

Agenda Item 7.

Development Management Ref No	No weeks on day of committee	Parish	Ward	Listed by:
161911	43/13	Shinfield	Shinfield North	Major

Applicant Crosfields School, Shinfield Road, Wokingham
Location Crosfields School, Shinfield Road, Wokingham **Postcode** RG2 9BL
Proposal Full application for the proposed artificial turf pitch with fencing and floodlighting, re-grading of land for two new football pitches and an artificial cricket strip
Type Major
PS Category 6
Officer Pooja Kumar

FOR CONSIDERATION BY Planning Committee on 14th June 2017
REPORT PREPARED BY Head of Development Management and Regulatory Services

SUMMARY

The application site is within a major development location in the settlement of Shinfield within the Crosfields School playing fields. Crosfields School is an independent school located close to the Wokingham Borough boundary with Reading borough. The site is accessed from Shinfield Road which is a classified road and main through route into the centre of Reading from adjacent settlements.

The application seeks permission for groundworks to the school playing field to facilitate the installation of an artificial turf pitch with fencing and lighting; alterations to the land levels in the middle of the field to provide two new grass football pitches and an artificial cricket wicket; alterations to the levels of the land near the White House building to provide a new grass pitch and training grids and; a training grid adjacent to the existing tennis courts. The proposal would not facilitate any increase in the number of pupils or staff at the school.

The school's playing field is located to the west of the main school buildings and slopes down towards the western boundary of the site. The proposed pitches would be sited around the school field and surrounded by residential properties to the east and west of the site. The site is bound by dense mature trees around all of its boundaries which provide a significant visual buffer.

Sport England are supportive of the scheme subject to conditions. With regards to other aspects, parking would be in accordance with the Borough's standards and no harmful impact on residential amenity would occur. Any impacts with regards to Biodiversity and Environmental Health would be controlled through conditions. As such, the scheme is compliant with the development plan and is recommended for conditional approval.

PLANNING STATUS

- Major development location
- Thames Basin Heaths SPA- 7km
- Nuclear Consultation zone
- Sand and gravel extraction
- Contaminated Land Consultation zone
- Within 100 metre Consultation zone of Ancient Woodland

- Area 1 TPO to south-west of site- 97/1976

RECOMMENDATION

That the committee authorise the GRANT OF PLANNING PERMISSION subject to the following:

A. Conditions and informatives:

Time Limit

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In pursuance of s.91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by s.51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

Plans

2. This permission is in respect of the submitted application plans and drawings numbered and labelled, S15-281/VW/CS0001; 1512/02; S15-281/VW/AV0001; Proposed Light Spill Plan (Halliday Lighting); 1512/05; 1512/04; S15-281/VW/CP0001; 1758/0414; Design and Access Statement received by the local planning authority on 07/07/2016, Location Plan; received by the local planning authority on 15/08/2017; Landscape Visual Assessment; S15-281/VW/LP0001 (Revision G); 5609 FE TL 01; S15-281/VW/CX0001 received by the local planning authority on 06/03/2017, Great Crested Newt Habitat Suitability Index (5609 FE HIS 01 April 2017) received by the local planning authority on 06/03/2017; Arboricultural Method Statement (5609 FE AMS 01) and plan no. 5609 FE TPP 03 received by the local planning authority on 19/04/2017 and plan number 5609 FE ASSCSF 01 received by the local planning authority on 12/05/2017. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the application form and associated details hereby approved.

Transport

3. No development shall take place, including any works of demolition, until a Construction Method Statement has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The approved Statement shall be adhered to throughout the construction period. The Statement shall provide for:
 - i. the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors,
 - ii. loading and unloading of plant and materials,
 - iii. storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development,
 - iv. the erection and maintenance of security hoarding including decorative displays and facilities for public viewing, where appropriate,
 - v. wheel washing facilities,
 - vi. measures to control the emission of dust and dirt during construction,
 - vii. a scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from demolition and construction works.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety & convenience and neighbour amenities.

Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

Drainage

4. No development shall take place until full details of the drainage system for

the site have been submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA. The details shall include:

- Results of intrusive ground investigation demonstrating seasonal high groundwater levels for the site and infiltration rates in accordance with BRE365.
- Demonstration that the base of SuDS features are at 1m above seasonal groundwater level.
- Full calculations demonstrating the performance of soakaways.
- A drainage strategy plan
- A maintenance arrangement for the SuDS features throughout the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure flood risk is not increased elsewhere. Relevant Policy: CC09 of the MDD Local Plan.

Archaeology

5. No development shall take place within the site until the applicant, or their agents or their successors in title, has secured a programme of archaeological work (which may comprise more than one phase of work) in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall only take place in accordance with the detailed scheme approved pursuant to this condition.

Reason: To ensure that any archaeological remains within the site are adequately investigated and recorded or preserved in situ in the interest of protecting the archaeological heritage of the borough.

Trees & Landscape

6. Prior to the commencement of the development, full details of both hard and soft landscape proposals shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. These details shall include, as appropriate, proposed finished floor levels or contours, means of enclosure, pedestrian access and circulation areas, hard surfacing materials and minor artefacts (e.g. play equipment, signs, lighting, etc). Soft landscaping details shall include planting plan (to include wildflower sowing on the new banks), specification (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment), schedules of plants, noting species, planting sizes and proposed numbers/densities where appropriate, and implementation timetable.

All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with a timetable approved in writing by the local planning authority. Any trees or plants which, within a period of five years after planting, are removed, die or become seriously damaged or defective, shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of species, size and number as originally approved and permanently retained.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and biodiversity. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and CP7 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB23

7. No operations shall commence on site in connection with development hereby approved (including any tree felling, tree pruning, demolition works, soil moving, temporary access construction and or widening or any other operation involving use

of motorised vehicles or construction machinery) until the tree protection works required by the approved details are in place on site.

The fencing or other works which are part of the Approved Scheme shall not be moved or removed, temporarily or otherwise, until all works including external works have been completed and all equipment, machinery and surplus materials removed from the site, unless the prior approval in writing of the local planning authority has first been sought and obtained.

Reason: To secure the protection throughout the time that the development is being carried out of trees shrubs or hedges growing within or adjacent to the site which are of amenity value to the area, and to allow for verification by the local planning authority that the necessary measures are in place before development and other works commence Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21

Environmental Health

8. Prior to commencement of development there shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority details of the proposed external lighting, including details of any baffles or means of minimising light spill.

Reason: To safeguard residential amenities. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC06 and TB20.

9. The pitches and external lighting hereby approved shall only be used during the hours of 8am and 9.30pm Mondays to Friday, 9am to 7pm Saturdays and 9am to 6pm on Sundays, Public and Bank Holidays.

Reason: To safeguard residential amenities. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC06 and TB20.

10. The floodlighting hereby approved shall be limited to no more than 350Lux at any time.

Reason: To safeguard residential amenities. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC06 and TB20.

Biodiversity

11. Prior to commencement of the development, a "lighting design strategy for biodiversity" for light sensitive species shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The strategy shall:

- a) Identify those areas/features on site that are particularly sensitive for bats and that are likely to cause disturbance in or around their resting places or along important routes used to access key area of their territory, for example for foraging; and
- b) Show how and where external lighting will be installed so that it can be clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent the above species using their territory or having access to their breeding sites and resting places.

All external lighting shall be installed in accordance with the specifications and locations set out in the strategy, and these shall be maintained thereafter in accordance with the strategy. Under no circumstances should any other external lighting be installed without prior consent from the local planning authority.

Reason: To maintain favourable conservation status of the site for protected species and species of principal importance.

Sport England Conditions

12. The artificial pitch hereby permitted shall not be constructed other than substantially in accordance with Sport England Technical Design Guidance Notes; Artificial Surfaces for Outdoor Sport and Comparative Sizes of Sports Pitches and Courts (outdoor).

