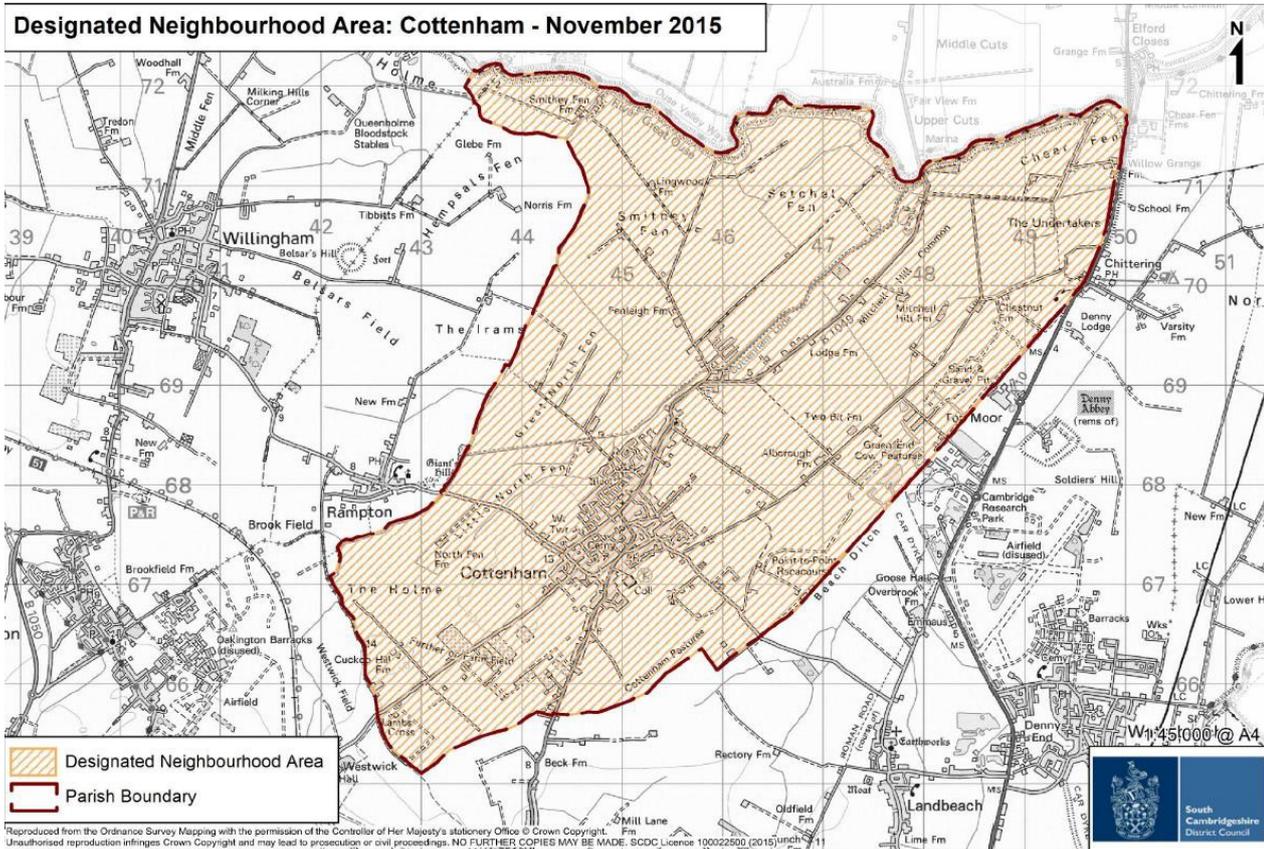


Cottenham Civil Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan 2017 to 2031

Designated Neighbourhood Area: Cottenham - November 2015



Cottenham Parish Council

NP Evidence – Recreation Ground December 2018

In 2031 Cottenham will still be an attractive safe rural village, proud of its character and retaining its sense of community with improved amenities and facilities, reduced impact of traffic, especially in the centre of the village, and having more affordable housing for the next generation of residents.



Cottenham Neighbourhood Development Plan Submission Plan – NP Evidence Paper E4



1. Summary

- 1.1 Cottenham has grown over recent years and now needs improved and extended outdoor community facilities within easy reach of the village centre yet with adequate car parking so as not to exclude residents who live further afield in the village or wider parish, or are less mobile.
- 1.2 This document outlines the reasoning for enhancements to the Recreation Ground; these enhancements include – when viable - additional space, all-weather operation and extended-day operation using floodlighting.



Cottenham Neighbourhood Development Plan
Submission Plan – NP Evidence Paper E4



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2. Situation

- 2.1 Cottenham currently has a population of approximately 6,400 and an actual freehold formal sports provision of 4.66 ha supplemented by 3.4 ha of leased land, most of which is used for sport. The Open Space Study conducted by SCDC in 2013, based on a population of 6,200 used a 1.6 ha per 1,000 population benchmark for outdoor sport in the district (and now enshrined as policy SC/8 in the Proposed Submission Local Plan (PSLP)). This implied a requirement for around 10 ha for Cottenham, implying a shortfall of around 2 ha. It should be further noted that significant parts of these playing fields require improvements in line with recommendations in the 2015 Cambridge & South Cambridgeshire District Council – Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS).
- 2.2 In particular, Cottenham Parish Council (CPC) makes regular and costly interventions to improve drainage and other qualitative improvements to improve existing facilities to enable them to cope with increased usage and population growth. Cottenham Parish Council has, with partners including Football Foundation, Sport England, SCDC and local taxpayers, invested in extending and improving sports facilities including leasing additional 3.4 ha of sports land from Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) in 2002, adding a skatepark and new Sports Pavilion in 2015, and application of innovative drainage techniques to extend playing season on difficult land near Les King Wood.



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3. Complications

- 3.1 The 2 ha shortfall is set to increase following the granting of planning permissions in 2017 which are likely to increase Cottenham's population to around 7,500, implying a short-term need for nearly 12 ha of land for outdoor sport – around a 5 ha shortfall.
- 3.2 Attempts to buy or lease a quantum of land adjacent to the recently-built Sports Pavilion from the neighbouring landowner in 2016 and 2017 were rejected; that landowner – Cambridgeshire County Council - has subsequently made several attempts (S/2876/16/OL and S/3551/17/OL) to develop the land for substantial amounts of housing on this key parcel of land. If permitted, these developments would force consideration of an additional playing field elsewhere in the village with considerable logistics and cost implications.



