lessons and I speak as a parent of one child who loves sport and has enjoyed playing in matches for you. I am also slightly concerned about the reduced area for playtime, the surface won't be suitable for normal outdoor school shoes and also is quite unforgiving for those children who wish to do gymnastics or play tag as they currently do in this area. I also feel the project to be contradictory of the environment statement that you are currently teaching and encouraging our children to follow. What justification do you have to the children for digging up the field to install this plastic surface when you as a school are encouraging the children to be plastic free, in my opinion this a clear double standard and not a great lesson for the children. T

We would not accept light spill beyond the AGP & upward light pollution should not be present

Do you have any other comments to make about the proposal to install an artificial grass pitch at Corbridge Middle School?

No

A full costing of maintenance and disinfection of surface for 5 year period would be advantageous for a costing overview to see where funding and charges can be made to meet

Try and make it larger if site allows

It's great to see investment in the schools

is it environmentally friendly to use plastic/artificial grass? still can't be used when icy or snowy

My son lives in corbridge but currently plays football in Prudhoe because there were no suitable facilities in Corbridge when he did play for a corbridge team. Training was frequently cancelled in bad weather.

Some benches along the outside of the caged area for spectators is a really useful addition.

I think it will be a positive addition to the school.

As a school we should be looking towards being much more environmentally aware and this seems to be a step in the wrong direction.

I like the idea you can go on both is it fake grass is there equipment also it will be fun for the children
As a casual 5/6/7/8 a side player who has played every week for an hour a stocksfield cricket club on a local very high quality artificial pitch would be something i would look forward to using. As the coach of Hexham Girls U14 football team winter training (Oct-Apr inc) on a pitch such as this would be extremely helpful. My team has 16 girls, half of whom are from Corbridge and Riding Mill and I believe a facility such as this would significantly help develop girls and womens football in the area. However, I would suggest appropriate cushioning is essential as would the ability to play FA 9v9 games on the pitch with goal sizes appropriate for up to U16s (a format played by U12, U14 and U16 girls in the Northumberland FA area). Sadly if this format couldnt be supported it would seriously limit use of the facility for footballing children aged 11+. If you can find anymore space a full size pitch would be even better! Mike Stephenson

Plss

There is no reason not to do it. Keeping active is an important part of our community. It is a facility not currently available in Corbridge. It will be an asset to the village.

great idea

I don't believe that the pupils will benefit directly from the installation of such a facility here. My daughter is a current pupil and was furious to hear of this proposal - grass is essential for storing Carbon gasses, for insect, bird & plant life, it's better for drainage after rain, its safer to skin and reduces the chance of injury and is multipurpose. the proposal sounds like a trade off for the sale of the land. without full size pitch facilities i don't believe it's a worthwhile idea to fundraise for.

Worried it may attract unwanted people to the school and cause damage/vandalism

I think the problem is that those who don't use the field or don't care about just being on the yard will say no to the proposal

I would worry about the mess and the likelihood that it would attract people to the site and cause problems for the school. I think additional security (lights and cameras) should be included in the proposal. I would also be concerned about the additional toilets - how would they be managed, secured and what measures taken to prevent vandalism.

could play the sports that use the playground in the winter and when the weather is bad. why destroy natural enviroment when there is no need!

My only concern is that this area may become an area for youths in Corbridge to either use inappropriately or vandalise unless security cameras were provided to protect it.

Its a necessity in my opinion

It isn't worth it and the money could be spent on something better like the science lab. Also it won't be that big so not many people can use it. It is made of plastic o it is bad for the environment and a waste
This is an unnecessary thing being put in that will cost ££££££££££ to install and keep. The money which may be used for this could do much better things such as updating (the now quite outdated and suffering because of not enough equipment) science lab and science department. We are an eco school aren't we? THE PLASTIC!!! Also, the nature and wildlife (rabbits, birds and pollinating insects) may be affected and hurt when the rabbit holes are covered up and the flowers are too. What happens if the animals try to eat this artificial pitch? DEATH! I hope you take mine, and other peoples comments on board and I hope I got my opinion across.

