

**Q1 Why did the Council withdraw its planning application to demolish the old football clubhouse and reopen the old grass pitch for public recreation and informal sport?**

We reviewed our planning application following the fire which destroyed most of the former clubhouse in August, and decided to withdraw it. The reasons for this are set out in full in our response to Q3 in the FAQs on the [Former football ground at Faraday Rd.](#)

**Q2 Do the works currently being carried out on site require planning permission?**

No. The works are to remove fencing and make the ground safe. The Council as Local Planning Authority was consulted prior to the works being commissioned and confirmed that planning permission was not required.

**Q3 Is planning permission required for the Faraday Ground to be anything other than a Football Club?**

No. The permitted use for the Faraday Rd ground is **Class F2 Local Community Uses c) outdoor sport or recreation**. There is no change of use in the proposal to re-open the ground as an informal area of grassland for general sports and recreational use. Planning permission will be required in order to redevelop the ground as part of the wider LRIE regeneration project.

**Q4 Were the public informed of when the works were to start?**

Yes. A press release dated 8 October, which was circulated to all West Berkshire Councillors and posted on our social media platforms, informed the public that works would be carried out to make the site safe and to open it up as informal sports and recreation space, and that contractors would start on site in the near future. The timing of the works was a matter for the contractor.

If you would like to be kept informed of what is happening on the Faraday Rd ground, please check our website <https://info.westberks.gov.uk/playingpitches> which is regularly updated.

**Q5 Where will the boundaries be when the works are completed?**

Under the plans to re-open the ground as an informal area of grassland for general sports and recreational use, the boundary treatments will be as follows:

- Southern boundary – remove all vegetation and all fencing, leaving boundary open with no replacement fence or hedge. Vehicular access will be prevented by existing timber bollards at southern end of existing car park.
- Eastern boundary – remove timber panels from 6' high close boarded fence (leave concrete posts in place). Leave existing approx. 4 metre high chain link fence in place along whole length of eastern boundary.
- Northern boundary, northern gate, western boundary and south western gate – remove all 4 metre high timber close boarding, leave existing steel posts in place but cut them down to 1.2 metres height and provide new caps to post tops. Then fix 1.2 metre high rural type open wire fencing to existing, shortened, posts.
- Old clubhouse concrete floor slab (and hence part of western boundary) – fence around the perimeter with 1.8 metre high temporary heras fencing.

**Q6 What works have been carried out to date and how much did they cost?**

The majority of the works commissioned from the contractor via Volker have been completed. These include initial survey, vegetation clearance, removal of floodlights, heras fencing, removal of eastern steps and clearance of hardstanding, fencing modifications and tree removal, and repairs to gully gratings in readiness for resurfacing. The cost of this work was £58,883, plus a further £840 on removal of waste including needles and £630 to cover the cost of delays while dealing with protesters who accessed the site on 4 November.

The remains of the high level fence on the southern boundary have now been removed by the contractor following a safety inspection which took place after the protest on 4 November, and the site has been made secure by heras fencing.

In addition, the Council spent £5,790 on the planning application required in order to demolish the clubhouse and £22,389 on the demolition of the remainder of the clubhouse and ancillary structures on safety grounds, following the fire in August 2021.

As the site has been closed since 2018, any proposals to open the ground to the public would have incurred costs to make the site safe.

**Q7 What works remain to be carried out?**

Resurfacing the hardstanding to the west where the stadium was located (not the clubhouse) for safety reasons will cost a further £23,719 and is scheduled to take place later this month.

**Q8 What risk assessments are carried out to make sure the site is safe?**

The appropriate risk assessments are carried out by the Council's Health and Safety team and any contractors before, during and after any works that take place. If you have health and safety concerns about the Faraday Road ground, please contact us via our website <https://www.westberks.gov.uk/home> or call our Customer Services on [01635 551111](tel:01635551111)