Reason: To ensure the development is fit for purpose and sustainable and to accord with Development Plan Policy

13. Use of the development shall not commence until 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 the artificial pitch, ancillary changing facilities 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, and anything else which the Local Planning Authority in consultation with Sport England considers necessary in order to secure the effective community use of the facilities. The development shall not be used at any time other than in strict compliance with the approved agreement.

Reason: To secure well managed safe community access to the sports facility, to ensure sufficient benefit to the development of sport and to accord with Development Plan Policy

Ground and building levels

14. No development shall take place until a measured survey of the site and a plan prepared to scale of not less than 1:500 showing details of existing and proposed finished ground levels (in relation to a fixed datum point) and finished roof levels shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority, and the approved scheme shall be fully implemented prior to the occupation of the building(s).

Reason: In order to ensure a satisfactory form of development relative to surrounding buildings and landscape. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy TB21.

Informatives

1. The applicant is reminded that this approval is granted subject to conditions which must be complied with prior to the development starting on site. Commencement of the development without complying with the pre-commencement requirements may be outside the terms of this permission and liable to enforcement action. The information required should be formally submitted to the Council for consideration with the relevant fee. Once the details have been approved in writing the development should be carried out only in accordance with those details. If this is not clear please contact the case officer to discuss.
2. Should any great crested newts or evidence of great crested newts be found prior to or during the development, all works must stop immediately and an ecological consultant contacted for further advice and Wokingham Borough Council informed before works can proceed. All contractors working on site should be made aware of the advice and provided with the contact details of a relevant ecological consultant.

PLANNING HISTORY

The site has an extensive planning history relating to the school. The most recent history relates to the erection of the swimming pool complex.

F/2011/0905	Proposed construction of new swimming pool complex with 25m pool, changing and storage facilities. Amendment to consent F/2010/2264, conditionally approved on 20 th July 2011.
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SUMMARY INFORMATION

Site Area	5 hectares
Existing Sports Pitches	1
Proposed Sports Pitches	1 All-weather pitch; 3 Natural Turf Pitches; 2 Training Grids and; 1 Artificial Cricket Wicket
Existing & Proposed parking spaces	100

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Berkshire Archaeology	No objection subject to condition (5)
Southern Gas Networks	No objection subject to applicant applying for a permit to carry out works near to gas pipe if necessary
Sport England	No objection subject to conditions (12 & 13)
Thames Water	No comments received
Reading Borough Council	Object on the basis of insufficient information on noise, lighting and landscape character
WBC Biodiversity	No objection subject to conditions (6 & 9)
WBC Drainage	No objection subject to condition (4)
WBC Environmental Health	No objection subject to conditions (8, 10 & 11)
WBC Highways	No objection subject to condition (3)
WBC Tree & Landscape	No objection subject to condition (6 & 7)
WBC Waste Services	No comments received

REPRESENTATIONS

Shinfield Parish: No comment

Local Members: No comments received

Neighbours:

- One Letter of **support** on the basis of more sports activities being available.
- Seven letters of **objection** on issues relating to highways safety; increased traffic; request for hours of lighting and use to be controlled; impact on residential amenity in respect of noise, disturbance and light pollution and; unrestricted use of existing access points along Shinfield Road and swimming pool. Lack of transport assessment, intensification of the use of the site for longer hours and impact on wildlife.
- Following the submission of revised plans, one letter of objection submitted on the basis of light pollution, noise, impact of floodlights on wildlife and no assessment of the impact of the proposed development on Mitford Close.

APPLICANTS POINTS

- The proposal would allow the school's hockey team to train on site and allow for better field sports facilities within the school minimising the need for travelling off

- site for sports training and matches;
- There would be no impact on highways and parking as the pitches would be used by schools predominantly, and out of school hours the all-weather pitch could be used by local communities;
 - No harm to residential amenities by the proposed lighting as it would be blocked by the existing school buildings and extensive tree coverage; and,
 - Additional noise would be limited as the main users of the pitch would be school pupils.

