

RECOMMENDATION FOR PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

DEFER AND DELEGATE

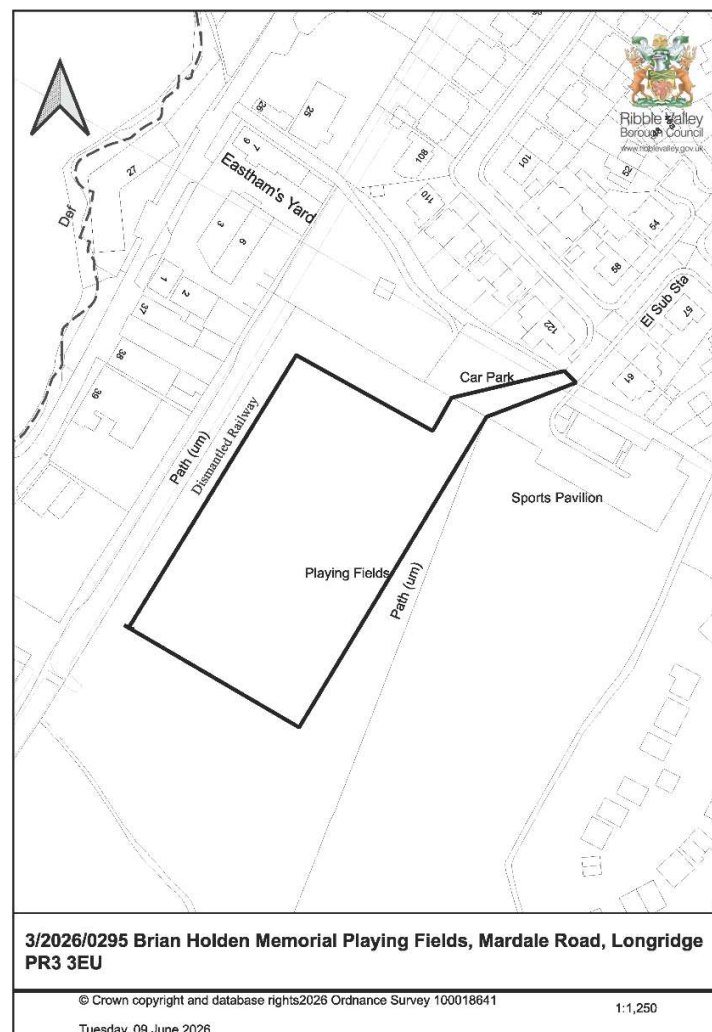
DATE: 23 JULY 2026
REF: MC
CHECKED BY: LH

APPLICATION REF: 3/2026/0295

GRID REF: SD 359714 436150

DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION:

PROPOSED SYNTHETIC TURF PITCH INCLUDING FENCING, SPECTATOR AREAS, STORAGE AREAS AND FLOODLIGHTING AT BRIAN HOLDEN MEMORIAL PLAYING FIELD MARDALE ROAD LONGRIDGE PR3 3EU



CONSULTEE RESPONSES/ REPRESENTATIONS MADE:

TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL:

Longridge Town Council supports the principle of improving sports facilities in Longridge. However, they consider that parking charges should not apply to users during organised sporting events as this could act as a disincentive to community sport and place an unnecessary financial burden on those attending sporting events and as well as reducing antisocial parking.

The Town Council request RVBC give careful consideration to opportunities to enhance BNG and would welcome the planting of native tree species, enhanced species-rich grassland and native bulb planting.

LOCAL HIGHWAYS AUTHORITY (LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL HIGHWAYS):

The Local Highway Authority (LHA) raise no objection to the scheme subject to conditions. The LHA recommend the removal of car parking charges on weekends for the existing car park at the playing fields and the promotion of sustainable travel methods on the website to encourage walking, cycling or accessing the site by bus.

The proposed conditions include the submission and approval of a Construction Method Statement, the provision of 7 no. secure and covered cycle storage spaces and the marking out of the car park to accommodate at least 69 car parking spaces which should be maintained for as long as the site is operating.

RVBC COUNTRYSIDE OFFICER:

A condition for precautionary working measures should be implemented to ensure that nesting birds, amphibians, otters, water voles, badgers and hedgehogs are not harmed by the works which should also include that in the unlikely event that a protected animal is found during construction, all works must stop and a suitably qualified ecologist must be contacted.

The Countryside Officer has reviewed the updated lighting assessment and is satisfied that the floodlighting has been design so that it is directed on to the playing area, away from the line of tree foraging areas for any feeding on the wing species i.e bats.

They also consider that the submitted tree information is in accordance with BS5837 for tree protection and therefore any grant of permission should be subject to an appropriate condition.

RVBC ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER: [

The EHO considers that the lighting scheme appears to be acceptable, provided that the lighting follows what is outlined within the submitted Design & Access Statement. With regards to noise, the EHO raises no objection, subject to the acoustic fencing/barrier being installed as indicated within the acoustic report Reference: 11842/OP. Project Title: Noise Impact Assessment – Proposed Artificial Grass Pitch, Brian Holden Memorial Pitch Dated: 3 March 2026.

