

Item No.	Application No. and Parish	Statutory Target Date	Proposal, Location, Applicant
(1)	25/02139/REG3 Newbury	27/11/2026 ¹	Erection of floodlighting Faraday Road Football Ground Faraday Road Newbury RG14 2AD West Berkshire District Council

¹ Extension of time agreed with applicant until 20/03/2026

The application can be viewed on the Council's website at the following link:
<https://publicaccess.westberks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=T2S6MNRDM4M00>

Recommendation Summary: To DELEGATE to the Development Manager to GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION subject to conditions.

Ward Member(s): Councillor Nigel Foot
Councillor Stuart Gourley

Reason for Committee Determination: The application is presented to planning committee as the application is submitted on behalf of West Berkshire District Council and has received 5+ letters of objection.

Committee Site Visit: 12/03/2026

Contact Officer Details

Name: Mr. Matthew Shepherd
Job Title: Principal Planning Officer
Tel No: 01635 519111
Email: Matthew.Shepherd@Westberks.gov.uk

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is for the Committee to consider the proposed development against the policies of the development plan and the relevant material considerations, and to make a decision as to whether to approve or refuse the application.
- 1.2 This application seeks planning permission for the construction of floodlighting at the sports ground known as Faraday Road Football Ground, Faraday Road, Newbury, RG14 2AD.
- 1.3 The application was initially submitted with a proposal to replace the existing football pitch with a new 3G surface and associated fencing. However, during the assessment of the application, concerns were raised regarding the potential for microplastics from the proposed 3G pitch to enter the nearby River Kennet SSSI. Consequently, this part of the proposal was withdrawn to allow the applicant further time to consider and address the issue. The fencing originally included within the proposal would not exceed 4 metres in height and therefore qualifies as permitted development under Schedule 2, Part 12 of the GPDO. As it falls within permitted development rights, the fencing does not require planning permission and does not need to form part of this application.
- 1.4 This report therefore considers only the proposed floodlighting and assesses the consultation responses relevant to this aspect of the scheme.
- 1.5 For the purposes of this report the applicant will be referred to as West Berkshire Council (WBC) and the decision maker will be referred to as the Local Planning Authority (LPA). In planning law, the LPA is a separate entity to WBC as the applicant.
- 1.6 The application is submitted by WBC which submits the red line around just the area required for development i.e. the sports pitch and area immediately adjacent to the sports pitch for the floodlights.
- 1.7 The application includes 6 floodlights proposed around the football pitch to the east and west of the pitch. These will be integrated into the existing fence line in places and, according to documentation, have been submitted to accord with safety regulations for the runoff areas of the pitch. The pitch and floodlights are proposed to be used between 08:00 and 22:00 Monday to Friday and 08:00 and 20:00 Saturday and Sunday.
- 1.8 The existing temporary buildings on site do not form part of this application.

2. Planning History

- 2.1 The table below outlines the relevant planning history of the application site.

Application	Proposal	Decision / Date
18/00603/COMIND	Renewal and expansion of existing football pitch including artificial pitches.	Appeal against non-determination. Appeal withdrawn
18/00604/OUT	Outline permission for replacement of clubhouse and stand at Newbury Football Ground. Matters to be considered: Access and Layout.	

18/02046/DEMO	Application for prior notification for demolition of spectator stand	Application not required 14.09.2018.
19/00814/FUL	Creation of 4 x multi-use games areas with replacement gates and new fencing; 8 x new floodlights (replacing existing 6 x floodlights)	Withdrawn 27.02.2020.
20/01530/OUT	Outline permission for replacement of clubhouse and new spectator stand at Newbury Football Ground. Matters to be considered: Access and Layout.	Approved 25.11.2021.
20/01966/COMIND	Renewal and expansion of the existing football pitch to form a new 3G main pitch and a smaller 3G training / practice pitch	Approved 25.11.2021.
20/02402/REG3	Provision of new car parking spaces, provision of timber bollards and provision of fencing. Part retrospective demolition of the football clubhouse.	Withdrawn 08.10.2021.
21/01575/CERTE	Confirmation of lawful use of land as a football ground under use Class F2 of the Use Classes Order (Amendment 2020)	Approved 24.09.2021.
22/02443/CERTP	Temporary metal container that consists of changing room and toilet facilities.	Refused 03.02.2023.
23/01818/REG3	The construction of an 8m high 'goal catch' fence constructed of a nylon weave netting on the north and south boundary spanning 46m at each end of the grass pitch area (92m total) to aid in the protection of local land users adjacent to the field while it is in operation.	Approved 21.11.2023.

3. Legal and Procedural Matters

- 3.1 **Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA):** Given the nature, scale and location of this development, it is not considered to fall within the description of any development listed in Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. As such, EIA screening is not required.
- 3.2 **Publicity:** Publicity has been undertaken in accordance with Article 15 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, and the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. The site notice was displayed on 07.10.2025 at the entrance to the site, with a deadline for representations of 28.10.2025. A public notice was displayed in the Newbury Weekly News on 09.10.2025; with a deadline for representations of 23.10.2025. Notification letters were sent to the nearest neighbouring properties to the site with an expiration date of the 24.10.2025.

- 3.3 During the course of the application amended documents were submitted in December 2025 and earlier January 2026. Statutory consultees and those who made representations were re-consulted on these documents providing them with an opportunity to comment.
- 3.4 As noted earlier, during the course of the application concerns were raised regarding the proposed replacement 3G pitch, specifically relating to the potential for microplastics to enter the nearby River Kennet. Consequently, this element of the scheme has been removed to allow the applicant further time to consider and address the issue. The associated fencing falls within permitted development due to its height and location, and therefore does not require planning permission. The LPA has already consulted on the proposed floodlighting and will assess all representations that relate to this aspect of the scheme. Letters 'For information only' advising contributors, neighbouring properties, the Town Council, and Ward Members of the changes to the application were sent on 6 March 2026.
- 3.5 The LPA is satisfied that all relevant parties were consulted on a broader scheme than the one now before the authority. As such, the reduction in the scope of the proposed development is not considered to disadvantage or prejudice any interested party, given that the removed elements formed part of the earlier consultation and no additional impacts arise from their omission.
- 3.6 **Local Financial Considerations:** Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) provides that a local planning authority must have regard to a local finance consideration as far as it is material. Whether or not a 'local finance consideration' is material to a particular decision will depend on whether it could help to make the development acceptable in planning terms. It would not be appropriate to make a decision based on the potential for the development to raise money for a local authority or other government body. No local financial considerations are material to this application.
- 3.7 **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):** Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a levy charged on most new development within an authority area. The money is used to pay for new infrastructure, supporting the development of an area by funding the provision, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure. CIL will be used to fund roads and other transport facilities, schools and other educational facilities, flood defences, medical facilities, open spaces, and sports and recreational areas. Subject to the application of any applicable exemptions, CIL will be charged on residential (Use Classes C3 and C4) and retail (former Use Classes A1 – A5) development at a rate per square metre (based on Gross Internal Area) on new development of more than 100 square metres of gross internal area (including extensions) or when a new dwelling is created (even if it is less than 100 square metres). CIL liability, and the application of any exemptions, will be formally confirmed by the CIL Charging Authority under separate cover following any grant of planning permission. More information is available at <https://www.westberks.gov.uk/community-infrastructure-levy>
- 3.8 **Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED):** In determining this application the Council is required to have due regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The Council must have due regard to the need to achieve the following objectives:
- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