PLANNING POLICY		
National Policy	NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
Adopted Core Strategy DPD 2010	CP1	Sustainable Development
	CP2	Inclusive Communities
	CP3	General Principles for Development
	CP6	Managing Travel Demand
	CP7	Biodiversity
	CP9	Scale and Location of Development Proposals
	Adopted Managing Development Delivery Local Plan 2014	CC01
CC02		Development Limits
CC03		Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping
CC04		Sustainable Design and Construction
CC06		Noise
CC07		Parking
CC10		Sustainable Drainage
TB21		Landscape Character
Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)	TB25	Archaeology
	BDG	Borough Design Guide – Section 7

PLANNING ISSUES
<p>Description of Development:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The scheme is for the installation of a number of sports pitches on the playing field of Crosfields School. Due to the changing levels of the land within the playing field re-grading of the land will be necessary to provide flat areas to accommodate the pitches. The following paragraphs describe the location, size and any additional works for each pitch. <p><i>Artificial Turf Pitch</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. The application proposes an artificial turf pitch with mesh fencing and flood lighting adjacent to the swimming pool and car park to the southern side of the site. The pitch would measure 99.4 metres by 61 metres and would be bound with 3 metre high weldmesh fence which would be coloured green on all sides (4.3 metre high fencing behind the goal posts), with 6 floodlights on 13 metres high columns.

Grass Pitch Adjacent to The White House

3. To the northern side of the playing field, the application proposes to re-grade the land and provide a natural grass playing area and training grid. This area currently slopes to the western side of the playing field and therefore the land level would be cut by approximately 4.5 metres to the west and filled by approximately 3.2 metres to the east to create a flat area for the proposed football pitches. The proposed pitch would not be fenced or artificially lit. Although an existing levels plan has been provided, it is considered that a proposed levels plan should be submitted prior to commencement of development. This has been requested via condition 14.

Grass Pitches & Cricket Strip

4. The proposal would require the land to be filled in approximately between 2.5 to 3.5 metres as there is a large dip in the land sloping into the field in the middle of the playing field, cutting into the land to the eastern side and filling the area to the west to provide an area of flat land to accommodate two grass football pitches and a cricket strip in between the two. These pitches would not be lit and would not be fenced.

Principle of Development:

5. The National Planning Policy Framework has an underlying presumption in favour of sustainable development which is carried through to the local Development Plan. The Managing Development Delivery Local Plan Policy CC01 states that planning applications that accord with the policies in the Development Plan for Wokingham Borough will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
6. Paragraph 69 of the NPPF identifies that the planning system can play an important role to facilitate social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities. Paragraph 73 goes on to highlight that access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities.
7. The site is located within a major development location and within a settlement boundary and as such the development would be acceptable providing that it complies with the principles stated in the Core Strategy. Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy states that development must be appropriate in terms of its scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area in which it is located and must be of high quality design without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land uses and occupiers and this is discussed below.
8. Given the national and local policy context, it is considered that the proposal would be acceptable subject to the assessment of other material considerations. These include no adverse impact on character of the area, the creation of suitable play space, and no adverse impacts on traffic, highways safety, neighbouring amenity, biodiversity, or sustainability.

Character of the Area:

9. The application site comprises of a number of single and two storey buildings. The school field slopes down from east to west. There are two car parking areas within the site and two vehicular access points. The site is bound with mature landscaping on all sides and an Ancient Woodland to the south-west of the site. There is a tree

preservation order outside of the site, but no protected trees are sited within the site's boundary.