SPORT ENGLAND:

Sport England considers that this proposal supports the principal use of the site as a playing field and meets exception 5 of our Playing Fields Policy (see Annex). This is because the site is used

for football and the project is recorded in the PPS. Sport England considers there is sufficient benefit to sport to meet exception 5. Further details are required to be submitted via planning condition in relation to the design/layout of the artificial pitch (including construction materials), confirmation prior to use that the pitch meets FIFA Quality Concept for Football Turf that it has been registered on the Football Associations Register, submission of details of containment barriers and microfilters for stormwater drains for the containment of infill, a management and maintenance scheme, and lighting hours. The original request for a community use agreement has since been removed.

HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE:

Does not advise against the granting of permission on safety grounds.

ADDITIONAL REPRESENTATIONS:

17 objections have been received raising the following comments/concerns:

- Worsening of on street parking issues within the vicinity of the site
- Antisocial behaviour
- Increase in speeding cars
- Longridge Recreation Ground would be better suited
- The car park should be made free of charge
- Concerns regarding decrease in property value
- Clarification required as to whether the pitch will be available for use outside of the proposed hours for members of public
- Noise concerns
- Floodlighting will be harmful to amenity
- Noise pollution
- The pitch should be sited further away from residential properties
- The ecology survey makes no reference to the impact on nocturnal mammals
- Highways upgrades should be made along Mardale Road and Hacking Drive to enforce speed limits
- Access is not adequate
- Concerns regarding drainage
- Impact on view from properties due to floodlighting and 4.5m high fencing
- The scale of development is not proportionate to its location
- Proposal will result in loss of community grassland
- There is already a 3G pitch at Longridge High School
- Safety concerns
- The operating hours of 08:00 – 22:00 are inappropriate
- If the Council would not remove parking charges, permit parking should be provided
- The traffic survey was carried out on 1 day and not representative
- Alternative access road should be provided away from Mardale Road
- Concerns regarding retention of heat from artificial pitch

1. Introduction, Site Description and Surrounding Area

- 1.1 Members will note that the application is being brought before Committee given the application is made on behalf of Ribble Valley Borough Council with the land to which the application relates also falling within the ownership of the authority.
- 1.2 The application site relates to an existing sports playfield fields within the settlement boundary of Longridge. The site is located to the south-west of the settlement and is bounded by residential development to the north-east and west, agricultural fields to the south and Shay Lane industrial site to the west. In addition, a disused railway line runs along the western boundary and is lined with trees/vegetation.
- 1.3 There are a number of constraints at the site, which includes Public Right of Way FP0302104 which runs through the centre of the playing fields, contaminated land and a major gas pipeline.

2. **Proposed Development for which consent is sought**

- 2.1 The proposed development is for the construction of a proposed synthetic turf pitch which would be approximately 97 x 61m with a total area of approximately 7742m².
- 2.2 The sports pitch would be constructed to meet FIFA quality performance requirements and includes two goal storage areas to store the goals when not in use, the creation of a 3m wide spectator area along the eastern boundary with a 2.5m wide user and emergency/maintenance access pathway which extends from the existing car park. The proposed pitch would have dark green, twin bar fencing with a height of approximately 4.5m around the footprint of the pitch and spectator area, a 1.1m high fence between the pitch and spectator area, gates accessing onto the pitch as well as the installation of 6 new floodlights. The proposed floodlights would be approximately 15m in height and would meet FA performance standards.
- 2.3 The site would also include a storage container in the south-eastern corner of the development for maintenance equipment and would include drainage systems.
- 2.4 An acoustic fence is also proposed along the north-eastern boundary of the pitch which would be a timber 3m high fence and would be sited behind the 4.5m high perimeter fencing.
- 2.5 It should be noted that prior to the determination of the application, details of the acoustic fence have been provided which shows 'Jacoustic' reflective fencing which would have a mass of 25kg/m².

3. **Relevant Planning History**

3/2023/0801: Proposed storage container adjacent to Mardale Pavilion. Approved with Conditions

3/2022/1164: Proposed two single storey extensions situated on the side elevations of the existing changing pavilion. Approved with Conditions

4. **Relevant Policies**

Ribble Valley Core Strategy:

Key Statement DS1: Development Strategy
Key Statement DS2: Sustainable Development
Key Statement EN4: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
Key Statement DMI2: Transport Considerations

Policy DMG1: General Considerations
Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations
Policy DMB3: Recreation and Tourism Development
Policy DMB4: Open Space Provision
Policy DMG3: Transport & Mobility
Policy DME1: Protecting Trees and Woodlands
Policy DME3: Site and Species Protection and Conservation
Policy DME6: Water Management

Adopted Longridge Neighbourhood Development Plan

Policy LNDP3: Longridge Design Principles
Policy LNDP6: Landscape
Policy LNDP11: Development of New Community Assets

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

5. Assessment of Proposed Development

5.1 Principle of Development:

5.1.1 The site is identified as a protected area of open space. Policy DMB4 of the Core Strategy protects open space and playing field provision. Policy DMG1 requires that development proposals must not result in the net loss of important open space, including public and private playing fields, without a robust assessment that sites are surplus to need. In assessing this, regard must be had to the level of provision and standard of public open space in the area [and] the importance of playing fields. Regard will also be had to the landscape or townscape of an area and the importance the open space has on this.

