



Committee and date

Northern Planning Committee

18th November 2025

Development Management Report

Responsible Officer: Tim Collard, Service Director – Legal, Governance and Planning

Summary of Application

<u>Application Number:</u> 25/02658/FUL	<u>Parish:</u>	Shrewsbury Town Council
<u>Proposal:</u> Extension of existing Shrewsbury Sports Village including Swimming Pool with viewing area, Fitness Suite, Studios, Group Cycle and Ancillary Spaces.		
<u>Site Address:</u> Shrewsbury Sports Village Sundorne Road Shrewsbury Shropshire SY1 4RQ		
<u>Applicant:</u> Shropshire Council		
<u>Case Officer:</u> Alison Lloyd	<u>email:</u> alison.lloyd@shropshire.gov.uk	

Grid Ref: 351531 - 314666



Recommendation: - Grant Permission subject to the conditions and a Memorandum of Understanding relating to BNG as set out in Appendix 1, with delegated authority to the Planning and Development Services Manager for minor amendments and conditions.

REPORT

1.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 1.1 Extension of existing Shrewsbury Sports Village including Swimming Pools with viewing, Fitness Suite, Studios, Group Cycle and Ancillary Spaces.
- 1.2 The applicant sought pre-application advice on the proposal:
PREAPM/25/00197 - Extension of the existing Shrewsbury Sports Village including Swimming Pools with viewing, Fitness Suite, Studios, Group Cycle and Ancillary Spaces. The officer advice which was provided was: - Additional Information Needed (AIP)

2.0 SITE LOCATION/DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 Shrewsbury Sports Village is located to the north / east of Shrewsbury, whilst in planning policy terms the sites is deemed to be countryside land, it is surrounding by existing development to the north, east and west.

The main highway “Sundorne Road” sits north of the site with a highly populated residential area beyond.

An NHS medical centre sits to the west with residential housing beyond, and to the east of the site is a health and fitness facility “David Lloyd Centre” beyond this is the main A49 highway network.

The site looks out to countryside land to the south.

- 2.2 The Shrewsbury development boundary as detailed under the SAMDev Plan sits within close proximity to the site to the north and west.

3.0 REASON FOR COMMITTEE DETERMINATION OF APPLICATION

- 3.1 Shropshire Council are the applicant for this planning application; therefore, it is a mandatory requirement under the Scheme of Delegation for this application to be taken to the Planning Committee for consideration.

4.0 COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIONS

4.1 CONSULTEE COMMENTS

- 4.1.1 Highway Officer - No objection
- 4.1.2 Tree Officer – Conditions TBC

- 4.1.3 Landscape Officer - additional information needed
- 4.1.4 Fire and Rescue Officer - Advice Given
- 4.1.5 Sports England - No objection
- 4.1.6 Drainage Officer - Pre-commencement drainage condition to be applied (agreed by applicant)
- 4.1.7 Public Protection Officer - No objection, Noise Assessment condition to be applied
- 4.1.8 Ecology Officer - A memorandum of understanding (MOU) for BNG provision, conditions advised
- 4.1.9 Green Infrastructure Officer – Conditions advised

4.2 PUBLIC COMMENTS

4.2.1 Shrewsbury Town Council - Neutral

Whilst the Town Council raise no objections to this application, Members have concerns about the removal of parking spaces for the proposal and would like more information about provision of additional parking in the grounds to support increased parking demands that these new facilities will create.

Following detailed supporting information with regards to parking the Town Council were re-consulted on 30.09.2025, no further comments have been received to date.

4.2.2 Letters of Representation

Support comments x 30

- Much needed development due to lack of local facilities: Shropshire is currently the only county in England without a competition-standard swimming pool, forcing swimmers to travel out of county (e.g., Wolverhampton, Sandwell, Nuneaton, Sheffield) for competitions and training.
- Economic Benefits: Hosting competitions and galas locally would bring revenue to Shropshire businesses (accommodation, food, etc.) and benefit the local economy
- Community Health & Wellbeing: The new pool would support physical and mental health for all ages, encourage healthy lifestyles, and provide inclusive access for all abilities and genders.
- Support for Local Swimmers: The facility would help talented swimmers train and compete locally, reducing the need to leave the county or the sport due to lack of facilities.
- Club Development: Local swimming clubs, including Shrewsbury Amateur Swimming Club and Wellington (Telford) Swimming Club, highlight the positive impact on club growth, youth engagement, and the sustainability of swimming in the county.