4. Sustainability

4.1 South Cambridgeshire's newly adopted Local Plan has several relevant policies:

Policy S/1: Vision

4.2 South Cambridgeshire will continue to be the best place to live, work and study in the country. Our district will demonstrate impressive and sustainable economic growth. Our residents will have a superb quality of life in an exceptionally beautiful, rural and green environment.

4.3 The policy is supported by several paragraphs:

- a. LP 9.23 The NPPF addresses the importance that access to open space has to the health and wellbeing of a community. It states that local authorities should set locally derived standards for the provision of open space, sports and recreational facilities after they have assessed the quantity and quality of what is available within their area.
- b. LP 9.32 It is important that there is provision made for open space that meets all the different needs of a community across the age ranges from play areas for toddlers to tranquil informal spaces with seating for older people to enjoy. Such open space will be designed carefully within a development so that the green spaces are fit for purpose and areas with potentially noisy uses such as playing fields for team sports will not cause disturbance and that children's play areas are within sight of housing so that they are a safe environment in which children can play.

Policy SC/9: Protection of Existing Recreation Areas, ...

4.4 Planning Permission will not be granted for proposals resulting in the loss of land or buildings providing for recreational use or for the loss of allotments or community orchards except where:

- a. They would be replaced by an area of equivalent or better quantity and quality and in a suitable location; or
- b. The proposed development includes provision of open space, or sports and recreation facilities of sufficient benefit to outweigh the loss; or
- c. An excess of provision in quantitative and qualitative terms is clearly demonstrated in all the functions played by the land or buildings to be lost, taking into account potential future demand and in consultation with local people and users.

4.5 The policy is supported by:

- i. LP 9.34 The NPPF states that existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should be protected from development.



**Cottenham Neighbourhood Development Plan
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Policy SC/8: Open Space Standards

- 4.6 The minimum standard for outdoor play space, informal open space and allotments and community allotments is 3.2 hectares per 1,000 people comprising:
- a. Outdoor Sport 1.6 ha. per 1,000 people
 - b. Open Space 1.2 ha. per 1,000 people
 - c. Allotments and community orchards 0.4 ha. per 1,000 people
- 4.7 Subject to the needs of the development the open space requirement will consist of:
- a. Formal Children’s Play Space 0.4 ha. per 1,000 people
 - b. Informal Children’s Play Space 0.4 ha. per 1,000 people
 - c. Informal Open Space 0.4 ha. per 1,000 people
- 4.8 And the related paragraph:
- a. LP 9.33 New areas of allotments and community orchards form important community assets and are well used. The standard stated in the policy is equivalent to 32 allotments per 1,000 households.



Cottenham Neighbourhood Development Plan Submission Plan – NP Evidence Paper E4



5. Possible solutions

5.1 As part of the development of the Neighbourhood Plan, a considerable amount of research was conducted into how the limitations of the existing site might be overcome by extension and further development.

- i. More space, contiguous with the existing pitches and close to the Sports Pavilion.
- ii. Additional facilities, including a 3-court floodlit MUGA and improved tennis courts.
- iii. An additional pavilion to support rugby and/or other sport.
- iv. Intensification of use through improved ground treatments, all-weather surfaces and floodlighting.

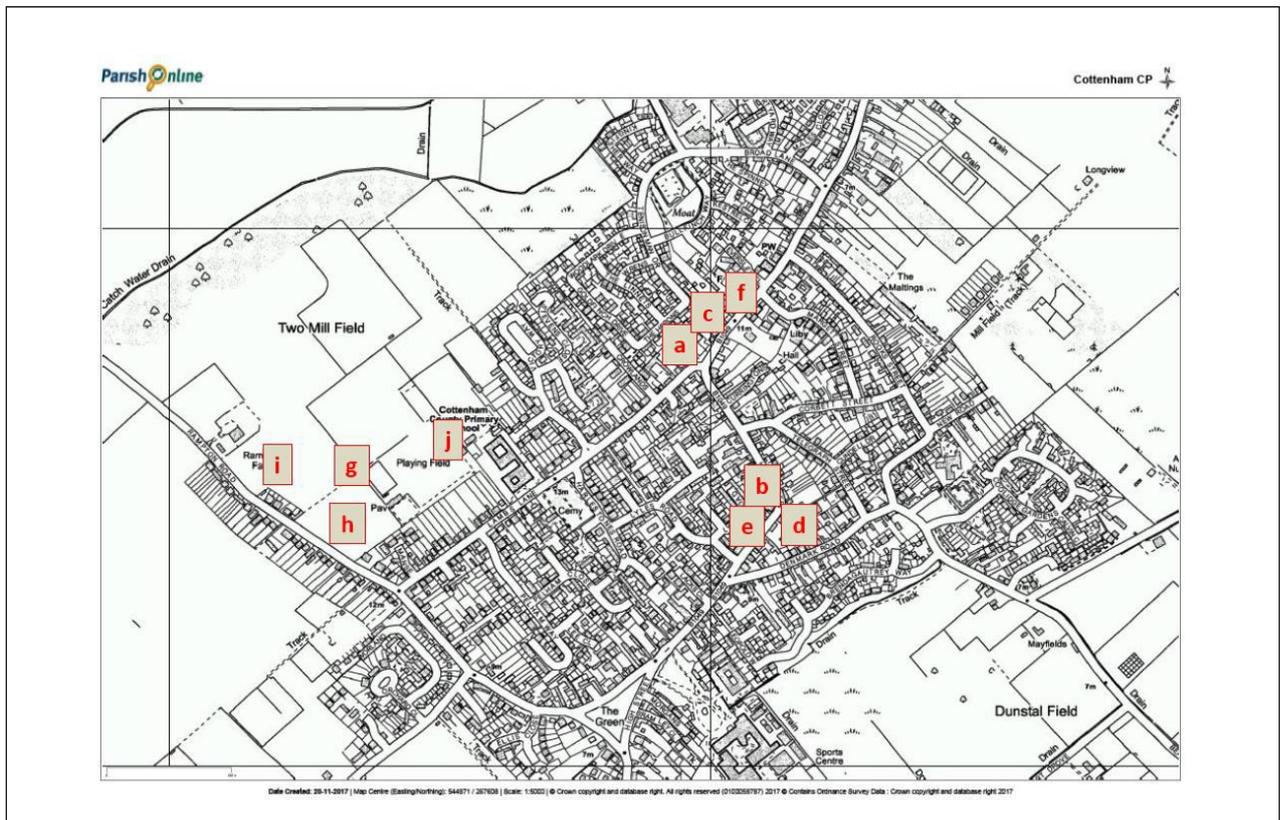
6. Criteria

6.1 Apart from required facilities, key location criteria include:

- i. proximity to the Sports Pavilion and its changing facilities and other services
- ii. location near the village centre for easy walking distance for most village residents
- iii. site scale to provide secure parking facilities for those further afield in the parish or lessmobile
- iv. potential as a multi-pitch hub supporting a variety of outdoor sports
- v. distance from neighbouring residences to minimise noise disturbance