5.1.2 Paragraph 104 of the NPPF states that:

Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields and formal play spaces, should not be built on unless:

- a) an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or*
- b) the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or*
- c) the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use.*

5.1.3 Policy LNDP11 of the adopted Longridge Neighbourhood Development Plan states that:

“Development of new or improvements to existing community facilities will be supported when they conserve local character and distinctiveness, and do not harm the landscape or residential amenity of existing and future occupiers.”

- 5.1.4 Sport England have provided comments on the scheme and they consider that the proposal supports the principal use of the site as a playing field and meets exception 5 of their Playing Fields Policy (see Annex). This is because the site is used for football and the project is recorded in the PPS. Sport England considers there is sufficient benefit to sport to meet exception 5. Further details are required to be submitted via planning condition in relation to the design/layout of the artificial pitch (including construction materials), confirmation prior to use that the pitch meets FIFA Quality Concept for Football Turf that it has been registered on the Football Associations Register, submission of details of containment barriers and microfilters for stormwater drains for the containment of infill, a management and maintenance scheme, and the submission of lighting hours.
- 5.1.5 The applicant has confirmed agreement to the submission of the above information.
- 5.1.6 As such, notwithstanding concerns from the occupiers of neighbouring properties with regards to the loss of the field for other recreational purposes, nor would it result in the loss of the dog walking field and it is considered that the proposed use of part of the playing field for an artificial pitch is considered to constitute an appropriate use within the open space designation that would comply with Policy DMB3 and Paragraph 104 of the NPPF.
- 5.1.7 Whilst the proposed facility has been designed to improve facilities for local residents, it is likely that matches would also be played by groups/sports clubs from people who live in nearby villages/towns and visitors. As such Policy DMB3 of the Core Strategy is relevant which states that planning permission will be granted for development proposals that extend the range of tourism and visitor facilities in the Borough. This is subject to meeting a number of criterion:-
1. *The proposal must not conflict with other policies of this plan;*
 2. *The proposal must be physically well related to an existing main settlement or village or to an existing group of buildings, except where the proposed facilities are required in conjunction with a particular countryside attraction and there are no suitable existing buildings or developed sites available;*
 3. *The development should not undermine the character, quality or visual amenities of the plan area by virtue of its scale, siting, materials or design;*
 4. *The proposals should be well related to the existing highway network. It should not generate additional traffic movements of a scale and type likely to cause undue problems or disturbance. Where possible the proposals should be well related to the public transport network;*
 5. *The site should be large enough to accommodate the necessary car parking, service areas and appropriate landscaped areas; and*
 6. *The proposal must take into account any nature conservation impacts using suitable survey information and where possible seek to incorporate any important existing associations within the development. Failing this then adequate mitigation will be sought*

- 5.1.8 Having regard to criterion 1, the proposal would not conflict with other policies of this plan in terms of protecting open space and playing field provision, subject to conditions.
- 5.1.9 The site is within the settlement boundary of Longridge and as such, the proposal complies with criterion 2. Criteria 3-6 is considered in more detail later in this report but no conflict is identified. Therefore, the proposal is considered to satisfy policy DMB3 and provide an appropriate sport facility in the Borough.

5.2 Impact upon Residential Amenity:

- 5.2.1 Policy DMG1 of the Core Strategy stipulates that development must be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of its size, intensity and nature and not adversely affect the amenities of the surrounding area. Furthermore, Policy DMG1 of the Core Strategy requires all proposals for development to consider the effects of development upon existing amenities.
- 5.2.2 Paragraph 135 (f) of the National Planning Policy Framework states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

“create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.”
- 5.2.3 Policy LNDP3 of the adopted Longridge Neighbourhood Development Plan also states that:

“Have no significant adverse impact on residential amenity for existing and future residents”
- 5.2.4 The closest residential receptors to the development are 110-122 Hacking drive which are located to the North-East of the proposed pitch. The closest property is approximately 43 metres away. Emerging residential development is also located to the eastern boundary of the playing fields.
- 5.2.5 There have been a number of objections to the scheme raising concerns regarding the obtrusive views of the pitch, as well as potential harmful noise and light pollution.
- 5.2.6 There is no right to a view and whilst there would be a change to the outlook of the surrounding residential properties, there would be a distance of over 40m from the edge of the pitch to the boundary of the closest residential garden. As such, it is not considered that the fencing surrounding the football pitch would be overbearing or result in any detrimental loss of light or overshadowing to the primary living accommodation of nearby residential receptors.
- 5.2.7 With regards to potential noise pollution. The Environmental Health Officer has provided comments on the scheme and they have a number of recommendations suggested based on the mitigation outlined in the submitted noise report. This

includes that acoustic fencing is constructed on the side nearest housing to prevent ball impact noise. This has been shown to be 3m in height and would be required to have a total mass of at least 10kg/m².