- Hosting County Championships: The new pool would allow Shropshire to host its own county championships and open meets, which are currently held outside the county.
- Modern, Accessible Design: Supporters praise the proposed design for being modern, efficient, and well-placed for transport links, with calls for generous spectator seating and parking.
- Positive Impact on Young People: Comments stress the importance of providing opportunities for children and young people to train, compete, and develop friendships locally.
- Support from Swimming Associations: Shropshire Amateur Swimming Association and other club chairs express full support, noting the facility's importance for the future of swimming in the county.
- Environmental Impact: Some note that a local pool would reduce unnecessary travel, lowering the environmental impact of out-of-county journeys.
- Inclusivity: The pool would cater for a wide range of uses, including lessons, leisure swimming, fitness classes, and competitions, making it a community asset for all.
- Improve and enhance the existing facility

Objection comments x 1

- There is no need to supplement the current provision of fitness facilities at the Sundorne sports village with an additional 130 station facility.
- No mention is given in the application to the facilities on offer at the private leisure facilities that borders the sports village site that includes 20m heated indoor pool, 25m heated outdoor pool, Indoor and outdoor kids splash pools, outdoor terrace.
- No mention is given to the new Padel tennis courts that are being provided at the Private Leisure Centre to supplement their indoor and outdoor court provision.
- No mention is given to the plan to replace the outdoor netball court provision at the sports village with Padel tennis courts that are also being provided at the facility next door.
- The private leisure facility will be competing directly with the same catchment for fitness station users, the private facility boasting Rowing Machines, Cross trainers, Treadmills, TRX functional training, Weights and strength training equipment.
- It makes no sense to be providing the same facilities next door to each other when other parts of Shrewsbury and Shropshire have no provision or very little available or accessible to their local communities
- The Sundorne Sports Facility would be best serving a more traditional user need, that is the likes of football, rugby, cricket, cycling, netball, rounders, indoor cricket nets, basketball etc, with a much valued mix of team grass pitches, outdoor floodlit facilities plus developing further its unique cycling facility.
- Other sites might better serve the swimming needs more effectively than what is being proposed.

- A competition swimming site would point to Sundorne, but remember the competition season is a short one, what happens the other 10 months of the year.
- A swimming club training facility could be at anyone of the sites or even a standalone facility on the Grange School site at the heart of the community.

4.2.3 Officers Response to objections raised

The facilities at David Lloyd Club are exclusive to members, with no pay-and-play option available. In contrast, the facilities at the sports village cater to a different demographic, offering pay-and-play and lower membership fees. Although both facilities are in the same area, they target different customer bases.

The padel courts are unrelated to the Swimming Pool planning application and will be addressed in a separate application by the Padel Club. The loss of the netball/tennis courts will be managed through this future application. Shropshire Playing Fields Association have already discussed mitigation strategies with the LTA and Sport England. The sports village has confirmed that most netball activities occur indoors, and the courts aren't frequently used for tennis. The new Padel facility will occupy three of the four courts, with the remaining court being refurbished for continued use for tennis and netball.

From a planning perspective, the loss of the netball/tennis courts falls under Exception 5 of Sport England's Playing Fields policy. This policy states that the proposed development of a sport facility should provide sufficient benefit to outweigh any detriment caused by the loss of the playing field.

A thorough review of potential sites for the swimming pool was conducted, identifying the sports village as the most suitable location. The Grange site is not viable due to ongoing discussions between the Council and Cornovii. Thus, any loss of playing fields will need appropriate mitigation.

5.0 THE MAIN ISSUES

PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT
SITING, SCALE AND DESIGN OF DEVELOPMENT
ARBORICULTURAL, LANDSCAPING AND ECOLOGY
ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS / PARKING AND HIGHWAY SAFETY
DRAINAGE
NEIGHBOURING LAND USES / AMENITIES

6.0 OFFICER APPRAISAL

6.1 PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

- 6.1.1 The proposal is for the extension and enhancement of Shrewsbury Sports Village, a well-established sports and leisure facility located on Sundorne Road, Shrewsbury.