- 3.9 Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to—
- (a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
 - (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
 - (c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- 3.10 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.
- 3.11 **Human Rights Act:** The development has been assessed against the provisions of the Human Rights Act, including Article 1 of the First Protocol (Protection of property), Article 6 (Right to a fair trial) and Article 8 (Right to respect for private and family life and home) of the Act itself. The consideration of the application in accordance with the Council procedures will ensure that views of all those interested are taken into account. All comments from interested parties have been considered and reported in summary in this report, with full text available via the Council's website.
- 3.12 Any interference with property rights is in the public interest and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 regime for controlling the development of land. This recommendation is based on the consideration of the proposal against adopted Development Plan policies, the application of which does not prejudice the Human Rights of the applicant or any third party.
- 3.13 **Listed building setting:** Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that special regard must be had to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Section 16(2) has the same requirement for proposals for listed building consent. The site does not contain any listed buildings, and the closest Listed buildings are west of the A339. The separation distance is sufficient that the proposed development would not impact these listed buildings.
- 3.14 **Conservation areas:** Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area. The Kennet and Avon Canal East Conservation Area is located immediately to the south of the site, whilst the Newbury Town Centre Conservation is to the west, separated by the A339 and the industrial buildings. Considerations regarding the proposed development's impact on the character of the conservation area is considered in other sections of this report.

4. Consultation

Statutory and non-statutory consultation

- 4.1 The table below summarises the consultation responses received during the consideration of the application. The full responses may be viewed with the application documents on the Council's website, using the link at the start of this report.

Newbury Town Council:	<p>11/11/2025: No objection, comment requires explanation as to how micro plastics will be prevented from entering the River Kennet.</p> <p>Town Council consulted on the 18/12/2025. No response provided.</p> <p>Town Council consulted on the 15/01/2026. No response provided.</p>
WBC Highways:	<p>No objections</p> <p>The site has a long history of a football pitch being on this site including what was a Newbury football club building.</p> <p>The use would be busiest during weekday evenings and at weekends during an afternoon when training and matches would be played. During such times I consider that there should be adequate car parking in the Faraday Road area including the adjacent public car park.</p> <p>The site is also reasonably close to the town centre where further car parking is available. The Local Highway Authority therefore has no objection to this planning application / proposal.</p> <p>Highways further responded on the 02/01/2026 with no further comments.</p> <p>Highways further responded on the 16/01/2026 with no further comments.</p>
Sport England:	<p>1st Response 16/10/25</p> <p>No objection to this application as it is considered to meet exception 5 of our Playing Fields Policy and to accord with Paragraph 104 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), subject to conditions as set out in their response. Comments raised are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Artificial Pitches have a limited life span and needed to be renewed/replaced every 10 years and a sinking fund is normally created to ensure this happens. No details of this are present with this application. - Concern is raised in regard to materials entering the water system from the pitch.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sport England agree on the strategic needs for sports lit 3G pitch within West Berkshire. - Concern in regard to lack of specific detail in some areas of the application such as floodlighting. - Need for a community use agreement which can be secured by condition. - The pitch design is unusual in that there are no goal recesses proposed and the markings for the small pitches are incomplete. - No storage areas are proposed to support the AGP or toilet provision. - Errors in the planning application and lack of attention to detail in the drawings. Misunderstanding of Sport England policy exceptions in the application. <p>Despite the above issues Sport England raised no objections subject to conditions.</p> <p>2nd Response 23/12/25</p> <p>“We have reviewed the documentation, and we are pleased see the concerns which we raised and then had requested conditions to address the concerns in our response dated 16th October have been appropriately addressed.</p> <p>Therefore, we have omitted two of the conditions we have previously requested.”</p> <p>3rd Response 15/01/26</p> <p><i>“No further comment to make on the revised drainage documentation and have no comments to make beyond those made on the 23rd December 2025. They clarified their position as Sport England raises no objection to the application because it is considered in principle to accord with exception 5 of our Playing Fields Policy and paragraph 104 of the NPPF and confirmed the required conditions.”</i></p> <p>4th Response 06/03/26</p> <p>No objection to the application because it is considered to accord with exception 2 of our Playing Fields Policy and paragraph 104 of the NPPF.</p>
WBC Ecology:	<p>1st Response 15/12/25</p> <p>No objections subject to conditions.</p> <p>We have reviewed the ecological information submitted in support of this planning application and advise that sufficient information has been provided. If planning permission is granted, we advise that the following conditions securing ecological</p>

avoidance and mitigation measures and the implementation of ecological enhancements are attached.

Biodiversity net gain:

A sum of 1.82 Biodiversity units is needed to meet the statutory requirement; this will require a S.106 agreement as no method of meeting this has yet been identified.

Drainage design:

The current drainage layout includes a silt trap manhole cover. This is required in order to prevent microplastics from contaminating the local network and River Kennet SSSI and degrading the protected habitat. Any changes to the drainage layout must maintain measures to prevent any debris from the artificial field from entering any watercourse and include measures for flood events and preventing pollution from surface runoff.

Ecology officers then updated their response on the 29/01/2026. Ecology objects to the proposal on the grounds of significant effects on the River Kennet SSSI.

Ecology holds objection until suitable detailed drainage design provides certainty that there will be no likelihood of negative impacts from the introduction of rubber crumb, microplastics, synthetic fibres and chemical contamination of surface water.

This objection may also be overcome by a suitably worded Grampian condition preventing operation of the site until these plans are provided, subject to Natural England's agreement on the use of a condition.

This is to ensure the adequate safeguarding of protected species and habitats in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, and Policy SP11 of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2023-2041.

2nd Response 09/03/26

Following the removal of the 3G pitch Ecology have confirmed that they have no objections:

"The current scheme removes all proposals barring the floodlighting and thus, this will be the only proposal assessed under this application.

The Lux Lighting plan demonstrates the boundary vegetation will be impacted by only 5 lux (moonlight is 3.0-3.5). This is consistent with the sharp cutoff and directional values of the LED lighting, which were very well displayed by the case studies provided on the supplier's website.

The lighting is acceptable in principle, but due regard should be made to the River Kennet Site of Special Scientific Interest and its protected status and ability to host European protected species such as Bats, among other species such as otters and water voles.

	<p>Given this consideration, I deem it acceptable to suggest a condition controlling the hours of lighting use to mitigate any negative impacts and prevent any possible long term disturbance from artificial lighting at night. Any breach of these hours will then also be enforceable to prevent negative impacts to the associated SSSI.</p> <p>Biodiversity net gain: The amended scheme has removed all proposals for new surfacing and therefore now qualifies for the de minimis exemption due to the lighting bollards being placed on an artificial sealed surface of no habitat value.</p> <p>The agreed baseline is now irrelevant, and statutory Biodiversity Net Gain does not apply to the proposal.</p> <p>Previous comments: It has been highlighted that my previous comments dated 29th January 2026 used out-of-date imagery to assess the fencing and boundary vegetation. These have been taken into consideration, and my new comments reflect the removal of close board fencing and replacement with a 3-5m permeable fence and a more open boundary structure of vegetation.</p> <p>The boundary vegetation will restrict light spill onto the Kennet and Avon Canal, and this will be further mitigated by the restrictions on lighting hours. I understand this is true for the summer months, and the deciduous species on the boundary will lose leaves and much of the screening effect during the winter months. The restrictions on lighting hours of use will mitigate impacts to non-hibernating/torpor species still present in the area, and European Protected species under the Habitats Regulations (bats) will not be affected during these months due to their torpor phase.”</p>
WBC Archaeology:	No objections subject to conditions.
WBC Conservation:	Responses of the 23/10/2025 and 22/12/2025 recorded no objections. These changes will not impact the nearby conservation areas.
The Canal and Rivers Trust:	<p>1st Response 20/10/25</p> <p>Raised concerns over the Light spill map which finishes at the boundary. This means it is not possible to understand the impact on protected species which use the adjacent land. Ideally a revised plan to show light levels beyond the site boundary should be provided, or alternatively a condition ensuring suitable levels at the nearest watercourse.</p> <p>It is noted that the proposal is for a synthetic pitch. The ecological appraisal states’ Avoid as far as possible letting storm drains and gutters drain near the path around the pitch, so that microplastic does not spread unnecessarily to the aquatic environment;</p> <p>It is not clear whether the drainage proposal is suitably designed to prevent microplastics entering into the water environment.</p>