- 5.2.8 The acoustic report outlines acoustic fencing which is now shown to be installed along the perimeter of the pitch which faces residential development along Hacking Drive. The fencing would be 'Jakoustic' fencing at a height of 3m. The Environmental Health Officer notes that this acoustic fencing should be secured by way of condition and it is considered that subject to the fencing being installed prior to the first use of the development, the proposal is considered to be acceptable from a noise perspective.
- 5.2.9 Turning to lighting, there have been objections from the occupiers of neighbouring properties in relation to lighting concerns from the proposed floodlighting at the site. There would be 6 floodlights and the lighting impact assessment notes that the design has been completed using the Philips Asymmetric OptiVision LED GEN 3.5 A35 Floodlights. A total of 12 no have been used to achieve an average of 200lux. The floodlights would be mounted on 6 x 15 metre columns and would be fitted with integral LO (maximum cut off) louvres to reduce spill and glare.
- 5.2.10 The Environmental Health Officer is satisfied that provided that the lighting is implemented in accordance with the above details, the lighting would be acceptable. As such, this can be secured by way of planning condition.
- 5.2.11 The proposed facility would operate between 08:00 and 22:00 (18:00 on Saturday, Sunday and bank holidays), with the floodlights only being used when the pitch is in operation and when natural daylight levels are insufficient. The floodlights would be switched off no later than fifteen minutes after the permitted hours.

5.3 Visual Amenity/External Appearance

- 5.3.1 Paragraph 135 (c) of the NPPF states:

"Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting."

- 5.3.2 Policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy provides additional general design guidance as follows:

"All development must be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of its size, intensity and nature as well as scale, massing and style...particular emphasis will be placed on visual appearance and the relationship to surroundings, including impact on landscape character."

- 5.3.3 Policy LNDP3 of the adopted Longridge Neighbourhood Development Plan also states that:

"All new development proposals will only be supported when they are of good design that responds positively to the local character and distinctiveness of the surroundings."

- 5.3.4 The proposal would result in the introduction of built form into an area currently devoid of structures as the area is used as an open recreational/sporting ground. Elevations of the pitch and associated paraphernalia have been submitted which demonstrates that the pitch would be sited along the western side boundary which lies adjacent to the disused railway line and Shay Lane industrial estate. The proposed pitch and fencing would be visible from within the park and from the public right of way which runs through the playing fields.
- 5.3.5 The agent for the application has provided a justification for the specific siting of the sports facility within the playing fields. They have confirmed that a site appraisal process has been undertaken which balances the technical viability, sporting utility and the protection of residential amenity. They consider that the proposed location minimises the need for new changing infrastructure elsewhere on the field, avoids the unnecessary loss or fragmentation of the existing natural turf playing pitches. By utilizing the specific area proposed, the project ensures the continuity of the wider sporting provision at Brian Holden Memorial Field (Mardale Playing Fields), maintaining the ability to host multiple matchday arrangements.
- 5.3.6 Alternative siting, particularly on the eastern side of the field, was discounted due to the siting of the Public Right of Way which runs through the site and the placement of the pitch within very close proximity to emerging residential development.
- 5.3.7 With regards to its size, scale and design, the perimeter fencing would be quite tall and therefore would alter the character and appearance of the playing fields. However, the height of the fences are required to ensure the sports pitch meets the FIFA regulations and provides adequate noise mitigation. The supporting information also indicates that the 4.5m perimeter fencing would comprise dark green panels to help soften the visual impact. As such, whilst there would be a change to the overall character of the playing fields, given the nature of the site being used for sporting facilities, this change is not considered to result in adverse harm that would warrant the refusal of the scheme.
- 5.3.8 The proposed storage container to store maintenance equipment would be approximately 2.5m in height with a flat roof and would match the perimeter fencing in terms of colour. The storage container would also be sited behind the fencing so would be partially screened within the site. In addition, planting has now been added in front of the proposed 3m high acoustic fencing which would help soften the visual impact from the fencing from within the site and from the rear of the adjacent properties.
- 5.3.9 On balance, whilst the proposal would result in a change to the openness of the field, the site already comprises a playing field and the introduction of an artificial pitch with associated fencing, floodlights and equipment would not be out of character of the surrounding area. Mitigation has been provided in the form of soft landscaping louvres to reduce light spill from the floodlighting.
- 5.3.10 As such, the proposal is considered to accord with Policies DMG1 and DMG2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and Policy LNDP3 of the adopted Longridge Neighbourhood Development Plan.

5.4 Trees and Ecology

5.4.1 Policy DME1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy states that:

“Where applications are likely to have a substantial effect on tree cover, the borough council will require detailed Arboricultural Survey information and tree constraint plans including appropriate plans and particulars. these will include the position of every tree on site that could be influenced by the proposed development and any tree on neighbouring land that is also likely to be with in influencing distance and could also include other relevant information such as stem diameter and crown spread.”

