

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	251312
Site Address:	Finchampstead Sports Club, The Village, Finchampstead, Wokingham, RG40 4JU
Expiry Date:	7 August 2025
Site Visit Date:	15 July 2025
Proposal: Full application for the proposed installation of an artificial wicket.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Water Utility Consultation Zones
Local Authorities
Affordable Housing Thresholds
Borough Parishes
Scale and Location of Development Proposals
Farnborough Aerodrome Consultation Zone
Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone
Nuclear Consultation Zone
Public Open Space
Borough Wards
Landscape Character Assessment Area
SSSI Impact Risk Zones
Thames Basin Heaths SPA Mitigation Zones
Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone Minor

PLANNING POLICY

National Policy	National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)
Core Strategy (CS)	CP1 – Sustainable Development CP3 – General Principles for Development CP4 – Infrastructure Requirements CP7 – Biodiversity CP8 – Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals CP11 – Proposals Outside Development Limits
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC02 – Development Limits CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping CC06 – Noise CC07 – Parking TB08 – Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Standards TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
240132	Pre-application advice for proposed installation of an artificial wicket on the edge of the cricket square on the Leas	Replied 20/02/24

CONSULTATION RESPONSES**Internal**

WBC Landscape and Trees: No objection

WBC Ecology: No comment

External

None consulted

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	Finchampstead Parish Council: No objection
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	No comments received

APPRAISAL

Site Description: 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.

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.

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.

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

Policy CP11 of the Core Strategy states proposals outside of development limits will not normally be permitted except where:

1. In the case of other countryside-based enterprises and activities, it contributes and/or promotes recreation in, and enjoyment of, the countryside; and
2. It does not lead to excessive encroachment or expansion of development away from the original buildings

Given the nature of the application, the proposed development will not result in an excessive encroachment of built form within the countryside. Such development is expected for a sports club and would be considered appropriate in this location and would not adversely impact the rural openness and visual amenity of the countryside it is situated within. 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 proposal is to 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). The pitch would be artificial grass and 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.

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

Landscape and Trees: There are no tree or landscape objections to the proposed artificial wicket.

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, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief. 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
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Recommendation:	Approve
Date:	7 August 2025
Earliest date for decision:	8 July 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	7 August 2025