

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

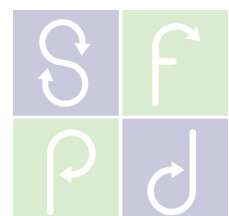
Proposed Development

At

Loddon Valley Leisure Centre
Rushey Way
Lower Earley
Reading
BERKSHIRE. RG6 4GD.

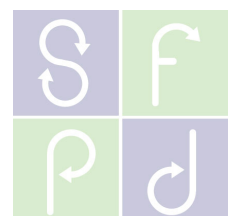
Issue 02

Dated 03.07.2026



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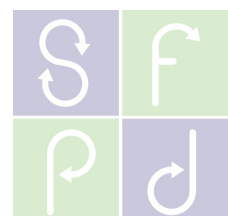


1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Design and Access Statement accompanies an application for full planning permission submitted to Woking Borough Council for the conversion of existing block of three porous asphalt floodlit netball courts to form four synthetic grass padel courts with integrated low level LED floodlighting and associated works.

1.2 The Statement is structured in accordance with the advice set out in Circular 01/2006 'Guidance on Changes to the Development Control System' and the guidance contained in the CABI publication 'Design and Access Statements'. Accordingly, the Statement is structured as follows:

- Assessment
 - *Physical*
 - *Social*
 - *Economic*
 - *Planning Policy*
- Involvement
- Evaluation
- Design
 - The Proposal*
 - *Use*
 - *Amount*
 - *Layout*
 - *Scale*
 - *Landscaping*
 - *Appearance*
- Access
- Conclusion



2.0 **Assessment**

- 2.1 This section of the Statement assesses the site's immediate and wider context in terms of physical, social and economic characteristics and relevant planning policies.

Physical

- 2.2 The application relates to an outdoor area of land at Loddon Valley Leisure Centre netball facility site located at Chalfont Way, Lower Earley, Reading. RG6 5HQ.

The Leisure Centre proposal is to convert the three redundant outdoor floodlit porous asphalt tennis courts to four outdoor floodlit synthetic grass padel courts.

The Leisure has three outdoor floodlit netball courts located at which are separate to the main Leisure Centre site adjacent Chalfont Park

The three existing porous asphalt tennis court Nrs 1 – 3 are currently floodlit using 2Kw metal halide projector fittings at nominal mounting height of 10.0m high.

The outdoor floodlit netball courts comprising court Nrs 1 – 3 are located away from the main Loddon Valley Leisure Centre site but still within easy walking distance. A grassed margin with mature trees is present to the North with the Chalfont Park public car park beyond, a grassed margin with trees to the East with Chalfont Way public highway beyond, trees and grassed margin hedging present to the South with public footpath beyond and a grassed margin with trees to the West with the main Chalfont Park grassland beyond.

The proposed four floodlit padel courts will be partly screened to the surrounding areas by the present of existing mature trees, shrubs and the existing 3.0m high perimeter fencing to the North, East, South and West elevations.



Visual impact of the installation of the four padel courts will have little or no affect on the locality.

The proposed four floodlit padel courts are not in close proximity to any residential dwellings (closest dwellings to the North 125m away). The adjacent Chalfont Way and The Square public highways and associated roundabout have existing street lighting.

2.3 There are no car parking spaces on the three netball court site area.

Closest car parking is available to the North of the three netball courts in the Chalfont Way public car park with 5 disabled spaces and 68 able bodied car parking spaces.

Amble space will be available around the four netball courts to allow for any cycles to be stored with hoops provided (if necessary).

Social

2.4 The site is excellently located to serve a considerable local population who can easily access the site by foot, cycle or car.

2.5 In terms of impact on the wider area this is likely to relate to the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area and the limited impacts associated with increased activity though the total number of padel court users will be less than the existing (i.e. fourteen persons per netball court plus 3 referees i.e. 45 total and 4 persons per padel court i.e. 16 total for four padel courts).

The proposed four padel courts will be used between 7.00 a.m. - 10.00 p.m. Monday to Friday and 7.00 a.m. – 8.00 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.



Economic

- 2.6 The benefits of the site and the proposed development derive largely from the sporting and recreational value rather than economic value.

Nonetheless the facilities available provide an invaluable asset to the local population who will be provided with inexpensive and improved recreational facilities immediately on the doorstep and without presenting the need to travel.