5.4.2 The Councils Countryside Officer has reviewed the application and note that the submitted tree information is in accordance with BS5837 for tree protection and therefore any grant of permission should be subject to an appropriate condition.

5.4.3 Policy DME3 also states that:

‘Development proposals that are likely to adversely affect the following.... ‘Wildlife species protected by law’ will not be granted planning permission. exceptions will only be made where it can clearly be demonstrated that the benefits of a development at a site outweigh both the local and the wider impacts. Planning conditions or agreements will be used to secure protection or, in the case of any exceptional development as defined above, to mitigate any harm, unless arrangements can be made through planning conditions or agreements to secure their protection’.

5.4.4 There have been concerns raised from residents that the impact of the scheme on nocturnal mammals has not been fully assessed. These comments are noted, however the application has been supported by a Preliminary Ecology Assessment/Survey which identifies a number of species, any potential impacts arising as a result of the development and includes recommendations/mitigation measures.

5.4.5 The report recommends a number of mitigation measures in order to make the scheme acceptable. Firstly, with regards to Great Crested Newts, the report notes that Environmental DNA (eDNA) surveys would be required of any ponds within 250m of the site (pond 1 , 9 and 14) (where accessible) to determine the presence or absence of great crested newts. Alternatively, a district level licence (DLL) could be obtained and the applicant has confirmed that a DLL will be sought which can be secured by condition. As such the Authority is required to consider if the development satisfies the following tests:-

- ‘favourable conservation status’ (FCS) test - The site is located within Natural England’s amber zone (moderate risk of harm to GCN) as such survey information and mitigation measures should be supplied if a valid Impact Assessment and Conservation Payment Certificate (IACPC) is not provided with an application in order for the LPA to apply this test properly. This has been requested.
- ‘no satisfactory alternative’ test – in light of the need for artificial 3G playing pitch provision in Longridge and the extent of the Council’s

ownership, the development cannot reasonably be located elsewhere and so the development satisfies the 'no satisfactory alternative' test

- 'imperative reasons of overriding public interest' (IROPI) test – in light of the need for artificial 3G playing pitch provision in Longridge and the significant community benefits / sporting opportunities this facility will provide, the development satisfies the 'overriding public interest' test.

5.4.6 Subject to the submission of further information, it is considered that the favourable conservation status' (FCS) test could be satisfied. Committee are therefore requested to delegate authority to officers to resolve this matter before issuing a decision.

5.4.7 The report also recommends that a low impact lighting strategy should be adopted which outlines the areas of the site that would be retained as dark corridors. However, the Countryside Officer is satisfied with the submitted lighting scheme and considers that the lighting has been designed so that it shines away from the habitat, towards the pitch. As such, it would be reasonable to condition that the floodlighting is implemented in accordance with the submitted details and any changes to the proposed lighting scheme would require details to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for assessment.

5.4.8 Precautionary working measures should be followed to ensure that nesting birds and other species are not harmed by the works. In the unlikely event that a protected animal is found during construction, all works must stop and a suitably qualified ecologist must be contacted. The ecology recommends the installation of bird boxes on mature trees around the site ownership boundary and other working methods for badgers, riparian animals and hedgehogs are recommended and can be secured by way of a suitably worded planning condition.

5.4.9 A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Statement has been submitted which identifies a baseline habitat unit of 1.49 and to achieve a 10% net-gain, a requirement of 1.64 is required.

5.4.10 The application originally proposed to secure the 10% net gain through the purchase of off-site biodiversity units rather than on-site enhancement due to the constraints of the site and to ensure there would be no further loss of playing pitches. However, officers have suggested that the 10% BNG is provided on-site where possible rather than purchasing off-site credits. The originally submitted BNG assessment states that there is good scope on site to achieve the required net gain and as such, the plans have been updated to demonstrate native hedgerow planting along the western site boundary as well as proposed native tree planting adjacent to the proposed acoustic fence. Officers are therefore satisfied that the site can achieve the required 1.64 units and these details can be secured by way of the statutory Biodiversity Gain Plan condition and a landscape and habitat management and monitoring plan.

5.5 Highway Safety and Parking

5.5.1 Paragraph 116 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that:

“Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios”.

- 5.5.2 With regards to parking, Policy DMG3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy states that:

“All development proposals will be required to provide adequate car parking and servicing space in line with currently approved standards”.

- 5.5.3 Policy DMG1 also states that development must:

1. *Consider the potential traffic and car parking implications.*
2. *Ensure safe access can be provided which is suitable to accommodate the scale and type of traffic likely to be generated.*

- 5.5.4 The Local Highway Authority (LHA) have been consulted on the application and they note that a parking survey was undertaken on Sunday 26th April, noted as a being scheduled during a 'typical matchday'. The survey was undertaken between 09:00 and 15:00 at 30 minute intervals. The car park itself as surveyed as well as streets surrounding the site including Mardale Road between the site and Grasmere Grove, Buttermere Road, Ennerdale Road, Thirlmere Drive between Buttermere Road and Ennerdale Road, and Hacking Drive between Mardale Road and Section Road, totalling approximately 600m of highway.

