



**Wheathampstead Parish Council
The Memorial Hall
Marford Road, Wheathampstead, Herts, AL4 8AY**

Re: Support for Wheathampstead Cricket Club – Kimpton Hoo Ground Redevelopment

Dear Sir/Madam,

On behalf of Wheathampstead Parish Council (WPC), I am pleased to offer our strong support for Wheathampstead Cricket Club's application to redevelop the disused cricket ground at Kimpton Hoo.

This project represents a highly strategic and timely investment in community sport provision within Hertfordshire. Wheathampstead Cricket Club has demonstrated exceptional growth over recent years, particularly in junior and female participation. The increase in junior membership from just 10 to over 200 players, alongside the establishment of a thriving girls' pathway with three competitive teams, reflects both the club's strong leadership and its commitment to inclusive participation. However, this success has also placed significant pressure on existing facilities, with demand now exceeding capacity. The Folly Fields project has been a huge success and has already reached capacity within 12 months.

The cricket club is following a near identical trajectory to Wheathampstead Wanderers Football club, which has gone from 6 girls participating in 2020 to over 100 now. Michael Lea, who is now chair of WCC, was the individual who started the Girls football section at the Wanderers and is now leading the charge at the cricket club. There is considerable demand for women and girls team sport within Wheathampstead. Without further development in facilities, growth in participation will be constrained. The James Marshall Foundation has supported the cricket club through funding to ensure that no child is preventing from participating through personal equipment costs.

The proposed redevelopment of the Kimpton Hoo site will directly address this need. Bringing a currently unused and derelict space back into active use aligns strongly with national and local priorities to maximise existing assets and increase opportunities for physical activity. The planned provision of a natural turf square, improved outfield, non-turf pitch, and irrigation system will ensure a durable, high-quality facility capable of supporting year-on-year growth.

From a strategic perspective, this project closely aligns with Sport England's *Uniting the Movement* ambitions by tackling inequalities and enabling more people to be active. In particular, the club's focus on engaging girls, women, and those new to cricket is especially commendable. The



Wheathampstead Parish Council
The Memorial Hall
Marford Road, Wheathampstead, Herts, AL4 8AY

expectation that at least 100 new participants will engage within the first two seasons—many from underrepresented groups—demonstrates clear and measurable impact.

The benefits of this project extend beyond cricket. Increased access to local, inclusive sporting opportunities will support improved physical and mental wellbeing, strengthen community cohesion, and reduce barriers to participation, including the need for travel outside the local area. The inclusion of opportunities for older adults (50+) is also an important feature, supporting lifelong engagement in physical activity. The site will be a focal point for the Hertfordshire Farming community, who are looking forward to re-establishing the Hertfordshire Farmers cricket team based at Kimpton Hoo.

We also welcome the club's commitment to environmental sustainability. Plans to incorporate biodiversity improvements, reduce reliance on diesel-powered equipment, and introduce rainwater collection systems demonstrate a forward-thinking approach that aligns with WPC's and Sport England's environmental priorities.

WPC recognises Wheathampstead Cricket Club as a key community anchor organisation, with the capacity and vision to deliver this project successfully and sustainably. The redevelopment of the Kimpton Hoo ground will play a vital role in ensuring that the growing demand for cricket in the area can be met, while also contributing to broader health and wellbeing outcomes for the local population.

We strongly endorse this application and encourage North Herts Council to support this important project.

Yours faithfully,

Claire Bainbridge

Facilities Officer and Assistant Clerk

Wheathampstead Parish Council

May 2026



Wheathampstead Parish Council
The Memorial Hall
Marford Road, Wheathampstead, Herts, AL4 8AY