It's a terrible idea and anyway, why not install it into the all ready standing cage where there is no animals to be affected by it

Don't install pitch it will be a waste of time and money. :(

Keep the grass. Even better, make the site even more biodiverse and make a wildflower meadow. Maybe we'll get the hedgehogs back. Humans need nature, it makes us happy and healthy.

I would love this to happen As I have lived inCorbridge all my life and it would be a great place for people of all ages to go and play and stay fit!!!!

What considerations have been given towards: Value management Procurement of the works Changing/Welfare facilities Security, CCTV, etc. What is the overall project budget and where is the remainder of the funding being provided from?

Please, for the sake of our environment do not continue on with this project.

PE kits for if you get muddy

This is a major opportunity for the community of Corbridge. Conversations have been taking place for years about the potential viability of such a facility and it would be genuinely game-changing to have such a facility in the village. I do believe it can be seen as a 'once in a generation' opportunity, to use a well worn but applicable cliché. We're not going to have the chance to consider a project like this again in a hurry - there is a unique set of circumstances coalescing at this point in time and it should be seized with as many hands as possible. I would like to see every effort made to ensure the quality and flexibility is as high as possible. While I remain aware of the pressures on finance, I would hope that all relevant parties can see their way to investing in what can become another jewel in the crown of Corbridge community life.

We need to be taking a strong stand on the environment, and both my children think so too. This is a short sighted plan, and makes me upset to think that an otherwise fantastic school would think of such a vile proposition.

no

NO

do not do it

I don't feel that we need an artificial pitch when there are more urgent things to fix in our school. It is not environmentally friendly!

I think it would be a good thing for the school but concerned re hiring it out to the public because of the noise and possible parking problems

This housing development should not be allowed in the first place. The houses in The Riggs are de-valued as a result. This was all arranged in 2016 - consultations had to be seen to happen per regulations. No one listened to the villagers. D. Hetherington 24, The Riggs. BAD DAY FOR CORBRIDGE

The pitch would be unsuitable to play any forms of athletics on or other for of childhood games (tag , hide and seek, etc). If the money were made available to the school to revamp part of it we could redesign the school science laboratory or build a new library building

No

We would need confirmation that the final surface does include the shock pad that makes it suitable for rugby use.

This would be an invaluable asset for many clubs and groups.

There are things all around school that need repairing so the money could be put to a better use. We are also meant to be an eco school but we are going to stick a lump of plastic on the top field?

The AGP pile length(60mm) is more suited to rugby than football and is unsuitable for some sports such as cricket, hockey. The restriction on sports use may cast doubt about the economic viability of the project going forward. I understand that customers may be expected from West of Corbridge. However in the near future Hexham is to have a new Middle and High school. If one of these developments has an AGP installed it is possible that custom from West of Corbridge will be curtailed. Once again putting doubt about the economic viability of the project in the future. There is a proposal to have an entrance in the northern perimeter to facilitate access from the Milkwell car park. This will increase the safety risk to pupils even if assurances are given that the access will be closed during the school day. The proposed AGP will require planning consent which will have to be considered by Northumberland County Council. NCC has a vested interest in the outcome of this process and therefore cannot be seen to be impartial in its deliberations. There must therefore be a conflict of interests. The proposed community "opening times" are 4pm-9pm (Monday to Friday during term time), 9am -6pm (Saturday & Sunday) and presumably 9am-9pm (Monday to Friday outside of school term time). These proposed times will increase the air, light and noise pollution for residents which may cause distress and health issues. The Department of Education guidelines state that the proceeds from the disposal of school playing fields have firstly to be applied to reinvesting into sports facilities where they are needed by the

school. Using this criteria it seems that as the AGP facility is being funded by outside sources and not the proceeds from the sale of part of the school playing fields, the AGP is not needed by the school and should not go ahead. If there is a shortfall in the income to expenses costs from the AGP, if planning permission is granted, who will be expected to cover the costs? Will it be the domestic/commercial rate payers through increased rates or the school from its educational budget which would then impact upon other curriculum activities. The development of the AGP is not a community requirement or need. It will increase pollution levels from air quality to noise and light. The majority of sporting activities are centred around Tynedale Park where any AGP should be sited. If the proposed AGP at the school is granted planning consent the rights of residents close to the school may be compromised under Protocol 1 Article 1 of the Human Rights Act which states that " a person has the right to the peaceful enjoyment of their property". It is difficult to see how this will be met with the proposals as they currently stand.

