

**Billingbear Park Golf
Course**

The Straight Mile

Wokingham

RG40 5SJ

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

January 2026

**WOKINGHAM
CITY
COUNCIL**

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Statement of Community Involvement is written in association with an application for planning permission made by Billingbear Park Golf Course (“the applicant”). The applicant is bringing forward proposals for the diversification of sport provision and the creation of enhanced facilities at Billingbear Park Golf Course, The Straight Mile, Wokingham (“the application site”).
- 1.2. This Statement of Community Involvement has been produced with the aim of clearly detailing the community consultation in respect of the proposals and includes data and responses received during the public consultation process.
- 1.3. The applicant is committed to engaging with the local community regarding its planning application and communicating with members of the community, community groups, Councillors and other relevant third-party stakeholders.
- 1.4. To assist with the consultation process, the applicant instructed 4TY Planning to advise in respect of engagement with relevant stakeholders and this report has been produced to summarise the process that was followed and to analyse the responses which have been received.
- 1.5. Engagement with the community included the applicant updating their website to advertise their proposals along with them hosting a drop-in public exhibition event on Wednesday 26 November 2025 with the exhibition boards continuing to be displayed in the clubhouse until Friday 12 December 2025.
- 1.6. The applicant’s engagement included targeted approaches to Councillors at the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, Parish Councillors and Ward Councillors representing the adjoining Ward in Wokingham Borough.
- 1.7. All those who attended the drop-in event and saw the exhibition boards in the clubhouse thereafter were given the opportunity to feedback on the proposals using the forms provided. Feedback could also be provided via email.
- 1.8. Feedback received during the drop-in event and provided on the completed forms shows overwhelming support for the proposals. Key responses included excitement for the diversification of the sport offer at the site, the need for the continued provision of practice nets and the hope that membership and green fees will continue to be competitively priced.
- 1.9. This Statement documents the activities, findings and outcomes derived from the consultation process and details the applicant’s response to the key points which have been made.

2. The application site and the proposed development

- 2.1. The application site is shown in the aerial photograph below and is located principally in the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (“RBWM”), although the site’s entrance from The Straight Mile is within Wokingham Borough Council (“WBC”).



Image 1: Aerial photograph showing the application site boundary approximately outlined in red

- 2.2. The application site boundary is minimised to include the part of the course which is proposed to be developed. This land includes the car park (where it lies within the boundary of RBWM), and land to the west of the car park, the clubhouse and the hardstanding area to the north. The wider golf course site is within the applicant’s ownership, but is not affected by development proposals and as such is not included within the application site boundary.
- 2.3. The applicant’s proposal is for a phased development of the site comprising 5 separate elements:
- Construction of 2 pickleball courts;
 - Construction of 3 padel tennis courts;
 - Construction of new putting course;
 - Construction of single storey extension to clubhouse following demolition of the existing marquee extension; and
 - Construction of golf simulator building

2.4. The development will be delivered in 3 phases, currently planned as follows:

- Phase 1: Construction of pickleball and padel tennis courts;
- Phase 2: Construction of extension to club house; and
- Phase 3: Construction of golf simulator building

3. Planning policy

- 3.1. The applicant has complied with the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (2024), which states at paragraph 40, *"Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community."*
- 3.2. The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead's Statement of Community Involvement (2016) states at paragraph 1.3 *"...the Council encourages developers to talk to the community before submitting planning applications."*
- 3.3. The applicant has sought to incorporate these points into its engagement programme. Government guidance and the Council's SCI encourage pre-application discussions and community involvement at an early stage in the design process. Therefore, prior to submitting the planning application for the site's development, the applicant undertook a programme of community consultation, as outlined in this Statement.
- 3.4. The applicant has adhered to the guidance provided by the Council and has delivered a suitable consultation which has given the community and other stakeholders an opportunity to engage in the early design process.

