

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	260493
Site Address:	St Crispins Sports Centre, London Road, Wokingham, RG40 1SR
Expiry Date:	22 May 2026
Site Visit Date:	28 April 2026
Proposal: Full application for the erection of boundary fencing with associated access gate.	

PLANNING POLICY	
National Policy	National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)
Core Strategy (CS)	CP1 – Sustainable Development CP2 – Inclusive Communities CP3 – General Principles for Development CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC02 – Development Limits TB21 – Landscape Character
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document

NO RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Property Services – No comments
WBC Landscape and Trees – Request further information
WBC CIL – No comments
WBC Sports Development (Places and Neighbourhoods) – No comments
WBC Cleaner and Greener – No comments
WBC Green Infrastructure – No objection

External

None

REPRESENTATIONS

Wokingham Town Council	In support of the proposal
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	No comments received

APPRAISAL

This application seeks planning permission for the erection of new fencing and gates to the front of St Crispins School, outside the former leisure centre. The proposed fencing is required to enclose the school boundary to improve security, prevent unauthorised access and antisocial behaviour to the building frontage.

Principle of Development: The National Planning Policy Framework has an underlying presumption in favour of sustainable development which is carried through to the local Development Plan. The Managing Development Delivery Local Plan Policy CC01 states that planning applications that accord with the policies in the Development Plan for Wokingham Borough will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The site is located within settlement limits and as such the development should be acceptable providing that it complies with the principles stated in the Core Strategy. Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy states that development must be appropriate in terms of its scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area in which it is located and must be of high quality design without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land uses and occupiers.

The boundary treatment proposed is said to be for security measures, as stated through the submission and supplementary information provided by the Agent. The proposed fencing is intended to reduce opportunities for unauthorised access and congregation around the sports centre building outside of school hours. The information submitted by the agent highlights ongoing issues of minor vandalism, littering and misuse of the frontage area, particularly arising from its proximity to the adjoining skate park and the lack of shelter elsewhere. As the sports centre is now managed directly by the school and is no longer operated as a fully staffed public facility throughout the week, the introduction of additional security measures is considered a reasonable and proportionate response to these identified site management concerns.

Having regard to the above, the principle of erecting fencing for security purposes within the school grounds is considered acceptable.

Character of the Area: In visual terms, the proposed fencing would be perceptible along the site frontage and would introduce a more enclosing, functional feature. While it may appear somewhat stark in isolation, it must be considered within the context of the established school and sports centre complex, where boundary treatments, hard landscaping, and built form already form prominent elements of the street scene. Given its limited extent, the fencing would not detract from the character of the area to a degree that would result in unacceptable harm.

It is also noted that the entrance to the former leisure centre is not of particular architectural merit itself; therefore, its enclosure does not give rise to concern.

When balanced against the clear social and operational benefits associated with enhanced site security, the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of character and visual amenity, and compliant with Policies CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy.

The Landscape Officer has requested additional information on matters that are either not material to the determination of this application or relate to fundamentally different

forms of development. While it is reasonable to suggest amendments, it is not appropriate to propose alternative schemes of a substantially different nature. Although the Officer notes that the fencing may appear visually dominant, no in-principle objection has been raised. For the reasons outlined above, it is not considered that any landscape or visual impacts would outweigh the benefits of the proposal.

Neighbouring Amenity: There would not be any negative impact on neighbouring land uses as a result of the development.

Conclusion: For all the above, the proposal is acceptable and the application is recommended for approval.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL): When planning permission is granted for a development that is CIL liable, the Council will issue a liability notice as soon as practicable after the day on which the planning permission first permits development. Completing the assumption of liability notice is a statutory requirement to be completed for all CIL liable applications.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010): In determining this application the Council is required to have due regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that persons with protected characteristics as identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application and there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

RECOMMENDATION

Conditions agreed:	Not required
Recommendation:	Approve
Date:	29 April 2026
Earliest date for decision:	27 March 2026

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	29 April 2026

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

- *None relevant*