	<p>Please can this matter be considered by the Council 's ecologist and further information on methods to prevent this occurring be provided if necessary.</p> <p>2nd Response 07/01/26</p> <p>Amended plans showing the extended light spill plans and further drainage information were received. However, the Canal and River Trust maintained their comments dated 07/01/2026.</p> <p>“Our comments remain unchanged. We have been contacted by a member of the public, who has noted our concern regarding the possibility of microplastics entering the water environment. I note that the Council’s Ecologist has been consulted on the application but that no response is published on your website as yet. Any microplastics which, however indirectly, enter the River Kennet will also affect the canal and so the Trust would be grateful if the Council Ecologist could consider this aspect of the proposal.”</p> <p>3rd Response 26/01/26</p> <p>They note that had no further comments beyond those noted on the 20/10/2025.</p> <p>4th Response 23/02/26</p> <p>“We are pleased to note that the proposal now includes an interceptor. However, the revised strategy and plans lack the required detail to satisfy our concerns, and those of Natural England too, regarding the potential pollution from microplastics and metals.</p> <p>For example: there is no comparison between current and proposed infiltration rates, or assessment of proposed infiltration and rainfall rates, to confirm no surface water flooding or the potential amount of surface water that could runoff;</p> <p>There is no specification for the proposed filter material to confirm it will trap microplastics or its maintenance regime (i.e. how often it will be replaced/cleaned); there is no assessment to confirm that filtration alone will remove dissolved metals; the strategy describes details such as kickboards around the perimeter to prevent surface runoff, yet these are not shown on the plan, and the lack of infiltration v rainfall assessment means there is no assessment of surface runoff.</p> <p>There are also errant references to the Natural Resources Wales website for data sourced from the Environment Agency.”</p>
<p>WBC Environmental Health:</p>	<p>No objections subject to conditions</p> <p>Noise: The proposed hours are 7 days a week until 10pm. This could possibly cause noise disturbance. This was discussed with the case officer who considered the existing hours and nature of use of the site and a noise management plan condition was decided upon.</p>

	<p>Lighting: The floodlighting details submitted by Halliday Lighting is acceptable and demonstrates that light spillage from the floodlighting is within acceptable limits.</p> <p>Contaminated Land: The site is close to a former landfill site. As the development consists of removing soil from the existing pitch to enable the new 3G surface a watching brief should be undertaken to ensure that any contamination found is dealt with appropriately.</p> <p>A CMS and hours of work are required in order to control any possible disturbance from the development.</p>
<p>Environment Agency:</p>	<p>1st Response 27/10/25</p> <p>No objections subject to a condition in relation to the ground levels according with the submitted documents.</p> <p>2nd Response 07/01/26</p> <p>No objections subject to a condition in relation to the ground levels according with the submitted documents.</p> <p>3rd Response 02/02/26</p> <p>No objections subject to a condition in relation to the ground levels according with the submitted documents.</p>
<p>WBC Lead Local Flood Authority:</p>	<p>1st Response 07/01/26</p> <p>Object due to insufficient or inadequate information</p> <p>The applicant has provided clear site and location information, an accurate description of development proposals, and correctly classified the vulnerability as water-compatible. Flood zones have been correctly identified, surface water flood risk has been assessed appropriately, and we agree that no flood compensation or flood resilience measures are required. The development does not increase flood risk, and sequential/exception tests do not apply. Infiltration is not viable, and while SuDS options are limited, the proposed pitch and filter drainage/perforated pipe system is recognised as a form of SuDS. Existing discharge values appear high, but the methodology is acceptable. Safe access/egress details are incomplete, but the risk to users is considered very low due to the nature of the site; this should be acknowledged in the FRA with potential incorporation of a policy restricting access during flood warnings.</p> <p>However, the submission contains gaps in the Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy. Key issues include inadequate groundwater and sewer flood risk assessments, lack of analysis, and insufficient safe access/egress planning. The drainage strategy lacks details such as existing drainage arrangements, outfall location, maintenance access, attenuation volumes, and appropriate supporting calculations. The design does not comply with current standards, and modelling is in need of an update. There is some concern over the details and</p>

whether they can be implemented with the proposed subbase and lack of impermeable liner (especially if there are high groundwater levels on site).

A revised submission addressing these deficiencies is required before the proposal can be considered acceptable – or elimination of issues through dialogue. The primary issues are:

- Safe access egress.
- Clarity on groundwater levels.
- Construction details and use of type 1 as a subbase for a porous system for attenuation/avoiding using an impermeable liner.
- Clarity regarding point of discharge into the river/levels assessment.
- Calculations and maintenance information.

2nd Response 06/03/2026

No objection - While the submission requires further refinement, the information provided is adequate to support a conditional approval at this stage.

I have reviewed the following updated information:

- Proposed Artificial Grass Pitch Faraday Road Football Centre – Flood Risk Assessment Rev A 13.01.26
- 3316-SL-DR-200-DL-R01 Drainage Layout – Rev 1 01.26
- Sportslabconsult Drainage Strategy - Rev 1 01/26

Concerning the main issues highlighted previously:

Safe Access and Egress – Partially Addressed

The applicant has introduced Section 2.7.2, recommending that site managers register with the Environment Agency's Flood warnings service so that site access can be suspended during flood warnings. Discussions with West Berkshire Council officers indicate that this is considered a practical and implementable measure.

Groundwater Levels – Addressed

Section 3.3.3 now provides clearer information on groundwater levels, confirming that readings ranged between 1.27 m and 2 m below ground level, with JPP recording no groundwater shallower than 1.5 m below ground level. These levels are not high enough to present a risk to the proposed subbase drainage.

Construction Details and Use of Type 1 Subbase in a Porous System – Partially Addressed

The applicant has added statements in Sections 4.3.2 and 4.1.2 noting the use of reduced-fines material and modifications to support drainage. During the meeting, the applicant agreed to

	<p>provide a formal specification for this material; however, this has not been included in the submission.</p> <p>Discharge Point and Level Assessment – Partially Addressed The location of the proposed discharge point to the river has been shown. The applicant notes that the outfall level still requires survey confirmation.</p> <p>Outstanding Matters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The hydraulic calculations do not appear to have been updated using FEH rainfall data. • Several issues remain within the drawings, including fundamental design aspects such as inappropriate use or understanding of access chambers and rodding eyes. <p>Despite this, the overall concept demonstrates that a viable drainage solution is achievable and the outstanding matters can be conditioned.</p> <p>Maintenance Information Some updates have been made; however, the maintenance strategy remains insufficiently detailed for long-term management. This can be addressed via condition.</p> <p>3rd Response 06/03/2026</p> <p>No objections</p> <p>Having been notified of the applicants’ intention to withdraw all elements of the pitch proposal apart from the sports lighting, the matters raised previously with regards to drainage are no longer relevant. The only remaining relevant matter was safe access and egress (which was addressed via dialogue with WBC staff):</p> <p>Safe Access and Egress The applicant has introduced Section 2.7.2, recommending that site managers register with the Environment Agency’s Flood warnings service so that site access can be suspended during flood warnings. Discussions with West Berkshire Council officers indicate that this is considered a practical and implementable measure.</p>
<p>Natural England:</p>	<p>1st Response – 21/10/25</p> <p>NO OBJECTION - SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATE MITIGATION BEING SECURED</p> <p>Natural England considers that without appropriate mitigation the application would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - damage or destroy the interest features for which the River Kennet Site of Special Scientific Interest has been notified.

