

PLANNING REF : 261097
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Grangefield
: 18 Sonning Meadows, Sonning-On-Thames, Berkshire
: RG46XB
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Kavi Gehlot
DATE SUBMITTED : 24/06/2026

COMMENTS:

I am writing as a resident of Sonning Meadows to formally object to the planning application submitted by Reading Cricket and Hockey Club. Having reviewed the documentation made available as part of this application, I have significant concerns regarding both the substance of the proposal and the lack of clarity surrounding its longer-term implications. I therefore respectfully request that the Council refuse the application in its current form.

A principal concern is the ambiguity that exists throughout the application. The proposal appears to extend beyond the scope of supporting sporting activities and instead suggests a gradual transition towards a mixture of commercial and residential uses. The documentation does not provide sufficient certainty regarding the intended future use of the site, making it difficult for residents and stakeholders to properly assess the full impact of the proposal. In my view, the application raises legitimate concerns that the site is being incrementally commercialised without adequate transparency regarding its ultimate purpose and scale.

The inclusion of a gym and physiotherapy facility is particularly concerning. The application does not appear to be supported by any demonstrable needs assessment or independent evidence showing that such facilities are required in this location. The local area is already well served by a range of established gym operators, including Anytime Fitness, David Lloyd Leisure, Palmer Park Leisure Centre and Bulmershe Leisure Centre. Similarly, there is no apparent shortage of physiotherapy services, with providers such as Greener Health, Ascenti, AM Physio, Rian Corbin Fitness Therapy, 3 Way Physio, Reading Physiotherapist, Physiocare Body Management and Bupa already operating within the local area. Given the existing provision, the justification for introducing further commercial facilities at this site has not been adequately demonstrated.

I am also concerned by references made to padel facilities and reports that there may be future plans to expand the site further through the introduction of padel courts. Whether or not such proposals form part of the current application, the existence of these discussions raises questions regarding the longer-term intentions for the site and whether the current application represents only one element of a wider development strategy. Residents are entitled to understand the full context in which planning decisions are being made.

The application must also be considered against the backdrop of increasing development pressure throughout the local area. It is widely recognised that a number of developments have either recently been approved or are currently being considered in and around Sonning. The cumulative impact of these developments on local infrastructure, traffic movements and the character of the area cannot be ignored. Any proposal which further intensifies the use of this site must be assessed within that broader context.

Traffic and highway impacts are of particular concern. Sonning Lane already experiences significant congestion, particularly during peak periods associated with school traffic and the expansion of The Blue Coat School. Residents regularly experience delays, increased traffic volumes and associated safety concerns. The proposed commercial uses would inevitably generate additional vehicle movements throughout the day and evening, extending beyond the traditional operating patterns associated with sports club activities. This additional traffic would place further strain on an already pressured local road network and contribute to the cumulative impacts currently being experienced by residents.

The proposal also appears to contemplate a change of use that could facilitate residential accommodation in the form of flats. However, there is no clear explanation regarding the long-term purpose, scale or justification for such accommodation. This lack of clarity is concerning, particularly as any approval could establish a precedent for further residential development on the site in the future. The Council should carefully consider whether granting permission for elements of this proposal could create a pathway for more extensive development that has not yet been fully disclosed or consulted upon.

More generally, there appears to be a lack of transparency regarding future plans for the site. Questions remain regarding potential padel court development, the expansion of commercial activities through gym and physiotherapy facilities, the introduction of residential accommodation, and the significance of the grey access road connecting the site to Sonning Lane. These issues collectively contribute to a sense that the long-term intentions for the site have not been fully articulated within the current application. Planning decisions should be based on clear and comprehensive information, not assumptions about future proposals that remain undefined but are currently being worked on.

In addition to the traffic impacts, any further commercialisation of the site is likely to increase noise, light pollution and environmental disturbance. Such impacts would inevitably affect neighbouring residents and alter the character of what is currently a relatively sensitive and semi-rural setting. These concerns would be amplified should padel courts form part of any future development, given the well-documented concerns regarding noise generation, extended hours of use and floodlighting associated with such facilities.

I am particularly concerned by references within the application to a purported "20-year master plan" for the site. If such a master plan exists, it is unreasonable that local residents have not been provided with an opportunity to review and understand its contents before decisions are made on individual planning applications. The existence of a long-term development strategy is clearly material to assessing the current proposal and should be disclosed in full. Without sight of this wider vision, residents are unable to properly evaluate whether the current application represents a standalone proposal or forms part of a much broader programme of development.

For all of the reasons outlined above, I respectfully request that the Council refuse this application. At a minimum, I believe that determination of the application should be deferred until greater

clarity is provided regarding the long-term plans for the site and the cumulative impact of future development proposals.

Furthermore, I strongly urge the Council to facilitate a comprehensive consultation meeting involving Reading Cricket and Hockey Club, local residents from Sonning Meadows and Sonning Lane, representatives of Sonning Parish Council, and officers from Wokingham Borough Council. Such a meeting would provide an appropriate forum for the presentation and discussion of the alleged 20-year master plan, allow meaningful community engagement, and ensure that any future proposals are considered transparently and in the context of existing and proposed developments within the wider area.

Thank you for considering my objection. I trust that the Council will give careful consideration to the concerns raised by local residents before reaching any decision on this application.

Regards,

Kavi