

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	261181
Site Address:	Thames Valley Science Park, Collegiate Square, Shinfield, Wokingham, RG2 9LH
Expiry Date:	30 July 2026
Site Visit Date:	30 June 2026
Proposal: Full application for the proposed replacement of existing 1.8m high timber feather edged fencing with 2.4m high welded mesh security fencing.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS

Countryside (CP11)
Green Risk Zone – Great Crested Newts
Flood Zone 1

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 CP7 – Biodiversity 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 CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction CC06 – Noise CC07 – Parking CC09 – Development and Flood Risk CC10 – Sustainable Drainage TB21 – Landscape Character
Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update (LPU)	SS1 – Sustainable development principles SS2 – Spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy SS5 – Development in the countryside C2 – Mitigation of transport impacts and highway safety and design FD1 – Development and flood risk (from all sources) FD2 – Sustainable drainage FD3 – River corridors and watercourses NE1 – Biodiversity and geodiversity NE4 – Trees, woodland, hedges and hedgerows NE5 – Landscape and design DH1 – Place making and quality design DH2 – Safeguarding amenity

	HC5 – Environmental protection
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Whilst Thames Valley Science Park has an extensive planning history, none of it is considered relevant to the development proposals.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Highways – No objections
WBC Growth & Delivery (Planning Policy) – No comments received
WBC Landscape and Trees – No objections subject to conditions
WBC Ecology – No comments received

External

Southern Gas Networks – No comments received
National Gas Transmission – No objections

REPRESENTATIONS

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

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

Thames Valley Science Park is a large research centre located immediately north of the settlement of Shinfield. The site also immediately abuts the M4 motorway to the north/west.

Proposal Description:

This application seeks approval for the proposed replacement of an existing 1.8m high timber feather edged fencing with 2.4m high welded mesh security fencing.

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 application site is located outside of settlement limits in the designated Countryside. Policy CP11 states that proposals outside of development limits will not normally be permitted except where certain criteria are met. The relevant criteria are

highlighted:

- 1) It contributes to diverse and sustainable rural enterprises within the borough, or 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; and
- 3) It is contained within suitably located buildings which are appropriate for conversion, or in the case of replacement buildings would bring about environmental improvement; or
- 4) In the case of residential extensions, does not result in inappropriate increases in the scale, form or footprint of the original building;
- 5) In the case of replacement dwellings the proposal must:
 - i) Bring about environmental improvements; or
 - ii) Not result in inappropriate increases in the scale, form or footprint of the original building.
- 6) Essential community facilities cannot be accommodated within development limits or through the re-use/replacement of an existing building;
- 7) Affordable housing on rural exception sites in line with CP9.

Whilst the proposed development does not comply with any of the criteria for CP11, the proposed development adequately achieves the overarching aims of CP11, that being to protect the separate identity of settlements and maintain the quality of the environment; The fence would remain in-keeping with its urbanised surroundings (aided by its visual permeability) and would not affect the separate identity of settlements.

Character of the Area:

The existing fence is close boarded and 1.8 metres tall. In comparison, the new fence would have a mesh construction and be approximately 2.4 metres tall.

Whilst the new fence would be 0.6 metres taller than the original, its visual prominence would arguably be lesser than the original, close boarded fence due to the legible gaps in its form, aiding visual permeability.

The new fence would be visible from the M4 motorway, but its form would assimilate into its urban locale, consisting of the motorway itself and the adjacent Science park and Shinfield Studios. Overall, its impact on the character of the area would be acceptable.

Neighbouring Amenity, Highway Access and Parking Provision, Flooding and Drainage, Landscape and Trees and Ecology:

Due to the nature of the proposals, there are no concerns on these grounds.

WBC Landscape and Trees requested a landscaping condition but as per the 6 tests of planning conditions, the Case Officer does not consider the condition necessary to make the scheme acceptable.

Biodiversity Net Gain:

The proposed development is considered 'de minimis' in scale and is therefore

exempt from mandatory biodiversity net gains.

Conclusion:

Overall, the proposed development complies with the development plan. Subject to conditions, this 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:	Approval
Date:	1 July 2026
Earliest date for decision:	30 June 2026

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	1 July 2026