In order to mitigate these adverse effects and make the development acceptable, the following mitigation measures are required / or the following mitigation options should be secured:

- Sustainable Urban Drainage System
- Construction, Environment Management Plan

We advise that an appropriate planning condition or obligation is attached to any planning permission to secure these measures.

Following this response the LPA provided further Drainage information.

2nd Response – 22/01/26

FURTHER INFORMATION REQUIRED TO DETERMINE IMPACTS ON DESIGNATED SITES

As submitted, the application could have potential significant effects on the River Kennet Site of Special Scientific Interest. Natural England requires further information in order to determine the significance of these impacts and the scope for mitigation.

The following information is required:

- Information to demonstrate that surface water runoff from the proposed 3G pitch will not result in pollution or adverse effects on the adjacent SSSI.

Without this information, Natural England may need to object to the proposal.

3rd Response – 13/02/26

Following the submission of further drainage information NE maintained their original objection.

FURTHER INFORMATION REQUIRED TO DETERMINE IMPACTS ON DESIGNATED SITES

As submitted, the application could have potential significant effects on the River Kennet Site of

Special Scientific Interest. Natural England requires further information in order to determine

the significance of these impacts and the scope for mitigation.

The following information is required:

- Information in relation to the Water Quality treatment performance of the proposed SuDS system.

Without this information, Natural England may need to object to the proposal.

	<p>Please re-consult Natural England once this information has been obtained.</p> <p>As per paragraph 4.1.4 of the amended Drainage Strategy issued February 2026, we note that the applicant has included a surface water filter media chamber into the design of the SuDS system to remove fine total suspended solids and dissolved metals. We understand that filter media chambers have a variety of ratings some of which are effective at removing suspended solids and some particulate bound metals but may have limited effectiveness in relation to dissolved metals, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH) and microplastic capture.</p> <p>For discharge to a SSSI we will require demonstrable treatment performance and evidence of pollutant removal efficiency for the selected filtration system. The Drainage Strategy should include the pollution hazard indices for the pitch and mitigation indices for each treatment stage as per the CIRIA SuDS manual (C753). The Simple Index approach does not account for microplastics or PAH therefore we require additional evidence of particle size capture for those pollutants.</p> <p>We advise your authority to request additional information from the applicant in relation to the above. We will be happy to provide further advice to you in due course once this is received.</p> <p>Step 3 under Section 26.7.1 of the SuDS manual (C753) outlines that the requirement for extra treatment should be considered in relation to discharge to environmentally protected sites. It states that ‘an additional treatment component (i.e. over and above that required for standard discharges), or other equivalent protection, is required that provides environmental protection in the event of an unexpected pollution event or poor system performance’.</p> <p>Please note that if your authority is minded to grant planning permission contrary to the advice in this letter, you are required under Section 28I (6) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) to notify Natural England of the permission, the terms on which it is proposed to grant it and how, if at all, your authority has taken account of Natural England’s advice. You must also allow a further period of 21 days before the operation can commence.</p>
WBC Tree Officer:	No objections.
WBC Transport Policy:	No response within the 21-day consultation period.
WBC Environments:	No response within the 21-day consultation period for any of the consultation.

Public representations

- 4.2 Representations have been received from 11 contributors, 5 of which support, and 6 of which object to the proposal.
- 4.3 The full responses may be viewed with the application documents on the Council's website, using the link at the start of this report. In summary, the following issues/points have been raised:

Support

- There is a long history of football at this location, and this application will continue to support that.
- There is a need for artificial pitches in the area, and the proposed changes ensure sport can be played by more people of all ages in the local area
- The playing surface proposed would all year round use regardless of weather conditions.
- The site has good accessibility from the Town centre and is away from neighbouring residences.
- The changes would benefit all ages health and wellbeing.
- A previously conducted petition collected 2,675 signatures to support the provision of a 3G pitch at this location.
- The current Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) highlights Faraday Road as a top priority football ground for development and that West Berkshire is up to 8 full size 3G pitches short, demonstrating the desperate need for this community facility.
- Provision of floodlighted football ground would enable increased participation encouraging all ages and genders to play sports.

Objection

- The application is poorly presented by the Council
- No boundaries are identified on the application for the entire football ground.
- Concern with how far the site extends towards the SSSI towards the south.
- Concern about the lack clarity in regard to the extent of the football ground, no blue line of adjacent site ownership has been provided.
- Objection to drawing the site outline around just the football pitch.
- Concern that adjacent hardstanding and portacabins have not been included in this application.
- The lack of including all the land at the football ground does not show a strategic approach which is needed to maximise opportunities and attract growth.
- Confusion about changes to adjacent Designated Employment Zone names.
- Objection to the Surface Water Drainage Systems leading into the River Kennet SSSI as the contents of Plastic Pitches are acknowledged to degenerate into small particulate matter to the extent it will need replacing in 10 years.
- DEFRA Magic Maps show that one of the River Kennet SSSI Impact Risk Zone runs across the pitch.
- Concern about documents referencing old policies.
- The site could be close to areas of Historic Landfill and concern is raised in regard to contamination.
- Concern about the lack of specific validation requirements for REG3 applications and the resultant lack of documentation submitted as part of this application.
- Concern the lack of accompanying improvements to the supporting infrastructure at the football ground and a site wide comprehensive redevelopment of the site.
- Concern about the lack of full Flood Risk Assessment
- Confusion over whether pre application advice was sought.
- Concern about the lack of information on the impacts to the adjacent SSSI River Kennet from the proposed development.

- Lack of compliance with local plan policies.
- Lack of proposed supporting facilities including toilets, changing areas, spectator areas and storage which would be expected for a facility of this size and importance to the community. Incomplete pitch design with lack of goal recesses and unfinished markings as identified by Sport England.
- Lack of technical detail to demonstrate that the proposal would adequately mitigate impacts on ecology and watercourses in accordance with local and national planning policy.
- Lack of detail regarding the proposed management and maintenance of the site.
- Lack of detail regarding community use arrangements, contrary to local and national policy.
- Concern about the adequacy of the sustainable drainage strategy.
- The application is premature in the absence of a comprehensive masterplan for Bond Riverside and a strategic approach to flooding in the area.
- The application does not address the need for a stadium at the football ground and wider redevelopment of the site.
- No financial viability assessment has been submitted. Concern is raised that this is not an appropriate use of public funds. Objection raised to business case.
- The lack of comprehensive application mean statutory consultees cannot respond fully.
- Concern about the modular buildings on the site not benefiting from planning permission. These would be used to support the proposed replacement pitch and should be considered as part of this application. Retrospective permission needs to be sought for these aspects as part of a newly submitted planning application.
- The application incorrectly identifies the scope and nature of the development.
- The proposed development seeks to discharge surface water into an existing public sewer network which subsequently outfalls into Northbrook stream a functional floodplain downstream. The additional outflows would add to flooding on the floodplain which could lead to more flooding of properties downstream.
- The FRA has not considered the impact on the functional floodplain.
- Concern about microplastics entering the water system not addressed.
- Concern about leaving any issue to planning condition would mean it is not fully considered as part of this application.
- The application fails to provide on-site biodiversity net gains.
- No comprehensive catchment study has been undertaken.
- Lack of Landscape Visual Impact Assessment.
- Lack of Noise Impact Assessment.
- No document identifying the carbon footprint and the creation of plastic pitch. The sustainability statement does not adequately cover these aspects.
- The DAS does not represent the latest position on the use of 3G pitches.
- Lack of containment measures in the pitch design.
- Lack of consideration for migration of plastic on football players
- Concern about fencing and security of the pitch and floodlights.
- Not enough consideration has been given to ecology and the proximity of the proposed development to the river.