6.2 Cottenham has only limited “outdoor formal sport” facilities in other venues:

- i. Cottenham Recreation Ground, including the King George V Playing Field – excellent facilities, moderate fees but limited availability and parking
- ii. Cottenham Village College – good facilities but high fees and some limits on when it can be used.
- iii. Cottenham Primary School – central, limited facilities and limited availability with parking nearby at the Recreation Ground
- iv. Cottenham Broad Lane Amenity Area and Retention Pond – some potential but flood-prone and limited scale with almost no parking.



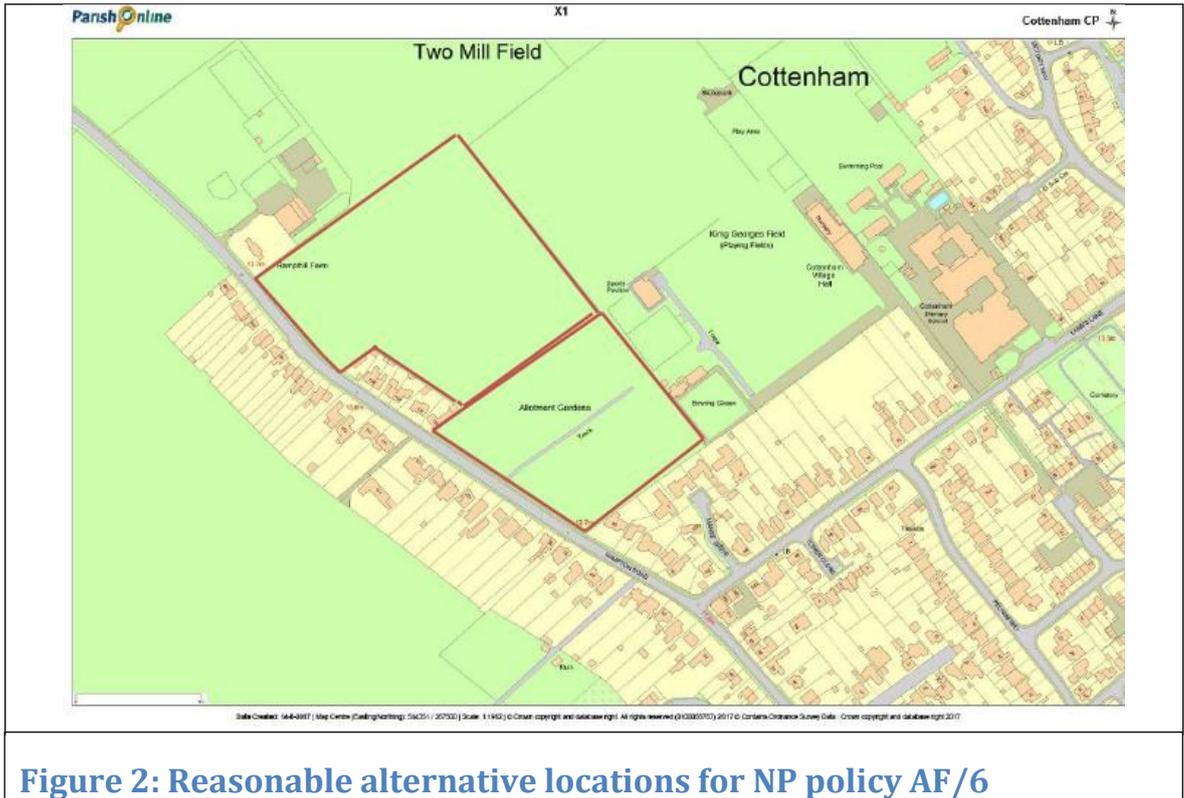
7. Candidate sites

Figure 1: Sites reviewed (h and i) as expansion sites for outdoor recreation

7.1 As part of the Neighbourhood Plan research, two sites (“h” and “i” in Figure 1; and enlarged in Figure 2) were considered as possible extensions to the Recreation Ground:

- h) Part of the Cottenham United Charities Allotments – the Trust and allotment holders are reluctant to move from this location which would, in any case, be very close to neighbouring residences and restrict availability of allotments.
- i) Land between Ramphill Farm and the Cottenham United Charities Allotments – land owned by Cambridgeshire County Council with strong aspirations to develop as housing.

