

EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

9 APRIL 2025

UPDATE REPORT

Item No: (1) Application No: 24/02658/FULMAJ Page No. 5-30

Site: Thatcham Memorial Playing Fields, Thatcham

1. Registered Speakers

Please refer to List of Speakers provided under separate cover.

2. Additional Consultation Responses

Public representations:	An additional letter of objection has been raised regarding the provision of the gates over the proposed footpath. It is suggested that conditions could be added to mitigate this concern including requiring access to be re-established from all original entrances to the playing field within one month of the decision and the removal of permitted development rights for gates over the site. A condition requiring the gate to comply with the British Standard BS5709 (operation by mobility scooters) is also requested.
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The request for conditions is noted, however it is considered that the conditions proposed regarding re-opening all entrances to the playing field and removing permitted development rights for the installation of gates at the playing field would not meet the six tests for conditions in terms of being both reasonable and relevant. Furthermore, there would not be a clear justification under paragraph 55 of the NPPF to remove permitted development rights.

However, concerns are noted regarding the accessibility of the footpath if the gates are closed and therefore it is recommended to amend the proposed condition regarding keeping the gates unlocked to also include keeping these in an open position. This is considered to be reasonable and in accordance with details included on the plans.

3. Updated Recommendation

Since the submission of the application progress has been made with construction of the scheme. For example, it was noted on the Committee site visit that the basin was complete and the construction site access has been now removed. It is therefore considered conditions applied on the original permission relating to the construction do not continue to have effect and are recommended to be removed from the proposed list of conditions.

It has been clarified that the artificial wicket required by condition 15 of the original permission has not been implemented and therefore a new condition is recommended to be imposed requiring the artificial wicket to be implemented in accordance with the approved plans and within 6 months of this decision.

The proposed condition regarding the gates is amended to reflect section 2 of the Update Report. A few corrections to the proposed conditions have been made.

It is recommended that the Committee delegate to the Development Manager to GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION subject to the conditions listed below:

1. Approved plans

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans and documents listed below:

- (i) Drawing 2004241-016 P2 (Site Location Plan) received on 22.12.2023;
- (ii) Drawing 2004241-001 F (General Arrangement) received on 11.03.2025;
- (iii) Drawing 2004241-002 P2 (Red line Boundary) received on 22.12.2023;
- (iv) Drawing 2004241-005-T01 (Proposed Earthworks Cut and Fill Volumes) received on 17.05.2024 (received under 24/01033/NONMAT);
- (v) Drawing 2004241-006 A (Tree Removal Plan) received on 18.09.2023;
- (vi) Drawing 2004241-007 (Site Cross Sections Sheet 1 of 2) received on 18.09.2023;
- (vii) Drawing 2004241-008 (Site Cross Sections Sheet 2 of 2) received on 18.09.2023;
- (viii) Drawing 2004241-009 (Bund and Swale: Construction Details Sheet 1 of 4) received on 18.09.2023;
- (ix) Drawing 2004241-010 (Bund and Swale: Construction Details Sheet 2 of 4) received on 18.09.2023;
- (x) Drawing 2004241-011 (Bund and Swale: Construction Details Sheet 3 of 4) received on 18.09.2023;
- (xi) Drawing 2004241-012 (Bund and Swale: Construction Details Sheet 4 of 4) received on 18.09.2023;
- (xii) Drawing 2004241-013 (Flow Control Structure Detail) received on 18.09.2023;
- (xiii) Drawing 2004241-014 A (Exolum Pipeline Protection Plan) received on 29.11.2023;
- (xiv) Drawing 2004241-015 P1 (Pedestrian Footbridge Detail) received on 22.09.2023;
- (xv) Drawing 2004241-024 (Relocation of Practice Nets and Artificial Wicket) received on 22.12.2023;
- (xvi) Drawing NSTTCC001 (Triple Lane Practice Facility) received on 22.12.2023;
- (xvii) Slatter Cricket and Play: Thatcham Town Cricket Club Quotation received on 22.12.2023.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interest of proper planning.