The site currently offers a range of dry-side sports facilities, including changing rooms, football pitches, netball and tennis courts, a cycle track, café, and a small fitness gym. Some areas have already been adapted for new uses, such as soft play and a spin studio.

The proposed development will further improve the existing facilities and introduce new wet-side amenities, including a main swimming pool, a learner pool, and upgraded health and fitness spaces. The scheme also includes an increase in parking provision to support the expanded sports centre and its users.

6.1.2 Key Objectives of Development

- Deliver new swimming and fitness facilities as an extension to the existing centre.
- Secure long-term swimming provision for Shrewsbury.
- Provide high-quality facilities for lessons, general swimming, and competitions.
- Diversify fitness and leisure offerings.
- Improve site utilisation and financial sustainability.
- Ensure accessibility for all user groups.
- Reduce environmental impact and aim for a more carbon-efficient solution.
- Transform the site into a health and well being centre for all.
- Provide enhance renewable energy provision within the site.

6.1.3 Under the adopted development plan, the site is designated as countryside, where development is generally restricted. However, planning policies CS5, CS13, CS16, MD11, and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) support proposals on suitable sites that maintain and enhance the vitality and character of the countryside. These policies are particularly supportive where developments contribute to the sustainability of rural communities by providing local economic and community benefits.

6.1.4 Policy CS5 allows for:

- The retention and appropriate expansion of established businesses, unless relocation to a site within a settlement would be more suitable;
- Sustainable rural tourism, leisure, and recreation proposals that require a countryside location, in accordance with Policies CS16 and CS17.

6.1.5 Policy CS13 provides a positive framework to support sustainable economic development, the growth of existing businesses, and the fostering of new enterprise, with the aim of providing a broader range of higher-skilled, better-paid employment opportunities and supporting the prosperity and resilience of Shropshire's communities.

6.1.6 Policy CS16 promotes the delivery of high-quality, sustainable tourism, cultural, and leisure development, supporting new and extended tourism schemes that diversify the rural economy, provided they are appropriate in terms of location, scale, and nature, and do not harm Shropshire's tranquil character or natural features.

6.1.7 Policy MD11 states that tourism, leisure, and recreation development proposals

requiring a countryside location will be permitted where they complement the character and qualities of the site's immediate surroundings and meet the requirements of Policies CS5, CS16, MD7b, MD12, MD13, and relevant guidance. Proposals should also be well screened and sited to mitigate visual impact through natural features, site layout, design, and landscaping.

- 6.1.8 Although the site is classified as countryside in planning policy terms (being outside the Shrewsbury development boundary), it is an established leisure facility located adjacent to the urban area. The proposal seeks to enhance and improve the existing facility, and is therefore considered to be in accordance with the relevant planning policies.
- 6.1.9 On this basis, the principle of development is supported, subject to compliance with all other relevant planning considerations. Consultations have been undertaken with the appropriate Council consultees, and further advice on other material planning matters is provided below.

6.2 SITING, SCALE, LAYOUT AND DESIGN OF DEVELOPMENT

SITING & SCALE

- 6.2.1 The new development is sited to the north of the existing sports village building, extending into the current car park area.

The site remains accessible from Sundorne Road, with improved pedestrian routes and a reconfigured car park layout to accommodate increased parking and safe access for all users.

The building is designed to maintain separation from neighbouring developments, with buffer zones and landscaping to preserve amenity and visual character.

The development as a whole will provide:

- A main competition swimming pool (8 lanes, 16.5m x 25m), suitable for community swimming, lessons, and competitions.
- A learner pool (15m x 10m) with a moveable floor for flexible use and accessibility.
- Spectator seating for 250 people, with additional temporary seating for gala events.
- Health and fitness facilities, including a 130-station gym, two studio spaces, and a wellness/toning suite.
- Children's soft play area and group cycling studio.
- Improved changing and wc facilities, including unisex, accessible, and "Changing Places" provision.
- Enhanced entrance lobby, reception, and administrative offices.
- Café improvements with direct views onto external pitches and the new play area.
- Bike storage and improved cycle parking.
- Expanded car parking (from 287 to 398 spaces), including accessible, EV,

and overspill provision.