If you actually decide to go ahead with this then frankly your not using your Brian very well AT ALL.

Most sincere apologies if this sounds rude but, it's my truthful opinion and lots of others peoples too.

(Oh and I know this has nothing to do with it but there's something wrong with your website. The page number went straight from 3 to 5)

I do not want the floodlights, they will disturb me I do not want the addition usage of the sports facilities into the evenings and in winter when the current facilities would not be available I do not want the addition traffic this would generate

As well as increased traffic use, there will be extra lighting in the street and floodlighting on the pitch. Sports activities are cheerful noisy places and this area is not big enough to allow this noise to spread out. There are no shops near by so people will need to bring refreshments possibly adding litter to a clean attractive place. Access to the building for toilets would be unsafe and need monitoring.

Should we get the wildlife to get a team together I'm sure they will appreciate a kick about and these people are educating our children what hope have they got ,what hope has the planet got

1. At the initial consultations with Gladmans we were told that NCC were minded to sell the area of land to the developers - at that time they must have been aware that this would require a Section 77 application to dispose of part of the playing fields. Why has this only come to light now? 2. There is a presumption against the need to change the current pattern of playing field provision and this appears a cynical attempt by the landowner and developers to resolve an issue that should have been taken into account as part of the planning process. Clearly if the Secretary of State for Education does not approve the disposal the scheme could potentially fail which would certainly meet the wishes of many in Corbridge. 3. It is my understanding that the school role is currently 353 (website). Area guidelines for playing fields for a KS2 are 50 m2 per pupil plus a base area of 2000 m2 . This calculates to give a total of 5.02 acres of playing field required. I can find no information on this, the impact of what is being sold off or the impact of adding in the artificial pitch (which I understand is calculated at twice the area). This information should be available as part of this consultation to ensure openness and that guidelines are not being breached. 4.As a resident of Priory Gardens we are already going to suffer considerable inconvenience as the scheme develops (assuming it does) as the access has inexplicably been granted via Cow Lane. We have yet to see any traffic management plan relating to the development and the provision of the artificial pitch will bring even further disruption running later in the evenings and weekends particularly with the provision of floodlights. 5. Corbridge is already well catered for in terms of football ,cricket, rugby ,tennis etc so the argument that it could be a well used community asset is speculative and not helped by the fact that it is not full size. Who will administer the charging, monitoring and maintenance of the pitch out with school hours?

This is not needed!

The school should not be collaborating with the developer to allow this housing estate to be built.

It will add to an impossible traffic load. Road too narrow at entrance for coaches to pass. Anti social hours. Flood lights and noise at night. Where are the toilets? If in the school who is going who is going to police the school to see there is no damage. With so many people around it could add to the possibility of more theft. With construction traffic for many years and added traffic of people using the pitch it is too much. Who will be responsible for maintaining the site and to see there is no raucous behaviour or damage. Litter will be a problem. As with the proposed housing project, I overheard when in my front garden, parents say they would not get caught up with the melee of going to the car park.

Instead they would drop their children off at the entrance to the road. Priory Gardens. What chaos this would cause young children and traffic not a good mix. Derek Johns

My objections is on the grounds of potential floodlights and the additional traffic

The pitch will be very expensive to maintain.