2. Temporary disabled parking provision

The approved temporary disabled parking arrangements shown on Covering Letter with Drawing 2004241-030 for Temporary Disabled Spaces by Ardent Consulting Engineers received on 27.03.2024 (approved under 24/00609/COND) shall remain for the duration of the construction and removed within a month of the construction access being re-instated to its original use.

Reason: To ensure that the healthcare facilities to the south of the site remain accessible during the construction of the development. This policy is applied in accordance with the NPPF and Policies CS13 and CS14 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026.

3. Landscape and Ecological Management Plan

The long-term implementation of the landscape and ecology enhancements scheme shall be carried out in accordance with the Landscape Ecology Management Plan (DFA24026V4, November 2024) received on 06.12.2024. Notwithstanding Appendix 1 within the document the development shall be carried out with the final agreed

Illustrative Landscape Masterplan (315862-ADW01g-ILMP) received on 11.03.2025 and Update Proposed Tree Planting Table received on 28.03.2025.

Reason: To ensure compensation for the trees lost at the site as these have both a visual and ecological benefit. The landscaping would also provide ecological enhancement as described in the Ecological Assessment by Derek Finnie Associates (August 2023) and the accompanying Biodiversity Net Gain Metric. This condition is applied in accordance with the NPPF and Policies CS14, CS17, CS18 and CS19 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2026-2026.

4. Soft landscaping scheme

All soft landscaping details shall be completed within the first planting season following completion or first use of the development (whichever occurs first) and in accordance with:

- (i) Illustrative Landscape Masterplan (315862-ADW01g-ILMP) received on 11.03.2025 and Update Proposed Tree Planting Table received on 28.03.2025;
- (ii) 315862: Technical Note 1- Landscape Details (Mabbett) received on 14.10.2024 (approved under 24/01982/COND);
- (iii) Email from Ardent Consulting Engineers: Condition 10: Updates in soft landscape implementation programme to reflect Tree Officer comments received on 29.11.2024. For the avoidance of doubt, the email from 29.11.2024 shall be taken as the details regarding the watering of trees, shrubs and hedgerows and the section of the standard tree planting rather than that within Technical Note 1 (approved under 24/01982/COND).

Any trees, shrubs or plants that die or become seriously damaged within five years of this development shall be replaced in the following year by plants of the same size and species.

Reason: Required to safeguard and enhance the character and amenity of the area, to provide ecological, environmental and biodiversity benefits and to maximise the quality and usability of open spaces within the development and to enhance its setting within the immediate locality. This is to ensure the implementation of a satisfactory scheme of landscaping in accordance with the NPPF and Policies ADPP1, CS14, CS17, CS18 and CS19 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026.

5. Retention of one tennis court and alternative arrangements during construction set-up

The remaining tennis court shall be retained in accordance with Drawing 2004241-023-P1 for the duration of the construction and alternative arrangements for the temporary loss of the second tennis court shall be undertaken in accordance with the Letter from Ardent Consulting Engineers dated 7th February 2025 (approved under 25/00264/COND).

Reason: To ensure that the proposed development does not result in the loss sport facilities. This condition is applied in accordance with the NPPF and Policies CS14 and CS18 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026.

6. Installation of non-turf wicket

Within six months of this decision the non-turf wicket (as shown on Drawing 2004241-024 and NSTTCC 001B) hereby approved shall have been constructed and brought into use.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed development does not result in the loss sport facilities. This condition is applied in accordance with the NPPF and Policies CS14 and CS18 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026.

7. Re-instatement of enclosed dog exercise area

Within three months of the completion of the hereby approved development a replacement enclosed dog walking area of a similar quality and size to the existing shall be provided in accordance with details that are first submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Details shall include the location, size and boundary treatments for the enclosure.

Reason: To ensure that the existing dog walking provision is replaced within one of a similar quality. The dog walking facility forms part of the green infrastructure provision and public amenity at Thatcham Memorial Playing Fields which is required to be protected and enhanced. This condition is applied in accordance with the NPPF and Policies CS14 and CS18 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026.