- Landscape improvements, including a new public plaza, avenue of lime trees, and improved pedestrian routes.
- Installation of a solar array system over the flat roof extension.

LAYOUT & DESIGN

6.2.2 Ground Floor:

- Main Entrance & Reception: Visitors enter via a glazed draught lobby leading directly to the main reception desk. Turnstiles control access to new wet-side facilities, while dry-side facilities remain accessible for events and match days.
- Wet-Side Changing Village: Includes unisex changing, group changing rooms for schools/clubs, accessible facilities, all-gender WC, and a “Changing Places” facility. The layout is designed for intuitive circulation and natural surveillance.
- Main Pool Hall: 8-lane, 16.5m x 25m pool, with pool pod and hoist for accessibility. Adjacent first aid room and pool store. Acoustic design to ensure a maximum 2-second reverberation time.
- Learner Pool: 15m x 10m, moveable floor, accessible steps, pool pod, and adjacent splash pad area.
- Children’s Soft Play Area: Double-height space with seating, directly accessible from the café.
- Group Cycling Studio: Conversion of existing Box 12 into a state-of-the-art interactive cycling space.
- Wellness/Toning Suite: Located in the former multi-use studio, fitted with power-assisted equipment for inclusive fitness.
- Bike Storage: Conversion of old squash courts to provide accessible bike storage for disabled user cycling programmes.
- Café: Improved seating and servery, with views onto external pitches and the new play area.

6.2.3 First Floor:

- Fitness Suite: 130-station gym with active frontage (windows to north and east), providing passive surveillance over the car park. Includes a consultation room for private staff-client interactions.
- Studios: Two studio spaces (~140m² each), designed for classes of ~28 people, with associated storage.
- Spectator Seating: 250 seats (including 6 accessible), with sightlines calculated to Sport England guidance. Additional poolside competitor spaces for gala events.
- Accessible and Unisex WC: Provided at first floor level.
- Plant Rooms: For servicing changing areas, fitness, and studio spaces.
- Vertical Circulation: Two lifts and a main staircase provide access to all first floor facilities, with additional escape stairs and locker provision.

Whilst the location of the solar array is indicated on the proposed roof plan, no detailed specifications regarding the solar panels have been provided in support of this application.

Further information will be provided following the completion of a Mechanical and

Electrical (M&E) strategy, which will set out a comprehensive plan for the design, installation, and long-term management of the solar panels to ensure operational efficiency and reliability.

These details will be secured by condition and submitted for approval at a later stage.

6.2.4 Sustainability Aims

Targeting BREEAM Excellent rating. (*Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method*) (an environmental sustainability certification awarded to projects that achieve a score of 70% or higher in a BREEAM assessment)

Energy efficiency: Air source heat pumps and solar PV.

Carbon reduction: Design aims to minimise carbon footprint and exceed statutory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirements.

Cycle parking: Covered and uncovered, designed to BREEAM standards.

Accessibility and Security

Level access from car park and public transport routes.

Automated doors and reception desk designed for wheelchair users and children.

Accessible toilets and changing rooms, including “Changing Places” facility.

Pool pod and hoist for both pools.

Induction loops at reception and customer service points.

Clear way finding signage and colour schemes for legibility.

Secure by Design principles: Well-lit entrances, robust ground-level materials, CCTV coverage, laminated glazing, and bollards for pedestrian protection.

Landscape and Parking

Car park expansion: 398 spaces, including accessible, EV, and overspill grasscrete parking.

Pedestrian routes: Improved connections from Sundorne Road and within the site.

Public plaza: New social gathering space linking the building to bowls hall and padel courts.

Tree retention and planting: Existing trees maintained where possible, new lime tree avenue added.

Lighting and boundary treatments: Designed to minimise impact on residential amenity and maintain security.

6.2.5 External Appearance

The new extension adopts a contemporary architectural style that both complements and contrasts with the existing sports village building. The design features two key connecting forms, each reflecting the internal activities they contain (e.g. pool hall, fitness suite, entrance colonnade).

The extension is visually “contained” by the existing building, helping to manage the overall massing and ensuring the new footprint integrates well with the site.