4. Community engagement

- 4.1. The consultation process for this proposal comprised a drop-in public consultation event. The event was advertised on the applicant's digital newsletter (which was mailed to 1,194 addresses), at the clubhouse and on their website. The event was also advertised via a newsletter which was delivered to the 5 local residents whose properties adjoin the site and was emailed to the Parish Council and Councillors at the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead and Wokingham Borough.
- 4.2. The drop-in event and ongoing exhibition display ran from Wednesday 26 November 2025 until Friday 12 December 2025.
- 4.3. The applicant endeavoured to engage with key local political stakeholders, who were contacted via email. Below are the stakeholders identified during the consultation process who were invited to the public exhibition:

Position / Organisation	Stakeholder
Cabinet Member for Communities and Leisure	Cllr Jack Douglas
Cabinet Member for Planning, Governance and Asset Management	Cllr Adam Bermange
Hurley and Walthams Ward Councillor (RBWM)	Cllr Maureen Hunt
Hurley and Walthams Ward Councillor (RBWM)	Cllr George Blundell
Waltham St Lawrence Parish Councillor	Cllr Mark Hipgrave
Waltham St Lawrence Parish Councillor	Cllr Charles Williams
Twyford, Ruscombe and Hurst Ward Councillor (Wokingham Borough)	Cllr Martin Alder
Twyford, Ruscombe and Hurst Ward Councillor (Wokingham Borough)	Cllr Martijn Andrea
Twyford, Ruscombe and Hurst Ward Councillor (Wokingham Borough)	Cllr Stephen Conway

- 4.4. A copy of the newsletter is provided at **Appendix 1**.
- 4.5. The in-person drop-in event was held on Wednesday 26 November between 4pm and 8pm at the clubhouse on the application site.
- 4.6. In total, 27 people attended the event with additional visits to the exhibition beyond.
- 4.7. Boards were presented at the exhibition which provided details of the proposal. The boards were consistent with the information presented to the Council through the pre-application process in order to ensure that all respondents had equal opportunity to learn about and feedback on the plans.
- 4.8. A copy of the exhibition boards is provided at **Appendix 2**.

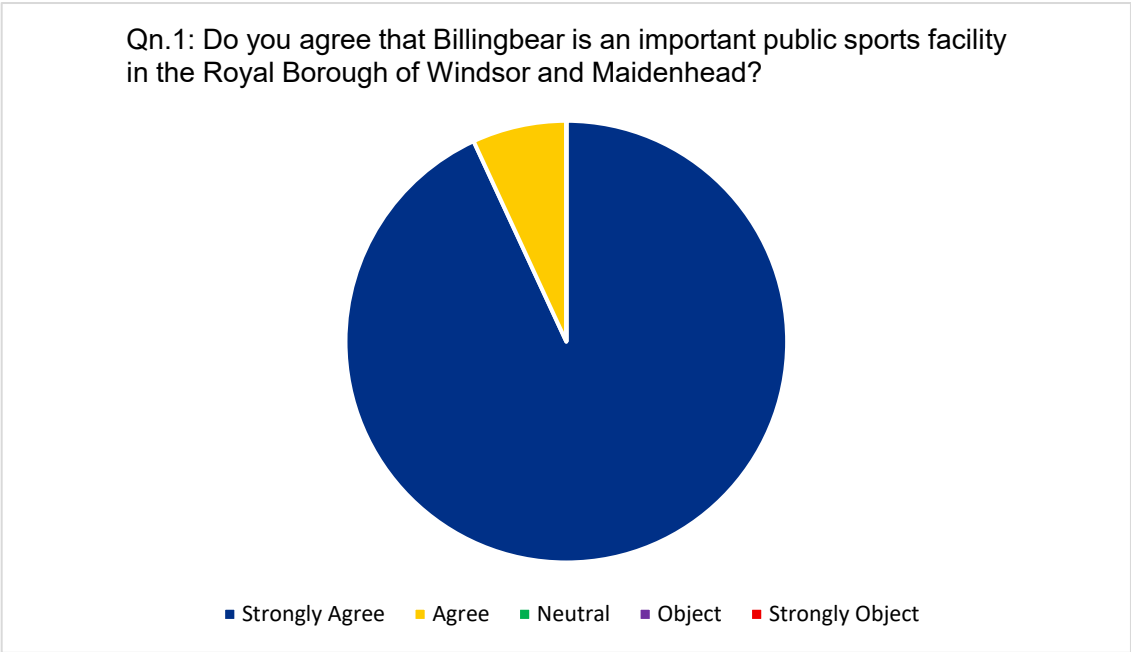


Image 2: The in-person exhibition

- 4.9. Feedback forms were available for attendees at the exhibition to complete and were left in the clubhouse for the duration of the display of the boards so comments could be left.
- 4.10. The feedback form comprised a range of questions designed to provide the applicant with constructive feedback from the community on the emerging proposals for the site. In total 29 feedback forms were provided.
- 4.11. A copy of the feedback form is provided at **Appendix 3**.