- 5.5.5 The LHA note that The Mardale Road car park has 69 car parking spaces and the survey recorded a maximum occupancy of 38 spaces at 12:00. Therefore, during the full survey period there were at least 31 spaces available for use. On the surrounding streets, the survey data records a maximum occupancy of 34 vehicles parked at 13:00. After 13:00, car park demand reduced from 36 vehicles to 1 in half an hour, indicating an end to the football period. In comparison to the car park occupancy itself, the occupancy level on the surrounding streets also significantly reduces over the same period between 1:00 1:30 reducing from 34 to 18 vehicles. This appears to indicate that there is overspill parking occurring on the surrounding streets of around 18 vehicles. The survey records that 'No illegal or obstructive parking was observed by the survey company'. However the LHA recognises that this could be subjective depending upon how close a vehicle is parked to a driveway or opposite a driveway, depending upon vehicles size and driver ability.

- 5.5.6 As such, the LHA consider that the amount of existing car parking spaces on Mardale Road car park (69 spaces) appears sufficient to accommodate the existing and overspill car parking demand, circa 52 vehicles at peak time. Shay Lane was not included in the survey and the LHA know users are being directed there by the football clubs therefore additional vehicles are likely to have been parked there. There will be capacity of circa 15 spaces to accommodate this demand. The potential increase caused by the provision of an all-weather pitch to replace the existing grass pitch is unknown.

- 5.5.7 The applicant advises that there will be no increase in demand as a result of the proposal however the LHA understands demand may increase overall due to the

pitch being playable all year round and less reliant on weather conditions. As such, the LHA recommends that the existing car parking charges are removed from the car park as there is evidence in the survey data that drivers are choosing to park on the surrounding streets to avoid the charges whilst there are spaces available on the car park and evidence from Lancashire Constabulary regarding attendance to the site to deal with car parking disputes.

- 5.5.8 The applicant has advised that the removal of car parking charges can only be achieved through a Council decision which lies outside of the planning process and therefore cannot confirm whether this would be acceptable at this stage. Notwithstanding this, the LHA have advised that if the charges were not removed, this would not raise an objection from them.
- 5.5.9 The LHA have also raised issues of complaints from businesses whereby players and parents are parking on Shay Lane which is causing obstruction to pedestrians and HGVs, but none appear to be associated with football parking and relate to the school on Preston Road. Nonetheless, the LHA do support car sharing and staggering match times to help with congestion but do not condone the promotion of Shay Lane as a parking area as there are no formal parking areas and certain sections of carriageway have a narrow width which may result in an obstruction for any larger vehicles accessing the Industrial Estate. They recommend car sharing is prioritised on the car park to further encourage this measure.
- 5.5.10 The LHA also recommend the provision of 7 cycle spaces and that they are located in areas with high natural surveillance. It is considered that details of this could be secured by way of planning condition.
- 5.5.11 No concerns are raised by the Local Highway Authority in relation to highway/pedestrian safety. However, the do recommend that a 'traffic and car park management plan' is implemented and promoted on the Councils website (although these are not suggested to be secured by way of planning condition). As such, the above could be added as an informative to any decision notice.
- 5.5.12 The LHA also recommend the inclusion of a condition for the submission and approval of a Construction Method Statement and for the car park to be marked out with at least 69 spaces to ensure adequate parking remains.

5.6 Drainage

- 5.6.1 Policy DME6 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy states that:

"Development will not be permitted where the proposal would be at an unacceptable risk of flooding or exacerbate flooding elsewhere.

Applications for development should include appropriate measures for the conservation, protection and management of water such that development contributes to:

- 1. Preventing pollution of surface and / or groundwater*
- 2. Reducing water consumption*
- 3. Reducing the risk of surface water flooding (for example the use of sustainable*

Drainage systems (SuDS))

As a part of the consideration of water management issues, and in parallel with flood management objectives, the authority will also seek the protection of the borough's water courses for their biodiversity value.

All applications for planning permission should include details for surface water drainage and means of disposal based on sustainable drainage principles. The use of the public sewerage system is the least sustainable form of surface water drainage and therefore development proposals will be expected to investigate and identify more sustainable alternatives to help reduce the risk of surface water flooding and environmental impact."