A two-storey covered walkway runs along the front of the building, highlighting the entrance and linking together the learner pool, studios, and first-floor gym. This walkway helps guide people to the main entrance and gives the building a welcoming and prominent look. A glass entrance lobby sticks out from the walkway,

making the entrance easy to spot from the car park and footpaths.

Extensive use of glazing at both ground and first floor levels maximises active frontages, providing visual connection between internal activities and the external environment. The first-floor fitness suite projects forward from the main building, with a continuous band of glazing to enhance visibility and presence. Tall glass walls are used along the pool hall, framed by special features, which continue the building's welcoming public style and match the look of the main entrance.

6.2.6 The materials have been selected for quality, durability, and to ensure the building sits comfortably in its context:

- Feature PPC aluminium cladding (Basalt Grey) for flashings and trims.
- Horizontally laid metal interlocking panels (Bronze finish rainscreen cassette).
- Vertical standing seam metal cladding (Grey).
- Facing brickwork (Red) to match the existing building and local context.
- Double-glazed aluminium windows and curtain walling (mid-grey profiles).

The extension is built around the tallest parts of the existing building, and the sports hall stores are rebuilt as part of the new pool hall. On the sides, like the west, the design uses the same simple horizontal brick and panel style as the original building to keep a consistent look.

The main two-storey building volume is topped with a single-ply flat roof, laid to falls and finished with metal parapet capping. The roof is designed to accommodate a solar PV array, supporting the project's sustainability objectives.

6.2.7 Design of external area

- Hard landscaping around the new build will use quality block paving to create easy-to-navigate public realm space with integrated planting areas.
- The new public plaza to the west of the extension provides a social gathering space, linking the building to the bowls hall and proposed padel courts.
- Existing trees are retained where possible, with a new avenue of lime trees added to the main path through the football pitches.
- External lighting is designed to ensure appropriate minimum levels for security and visitor safety, while minimising impact on residential amenity.
- The building's entrances and perimeter are well-lit and visible, with robust ground-level materials and ample glazing for passive surveillance.
- A CCTV system will provide continuous coverage of the building, car park, and main public interiors.
- Laminated glazing and bollards are used for pedestrian protection and to enhance security.
- Boundary treatments remain as existing, with limited changes required due to the site's established context and buffer zones.

- 6.2.8 The proposed development has benefited from detailed design advice throughout its progression. Officers consider that the external appearance of the extension reflects a modern approach, with high-quality materials and generous use of glass. The new building is thoughtfully integrated with the existing sports village and surrounding landscape. The design aims to provide a facility that is welcoming, accessible, and visually attractive, while enhancing the overall character and appearance of the site.

6.3 LANDSCAPING, ARBORICULTURAL AND ECOLOGY

LANDSCAPING

- 6.3.1 The site is mainly a large open car park with tarmac surfacing, some individual trees, and an area of overgrown vegetation in the north-eastern part. Vegetation within the car park is limited, with some municipal planting, amenity grass, and incidental trees. Tree cover increases along Sundorne Road, with several mature trees present. The remaining planting consists of moderate condition trees (Category B or C) spread in clusters across the site.

6.3.2 Landscape Master Plan

- The new building extends into the existing car park, requiring adjustments to parking and access roads. Parking aisles will be shortened for efficiency, reducing the need for large-scale remodelling. Circulation through the car park remains largely as existing, with one-way routes in and out.
- Additional parking is proposed to the east of the sports village, with two new car park extensions using hard landscaping and grasscrete for match day overspill.
- The remodelled car park will provide 398 spaces, including EV, accessible, family, and grasscrete overspill parking.
- Pedestrian access will be improved, with a new route linking Sundorne Road to the main entrance plaza.
- A drop-off point will be added in front of the new entrance.
- A maintenance road will run between the new building and the bowls centre, maintaining service access.
- Cycle parking will be provided, with covered and uncovered stands in visible, surveilled locations.
- Existing bin and recycling facilities will be retained
- Four EV charging spaces are included.
- Hard landscaping will use quality block paving for public realm space, with integrated planting areas.
- A new public plaza will be created to the west of the extension, with seating and planting linking the building to the bowls hall and padel courts.
- Existing trees will be maintained where possible, and a new avenue of lime trees will be added to the main path through the football pitches.
- External lighting will be designed for security and minimal impact on residential amenity.
- Boundary treatments will remain as existing.