7.2 Neither site is within Parish Council control, creating additional complexity for a community investment.



7.3 The study concluded that no other sites in the village have the potential to satisfy all the criteria.

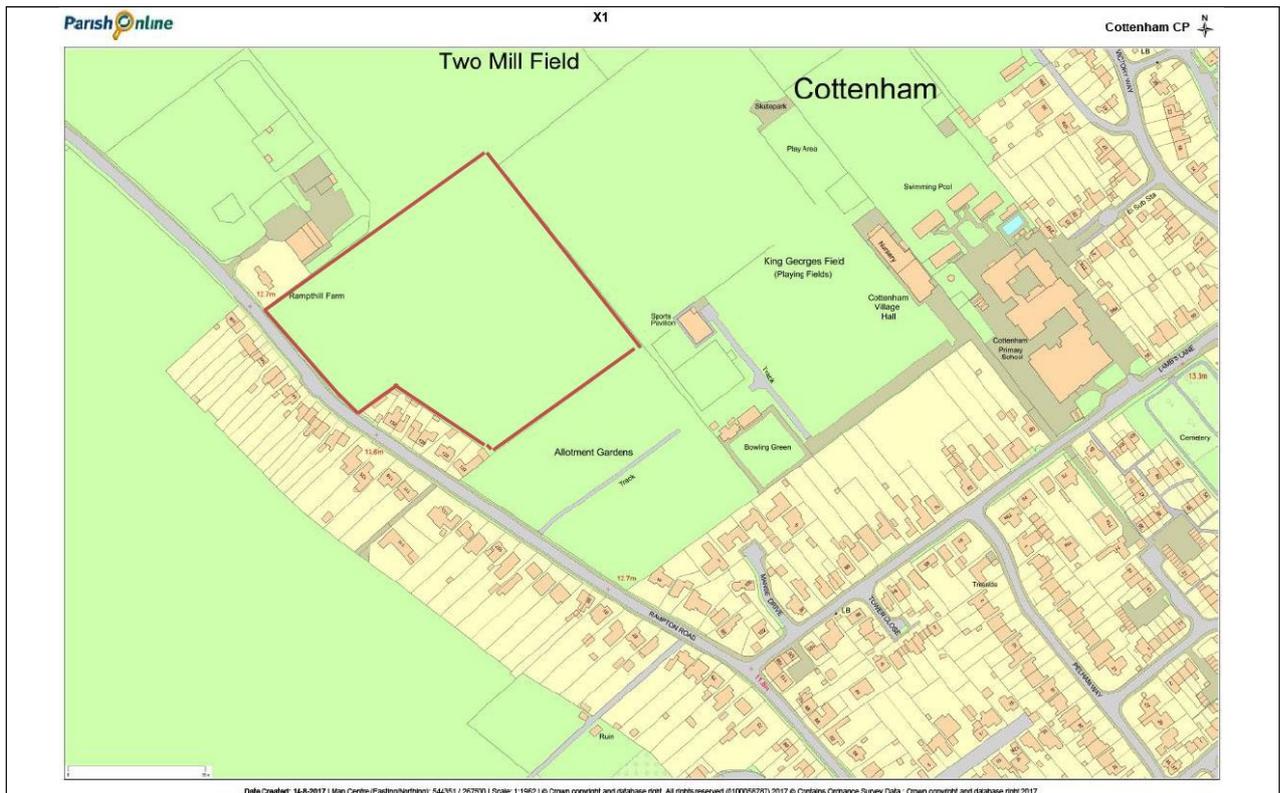


Cottenham Neighbourhood Development Plan Submission Plan – NP Evidence Paper E4



8. AECOM Site Assessment

- 8.1 Both sites were considered suitable for consideration as extensions to the Recreation Ground on the AECOM Site Assessment conducted for Cottenham Parish Council in October 2017.
- 8.2 Only the Allotment site (X1 or GF/3) was considered suitable for housing in their report; the CCC site had previously been rejected as unsuitable for housing under the SCDC SHLAA.



9. Evaluations

Figure3: The “Two Mill Field” site location off Rampton Road

The Two Mill Field Site

- 9.1 The site lies outside but close to the existing residential framework, is mostly within easywalking distance of Cottenham’s core, and adjacent to the Recreation Ground.
- 9.2 The land is owned by a single public-sector landowner and understood to be available for development, although the owner has its own agenda as a “speculative developer”.
- 9.3 The site is just beyond easy walking distance of the village centre via Rampton Road but can readily be integrated with the Recreation ground and connected by foot path to the adjacent Primary School.
- 9.4 Use of the site complements Cottenham’s limited open space for sport and respects the proposed Local Green Space.



Figure 4: The Allotments site

The Allotments Site

- 9.5 The site lies outside but adjacent to the existing residential framework, is mostly within easywalking distance of Cottenham’s core, and adjacent to the King George V Playing Field, part of the Recreation Ground.
- 9.6 Cottenham Charities manages the allotments, provides almshouses and offers grants to residents in need.
- 9.7 Cottenham has over 8 hectares more than the average 0.4 hectares of allotment per 1,000 residents (SCDC – Recreation & Open Space Study 2013) and the land is well-connected to both the village and the Recreation Ground.
- 9.8 Relocation of the allotments, followed by limited development of the site, could increase the Charity’s ability to deliver all three aims.

10. Evidence of community consultation and support

10.1 In addition to many informal consultations by email, social media or face-to-face, there have been four principal sources to the NP:

- a. **Vision Plan** – this parish-wide survey in 2014, with 217 responses, focused on improvements to facilities:
 - 59% wanted a circular walk/nature trail in wood/countryside (2 miles)
 - 57% wanted marked-out walking routes of 1, 3 and 5 miles
 - 46% of respondents thought we needed a new or refurbished Village Hall
 - 41% wanted hard courts for Tennis / Basketball / Netball
 - 40% wanted a trim trail/jogging track (1 – 2 miles)
 - 33% wanted rugby pitches (33%)
 - 29% wanted a grass running track (29%)
 - 23% wanted additional facilities for small and start-up businesses
- b. **NP survey** – this parish-wide survey in the winter of 2016, with 973 responses, tested residents' views on a wide range of issues:
 - Two findings relate to an improved or new Village Hall
 - 79% thought we should improve welfare and day care facilities for the elderly and less-mobile
 - 68% thought we should improve leisure and recreation facilities
 - One relates to provision of a Nursery
 - 44% thought we should improve number and availability of pre-school places
 - Findings relate to outdoor improvements at the Recreation ground
 - 68% thought we should improve leisure and recreation facilities
 - 26% thought we needed a Multi-Use Games Area (35% don't know)
 - 19% thought we needed floodlit sports facilities (47% don't know)
 - 16% thought we needed all-weather sports facilities (47% don't know)
- c. **Ballot** – this parish-wide ballot in late 2016, with 453 responses, tested residents' views on whether or not "a new Village Hall and Nursery is worth £1/week on each home's Council Tax"?
 - 60.5% were in favour; some raising clarification questions or urging progress.
 - 39.5% were against; many thinking the use of Council Tax was unfair or the Tax was too high
- d. **7 issues** – this parish-wide survey in late 2017, with 466 responses, tested residents' views on:
 - Provision of an all-weather, floodlit Multi-Use Games Area at the Recreation Ground
 - 47% were in favour and a further 41% were more open to timing and location
 - Proximity of the Nursery to the Primary School
 - 71% were in favour and a further 17% had no preference