- 5.6.2 The application has been supported by a drainage strategy which states that the surface water is to drain to the existing ditch to the south of the site. The drainage strategy includes restricting the pitches' surface water to as close to greenfield runoff rates as possible.
- 5.6.3 The new artificial grass pitch would consist of a synthetic surface, porous shockpad, along with porous macadam and a 300mm permeable type 3 subbase, all laid with a gradient of 1:230 north to south, which would allow water to infiltrate through the pitch make up to a series of new lateral drains which will collect surface water before outfalling into a HydroBrake flow control device, restricted to 7.6l/s with attenuation provided within the pitches make up. Flows will then outfall into the existing ditch to the south. Calculations have been provided which show within the 1in100 year + 50% event, a flooded volume of 103.5m³ but the report states that flooding in the 1in100 + 50% storm event is acceptable as long as it can be demonstrated that water can be contained on site and not cause any issue to buildings or 3rd party land. It is proposed to provide an edging/kerb with a 125mm upstand kerb at the pitch edge to store this flooded water within the pitch extent. Based on the pitch gradient of 1:230, a maximum water depth of 120mm can be expected.
- 5.6.4 The report states that surface water from the AGP will pass through a permeable subbase which acts similar to permeable paving and concludes that the permeable subbase will provide adequate treatment for the site's surface water.
- 5.6.5 The report concludes that provided the drainage strategy is implemented in accordance with the above details, the development would not contribute further to flood risk and satisfies the requirements of Policy DME6 and the NPPF.

5.7 Other matters

- 5.7.1 The site lies on contaminated land and a Desk Study Report was previously completed for the site and a Ground Investigation Report has since been completed. No further investigations for the site are considered necessary as outlined within the report.
- 5.7.2 Other concerns have been raised from the occupiers of neighbouring properties with regards to the potential decrease in property value. However, this is not a

material planning consideration that would be given any weight in the determination of the application.

6. **Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion and Planning Balance**

- 6.1 For the reasons outlined above the application is recommended to be deferred and delegated to officers for approval following the satisfactory conclusion on ecology (Great Crested Newt) insofar that the proposal will not result in any significant adverse impacts, nor will the proposal result in significant measurable conflicts with the aims and objectives of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and Longridge Neighbourhood Plan that would warrant the refusal to grant planning permission in this instance.

RECOMMENDATION: That the application be DEFERRED AND DELEGATED to officers for approval following the satisfactory conclusion on ecology subject to the following conditions (with subsequent conditions on outstanding ecology matters to be added by officers as appropriate):

1. The development must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

REASON: Required to be imposed by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out otherwise than in conformity with the following submitted plans therein received by the Local Planning Authority unless prohibited by any other condition.

Amended Location Plan drawing ref: 25-0628(G-234211) 01 Version 02 received 3 July 2026

Amended Proposed Site Plan drawing ref: 25-0628(G-234211) 02 Version 3 received 3 July 2026

Amended Pitch Layout drawing ref: 25-0628(G-234211) 03 Version 3 received 3 July 2026

Amended Proposed Elevations drawing ref: 25-0628(G-234211) 05 Version 02 received 16 June 2026

3. Prior to the commencement of development, a Biodiversity Gain Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority (see further details below at 7 of the Notes Section) and implemented in accordance with the approved details.

REASON: To ensure the development delivers a net gain off site which satisfies paragraph 14 (2) of Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and which is in accordance with the biodiversity information submitted with the planning application.

4. Prior to the first use of the development hereby approved, details of secure, covered cycle storage, showing storage for at least 7 bicycles shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The cycle storage shall be implemented in accordance with the approved scheme and thereafter retained.

REASON: To support sustainable travel.

5. Notwithstanding the submitted details, prior to any above ground works, a landscape/habitat management and monitoring plan, including long-term design

objectives, management responsibilities and maintenance schedules for all landscape areas shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The landscape shall thereafter be managed and maintained in accordance with the approved plan.

REASON: To ensure the proper long-term management and maintenance of the landscaped areas in the interests of visual amenity and biodiversity enhancement in accordance with Policy DMG1, DME1 and DME3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

6. (a) Prior to any above ground works, a specification of and a plan showing the location of a minimum of two bird boxes to be installed on mature trees on land within the blue line boundary on drawing ref: 25-0628(G-234211) 01 Version 02 shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and remain in perpetuity.

(b) The development shall be carried out in strict accordance with the Precautionary Working Method identified within the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal by 'Arbtech' (survey date 20th January 2026).

REASON: To ensure the protection of species/habitat protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as Amended) and in the interests of biodiversity and to enhance habitat opportunities for species of conservation concern/protected species and to minimise/mitigate the potential impacts upon protected species resultant from the development.

7. No development shall commence until further details of the design and layout of the artificial pitch to include details of the construction and materials used including sub base, shockpad, infill type and surface pile have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority after consultation with Sport England. The artificial pitch shall not be constructed other than in accordance with the approved details.

REASON: To ensure the development is fit for purpose and sustainable.

8. Use of the artificial pitch shall not commence until:

(a) certification that the Artificial Grass Pitch hereby permitted has met FIFA Quality Concept for Football Turf – FIFA Quality or equivalent International Artificial Turf Standard (IMS) and

(b) confirmation that the facility has been registered on the Football Association's Register of Football Turf Pitches

have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To ensure the development is fit for purpose and sustainable, provides sporting benefits.

9. No development shall commence until details of containment barriers and microfilters for stormwater drains for the containment of infill are submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The construction of the barriers shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the approved details.

REASON: to minimise the loss of infill from the playing surface.