ARBORICULTURAL

6.3.3 Existing Trees and Site Context

The site contains several larger trees around its perimeter, particularly along Sundorne Road and near the main entrance. All mature trees are to be retained and will not be affected by the proposed development. Trees within the development boundary are classified as Category B or C (moderate condition).

6.3.4 Tree Removal and Mitigation

The development will result in the loss of areas of modified grassland and introduced shrub, as well as 25 small urban native trees and 2 small trees from a treeline, mainly to facilitate new parking areas and the building extension. No hedgerows will be removed; existing hedgerows are in poor to moderate condition.

6.3.5 Any loss of trees will be mitigated through replacement planting, ensuring compliance with statutory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirements, which require a minimum 10% increase in biodiversity value within the site boundary. (discussed in paragraph 6.3.6 below)

6.3.6 The landscape plan has been designed to retain as many existing trees as possible, especially within the car park areas, while still providing additional parking spaces. A new avenue of lime trees is proposed between the football pitches to further enhance green infrastructure and site amenity.

ECOLOGY

6.3.7 The site consists mainly of developed land (sports building, tarmac car park), modified grassland, introduced shrub, native hedgerows, lines of trees, and small urban native trees. Most habitats present are of low ecological distinctiveness and poor to moderate condition. An ecological impact assessment was carried out by Arbor Vitae Environment Ltd in February 2025, including a desk study and site survey, to assess habitats and protected species and to inform Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) compliance.

6.3.8 Wildlife Habitat

No suitable bat roosting sites were found within the site; the building and trees are modern or young, and the area is well-lit. The site offers limited opportunities for breeding birds due to the urban setting and condition of hedgerows.

6.3.9 The Sundorne Canal (a Great Crested Newt site) is 210m south, but intervening sports pitches and roads present a significant barrier to newt dispersal. The site itself offers poor terrestrial habitat for newts, and the development will not impact their conservation status. Reasonable avoidance measures will be implemented during works.

6.3.10 Mitigation and Enhancement Measures:

66 new native trees will be planted to compensate for tree loss.

621m² of neutral grassland will be created and managed for biodiversity.

0.25ha of modified grassland will be enhanced for species diversity.

35m of new native hedgerow will be planted.

Bat and bird boxes will be installed on mature trees to support local wildlife.

Hedgerow gaps will be filled with native species to improve habitat quality.

6.3.11 BNG (Biodiversity Net Gain)

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) compliance for the Sports Village project means the development must deliver at least a 10% increase in biodiversity value within the site boundary, as required by national planning policy.

6.3.12 BNG is addressed in this project through:

- Tree Retention: Existing mature trees around the site, especially along Sundorne Road and the entrance, will be kept wherever possible.
- Tree Removal: If any trees need to be removed for the development, this will be carefully considered and justified. Replacement planting will be provided to ensure the overall biodiversity value increases.
- Survey and Assessment: An Arboricultural Survey is submitted with the planning application to assess the impact and guide tree retention and planting.
- Landscape Design: The landscape masterplan includes new planting, such as an avenue of lime trees, and improvements to green spaces, which contribute to biodiversity.

6.3.13 A net gain of 0.35 (10.44%) habitat units and 0.12 (11.40%) hedgerow units is proposed. This is going to be achieved through a mix of on-site (within red-line) and off-site (within blue-line) interventions.

The Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) associated with this development is considered significant. As Shropshire Council is the applicant, it is not possible to enter into a Section 106 Agreement with itself. Therefore, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) will be required to secure both the onsite and offsite BNG provision for a period of 30 years.

6.3.14 The MoU will include a monitoring fee calculated using the Council's monitoring fee calculator. Based on the site's small size and low technical complexity, the monitoring fee is estimated at £4,504.57. In addition, the MoU will incorporate a draft Section 106 Agreement to address any future change in site ownership. Should ownership transfer, completion of the draft Section 106 Agreement will be required to ensure that the 30-year onsite and offsite BNG provision is maintained by the new owner(s).