11. Planning implications

- 11.1 The Recreation Ground is at one end of the route served frequently by Citi8 buses although improved access and control of on-site car parking will also be necessary for residents living some distance from the site and beyond the range of more sustainable walking, cycling or bus services.
- 11.2 The Recreation Ground sites, including the site of the existing Village Hall and adjacent Ladybird pre-school are technically “in the countryside”, being outside the existing village development framework and therefore in conflict with policy S/7 in the adopted Local Plan. However, as can be seen in Figure 5, the site of the existing Village Hall and Ladybird pre-school is adjacent to the existing village development framework and already virtually surrounded on three sides by housing and the Primary School buildings. A further expansion of the Primary School is imminent to cater for recent planning permissions on the south-west side of Rampton Road.
- 11.3 It was concluded that a minor adjustment to the village development framework, mostly to embrace established buildings - including the Village Hall, Ladybird pre-school and recent extension to the Primary School would not encroach into “real” open countryside and involves no significant loss of recreation space yet would enable a considerable improvement to amenity within the village, including the enjoyment of sport and outdoor recreation.
- 11.4 Cottenham’s emerging Neighbourhood Plan includes the “Community Facilities” site within a slightly extended development framework, outlined in blue on Figure 5. The extension is represents a minor adjustment of the framework, mostly to include established buildings. It is not really extending the framework into “open countryside” and involves no significant loss of recreational space, while considerably enhancing amenity.

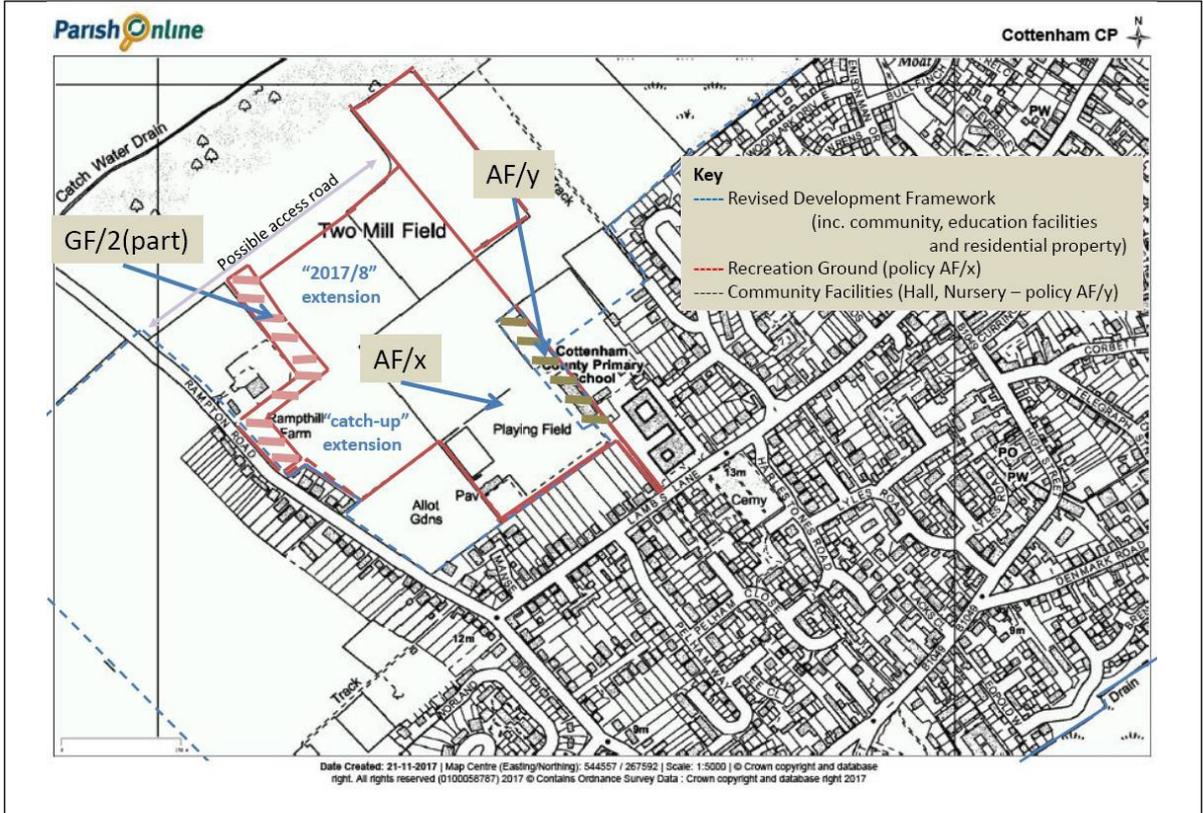


Figure 5: Cottenham development framework (per Pre-submission draft Neighbourhood Plan 2017)



12. Policies from Pre-submission draft Neighbourhood Plan

Policy AF/5: Sports facilities

Support "sport for all" by allocation of land and development of additional sports facilities at, and adjacent to, the Recreation Ground, provided these create safer traffic movements by including appropriate on-site parking facilities. The land would:

- a) be contiguous with the existing Recreation Ground, especially near the Sports Pavilion, and
- b) include provision for all-weather and/or floodlit outdoor sports facilities, and
- c) provide a road route through the site to Rampton Road

Policy BF/1: King George V Field & Recreation Ground

Support development of the King George V Field and Recreation Ground to provide community facilities adjacent to the Primary School within the development framework boundary as proposed by the Neighbourhood Plan (although it currently falls outside the boundary as set by the 2004 Local Plan), primarily intended to encourage wider participation in and enjoyment of indoor and outdoor recreation or, due to proximity of the Primary School, to provide facilities for early years education and out-of-school child-care*, and an informal day centre for the elderly** provided any development:

- a) retains outdoor space sufficient to support at least one dedicated cricket square and regulation-size association football pitch, with ample additional space to support additional formal sports pitches and training areas, and
- b) retains adequate changing and washing facilities to support participation in formal and informal sports, and
- c) supports “sports for all” by providing indoor and outdoor facilities to encourage participation irrespective of age, disability or gender, and
- d) improves utilisation potential by upgrading some outdoor areas to all-weather surfaces and use of floodlighting, and
- e) retains and updates appropriate indoor community facilities to support a wide range of community activity including a meeting place for the elderly, and
- f) supports safe child-care and pre-school education, and
- g) applies imaginative and original designs to extend and renew the distinctive character and traditions of Cottenham’s built environment and especially the buildings already on-site, and
- h) includes infrastructure for modern communications technology to facilitate “drop-in” meeting facilities for small business and community groups***, and
- i) encourages pedestrian access, and
- j) contributes to safer traffic movements by inclusion of appropriate on-site parking and site access and co-ordination improvements

*Out-of-school child-care – pre-school and post-school care for primary years children during term-time; all-day in vacations

** Informal day centre for the elderly – supervised meeting place and hot meal for the elderly and less mobile

*** Drop-in meeting facilities for small business and community groups – “ad-hoc” rental of space within a shared room with business support facilities such as Wi-Fi, printing etc.

