Discussion document 5G pitch

Proposed conversion of the football club's grass pitch to an all-weather surface.

The club's responses are summarised below.

Infill Material
The club advises that the pitch will utilise a modern performance infill, typically a rubber-based material such as SBR or an equivalent approved alternative. They have indicated that alternative and organic infill options are considered during the design process, with factors such as durability, performance, lifecycle costs and suitability for local weather conditions taken into account before a final specification is selected.

The club has also previously confirmed that infill containment measures can be incorporated to minimise the risk of material migration beyond the pitch footprint.

End-of-Life Disposal and Recycling
The anticipated lifespan of the pitch surface is approximately 8–10 years, depending on usage and maintenance.

The club advises that established industry practices seek to maximise recycling and reuse of materials at the end of the pitch's life, including recovery of infill materials and recycling of carpet fibres where possible. They have also advised that many suppliers now operate take-back and recycling schemes designed to reduce landfill and support circular economy principles.

Biodiversity Enhancements
Recognising the replacement of an existing grass surface, the club has indicated a willingness to explore biodiversity enhancements elsewhere on the site. Examples discussed include:

- Wildflower planting;
- Native tree planting;
- Hedgerow improvements; and
- Enhancements to existing green boundaries to support wildlife habitats.

The club considers that such measures could help offset the loss of the grassed area and contribute positively to the wider environmental value of the site.

Consideration by Council
As councillors, we will inevitably balance a range of factors when considering whether we should support this application, including:

- Environmental and biodiversity impacts;
- Measures proposed to mitigate those impacts;
- Community and health benefits;
- Increased sporting participation;
- Year-round usability of the facility; and
- The wider benefits to the town.