10. Use of the development should not commence until a scheme setting out measures to prevent infill leaving the pitch at all player and vehicle entrance gates is submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The approved scheme shall be complied with after the commencement of use of the development.

REASON: to minimise the loss of infill from the playing surface.

11. Prior to the first use of the development hereby approved, a Management and Maintenance Scheme for the facility including management responsibilities, a maintenance schedule and a mechanism for review shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

For Artificial Grass Pitches this should include measures to ensure the replacement of the Artificial Grass Pitch within a specified period. The measures set out in the approved scheme shall be complied with in full, with effect from commencement of use of the artificial pitch.

REASON: To ensure that a new facility is capable of being managed and maintained to deliver a facility which is fit for purpose, sustainable and to ensure sufficient benefit of the development to sport.

12. Prior to the first use of the development hereby permitted, the acoustic barrier as detailed on drawing ref: 25-0628(G-234211) 03 Version 03 shall be fully installed and shall remain in perpetuity for the lifetime of the development.

REASON: To protect the amenity of nearby residential receptors.

13. The development approved shall only be used between the hours of 08:00 – 22:00 Monday to Friday and 08:00 – 18:00 Saturday and Sunday, including bank holidays, with the floodlights switched off no later than 15 minutes after the permitted hours.

REASON: In order to protect the amenities of existing residents and to minimise the impact on protected species in accordance with Policies DMG1 and DME3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

14. During the construction period, all trees to be retained shall be protected in accordance with British Standard BS 5837:2012 or any subsequent amendment to the British Standard.

REASON: To protect trees/hedging of landscape and visual amenity value on and adjacent to the site or those likely to be affected by the proposed development hereby approved.

15. No development hereby permitted shall be brought into use until the sustainable drainage scheme for the site has been completed in accordance with the drainage scheme as identified in the amended Surface Water Drainage Strategy by 'SEA Consulting Engineers' dated February 2026 (received 9 July 2026).

REASON: In order to reduce the risk of flooding in accordance with Policy DME6 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

16. The lighting shall be implemented in strict accordance with floodlight specification outlined on page 11 of the amended Design & Access statement document ref: 25-0628_G-234211_DAS_V2 Received 16 June 2026 and shall remain in perpetuity for the lifetime of the development or unless no longer required.

REASON: To ensure the floodlights do not adverse impact on the occupiers of nearby residential properties or have a negative impact on wildlife/protected species.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

https://webportal.ribblevalley.gov.uk/site/scripts/planx_details.php?appNumber=3%2F2026%2F0295

INFORMATIVES:

1. The applicant is advised that the pitch should be tested in accordance with The FA standard code of rules and be registered on the FA Register for 3G Football Turf Pitches. Informative (artificial grass pitches football only)
2. The applicant is advised that for any football match play to take place the pitch should be built in accordance with FIFA Quality Concept for Football Turf - FIFA Quality or International Match Standard (IMS) as a minimum.
3. Measures should be taken to manage and minimise the loss of infill from the playing surface. BSI Standards, working with the European Committee for Standardisation (CEN), have developed a Technical Report describing the procedures that should be used to control infill migration. FIFA, World Rugby and the International Hockey Federation (FIH) have all included the recommendations of CEN into their certification programmes for artificial grass pitches. Contractors building pitches that require certification should therefore include the measures within their designs. For further information on the design of 3G pitches please access the FA Guide to 3Gs, which can be found online or contact the Football Foundation/FA for further advice.
4. The following are recommended to be implemented and promoted by the Clubs and on the Council's website:
 - a. Promote the use of the car park, deter use of the surrounding roads (Mardale Road and Shay Lane) and consider the removal of car parking charges from car park.
 - b. Stagger bookings to minimise the parking impact at change over.
 - c. Allocate parking for officials, equipment/kit deliveries, car sharers and mini buses.
 - d. Provide bus timetables, route maps and cycle parking information.
 - e. Keep the car park lining refreshed to maximise occupancy.
 - f. Marshalls to assist drivers in the car park during busy times.
 - g. Promote good driver behaviour and respect for neighbours when accessing the site.
5. The granting of planning permission does not entitle the developer to cause an obstruction to the public footpath which crosses the site. The infringement or obstruction of the public

right of way would be a criminal offence, as such the right of way should always remain clear, not to be excavated nor used to park or store materials, vehicles or machinery.

6. BNG Informative

Statutory Biodiversity Condition

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for the development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition "(the biodiversity gain condition") that development may not begin unless:

- (a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the local planning authority, and
- (b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because none of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements listed in the legislation are considered to apply.

The biodiversity gain plan must include:

- (a) information about the steps taken or to be taken to minimise the adverse effect of the development on the biodiversity of the onsite habitat and any other habitat;
- (b) the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat;
- (c) the post-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat;
- (d) any registered offsite biodiversity gain allocated to the development and the biodiversity and the biodiversity value of that gain in relation to the development;
- (e) any biodiversity credits purchased for the development; and
- (f) such other matters as the Secretary of State may by regulations specify.