5. Planning Policy

- 5.1 Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The following policies of the statutory development plan are relevant to the consideration of this application.

Development Plan Document	Relevant Policies
<u>West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2023-2041</u>	<p>Strategic Policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy SP1 The Spatial Strategy • Policy SP3 Settlement Hierarchy • Policy SP5 Responding to Climate Change • Policy SP6 Flood Risk • Policy SP7 Design Quality • Policy SP8 Landscape Character • Policy SP9 Historic Environment • Policy SP10 Green Infrastructure • Policy SP11 Biodiversity & Geodiversity • Policy SP19 Transport • Policy SP20 Infrastructure Requirements & Delivery <p>Development Management Policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy DM2 Separation of Settlements Around Newbury & Thatcham • Policy DM3 Health & Wellbeing • Policy DM4 Building Sustainable Homes & Businesses • Policy DM5 Environmental Nuisance & Pollution Control • Policy DM6 Water Quality • Policy DM7 Water Resources & Waste Water • Policy DM8 Air Quality • Policy DM9 Conservation Areas • Policy DM10 Listed Buildings • Policy DM14 Assets of Archaeological Importance • Policy DM15 Trees, Woodland & Hedgerows • Policy DM30 Residential Amenity • Policy DM31 Designated Employment Areas • Policy DM39 Local Community Facilities • Policy DM40 Public Open Space • Policy DM44 Parking • Policy DM45 Travel Planning

5.2 The following material considerations are relevant to the consideration of this application:

- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
- National Design Guide
- Quality Design SPD (2006)
- Planning Obligations SPD (2014)
- Sustainable Drainage Systems SPD (2018)

6. Appraisal

Principle of development

- 6.1 The application site is an existing sports facility. The proposed development seeks to add 6 floodlights to the sports facility. The floodlights would be located adjacent to the pitch on the east and west side, spaced to provide coverage of lighting to the whole pitch.
- 6.2 Policy SP10 seeks to strengthen both local and strategic Green Infrastructure (GI) assets throughout the district by ensuring the protection and enhancement of existing GI resources. The supporting text at paragraph 5.66 confirms that GI includes Amenity green spaces such as outdoor sports facilities. Policy SP10 further sets out that, depending on the location, nature and scale of proposals, development should:
- a. Protect and/or enhance existing GI and the functions this performs;
 - b. Create additional GI which is integrated into the overall development design from the outset; and
 - c. Take opportunities to achieve multi-functionality by bringing GI functions together.
- 6.3 The proposed development preserves the existing use of the sports pitch, which will not be lost or diminished in any way as a result of this application. Instead, the scheme enhances the site's Green Infrastructure by introducing floodlighting, enabling extended hours of use into the evening. The provision of floodlighting will also support the club in meeting the Football Association's standards for its league level (Steps 1–6), thereby allowing football to be played to a higher and more compliant standard.
- 6.4 The installation of floodlighting will extend the usable hours of the Green Infrastructure, allowing activities to continue into the darker evenings. This will increase the availability of the sports pitch for a wider range of teams and community groups throughout the year. Overall, the proposal is considered to enhance the playability of the sports pitch and maximise sporting opportunities within the Green Infrastructure.
- 6.5 The development plan further outlines that development proposals for new and/or expanded provision of local community facilities will be supported where the proposal complies with the criteria listed in the policy. This being:
- a) A local need can be demonstrated;
 - b) It is accessible and inclusive to the local community it is intended to serve;
 - c) It is of a high-quality design and proportionate in scale to the local area;
 - d) It has been subject to prior meaningful local community engagement; and
 - e) Appropriate consideration has been given to the use of shared spaces, the re-use and/or redevelopment of existing buildings within the local community.
- 6.6 In considering this policy the proposed development has been shown to be needed locally to enhance the offering of the district in regard to sports. Sport England's response of the 16/10/2025 outlines that they agree with the Football Foundation that there is a strategic need for a floodlit 3G pitch. Whilst the 3G element of the proposed development has been removed the response outlines support for the provision of floodlights.

- 6.7 There are no changes to the access arrangements and accessibility remains as existing. The application is for floodlights only, thereby enhancing the existing provision. The proposal has given due consideration to the maximisation of existing assets in the local community.
- 6.8 The application does not specifically outline what prior engagement has occurred with the local community. However, from the submitted letters of support for the application it is clearly shown the support within the community for a replacement a pitch. Some objection has been raised in regard to the lack of financial viability report to go alongside this application. There is no requirement for such information under the planning policies relevant to the provision of green infrastructure.
- 6.9 Within the established settlement boundary of Newbury, on a site of existing green infrastructure the proposed floodlighting is in principle acceptable in the defined settlement boundary. The proposal is considered to seek to maximise the football pitch's availability for play for the benefit of the community enhancing the green infrastructure in accordance with the development plan. The proposed development is therefore considered to comply with the relevant aforementioned planning policies in principle.

Character and appearance

- 6.10 Policy SP7 will require new development to strengthen a sense of place through high quality locally distinctive design and place shaping. This will enable healthy place making, creating places that are better for people, taking opportunities available for conserving and enhancing the character, appearance and quality of an area and the way it functions. Development proposals will be expected to show how they have responded positively to both national and local design guidance.
- 6.11 Policy SP8 relates to the Landscape Character of areas and is closely linked to SP7. Landscape led development which conserves and enhances the diversity and local distinctiveness of the landscape character of the district will be supported.
- 6.12 The natural, cultural, and perceptual components of the character of the landscape will be considered as a whole. Particular regard will be given to:
- a. Its valued features and qualities;
 - b. The sensitivity and capacity of the area to change; and
 - c. Ensuring that new development is appropriate in terms of location, scale and design in the context of the existing settlement form, pattern and character.
- 6.13 The application site is an existing sports facility within the defined settlement boundary of Newbury. It is situated in close proximity to the town centre in an urban setting surrounded in the majority by an industrial estate. The site is bounded to the south by the River Kennet.
- 6.14 The proposed floodlight would consist of three columns on either side of the pitch and would extend to a height of 15 meters. They would have a slim profile and have the lighting at the top. Several sites throughout Newbury have floodlights such as the Tennis Club, Trinity school, Victoria Park Tennis Courts, and Newbury rugby club. Whilst the heights and design may change between sites and sports, floodlights are regularly found within the built-up Area of Newbury.
- 6.15 Letters of objection have raised issue with the lack of Landscape Visual Impact assessment accompanying the application. The surrounding development near

Faraday Road would be industrial in nature, and the site would be close to the dual carriage way of the A339. The site is not within a designated landscape such as the North Wessex Downs National Landscape. Given the urban context of the site and its established use as a sports facility, together with the limited visual sensitivity of the surrounding area, a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment is not considered necessary by the case officer.

