

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	261139
Site Address:	Twyford Tennis Club, George's Playing Fields, Twyford, RG10 9JA
Expiry Date:	19 August 2026
Site Visit Date:	3 August 2026
Proposal: Full application for the proposed erection of an additional tennis court with fencing, new floodlights system to block of 3 courts, erection of rebound fences and erection of a bund.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Scale and Location of Development Proposals – Major Development Location - Twyford
Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone
Public Open Space

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 CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction CC06 – Noise CC07 – Parking CC09 – Development and Flood Risk CC10 – Sustainable Drainage TB08 – Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Standards TB21 – Landscape Character TB22 – Sites of Urban Landscape Value TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
40136	Installation of floodlights on two tennis courts	Approved

		4 February 1993
F/2013/0049	Application for temporary permission for the continued use of a prefabricated building as club house.	Approved 08 March 2013
223372	Full application for the proposed erection of an additional tennis court with fencing, new floodlights system to block of 3 courts & rebound fences to single court and erection of bund.	Approved 13 January 2023
230132	Application to vary condition 4 of planning consent 223372 for the proposed erection of an additional tennis court with fencing, new floodlights system to block of 3 courts & rebound fences to single court and erection of bund. Condition 4 refers to floodlighting and the variation is to allow the rewording of the condition to remove the month restriction.	Approved 03 March 2023

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Environmental Health – No objection subject to conditions.
WBC Tree and Landscape – No objection.
WBC Highways – No objection.
WBC Sports Development (Places and Neighbourhoods) – No comments received.
WBC Cleaner and Greener – No comments received
WBC Green Infrastructure – No comments received

External

Sport England – No objection.

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	No objection raised. However, the Committee request that the comments raised by neighbouring residents, regarding lighting, are fully taken into consideration and if planning permission is granted, a condition added requiring the lighting to be switched off at 10pm in line with the existing arrangements for the skatepark, to help minimise any impact on nearby properties. <i>Officer Response: If the application is approved, the proposed lighting scheme will be subject to the same lighting conditions attached to the lapsed permissions ref 223372 and 230132, including to be switched off by 10pm.</i>
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	2 comments received relating to operating hours and querying whether the lights will be controlled to switch off no later than 10pm to minimise disturbance to those living nearby. <i>Officer Response: If the application is approved, the</i>

	<i>proposed lighting scheme will be subject to the same lighting conditions attached to the lapsed permissions ref 223372 and 230132, including to be switched off by 10pm.</i>
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APPRAISAL

Site Description: The site is located within King George's playing field, Twyford, adjacent to the existing tennis courts. This application proposes the re-submission of a scheme previously approved under planning permissions 223372 and 230132. As those permissions have expired, the development requires a new grant of planning permission.

Proposal: This application proposes:

1. The erection of a 34m x 15m tennis court enclosure comprising porous asphalt surfacing in blue with green grass edging to the east of the existing double tennis court.
2. The erection of 2.7m high chain-link rolled weldmesh fencing with crank top barbwire above to match existing fencing. This will enclose the new tennis court and the existing two courts.
3. The formation of a 1m high earth bund around the tennis court approximately 48m in length to the east of the proposed and existing tennis courts
4. Erection of 18 floodlights on 12 columns in RAL 6005 Green, approximately 6.7m in height to the 3 adjoining courts (2 existing and 1 proposed) and removal of the existing floodlights. The proposed pitch lighting will comprise: HiLux Match G6.10 FS 600; HiLux Match G6 10 FS 360; Hiux Match G6.10 FS 420 and HiLux Match G6.10 FS 360
5. The diversion of the existing tarmac footpath around the proposed tennis court.

N.B. The existing floodlights on the existing "Court 3" are to remain as existing (8.5m in height).

Loss of existing playing field: The Council takes a positive approach to the provision of new leisure facilities within the Borough providing any adverse impact are adequately mitigated and managed to make them acceptable and in accordance with paragraph 104 of the NPPF. The proposed development to provide an additional tennis court would result in the formalisation of part of the exiting field and subsequently its loss.

Sport England were consulted on the proposal. As part of their assessment, Sport England consulted with the Lawn Tennis Association and Bucks and Berks Football Association/the Football Foundation. Sport England have confirmed that the proposal will not have an impact on the existing football pitches and therefore they have no objections. The proposal would result in the loss of only a limited area of informal playing field and would directly facilitate the provision of an additional tennis court and improved associated facilities. Officers consider that these sporting benefits outweigh the limited loss of playing field land in this instance. In this respect, the proposed sport lighting will allow greater participation of tennis at the site as will the extra court. Having reviewed the documentation, Sport England is of the opinion that the proposal will accord with exception 5 of their Playing Fields Policy and paragraph 104 of the

NPPF.

Therefore, the loss of a limited area of the existing playing field is considered acceptable to provide a new tennis facility and would comply with paragraph 104 of the NPPF and exception 5 of Sports England Playing Fields Policy.

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.