8. Re-instatement of children's play area

Within three months of the removal of the temporary construction road and access hereby approved the children's play equipment indicated to be removed on Drawing 2004241-020 shall be replaced in accordance with details that are first agreed with by the Local Planning Authority. Details shall include the location, type of equipment and any boundary treatments required.

Reason: To ensure the children's play area is returned to the site which forms part of the green infrastructure provision at Thatcham Memorial Playing Fields which is required to be protected and enhanced. This condition is applied in accordance with the NPPF and Policy CS18 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026.

9. Re-instatement of tennis court

Within three months of the removal of the temporary construction road and access (as shown on Drawing 2004241-020) hereby permitted the existing tennis court to be lost during construction shall be reinstated to a quality at least equivalent (or better) than the current quality. Details of the reinstated tennis court shall be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before reinstatement works commence.

Reason: To ensure the development would not result in the loss or harm to sport facilities. This condition is applied in accordance with the NPPF and Policies CS14 and CS18 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026.

10. Re-instatement of recreational ground

Within three months of the removal of the temporary construction compound, road and access (as shown on Drawing 2004241-020) hereby permitted the recreational ground shall be reinstated to a quality at least equivalent (or better) than the current quality.

Reason: To ensure the development would not result in the loss or harm to sport facilities and green infrastructure. This condition is applied in accordance with the NPPF and Policies CS14 and CS18 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026).

11. Footpaths

Within 3 months of this decision, the footpath shall be laid out in accordance with Drawing 2004241-036-P7 (Proposed Footpath Routes) received on 10.02.2025. Where the footpath has already been laid in root protections areas this should be replaced in accordance with the details shown on Drawing 2004241-036-P7. Tree Protection during the construction of the footpath should be carried out in accordance with the Arboricultural Method Statement (SJA ams 24358-01c) received on 06.12.2024.

Reason: To ensure that enjoyment of the playing fields and the connectivity it provides for residents to services in Thatcham is not harmfully impacted by the development. The condition also ensures that there is no harm to existing vegetation within the site.

This condition is applied in accordance with Policy CS13, CS14, and CS18 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026 and Policy TRANS1 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 (Saved Policies 2007).

12. Footpath maintenance

The approved footpaths shall be maintained thereafter in accordance with Footpath Maintenance Plan (2004241-R09) received 13.02.2025.

Reason: To ensure the footpaths remain accessible for the enjoyment of playing fields and the connectivity it provides for residents to services in Thatcham is not harmfully impacted by the development. This condition is applied in accordance with Policy CS13, CS14 and CS18 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026 and Policy TRANS1 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 (Saved Policies 2007).

13. Fence details

The new fence hereby approved at Brown's Sports Field shall not be installed until details of the fence have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details of the fence shall include height, style, and materials. The new fence shall be installed in accordance with these approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed fence does not have a harmful impact on the character of the area. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, Policies CS14 and CS19 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026), and the Quality Design SPD.

14. Fence construction

The 1.2 metre fence and gates to the south of the detention basin and within the Thatcham Memorial Playing Fields shall be constructed in accordance with Drawing 2004241-036 P7 received on 10.02.2025 and Arboricultural Method Statement (SJA ams 24358-01c) received on 06.12.2024.

Reason: To ensure that the type of fence installed would respect the character of the area and would not result in harm to existing vegetation within the site. This condition is applied in accordance with the NPPF, Policy CS14 and CS19 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026.

15. Gates

The gates located on the footpaths as shown on Drawing 2004241-036 P7 within Thatcham Memorial Playing Fields shall remain unlocked and in open position at all times, unless required to be locked for Health and Safety purposes or private events.

Reason: To ensure the footpaths remain accessible for the enjoyment of playing fields and the connectivity it provides for residents to services in Thatcham is not harmfully impacted by the development. This condition is applied in accordance with the NPPF, Policy CS13, CS14 and CS18 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026 and Policy TRANS1 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 (Saved Policies 2007).

Informatives:

1. Proactive statement
2. Section 73 A
3. Biodiversity Net Gain not required: Section 73 exemption applicable
4. Compliance with approved drawing