- 6.16 The Kennet and Avon Canal East Conservation Area is located directly to the south of the proposal. As such views from the Canal should be considered carefully. The Council's Conservation Officer has raised no objections to the proposed development. During daylight the columns would have a slim profile and would be set against the existing backdrop of large industrial buildings. The height of the proposed floodlighting would be similar to adjacent buildings such as the Cinch Storage. The proposed floodlight columns are not considered to have a harmful effect due to the height, size or design. They are expected features at sports grounds that are in-keeping with the established use.
- 6.17 When the floodlights are in use during evenings the magnitude of change to the site would be most prominent. When illuminated the lights would be seen in the context of the industrial estate which has streetlights, external building lights and illuminated advertisement signs. Overall, the impact to views from within the Conservation Area would be minimal as supported by no objections being raised by the Conservation Officer.
- 6.18 The design of the floodlights is considered utilitarian but in keeping with the existing use of the site as a football pitch. The character of the area and landscape are not negatively impacted from the proposed development. Given these factors the proposed floodlighting would be located at an existing sports facility in a built-up area surrounded by industrial development. The development is considered to accord with the development plan in regard to design and impacts to the character of the area.

Historic Environment

- 6.19 The site is located adjacent to the Kennet and Avon Canal East Conservation Area which runs along the south boundary. The nearest listed building is to the South approximately 200 meters away on the other side of the A339. It is not considered the proposed development would have a harmful impact on the setting of this listed building or in the character and appearance of the conservation area. The Council's Conservation Officer has been consulted and raised no objections. It is therefore considered the proposed development is not considered to harm the significance of the Conservation Area or any nearby listed buildings.

Archaeology

- 6.20 The Archaeological Officer notes that the application, as originally submitted, has the potential to have an impact on heritage assets of archaeological interest, predominantly those from the Mesolithic (Middle Stone Age). Deposit modelling carried out by Wessex Archaeology and the University of Reading shows that there could be surviving remains and environmental deposits in this part of the Kennet Valley, based on a study of geology, topography, existing bore holes, and known work.
- 6.21 The proposed floodlighting for the football club falls within a predicted area of high and medium archaeological potential. An old land surface with many Mesolithic flints was encountered in a test pit in Victoria Park at less than 0.5m deep, and an excavation revealing an intact Mesolithic deposit with flint and animal bone was also carried out at the former West Berkshire Council Offices at nearby Faraday Road in 1997. These are

sites of national if not international significance. Some on-site assessment at the football ground has noted the presence of peat underlain by gravel.

- 6.22 In line with the National Planning Policy Framework and the Local Plan Review policy DM14, the Archaeological Officer believes further information is needed to understand whether the proposal will affect the archaeological and palaeoecological resource. An archaeological desk-based assessment would be the starting point, and if necessary, some targeted test-pitting would also be required. In conversation with the Archaeological Officer, it was determined that this information could be undertaken and submitted for approval as part of a pre-commencement condition. Subject to this condition the proposed development would accord with the development plan in relation to Archaeology.

Amenity

Impact on neighbouring amenity

- 6.23 According to Policy DM30, all development will be required to provide and/or maintain a high standard of amenity for existing and future users of land and buildings.
- 6.24 When considering the impact on the living conditions of existing and proposed residential dwellings, development proposals will be supported where there is no unacceptable harm in terms of the following criteria:
- Any significant loss of daylight and/or sunlight to land and buildings;
 - Any significant overlooking of land and buildings that results in a harmful loss of privacy;
 - Development resulting in an undue sense of enclosure, overbearing impact, or a harmful loss of outlook; and
 - Noise, dust, fumes and odours.
- 6.25 The Council's Environmental Health officer was consulted and they raised concerns in regard to the hours of use of the site which could possibly cause noise to neighbouring dwellings across the river. They have therefore recommended that a condition is attached requiring the submission of a noise management plan to manage noise levels from the site.
- 6.26 The Environmental Health officer raised no issues with the floodlighting details submitted by Halliday Lighting. These were considered acceptable and demonstrates that light spillage from the floodlighting is within acceptable limits.
- 6.27 A Construction method statement and hours of work are required in order to control any possible disturbance from the development. These can be controlled by suitably worded conditions.
- 6.28 Given the existing nature of the football pitch the proposed development is not considered to give rise to issues of overlooking, overbearing, or overshadowing. Subject to the imposition of suitably worded conditions the proposed development is considered to accord with DM30 of the development plan.

Highways

- 6.29 According to Policy SP19, development that generates a transport impact will be required to (amongst others) mitigate any adverse impact on local transport networks. Vehicular parking requires that following construction sufficient space is available for on-

site vehicular parking in accordance with policy DM44 in a way that does not detract from the character and appearance of the area.

6.30 The site has a long history of a football pitch being on this site including what was a Newbury football club building.

6.31 The use would be busiest during weekday evenings and at weekends during the afternoon when training and matches would be played. During such times Highways officers consider that there should be adequate car parking in the Faraday Road area including the adjacent public car park. The site is also reasonably close to the town centre where further car parking is available.

6.32 The Local Highway Authority therefore has no objection to this planning application.

Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage

Flood Risk

6.33 The LLFA is satisfied that the applicant has provided clear site and location information through its flood risk assessment/drainage strategy. An accurate description of development proposals has been included in the application documents, and the consultants have correctly classified the vulnerability as water compatible.

6.34 Flood zones have been correctly identified according to the LLFA officers. Some of the site is in flood zone 2 and some areas in flood zone 3. Surface water flood risk comes from the adjacent river, and the site has some areas of surface water flood risk in general. This has been assessed appropriately as well in the submitted documents.

6.35 The LLFA confirms that no flood compensation or resilience measures are required, as the development does not increase flood risk and the sequential and exception tests are not applicable. The Environment Agency has raised no objection, subject to a condition requiring site levels to remain as submitted. As the revised proposals remove the 3G pitch and the floodlighting will not alter existing site levels, this condition is no longer necessary

6.36 Concern was raised by the LLFA that the Drainage report did not adequately address the access arrangements during a flood event. The applicant confirmed that during a flood event it would not be possible to utilise the pitch.

6.37 In addition, the applicant has added section 2.7.2 to the FRA, recommending that site managers sign up to the EA flood line service so that during flood warnings access and use of the site is prohibited to ensure no risk to users and employees. The LLFA having spoken to WBC staff relevant to the project and consider this to be acceptable.

Sustainable Drainage Measures

6.38 According to Policy SP6, in order to restrict or reduce runoff, surface water will be managed in a sustainable manner through the implementation of Sustainable Drainage Methods (SuDS) in accordance with the SuDS Supplementary Planning Document, best practice, and the Non-statutory Technical Standards for Sustainable Drainage. The surface water strategy has been reviewed and considered by the LLFA. This policy is amplified by Policy DM7 which seeks to ensure a comprehensive and integrated approach to the conservation and management of water resources and ensure that development do not overload available facilities and create or exacerbate problems of flooding or pollution.

- 6.39 With regard to sustainable drainage, the SuDS Officer has confirmed that the installation of floodlighting will have only a minimal impact on the site's existing drainage arrangements, which will remain unchanged. The proposed floodlights are to be installed on existing hardstanding, and their physical footprint is very small. Consequently, the current drainage system is considered capable of accommodating the development, and no objections are raised.
- 6.40 As noted earlier, although Natural England raised an objection regarding the discharge of surface water to the river, this related specifically to the proposed replacement of the existing pitch with a 3G surface. As this element has now been removed from the scheme, this objection is no longer relevant.