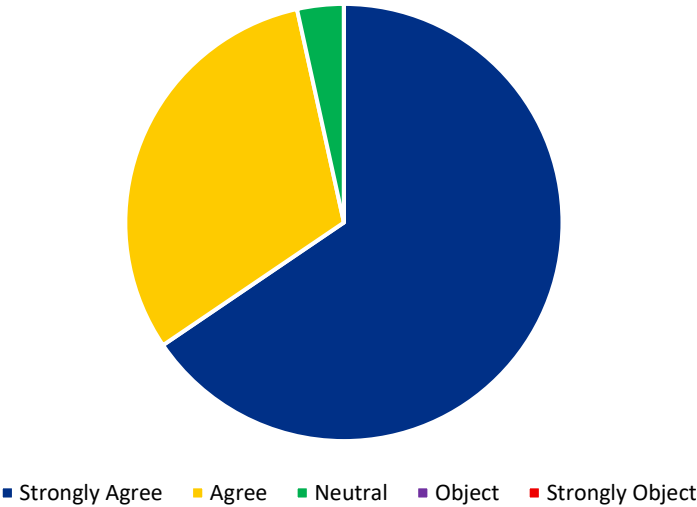
5. Review of community feedback

- 5.1. In total, 29 feedback forms were completed.
- 5.2. The feedback from the community was overwhelmingly positive with the vast majority of responses to all questions agreeing, or strongly agreeing with the proposition. None of the responses received raised any objection to any aspect of the proposals for the application site.
- 5.3. The below analysis and charts illustrate the feedback received via the feedback forms.



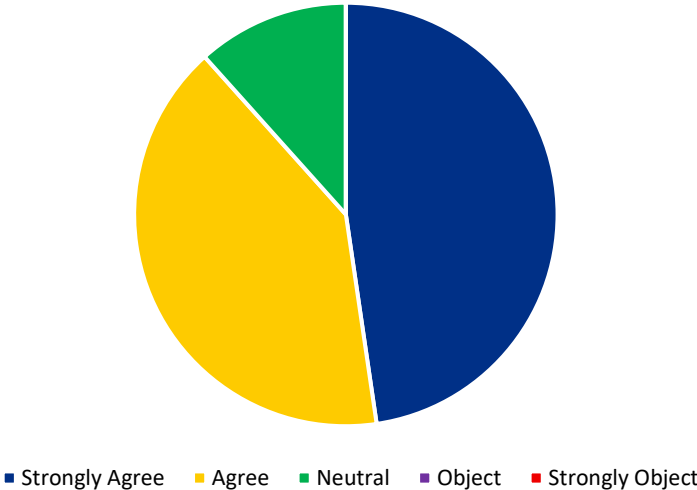
- 5.4. 100% of respondents strongly agree, or agree that Billingbear Park Golf Course is an important public sports facility.

Qn.2: Do you support the principle of sports diversification on the site?



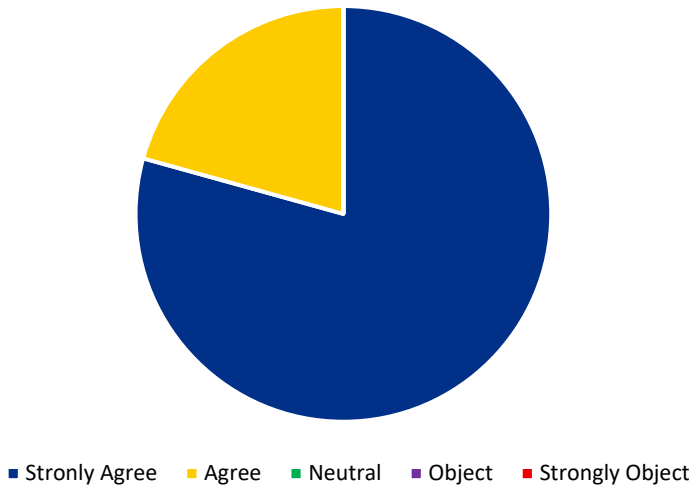
5.5. 97% of respondents strongly agree, or agree with the plan to diversify sports provision at the application site.