Planning Policy

- 2.7 National Planning Policy is now contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in December 2024.

Clause 11 states

Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

For plan-making this means that: a) all plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to: meet the development needs of their area; align growth and infrastructure; improve the environment; mitigate climate change (including by making effective use of land in urban areas) and adapt to its effects; b) strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas, unless: i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area; or ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.



2.8 NPPF Clause 96 is in respect of Promoting Healthy & Safe Communities :-

Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which: a) promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other – for example through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres, street layouts that allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods, and active street frontages; b) are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion – for example through the use of well-designed, clear and legible pedestrian and cycle routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas; and c) enable and support healthy lives, through both promoting good health and preventing ill-health, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs and reduce health inequalities between the most and least deprived communities – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.

Clause 98 :

To provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should: a) plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments; b) take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community; c) guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs; d) ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise, and are retained for the benefit of the community; and e) ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.



2.9 Local Planning Policy is contained within the Local Development Plan January 2010.

Generally the local planning policy can be summarized as follows :-

All development should represent high quality design which demonstrates high levels of environment awareness and contributes to climate change mitigation and adaption.

Development proposals for outdoor lighting schemes should not have a demonstrably harmful impact on residential amenity or biodiversity.

The openness of the Green belt should not be affected by developments.

Wokingham Borough Council advocates the provision of facilities to improve the health and the quality of life within the Community. This vision is consistent with Central Government policy either expressed directly or through Sport England.

The conversion of the three existing floodlit netball tennis courts to four floodlit padel courts represents an improvement to existing sporting and recreational facilities at the site area.

The existing netball court block fencing weld mesh 3.00m high will be retained to the outer perimeter. All development takes place within the existing hard surfaced court block area with no extension in the surrounds.

The four padel courts are each dimensioned 20.0m long x 10.0m wide internally and will be mainly contained within the curtilage of the existing three floodlit netball court block as indicated within the layout drawings. The padel court play surfaces will be generally formed at the same level as the existing netball court playing surface to a level gradient.



The four floodlit padel courts will be mainly used for junior and adult competitive play, development and coaching for padel tennis.

The padel courts have been sensitively designed to have the minimum effect on the character of the area with the new perimeter glazed walls and fencing comprising 3.0m high toughened glass to the end walls and to 4.0m long return sections to both side walls with 1.0m weld mesh panels (RAL 9005) above and 3.0m high weld mesh panels to the remaining section.

Toughened glass and weld mesh panels will be fixed off 100mm x 50mm green (RAL 6005) rectangular hollow section fence posts (4.00m high to end walls including the 4.0m long returns and 3.0m high to intervening side wall weld mesh sections). Clear opening entrances 2.20m high x 2.00m wide will be incorporated to each side wall at the centre line position. The new all weather synthetic turf playing surface will be single tone dark blue with white court markings. Note : the existing 3.00m high perimeter fencing will be retained without replacement.

The new porous asphalt padel court sub-base construction will comprise two layers of porous asphalt 65mm depth above the existing free draining aggregate layer which incorporate existing perimeter drainage below the playing surface.

As such careful consideration of the proposed 6.15m high LED floodlighting installation has been undertaken to ensure that spillage and glare will not pose a problem to adjacent residential dwellings and other surrounding areas.

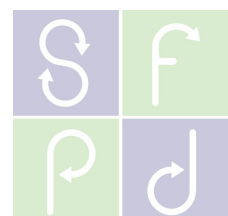
The proposed LED floodlighting has been specifically designed in order to reduce sky glow and spillage to adjacent domestic properties. Note : the floodlighting to each padel court will be turned off when not in use.



The floodlighting scheme has been designed to have the minimum effect on the character of the area with slender integrated columns (nominal 100 x 50 R.H.S. extended fence posts) which will be painted green (RAL 6005) together with dark green (RAL 6005) or light grey LED fittings.

Woking Borough Council advocates the provision of facilities to improve the health and the quality of life within the Community. This vision is consistent with Central Government policy either expressed directly or through Sport England.

- 2.10 The proposals perform well when assessed against all of these policy objectives promote and increase the sporting and recreation facilities at the Loddon Valley Leisure Centre netball area site.