Ecology

- 6.41 The Ecology officer has raised no objections to the amended proposal subject to conditions. The application documents do not show that the proposed development would impact any protected species. The ecology reports note that none of the building or trees have suitable bat roosting features. No further surveys are considered necessary.
- 6.42 Ecology officers have reviewed the ecological information submitted in support of this planning application and advise that sufficient information has been provided in regard to the floodlighting element of the application. They had raised concerns in line with Natural England in regard to the 3G pitch element but as this has been removed this is no longer an issue.
- 6.43 The site did previously have flood lighting fixtures as shown on google maps images from 2018. It is not clear from the submission when these were removed but the site has been subject to lighting previously.
- 6.44 The current scheme removes all proposals barring the floodlighting and thus, this will be the only proposal assessed under this application.
- 6.45 Detailed lux lighting contour plans have been submitted, and this plan demonstrates that the boundary vegetation will be impacted by only 5 lux (moonlight is 3.0-3.5). This is consistent with the sharp cutoff and directional values of the LED lighting, which were very well displayed by the case studies provided on the supplier's website.
- 6.46 The lighting is acceptable in principle, but due regard should be made to the River Kennet Site of Special Scientific Interest and its protected status and ability to host European protected species such as Bats, among other species such as otters and water voles. Given this consideration, the Ecology Officer suggests a condition controlling the hours of lighting use to mitigate any negative impacts and prevent any possible long-term disturbance from artificial lighting at night.

Biodiversity net gain

- 6.47 The amended scheme has removed all proposals for new surfacing and therefore now qualifies for the de minimis exemption due to the lighting bollards being placed on an artificial sealed surface of no habitat value.
- 6.48 The agreed baseline is now irrelevant, and statutory Biodiversity Net Gain does not apply to the proposal.
- 6.49 Overall, the proposed development is not considered to adversely affect the ecology of the site. The proposed lighting is of a sufficient distance away from the SSSI to the south of the site as to spill light over into this sensitive area.

Trees

- 6.50 The proposed development has been reviewed by the tree officer who has raised no objection. However, due to the nearby boundary trees they have recommended an informative with regards to tree and hedge protection.

Health Impacts

- 6.51 Policy DM3 of the development plan requires development proposals to promote, support and enhance positive mental and physical health and wellbeing and thus contribute to reducing health inequalities. Policy DM3 only requires the submission of a Health Impact assessment for major development proposals or other development likely to have a potentially significant impact on the health and wellbeing. The case officer has considered policy DM3 and considers the proposed development is likely to be positive effects on health and wellbeing by providing greater opportunities for sport and play to the population of West Berkshire residents. It is not considered the impacts would be significant enough to warrant assessment through a Health Impact Assessment (HIA).

7. Planning Balance and Conclusion

- 7.1 Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework is a material consideration in planning decisions. It includes a presumption in favour of sustainable development which means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay. However, where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan, permission should not usually be granted.
- 7.2 During the course of the application, the proposed development was amended to remove elements that had generated objections. The revised scheme, now comprising solely the installation of floodlighting, has been assessed accordingly.
- 7.3 The proposed floodlights are considered to be compatible with the existing character and function of the site and will enhance green infrastructure provision by extending the usable hours of the facility.
- 7.4 For the reasons set out in this report, the proposal is considered to comply with the relevant policies of the current development plan, and no material considerations indicate that planning permission should be refused. The application is therefore recommended for approval.

8. Full Recommendation

- 8.1 To delegate to the Development Manager to GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION subject to the conditions listed below.

Conditions

1.	<p>Commencement of development</p> <p>The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.</p> <p>Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).</p>
2.	<p>Approved plans</p> <p>The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans and documents listed below:</p> <p>Location plan reference 3316-SL-DR-010-LP- R01. 2nd October 2025</p> <p>Proposed Floodlighting. Drawing number HLS11358 Revision REV. Date received 08th December 2025.</p> <p>Flooding Lighting drawing 15m Drawing number HAL250XL . Date received 17th December 2025</p> <p>15m RL With 2 and 3 floodlights. Drawing number 3316-SL-DR-100-GA-R02 . Date received 17th December 2025</p> <p>Flood lighting drawing. Drawing number HAL250 - 2 FITTINGS ELEVATION Date received 17th December 2025</p> <p>Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interest of proper planning.</p>
3.	<p>Materials (as specified / to match)</p> <p>The materials to be used in the development hereby permitted shall be as specified on the plans and/or the application forms. Where stated that materials shall match the existing, those materials shall match those on the existing development in colour, size and texture.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure the appropriate use of external materials. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, Policy SP7 of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2023-2041, and Supplementary Planning Document Quality Design (June 2006).</p>
4.	<p>Flood Lighting in accordance with details</p> <p>No floodlighting or other forms of external lighting shall be installed unless it is in accordance with details which have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such details shall include location, height, type and direction of light sources and intensity of illumination. Any lighting, which is so installed, shall not thereafter be altered without the prior consent in writing of the Local Planning Authority other than for routine maintenance that does not change its details.</p> <p>Reason: To protect residential amenity. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, Policies DM5 and DM30 of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2023-2041, and the Quality Design SPD.</p>

5.	<p>Control over lighting (hours of use)</p> <p>The sports pitch shall not be externally lit between the hours of 22:00 and 07:00 (inclusive), unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.</p> <p>Reason: Bats, badgers, water voles and otters are sensitive to light pollution. The introduction of artificial light might mean such species are disturbed and/or discouraged from using their breeding and resting places, established flyways or foraging areas. Such disturbance can constitute an offence under relevant wildlife legislation. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, and Policy SP11 of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2023-2041.</p>
6.	<p>Noise Management Plan</p> <p>The use of the site shall not commence until a Noise Management Plan is submitted to the Council for approval. This plan shall include, but not be limited to, the hours of use of the pitch and floodlights, the noise generated from arrivals and departures from the site and control of noise as to not give rise to disturbance of neighbours.</p> <p>A scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, which specifies the provisions to be made for the control of noise emanating from the site. Thereafter, the use shall not commence until the approved scheme has been fully implemented.</p> <p>Reason: To protect the occupants of nearby residential properties from noise due to the increased hours of use into the evening that the floodlights enable. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, Policies DM5 and DM30 of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2023-2041, and the Quality Design SPD.</p>
7.	<p>Hours of work (construction/demolition)</p> <p>No demolition or construction works shall take place outside the following hours:</p> <p>7:30am to 6:00pm Mondays to Fridays; 8:30am to 1:00pm Saturdays; No work shall be carried out at any time on Sundays or Bank Holidays.</p> <p>Reason: To safeguard the amenities of adjoining land uses and occupiers. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, and Policies DM5 and DM30 of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2023-2041.</p>
8.	<p>Contaminated Land</p> <p>If any previously unidentified land contamination is found during the carrying out of the development, it shall be reported immediately in writing to the LPA. Appropriate investigation and risk assessment shall be undertaken, and any necessary remediation measures shall be submitted and approved in writing by the LPA.</p> <p>Thereafter, any remediation measures shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.</p> <p>The development shall not be used* until all approved remediation measures have been completed and a verification report to demonstrate the effectiveness of the remediation has been submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA. (* Unless otherwise agreed in writing by the LPA)</p>

