

Finchampstead CC Artificial Wicket – Planning Statement

Description of Proposal

Lay an artificial wicket on the edge of the cricket square on the Leas. The dimensions of the Match Pitch are 30 m x 2.74 m (94 ft by 9 ft). Ground at Finchampstead Sports club. Pitch would be artificial grass, no impact. Ground is Sports club owned and the cricket square is roped off in winter and used in summer. There is no public foot fall across the middle of the square. Pitch would be the same colour as the surrounding grass so would be indistinguishable from any sort of distance.

Site and Surroundings

The site is located within an area of countryside and an area of public open space and accommodates a sports ground, a tennis court and pavilion. The site is located to the north of The Village and there is a public right of way to the north and east of the site.

The proposed build site is on the second pitch, behind the recreation ground. The new match pitch will be located on the western edge of their existing natural turf square.

The new wicket will allow both boys and girls who play for Finchampstead CC to play more cricket, both matches and will give them an enhanced training facility.

Assessment of Proposal & Key Issues

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. Policy CC01 of the MDD Local Plan 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.

Located in the Countryside: The site is located outside the settlement boundary and in the countryside.

Given the nature of the application, the proposed development will not result in an excessive encroachment of built form within the countryside. Therefore, the proposal will have no detrimental impact on the character or appearance of the countryside. The proposal is therefore considered compliant with policy CP11 in this respect.

Character of the Area: The pitch would be the same colour as the surrounding grass so would be indistinguishable from any sort of distance. Given the significant set back from the road “The Village”, the proposal would not harm the character of the area.

Neighbour Amenity: The proposal would not have a negative impact upon neighbouring amenities.

Heritage and Conservation: There is believed to be no heritage issues with the proposal given the intervening distance to the nearest of the identified heritage assets.

Landscaping and Trees: The site is located within the Countryside which has recently been identified as being within the Forest and Rides Valued Landscape. A number of Valued Landscapes have been identified through a Topic Paper on Valued Landscapes by WBC dated January 2020 to respond to paragraph 174 (a) of the NPPF and prepared as part of the evidence base for the Emerging Local Plan Update and associated Policy NE6.

The proposal for an artificial wicket as part of an existing area of sports pitches is relatively small in comparison to the wider sports complex. It is therefore considered this will have little

or no impact on the wider character beyond the sports pitches or valued landscape and I am unlikely to have any objection should an application be submitted.