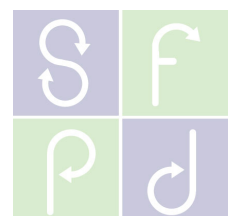
3.0 Involvement

- 3.1 The proposals have been prepared in conjunction with Places Leisure Management Limited, Wokingham Borough Council, the Lawn Tennis Association and Sports Facility Planning & Design Limited with appropriate liaison where necessary.

They are informed by the professional expertise of specialist providers of this type of facility who have advised throughout.

- 3.2 Post the submission of this application, consultation has taken place with any adjacent local residents to advise of the proposed development and allow opportunity for feedback and comment.

Internally consultation with the Leisure Centre membership, who are locally based, has taken place and they are in support of the project.



4.0 Evaluation

4.1 From an assessment of the context of the site, the key opportunities and constraints of the site are set out in the table below:

Opportunities	Constraints
• Opportunity to improve sporting and recreational facilities • Secure a high quality facility. • Improve visual qualities of the locality. • Padel courts to be constructed over the footprint of existing three netball court block • Protect the existing landscaping across the site. • Provide natural surveillance and increased activity to reduce potential for criminal activity. • Create a community asset which is valued and appropriately maintained • Ability to utilise existing changing and welfare facilities within the Club site	• Need to minimise sky glow and spillage from floodlighting • Need to minimise light pollution and potential glare to residents • Need to minimise noise pollution to any adjacent residents. Note the padel courts are over 120 metres distance from the closest adjacent dwellings. • Finished levels of padel courts area to be kept within reasonable limits of existing netball court levels. • LED floodlighting scheme to padel court to reduce horizontal and vertical lux spillage compared to existing 2Kw metal halide high column scheme.

5.0 Design

The Proposal

- 5.1 Permission is sought for the conversion of three existing floodlit porous asphalt netball courts to form four floodlit padel courts.

The four padel tennis courts have been designed to meet Lawn Tennis Association and International Padel Federation minimum dimensions and has been specially designed for both adult and junior development and coaching.

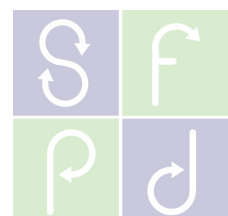
The padel courts shall be floodlit to achieve the L.T.A. minimum standard for padel tennis (i.e. 300 lux PPA) from four number nominal 6.00 metre high integrated columns in a side lit arrangement.

Each padel court will utilise four nominal 320 watt LED linear fittings (with a tilt angle of less than 10 degrees) with front and rear deflector plates which will be turned off when not in use. The use of LED fittings permits instant on and off switching with no problems of 'hot striking' which affect metal halide fittings which leads to metal halide fittings being switched on even when the courts are not in use.

The mini tennis courts will be created by removing the existing synthetic turf surfacing and colour coating the underlying 6mm diameter porous asphalt sub-base.

Eight existing floodlight columns will be removed from site.

All the existing 2Kw metal halide 'projector' type fittings will be removed from site.



Use and Amount

5.2 The application seeks a more intensive sporting recreational use of the Loddon Valley Leisure Centre site by the conversion of three floodlit porous asphalt netball courts to form four synthetic turf floodlit padel courts.

5.3 The hours of proposed use will be restricted by the Leisure Centre to the following :-

Monday to Friday 7.00 am to 10.00 p.m.

Saturday & Sunday 7.00 am to 8.00 p.m.

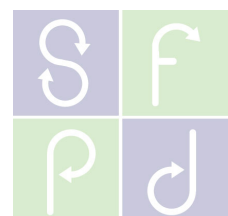
Layout and Scale

5.3 The proposed layout is shown on the drawings accompanying the planning application.

5.4 The scale of facility is in keeping with the nature and extent of the area available and appropriate to the location of the site and the relationship with adjacent facilities and structures.

Landscaping

5.5 Existing landscaping to the outer perimeter of the existing court block will be retained and can be supplemented if necessary.



Appearance

- 5.6 There will be very little change to the appearance of the site.

The four new padel tennis courts will be generally finished at the same level as existing porous asphalt playing surface. The synthetic playing surface will be single tone dark blue.

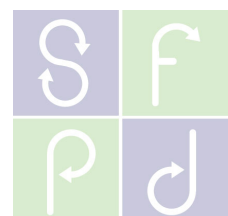
The only structures visible above ground level will be new perimeter glass walls and rigid panel weld mesh fencing with associated 100mm x 50mm R.H.S. posts (RAL 6005) and the extended integrated floodlight columns (painted green RAL 6005) and LED fittings.