Appendix A: General References

Reference	Paper
B1	Cottenham Neighbourhood Plan Survey – Final Report (NPS)
B2	Cottenham draft Pre-submission Neighbourhood Plan v2.1
B3	Cottenham draft Pre-submission Neighbourhood Plan v3.1
B4	AECOM Housing Needs assessment
B5	AECOM Site assessment
B6	AECOM Heritage & Character assessment
B7	Evidence Paper E1 Housing need and supply
B8	Evidence Paper E2 Brownfield sites
B9	Evidence Paper E3 Rural Exception Sites and Community Land Trust
B10	Evidence Paper E4 Recreation Ground
B11	Evidence Paper E5 Village Hall
B12	Evidence Paper E6 Nursery
B13	Evidence Paper E7 Medical and Drop-in & Chat Centre
B14	Evidence Paper E8 Village heritage and character
B15	Evidence Paper E9 NP Golden thread
B16	Evidence Paper E10 Burial ground extensions
B17	Evidence Paper E11 Drainage & Flooding
B18	Evidence Paper E12 Village Design Statement 2007
B19	Evidence Paper E13 Traffic & Transport Strategy
B20	Evidence paper E14: Community Transport
B21	Evidence paper E15: Play
B22	Evidence Paper E16: Open Space
B23	Cottenham draft Pre-submission Neighbourhood Plan v4.2
B24	Strategic Environment Screening Opinion
B25	Consultation statement
B26	Cottenham Submission Neighbourhood Plan v5
B27	Strategic Environment Assessment
B28	Basic Conditions Statement

Appendix B: Implications of County Council planning application S/3551/17/OL

- B.1 Despite there being no need for additional housing land to be allocated within Cottenham, Cambridgeshire County Council has made a planning application for upwards of 100 houses on land that is needed for sports use in the village both to catch up on an existing deficit and to cater for the expanding population as a result of planning applications already approved.
- B.2 Discussions are ongoing with the landowner and Local Planning Authority in an attempt to protect enough land for sports use.
- B.3 An early suggested layout for S/3551/17/OL implied a considerable extension to sports provision was possible and all but ignored the proposed location for a Primary School extension which would take several hectares of sports space away.



Figure 6: Front page of Design & Access Statement accompanying Cambridgeshire County Council's planning application

- B.4 This layout morphed during consideration of the application, with houses proposed adjacent to Les King Wood being relocated into space adjacent to the Sports Pavilion.

- B.5 The County Council proposal (Figure 7 a to c) has evolved from:
- i. V1 forfeited 2ha from 3rd Field but compensated with some “suitable sport” expansion space (shown as an additional FA/rugby pitch)
 - ii. V2 forfeited 2ha from 3rd Field but compensated with “unsuitable sport” expansion space (shown as an additional FA/FA 7v7pitch)
 - iii. V3 appears not to forfeit 3rd Field space but shuts out expansion potential (hashed blue lines)

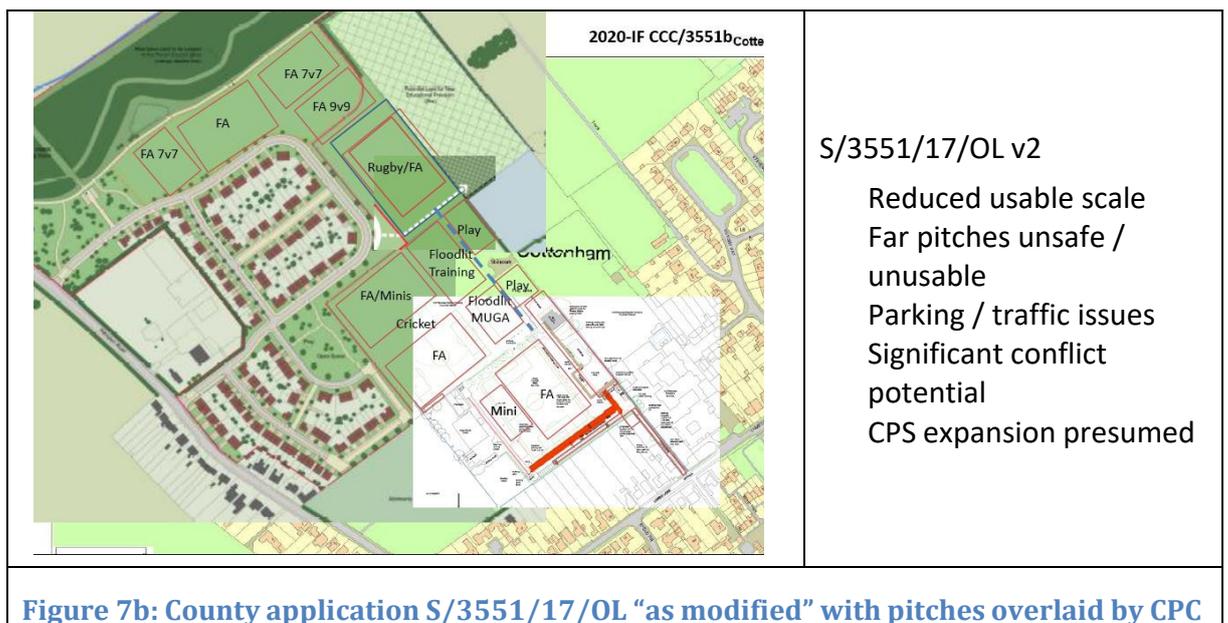
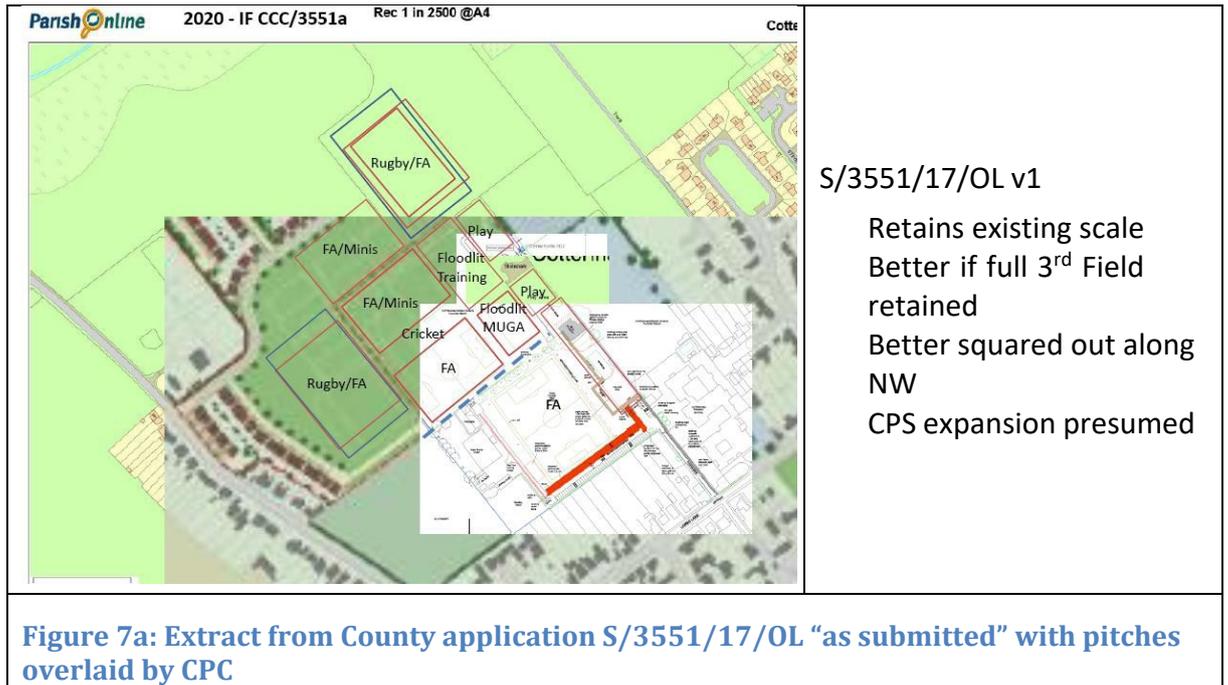