	Reason: To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other offsite receptors. This condition is applied in accordance with paragraphs 170, 178, 179 and 180 the National Planning Policy Framework.
9.	<p>Community Use Agreement</p> <p>Within 6 months of the date of this permission, a community use agreement prepared in consultation with Sport England has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and a copy of the completed approved agreement has been provided to the Local Planning Authority. The agreement shall apply to outdoor sports facilities, changing and car parking and include details of pricing policy, hours of use, access by non-educational establishment users, management responsibilities and a mechanism for review. The development shall not be used otherwise than in strict compliance with the approved agreement.</p> <p>Reason: To secure well managed safe community access to the sports facility/facilities, to ensure sufficient benefit to the development of sport and to accord with Development Plan Policy SP10 Green Infrastructure and the National Planning Policy Framework.</p>
10.	<p>Programme of archaeological works</p> <p>No development (including any demolition and site clearance/preparation) shall take place until a project design for a programme of archaeological works has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The project design shall ensure archaeological monitoring and recording of the floodlight foundations. Thereafter, the archaeological work shall take place in accordance with the approved project design, and a report shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority within three months of the end of the programme (unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority).</p> <p>Reason: To ensure that any significant archaeological remains that are found are adequately recorded. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, and Policies SP9, DM11 and DM14 of the Local Plan Review 2023-2041. A pre-commencement condition is necessary because the programme of archaeological works must take place before/during the development.</p>

Informatives

1	This decision has been made in a positive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development having regard to Development Plan policies and available guidance to secure high quality appropriate development. In this application whilst there has been a need to balance conflicting considerations, the local planning authority has secured and accepted what is considered to be a development which improves the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area.
2	<p>Tree/ hedge protection precautions informative note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure that the trees/ hedges which are to be retained are protected from damage, ensure that all works occur in a direction away from the trees.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition that no materials are stored within close proximity i.e. underneath the canopy of trees/ hedges to be retained. • Ensure that all mixing of materials that could be harmful to tree/ hedge roots is done well away from trees/ hedges (outside the canopy drip line) and downhill of the trees if on a slope, to avoid contamination of the soil. • To ensure the above, erect chestnut pale fencing on a scaffold framework at least out to the canopy extent to preserve rooting areas from compaction, chemicals or other unnatural substances washing into the soil. • If this is not possible due to working room / access requirements The ground under the trees'/ hedge canopies on the side of construction / access should be covered by 7.5cm of woodchip or a compressible material such as sharp sand, and covered with plywood sheets / scaffold boards to prevent compaction of the soil and roots. This could be underlain by a non permeable membrane to prevent lime or portland based products / chemicals entering the soil. • If there are any existing roots in situ and the excavation is not to be immediately filled in, then they should be covered by loose soil or dry Hessian sacking to prevent desiccation or frost damage. If required, the minimum amount of root could be cut back using a sharp knife. • If lime or portland based products are to be used for strip foundations then any roots found should be protected by a non permeable membrane prior to the laying of concrete. • Post holes within root protection areas must be hand dug with a fork and trowel, or use of an air pick, and lined with an impermeable membrane (e.g. the postmix bag if not perforated) before pouring concrete.
3	<p>BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN</p> <p>The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition (biodiversity gain condition) that development may not begin unless:</p> <p>(a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and</p> <p>(b) the planning authority has approved the plan.</p> <p>The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan, if one is required in respect of this permission would be West Berkshire District Council.</p> <p>There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply. These are listed below.</p> <p>Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will not require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because one or more of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements in the list below is/are considered to apply.</p> <p>EXEMPTIONS AND TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS</p> <p>The following are the statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements in respect of the biodiversity gain condition.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The application for planning permission was made before 12 February 2024. 2. The planning permission relates to development to which section 73A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (planning permission for development already carried out) applies.

3. The planning permission was granted on an application made under section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and
(i) the original planning permission to which the section 73 planning permission relates* was granted before 12 February 2024; or
(ii) the application for the original planning permission* to which the section 73 planning permission relates was made before 12 February 2024.

4. The permission which has been granted is for development which is exempt being:

4.1 Development which is not 'major development' (within the meaning of article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015) where:

i) the application for planning permission was made before 2 April 2024;
ii) planning permission is granted which has effect before 2 April 2024; or
iii) planning permission is granted on an application made under section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 where the original permission to which the section 73 permission relates* was exempt by virtue of (i) or (ii).

4.2 Development below the de minimis threshold, meaning development which:
i) does not impact an onsite priority habitat (a habitat specified in a list published under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006); and
ii) impacts less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat that has biodiversity value greater than zero and less than 5 metres in length of onsite linear habitat (as defined in the statutory metric).

4.3 Development which is subject of a householder application within the meaning of article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. A "householder application" means an application for planning permission for development for an existing dwellinghouse, or development within the curtilage of such a dwellinghouse for any purpose incidental to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse which is not an application for change of use or an application to change the number of dwellings in a building.

4.4 Development of a biodiversity gain site, meaning development which is undertaken solely or mainly for the purpose of fulfilling, in whole or in part, the Biodiversity Gain Planning condition which applies in relation to another development, (no account is to be taken of any facility for the public to access or to use the site for educational or recreational purposes, if that access or use is permitted without the payment of a fee).

4.5 Self and Custom Build Development, meaning development which:
i) consists of no more than 9 dwellings;
ii) is carried out on a site which has an area no larger than 0.5 hectares; and
iii) consists exclusively of dwellings which are self-build or custom housebuilding (as defined in section 1(A1) of the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015).

4.6 Development forming part of, or ancillary to, the high speed railway transport network (High Speed 2) comprising connections between all or any of the places or parts of the transport network specified in section 1(2) of the High Speed Rail (Preparation) Act 2013.

* "original planning permission means the permission to which the section 73 planning permission relates" means a planning permission which is the first in a sequence of two or more planning permissions, where the second and any subsequent planning permissions are section 73 planning permissions.

APPLICABLE EXEMPTION

The exemption that is considered to apply to this application is: Development below the de minimis threshold, meaning development which:

- i) does not impact an onsite priority habitat (a habitat specified in a list published under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006); and
- ii) impacts less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat that has biodiversity value greater than zero and less than 5 metres in length of onsite linear habitat (as defined in the statutory metric).

IRREPLACEABLE HABITAT

If the onsite habitat includes irreplaceable habitat (within the meaning of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024) there are additional requirements for the content and approval of Biodiversity Gain Plans.

The Biodiversity Gain Plan must include, in addition to information about steps taken or to be taken to minimise any adverse effect of the development on the habitat, information on arrangements for compensation for any impact the development has on the biodiversity of the irreplaceable habitat.

The planning authority can only approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if satisfied that the adverse effect of the development on the biodiversity of the irreplaceable habitat is minimised and appropriate arrangements have been made for the purpose of compensating for any impact which do not include the use of biodiversity credits.

THE EFFECT OF SECTION 73D OF THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

If planning permission is granted on an application made under section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (application to develop land without compliance with conditions previously attached) and a Biodiversity Gain Plan was approved in relation to the previous planning permission ("the earlier Biodiversity Gain Plan") there are circumstances when the earlier Biodiversity Gain Plan is regarded as approved for the purpose of discharging the biodiversity gain condition subject to which the section 73 planning permission is granted.

Those circumstances are that the conditions subject to which the section 73 permission is granted:

- i) do not affect the post-development value of the onsite habitat as specified in the earlier Biodiversity Gain Plan, and
- ii) in the case of planning permission for a development where all or any part of the onsite habitat is irreplaceable habitat the conditions do not change the effect of the development on the biodiversity of that onsite habitat (including any arrangements made to compensate for any such effect) as specified in the earlier Biodiversity Gain Plan.

PHASED DEVELOPMENT

If the permission which has been granted has the effect of requiring or permitting the development to proceed in phases, the modifications in respect of the biodiversity gain condition which are set out in Part 2 of the Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (Modifications and Amendments) (England) Regulations 2024 would apply if the permission were subject to the biodiversity gain condition.

In summary: Biodiversity gain plans would be required to be submitted to, and approved by, the planning authority before development may be begun (the overall plan), and before each phase of development may be begun (phase plans).
--