10. The proposed development would involve engineering works to re-grade the land in the centre of the field to create 2 grass pitches and a cricket strip. These pitches would not be lit and would not have any fencing. The proposed alterations to the level of the land would alter the appearance of this part of the field in respect of the geometric shape of the site from filtered views from the west of the site; however the character of the field as a school play field is considered to remain unaltered.
11. Similar to the works in the centre of the field, to the northern part of the site there would be re-grading of the land adjacent to the 'White House', to provide grass pitch closer to the main complex of school buildings. This pitch also would not be lit nor would have any fencing and therefore it's considered not to detrimentally alter the character and appearance of the sport field.
12. The installation of an artificial turf pitch adjacent to the existing swimming pool building is considered be in keeping with the existing character of the school field. The proposed installation of floodlighting and mesh fencing is considered not to detrimentally alter the appearance of the site which is a school sports field.
13. In terms of the visual appearance, the proposal is considered to alter the site's appearance to a limited degree however this would not visible from outside of the site. The applicant has submitted a Landscape Visual Assessment for consideration which includes photographs of views towards the site from various points outside of the site in adjacent local authorities. The assessment demonstrates that the site is well screened and that any views towards the playing field are extremely limited to filtered views of the field.
14. There have been concerns raised on the visual impact of the development on residents of Mitford Close. The closest pitches to Mitford Close (approximately 80 metres away) would be the two grassed pitches and cricket strip which would not be lit and neither fenced. Due to the proposed 'cut and fill' to the western side of the pitch, it is considered that there would no detrimental alteration to the views of the site from Mitford Close. The proposed 'fill' would screen views directly towards the sports pitches as it would raise the land level to the west side and therefore from the immediate west of the site the only visible alteration would change in the level of the land as demonstrated in plan titled 'Proposed Cross Sections'.
15. In respect of the lit all weather pitch, the nearest residential property would be along Crosfield close at a distance of 90 metres. The nearest public highway to the flood lighting would be Shinfield Road, at a distance of 100 metres. It is considered that the street scene of Shinfield Road would remain unaltered as a result of the proposed development.
16. Whilst it is acknowledged that there would be an alteration to the appearance of the site; it is considered that this would only be noticeable from within the site's boundary. Views towards the playing field from outside are limited and views of the alterations are considered to be limited to the changes of the level of the land to accommodate the development. The proposed use of the site as a result of the proposed development is considered to be typical of school's within the Borough whereby there is some wider community use outside of regular school hours. The

proposed development is considered not to harm the character and appearance of the site and school; as such it would accord with policy CP3 of the Core Strategy and policy TB21 of the MDD Local Plan.

Residential Amenities:

Mitford Close

17. The site is an existing school field and the applicant could use the most western are of the site for additional sports at any time without requiring planning consent. In respect of overlooking, loss of light and overbearing it is considered that there would be no harm to the occupants of Mitford Close. The nearest pitches would be the unlit and unfenced grass pitches and cricket strip. This playing area would be located approximately 80 metres from the site's boundary and as such the relationship between the site and Mitford Close is considered to remain unchanged.
18. Concerns regarding noise from the sports field have been raised by residents of Mitford Close. The closest pitches would be grass pitches and unlikely to be used outside of school hours by community groups due to the lack of lighting and fencing. Any use of these pitches is likely to be limited to day light hours. A condition to control the hours of use of pitches has been recommended by Environmental Health officers and included within the officers recommended condition 10.
19. In respect of light pollution it is considered that there would be no significant harm to the residential properties of Mitford Close. The artificial turf pitch would be located over 150 metres away from the site's west boundary and would be separated from Mitford Close by the sloping field and mature landscaping; as such no harm to residential amenity is considered in this respect. Condition 10 limits the level lighting.