Figure 7c: County application S/3551/17/OL “as clarified”

B.6 The layout makes no attempt to help correct the shortfall of sports space as the open land adjacent to Les King Wood is poorly drained and has a considerable slope rendering its use for sport impracticable, especially given the safeguarding concerns for young children at this distance from the facilities.

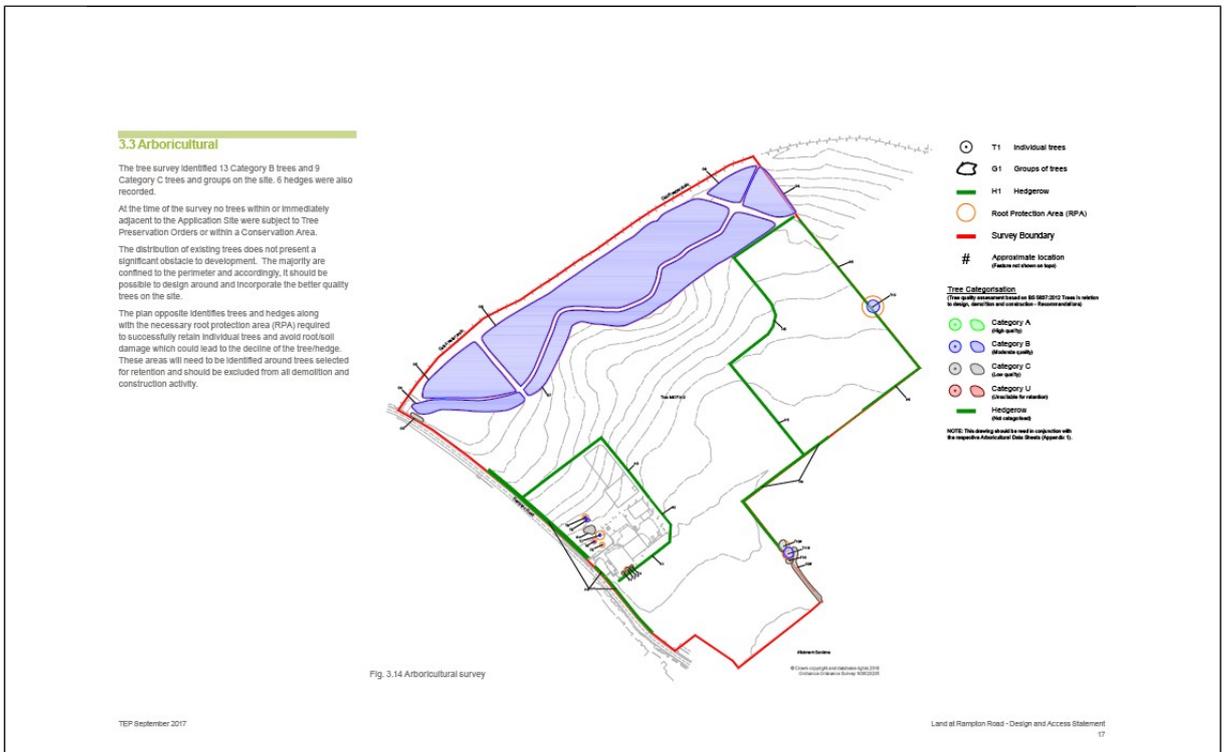
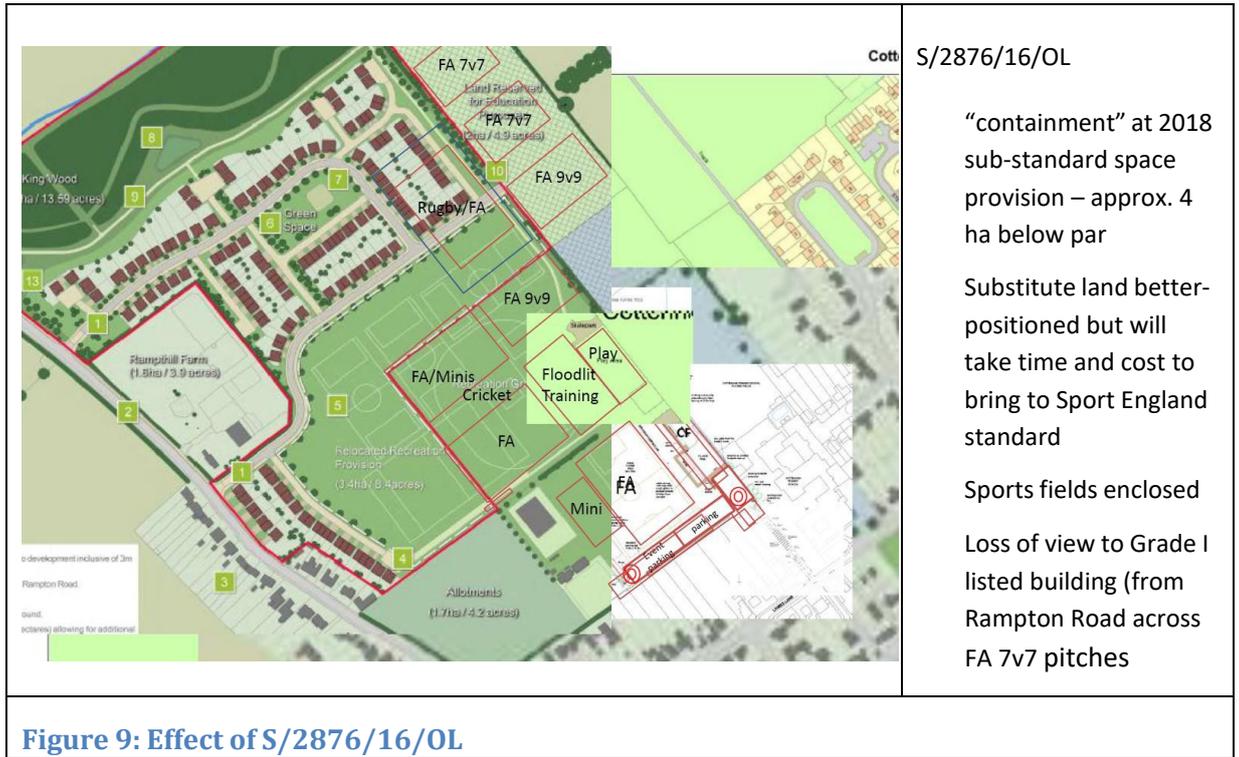