Firstly i am very concerned that this proposal has even been given any thought whats so ever as who ever negotiated this "Deal" has severely let you down and needs to be investigated. As a minimum the developer should be bearing all costs for the installation of the pitch and should be paying all yearly upkeep and maintenance costs for the life of the pitch usually 20 - 25 years this is very much the "Norm" when a developer is in this situation have a look around at other community benefits that developers provide. The fact that this will only benefit such a small number of the local community the Developers "Community Benefits Fund" could be more wisely spent in the local community. The school nor Northumberland county council should be picking up any extra costs for this pitch to be installed. Secondly rather than having a pitch installed that will only cover a very small percentage of the local community I would much rather see a two story school extension something like a new science block etc, it is very apparent the school building is in need of repair and updating, and modernising. surely any extra money required to have this pitch installed would be better spent on making the school building the best it can be than raising extra funds for an unneeded extra. In response to the comments 1 - 12 1) The suggested location is so close to neighbour houses the noise from the pitch would be totally unavoidable by local residents even with acoustic barriers. having the pitch so close to neighbouring house will cause such noise disturbances that having windows open on a hot summer evening that you will undoubtedly hear noise form the pitch. The evening and weekend activities that currently take place such as the choir in the school hall or football matches on the current location of the proposed pitch as soon as you open a window you can hear these and its not just the noise form the activities it is also the extra traffic people slamming car doors and chatting outside, no one intentionally going out of their way to make noise just a distinct lake of courtesy for the local residents. Not all of the local residents work 9 - 5 and i regularly travel pre 6am meaning early nights and if i want sleep when its warm it means i have to shut my window. the thought of the Pitch allowing access till 9pm and then by the time they have packed up all had a chat and then driven out it will be nearer 09.30pm and who is going to be onsite to ensure all activities are finished in time and the external toilets locked up? 2&3)The pitch been suitable for many sports yet not a full size pitch? having a wildlife garden instead would be better for the environment and give much more back to the community than a pitch that a small percentage can or would be interested in using. 4) the pitch been suitable for U11/12 Rugby has a very small relevance to the community there is a very small percentage of the local population that fall with in this bracket. 5)Even low grade lighting gives off light pollution and will be a disturbance to all of the local residents and wildlife 6&7) Possibly installing rebound boards etc should not be an option but a must we do not want footballs etc flying in to our gardens or worst hitting and damaging our property and cars. who will have the insurance and who will deal with the inevitable claims if you do not install rebound bounds. netting will only last a few months before it gets ripped and torn and becomes inadequate. the fencing would have to be a good 10+ foot to ensure unauthorised access and this is just unsightly 8) Acoustic barriers will be installed this needs to be a guarantee and not a possible? the noise form the current pitch on a Saturday when matches are taking place is bad enough and that is a Saturday morning. and you proposing the pitch been open 9-9 the noise would be damaging to the quality of your neighbours lives 9) access to external toilets will these be locked each evening? as much as you will try to encourage people not to hang around toilets they are a magnet for certain age groups to gather and get up to no good 10) Cars accessing i am yet still to see how you are going to prevent cars form parking and dropping off in Priory Gardens even after the car park is built and this will be the same people will drop their Kids in Priory Gardens and dash off rather than having to negotiate their way around and up and down in to the car park this is just human nature you find the quickest place to drop and pick up. This will also add even more traffic coming along Priory Gardens on top of all of the extra traffic from the new houses and will make it much more difficult for residents to gain access on and off their drives 11) as stated above the Developer should and needs to pay for the upkeep and repair of the pitch for the expected life of the pitch 20 - 25 years and monies raised from the hire of the pitch should go back in to the school funds. their should also be a capped amount of activities booked

after the hours of 5pm and on weekends 12) times of the pitch need to be looked at 9 - 5 Monday to Thursday 10-6 on a Saturday and no access on a Sunday to give the local residents a day of peace and quiet This has been a very badly thought out idea and really needs to be looked at who ever came up with idea is just trying to Win over the school an certainly not looking a the local neighbours who are going to be more severely effected by the building of the new houses and this very much just looks like a sweetener to the school. I look forward to hearing what the Secretary of the state has to say about this proposition.

I think it is too much cost for a limited use facility. Funds should go into the school that support pupils directly. Such as covered outdoor areas and play equipment .

I support the idea in principle but object to the extra evening traffic past my house. Addition of bollards to the top of Cow Lane would win my full support for the project.

We support the proposal however see Q3 notes for items that should be designed out - light spill