Crosfield Close

20. It is considered that there would be no harm in respect of overlooking, loss of light and overbearing to the residents of Crosfield Close. The closest pitch would be the artificial turf pitch, which would be screened from open view of Crosfield close by the existing two storey sports hall with a ridge height of 10.4 metres and the swimming pool building which is single storey in height.
21. In respect of noise, there would be additional noise as a result of the use of the southern area of the playing field. Environmental Health officers have advised that subject to a condition restricting the hours of operation (9) there would be no detriment to the residential amenities of the occupants of Crosfield Close.
22. Concerns regarding light pollution have been raised by occupants of Crosfield Close. The proposed light columns would be a height of 13 metre and the lighting would be projected onto the pitch at a horizontal angle. In addition to this, there is mature landscaping between the school site and the proposed artificial turf pitch to further screen the lighting columns. Environmental Health officers have advised that the proposed lighting is acceptable subject to a condition restricting the hours of illumination and the amount of illumination (10 and 11).

Shinfield Road

23. There would not to be any detriment in respect of overlooking, loss of light and overbearing to residents of Shinfield. At approx. 120 metres these properties would

be furthest away from the proposed pitches.

24. In respect of noise and disturbance, some neighbours have advised that any increase in the use of the site would create additional disturbance from car doors opening and closing and from adults using the pitches and creating more noise than school pupils. Whilst this is noted, the residential properties along Shinfield Road are located on the opposite side of the Shinfield Road (A327) to the school and there is already a degree of back ground noise from the classified road. Environmental Health officers have advised that suitable conditions to control hours of use would be acceptable to ensure no adverse impact in this respect (10).

Access and Movement:

25. **Traffic Generation:** The applicant has not submitted a travel plan, however the Design and Access Statement advises of the proposed uses of the pitches. All of the pitches would be used mainly by the school during school hours and for after school clubs. The only pitch available for use by external bodies would be the all-weather pitch; however this would be limited to outside school hours when school children would not be on site. Therefore it is considered that the proposal will not harmfully increase in traffic in the local area. Whilst it is acknowledged that there may be some additional use of the site outside of the existing school hours, this would be limited to the use of one pitch only which is not considered to attract an excessive number of cars into the site. The suggested condition (13) by Sport England on Community use will need to be drafted to take into consideration the conditions imposed by the local planning authority in respect of hours of use and parking availability, Highways will need to be consulted when this document is received so that elements of the car park can be taken into consideration.
26. **Highway Safety and Access:** There are two access points to the school along Shinfield Road. These would remain in situ and are considered sufficient in terms of cars accessing the site. Due to the site's location a condition requiring the submission of a Construction Method Statement is recommended from our Highways officers (3).
27. **Parking:** The existing site is a school which has 100 parking spaces and no new spaces are proposed as part of the application. The pitches will be used predominantly by the school; however the all-weather pitch closest to the swimming pool could be open to the community. The use of one pitch by the community would be outside of school hours and therefore it is considered that the existing level of parking would be acceptable.
28. **Sustainability:** The site is within a major development location and is along bus routes 3 and 10, encouraging people to access the site by public transport. The site would accord with policy CP6 as it is located in a sustainable location.

Sport England:

29. Sport England have been consulted on the proposal and have raised no objection subject to conditions on lighting, pitch quality, hours of use and lighting, community use and design. These have been included within the officer's recommendation as conditions 12 and 13. The proposed hours of use and illumination are covered by condition requested by WBC Environmental Health (9).

Flooding and Drainage:

30. The applicant has submitted a drainage plan and Design & Access Statement which identifies that draining the new pitches will be via soakaways; however no soakage test results have been submitted to demonstrate that infiltration is achievable at the site. In addition, no ground water monitoring has been conducted to indicate the seasonal high groundwater levels in the area to ensure the base of infiltration structures will function properly. WBC Drainage officer advises that there is no in-principle objection to the proposal, however a condition requiring the submission of a drainage system including test results, infiltration levels and rates and calculations (4) is recommended. Subject to adherence to this condition the proposal is considered to accord with policy CC09 of the MDD Local Plan.