Character of the Area:

Paragraph 131 of the NPPF emphasises the importance of good design as key to making places better for people to live. 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 site is used by Twyford Tennis Club and forms part of King George's Playing Fields, which includes a range of outdoor sports facilities. The proposed court would adjoin the existing tennis courts and would be approximately 52m from the nearest dwelling in Stephenson Close. While the development would encroach slightly into the playing field, the additional court would support the recreational function of the site and would be read in the context of the existing tennis club and wider leisure facilities. The fencing, floodlighting columns and associated earth bund would also be viewed in association with the existing tennis courts and other sporting infrastructure within King George's Playing Fields and would not appear incongruous within this established recreational setting.

Whilst the proposal would introduce additional fencing, lighting columns and a bund into part of the playing field, these features would be viewed within an established sporting and recreational setting and would not cause material harm to the character or appearance of the area. Accordingly, the proposal complies with Paragraph 131 of the NPPF and Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy.

Neighbouring Amenity: The representations received from neighbouring residents and the Parish Council primarily relate to the potential impact of floodlighting and operating hours on residential amenity. These matters are assessed below.

The proposal would not give rise to unacceptable impacts in terms of overlooking,

loss of light or overbearing effects. The submitted lighting design demonstrates that illumination levels beyond the court area would remain within the parameters assessed by the applicant's lighting consultant, and this has been corroborated by the Council's Environmental Health officer. The key amenity consideration is the potential for the proposed floodlighting to result in obtrusive light affecting nearby land users.

Policy Context: Paragraph 198 of the NPPF requires development to be appropriate for its location, having regard to the likely effects, including cumulative effects, of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, and the sensitivity of the site and wider area. It states that planning decisions should *"limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation."*

Lighting Details: The proposed floodlighting would be approximately 52m from the nearest dwelling and would replace an older lighting system already present on the site. To safeguard neighbouring amenity and ensure compliance with NPPF Section 15 and Core Strategy Policies CP1 and CP3, the following conditions from the lapsed permissions 223372 and 230132 would be added to the Decision Notice if the application were to be approved:

- Condition (ref 223372): The flood lights shall be installed in accordance with the details contained within the Twyford Tennis Club, Outdoor LED Tennis Lighting Design dated 21/7/2022 and as shown on the plans listed at Condition 2 and the lux levels shall not exceed the levels detailed in these documents and associated plans.
- Condition ref (230132): The facility shall not be used, and all floodlighting shall be switched off, between the hours of 2200 to 0800 hours on any day unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Lighting Assessment: The submitted lighting information indicates that light spill beyond the courts would be limited. Although the site is open, the additional lighting columns would not appear unduly obtrusive given their limited number and slim design.

The floodlighting would improve local sporting provision, support year-round use of the courts, reduce pressure on the main pitch, and provide safer winter training facilities. In terms of noise, the proposal represents an intensification of an existing recreational use rather than the introduction of a materially different activity. Having regard to Environmental Health's consultation response, the additional court is not considered likely to result in unacceptable noise impacts on neighbouring occupiers.

Having regard to the efficiency of the proposed equipment and the existing recreational use of the site, the development is considered appropriate to its locality and use. It would therefore accord with Policy CP3 of the Wokingham Core Strategy and the Wokingham Borough Design Guide. Subject to the reinstated conditions, the proposed lighting would not result in a significant adverse impact on the amenity of adjoining land users.

Highway Access and Parking Provision: The Highways Officer raises no objection and has commented: *"As well as the tennis club, the car park serves several other*

facilities including the village hall with its associated activities and a veterinary practice. Using WBC parking standards for each land use the car park supports, the applicant is generally required to demonstrate that the existing car park has sufficient capacity to accommodate the increase in demand resulting from the additional tennis court. However, with reference to the officer report of 223372, the case officer has assessed on the sufficiency of the shared car park, and considered there are no concerns regarding parking provision. The proposed flood lights are to be more than 100 metres from the nearest public highway and are therefore not considered to impact significantly upon highways safety. The proposal has the potential to generate additional trips to the site but given the scale of the proposed additional court and the existing parking provision serving the site, the proposal is not considered likely to result in a severe impact on parking demand or highway safety."

Tree and Landscape: The Tree Officer raises no objection and has commented: "No trees or other landscape elements are detrimentally impacted by this proposal."

Environmental Health: The Environmental Health officer raises no objection to the proposal subject to the recommended lighting and hours conditions. The EHO also commented: "As application 261139 is essentially a resubmission of the scheme approved under 223372 and 230132, and no contamination conditions were requested on those permissions, a decontamination condition is not considered necessary."

Conclusion: The proposal is substantially the same as the earlier approved scheme and has been assessed against current planning policy and material considerations. The limited harm arising from the loss of a small area of playing field land is outweighed by the benefits of enhanced sporting provision, increased participation opportunities and improved supporting infrastructure. Subject to the recommended conditions, the proposal would not result in unacceptable impacts on the character of the area, neighbouring amenity, highway safety, trees, landscaping or environmental health.

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:	Yes
Recommendation:	Approve
Date:	19 August 2026
Earliest date for decision:	16 July 2026

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	19/08/26