The floodlight columns and fittings will be partly screened by the existing trees and hedging to the North, East, South and West elevations.

The integrated padel court floodlight columns will be of slender design with a painted dark green finish. The floodlight luminaries will be finished green (RAL 6005).

Nominal 320 Watt LED Linear Panel fittings (4 Nr to each padel court which is 16 Nr in total) have been selected to reduce light spillage and sky glow. The LED fittings will be installed with the nominal mounting height of only 6.15m and to reduce both horizontal and vertical lux spillage with reduced source intensity (i.e. candela) or glare to adjacent residential properties.

As such the power requirement for the new floodlighting will be only 1.20 Watts per padel court. The existing power requirement is in the order of 8.8Kw per court for the metal halide scheme so the proposed padel floodlighting scheme is significantly more sustainable in terms of power consumption and will reduce the lux level spillage to the locality.



The proposed LED fittings have been selected for its relative compact small size and manufacturers inclusion of front and rear deflectors installed by the manufacturer which significantly reduces lux spillage and source intensity (candela). All the LED 'panel' type fittings will be installed at a tilt angle of less than 10 degrees with a zero upward light ratio rating.

The proposed installation of floodlighting represents a more sustainable solution over tradition metal halide 'projector' type fittings.

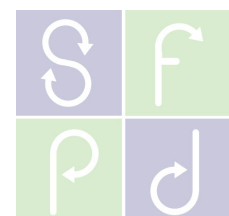
The proposed mounting height of the LED fittings is only 6.15m compared to the traditional use of 10.0m metre columns in a corner arrangement scheme for a netball court.

The lux level spillage plots included within the lighting design / impact assessment proposals indicates that no adjacent properties will be adversely affected by the floodlighting. The Loddon Valley Leisure Centre netball area is considered to be E3 Medium District Brightness as defined by the I.L.P. The lighting design indicates compliance with E3 criteria.

The colour temperature of the existing metal halide floodlighting is likely to be 4000 kelvin and this colour temperature will be changed in the new LED fittings which will be 2700 kelvin in accordance with the ILP Guidance Note for Bats and Artificial Lighting. The colour temperature change will result in an approval for ecology in the locality and insect life in particular.

The proposed LED fittings do not have any Ultra Violet lighting emission unlike the existing metal halide lamps (which attracts insects and leads to their ultimate demise).

The existing metal halide floodlighting to netball court Nrs 1 – 3 has been designed with a maintenance factor of 0.8 applied which represents a 20% reduction of lux values on installation and indicates performance at the end of the lamp life (i.e. 2000 hours). The S.F.P.D. lighting scheme has been designed with a maintenance factor 1.00 to indicate the maximum lux vales at the initial installation or switch on all in accordance with the recommendations of the Institute of Lighting Professionals Guidance Note for Obtrusive Light dated 2021/01.



Due to the presence of existing fencing to the court block perimeter 3.00m high, which is an obstruction to unopposed flight by bats, the fact that the court block area is porous asphalt which is also an inert material for ecology, the previous operation use of the metal halide floodlighting for a period of over 20 years upto 10.00 p.m. at night (plus the adjacent public highway street lighting) SFPD Limited consider that bats will have moved away from the specific locality of the three netball courts.

Note : The redundant 10.0m high galvanised columns and the associated 2Kw metal halide fittings will be taken down and removed off site for recycling which will be an aesthetic improvement to the locality.

6.0 Access

- 6.1 Previous sections have set out the excellent accessibility of the site to potential users. The site is within the heart of an established residential area and is already well used. Many users will inevitably arrive by foot and access to the ambulant disabled will be easily facilitated.
- 6.2 In addition many existing users will access the site by cycle and will be able to utilise cycle parking facilities.



7.0 Conclusion

- 7.1 This Statement has sought to set out the design rationale to the proposal in the context of Development Plan policy. It has described how the site opportunities and constraints have influenced the design process and how the scheme proposed follows an iterative examination of these issues.
- 7.2 The outcome is a proposal that is policy compliant at every level. It will improve the appearance of the area and enhance the sporting and recreational value of the Loddon Valley Leisure Centre netball area site.