Landscape and Trees:

31. The site is located in the Shinfield North settlement area and in Landscape Character Area J3 'Spencers Wood Settled and Farmed Clay'. The school buildings and landscape covers a substantial area and part of the 100m Consultation Zone for Ancient Woodland is located in the south-west of the wider playing fields. The school playing field is surrounded by mature trees both inside and outside the site's boundary. Within the main areas of the playing field there are a few mature trees and shrubs, as indicated by Tree Schedule referenced 5609 FE TS 01 and the associated plans attached to the decision notice. The trees are of different categories as included in the detail provided within the Tree Schedule.

32. There are no in-principle objections to the proposed development from WBC Trees and Landscape Officers, as the proposed development would not require the removal of any trees from the site. Moreover, the applicant has submitted an acceptable tree survey and tree protection plan which will form part of the approved details. The areas to be used for the proposed pitches are either areas of shrubbery or areas of grassed field.

33. WBC Trees and Landscape officers have advised that the proposed development would not detrimentally alter the landscape character of the site and local area; however it is advised that a condition requiring the submission of hard and soft landscaping details must be attached to planning permission (7), subject to which the proposal is considered to accord with policy CC03 of the MDD Local Plan.

Environmental Health

Light:

34. The design and access statement submitted by the applicant identifies that 6 lighting columns would be installed on site with 3 lamps on each column, a total of 18 lamps. The proposal would use a 'Philips Optivision floodlighting system' or equivalent. This modern lighting system is a down-lighting luminaire which controls light spill, limits glare and upward leakage of light. The size and scale of these lamps can be found in different sizes, however most modern training pitches make use of the narrow, compact lamps. A condition requiring the submission of the lighting specification has been attached to the recommendation (8).

35. The applicant has advised that the maximum illumination would be 350 Lux for the duration of Hockey matches and senior training. At all other times, the illumination would be limited to 200 Lux. Environmental Health officers have advised that both illumination levels are acceptable. Nonetheless a condition ensuring that illumination

does not exceed 350 Lux should be included (11).

Noise:

36. Environmental Health officers have advised that due to the separation distances between residential properties and the proposed pitches, combined with the restriction on the hours of use; there would be no adverse effect on residential amenity in respect of noise.

Biodiversity:

Great Crested Newts:

37. WBC Biodiversity officer has advised that although there is a pond on site, it is unlikely that this is a breeding pond for the protected species of great crested newts. An informatives (2) is considered appropriate in this instance.

Bats:

38. The applicant submitted an Ecological Appraisal of the site for review. WBC Biodiversity officer has advised that the proposed increased use and light spill could have an impact to the protected species of Bats. As such the officer has requested the submission of a lighting design strategy for light sensitive species to limit light spill and to ascertain the possibility of using baffles and/or louvres (8).

39. As a result of the proposed 'cut and fill' there will be some loss of shrubs within the playing field which would have a detrimental impact on the biodiversity on the site. It is considered appropriate in this instance to propose an amendment to the standard landscaping condition to include planting for wildflowers on the new banks to maintain some degree of biodiversity habitat (6), subject to which the proposal is considered to accord with policy CP7 of the Core Strategy and policy TB23 of the MDD Local Plan.

Community Infrastructure Levy:

40. As the proposal is for ground works to facilitate the installation of sports pitches, the proposal would not be CIL liable development.

Archaeology:

41. Due to potential archaeological remains in the area, the Council's archaeological consultant has recommended a condition (5) be placed requiring the approval of a written scheme of investigation prior to development occurring on site. Subject to this condition, no harmful impact is considered to occur.

CONCLUSION

The proposed development is considered to be appropriate in respect of character, impact on highways and trees and landscape. The proposal would enhance the sporting facilities on site and would not harm the residential amenities of neighbours subject to conditions. In respect of biodiversity it is considered appropriate to attach conditions to mitigate any harm from lighting and loss of shrubs on site. As such, the proposal is considered to accord with local and national planning policy and is therefore recommended for approval.

CONTACT DETAILS		
Service	Telephone	Email
Development Management and Regulatory Services	0118 974 6428 / 6429	development.control@wokingham.gov.uk