Qn.3: Do you agree that providing access to wider sports facilities at the site will have a beneficial impact on encouraging participation in sport?



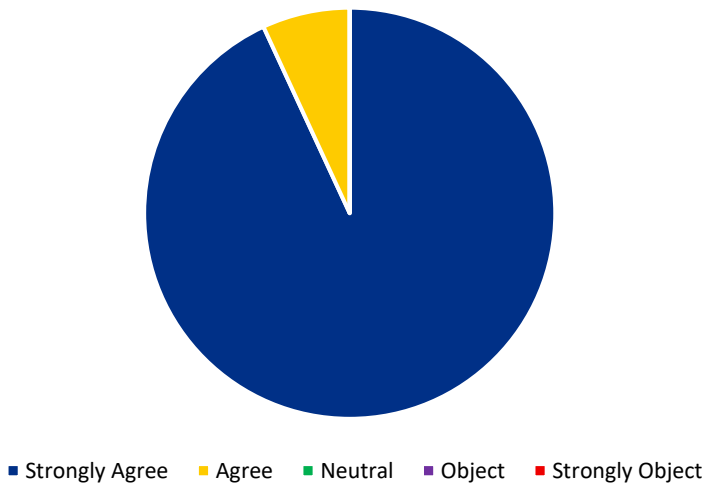
5.6. 93% of respondents strongly agree, or agree that providing access to wider sports facilities at Billingbear Park will positively encourage wider participation in sport.

Qn.4: Do you agree that the new clubhouse extension and indoor driving range buildings are of a high quality and attractive design?



5.7. 100% of respondents strongly agree, or agree that the design of the proposed clubhouse and indoor driving range building are of a high quality.

Qn.5: Do you agree that it is important for the development to include a landscaping scheme to enhance its setting and biodiversity?



5.8. Finally, 100% of respondents strongly agree, or agree that it is important for the development to include a suitable landscaping scheme to enhance the development's setting and biodiversity at the site.

5.9. Question 6 on the feedback forms asked respondents to provide any further comments in relation to the proposed development. The main relevant themes arising from the answers to this question and other comment responses are listed below:

- Support for the overall development (x8 responses)
- Support for the expansion of diversified sporting offer at the site (x3 response)
- Request for the continued provision of a net for driving range practice and warm ups before a round (x3 responses)
- Request for membership and green fees to be kept reasonable (x1 response)
- Request for an expansion of the food and drink options provided in the clubhouse (x2 responses)

5.10. The applicant's response to these points is, where relevant, detailed in the table below:

Feedback received	Applicant's response
Practice nets should continue to be provided at the site.	The applicant's current approach to operating the site is detailed on their website as " <i>Making quality golf accessible to all</i> ". This objective will carry through to the operation of the simulator building, which they intend to operate at a competitive price point. The applicant recognises the popularity of the moveable nets and intends to keep these at the site.
Membership and green fees to be kept reasonable.	The cost of maintaining and operating the course is rising significantly given increased costs associated with staff salaries, materials and equipment. The applicant is proud, however, to be the only pay-and-play course in Windsor and Maidenhead and is determined to keep their membership and green fees affordably priced. The diversification of sports provision at the site will generate additional use of the site and will monetise parts of the site which currently fulfil no sporting purpose, but add to maintenance costs. By diversifying their income stream, the applicant will be able to maintain affordable golf provision.
Widened food and drink choice in the clubhouse.	With the development of the extended clubhouse and with additional use of the site, the applicant may be able to consider the expansion of the food and drink offer. However, this is not currently proposed.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1. Across the course of the public consultation period, several opportunities were provided for local residents and other stakeholders to comment on and contribute to the applicant's proposals for the development of the site. The drop-in event provided a key opportunity for attendees to ask questions of the applicant, their architect and planning consultant, provide feedback on the proposals and voice concerns they might have.
- 6.2. The provision of feedback forms provided a further opportunity for comments to be provided and concerns raised.
- 6.3. The feedback received has been overwhelmingly positive with respondents being very supportive of the applicant's plans to diversify sports provision at the site.
- 6.4. Throughout the consultation period, the applicant has worked closely with the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Council to ensure officers and Councillors are aware of the proposed development and their feedback can ensure the development delivers significant benefits to the local community.