Figure 8: Extract from County application S/3551/17/OL showing land contours sloping more quickly at NW end of site.

B.7 Although S/2876/16/OL was refused permission by SCDC, the application outlined in figure 9 was allowed at appeal.



- B.8 It has emerged that any Primary School expansion would take up at least some of the 2 ha leased field at the NE of the site, considerably reducing available space for sport.
- B.9 The layout in figure 10 has the potential to increase the land available for sports use near to the Sports Pavilion and intensify its use using floodlighting and all-weather surfaces.
- 8.10 A modest loss of land designated as Les King Wood (“L” in Figure 10) should allow a similar expansion of the sports areas (“M₂” and “N₃” in Figure 10) and a green link to be maintained between Les King Wood (“L” in figure 10) and the sports field (M₂ in figure 10) via part of the sports field (M₁ in figure 10).

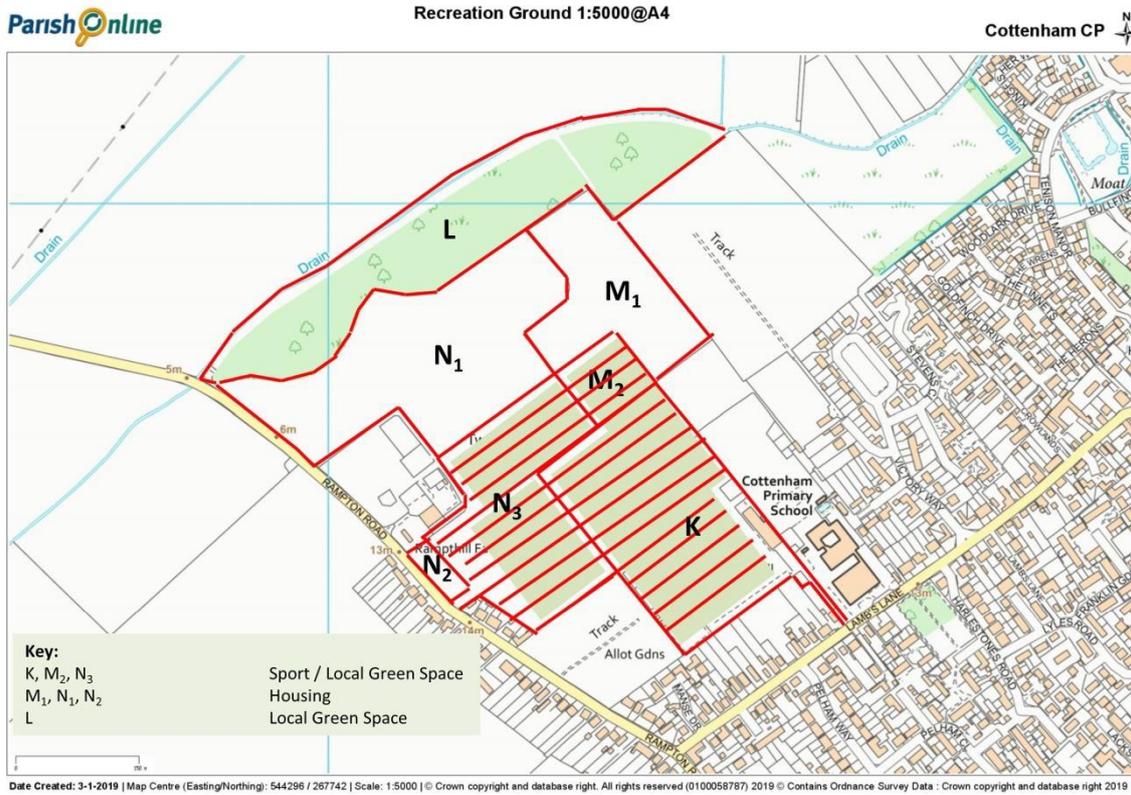


Figure 10: Proposed reconfigured Recreation Ground and Development