6.3.15 The project's approach to BNG ensures that, after development, the site will support more and better-quality habitats for wildlife than before, meeting both national and local policy requirements.

6.3.16 The ecological impact of the development is limited and adequately mitigated. The project will deliver a measurable net gain in biodiversity through new planting, habitat creation, and wildlife enhancements. No significant adverse effects on protected species or local ecological networks are anticipated.

6.4 ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS / HIGHWAY SAFETY AND PARKING

ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

6.4.1 The site is well located in Shrewsbury, close to the North East section of the ring

road (A49) and is accessible via Sundorne Road. Adjacent bus stops and established pedestrian links serve the site, supporting sustainable travel options.

The main entrance is highly visible from the car park and key pedestrian approaches, with level access provided for disabled visitors. Existing pedestrian routes onto Sundorne Road are maintained and rerouted through the modified car park layout as necessary.

No changes are proposed to the site's existing vehicular access arrangements.

PARKING

- 6.4.2 The existing car park provides 287 spaces, including accessible parking, minibuss parking, and drop-off facilities close to the main entrance. Coach parking is also provided along the northern boundary. The remodelled car park will achieve 398 spaces, including electric vehicle (EV) charging, accessible, family, and grasscrete overspill parking for match days and large events. An increase of 111 parking spaces.

A Transport Assessment has been undertaken to determine the parking requirement for the enlarged centre and to assess traffic impact, if any. The assessment found that the car park is underutilised for most of the time during normal use, but additional provision is needed for peak times.

A detailed Parking Strategy and Travel Plan has also been submitted addressing opportunities for sustainable and active travel links. The site benefits from strong highway connections, public transport, and pedestrian access.

Additional parking is proposed to the east of the sports village, with two new car park extensions using hard landscaping and grasscrete. Weekend tournament events can create congestion and overspill parking in local roads; increasing parking provision was a key brief requirement to address this issue. Cycle parking is provided, with covered and uncovered stands in visible and naturally surveilled locations.

There would be a requirement for a parking management strategy, to be tailored to coaches or minibuses. An effective strategy would significantly reduce the demand for car parking. A combined parking strategy and travel plan is also necessary to demonstrate that parking does not exceed capacity on site.

- 6.4.3 Parking provision will be significantly increased and diversified to meet both day-to-day and event requirements, with sustainable travel options and accessibility prioritised in the design.

No changes are proposed to the site's existing access arrangements. Officers are satisfied that the level of car parking provided will be sufficient to support the expanded sports centre. It is recommended that conditions relating to construction management, travel planning, and parking management are attached to any permission, in the interests of highway safety and to ensure ongoing compliance with relevant planning policies throughout the lifetime of the development.

6.5 DRAINAGE

- 6.5.1 The existing sports village discharges foul water to the public sewer system. The capacity of the existing drainage system has been reviewed to ensure it can accommodate the enlarged facility, including an allowance for swimming pool backwash. Details of the proposed drainage strategy are illustrated in the submitted drainage drawings by Furness Partnership.

The proposed site is not in a fluvial flood zone or at risk of groundwater flooding. There is a patch of pluvial flood zone (1 in 100 years) to the north-east of the existing building, but the site itself is at very low risk of flooding.

- 6.5.2 The submitted Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and supporting calculations are noted, and the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) welcomes the improvements achieved in discharge rates from the site.

The proposed drainage strategy and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) maintenance schedule are considered acceptable in principle.

Given the site's topography, it is important to ensure that surface water flood risk at building thresholds is fully assessed and appropriately mitigated. Therefore, detailed drainage proposals for these areas should be provided, accompanied by a summary statement assessing the risks and describing any proposed mitigation measures. Exceedance flow routes should also be clearly indicated on a layout plan.

Details of the Trade Effluent Agreement with Severn Trent, including any discharge rate restrictions, should be submitted to confirm that the installed equipment is compatible with the capacity of the existing foul water network.

- 6.5.3 The above outstanding information will be addressed at a later stage dealt via a pre-comment condition, to secure a satisfactory means of drainage on the site and to avoid flooding.

6.6 NEIGHBOURING LAND USES / VISUAL AMENITIES

NEIGHBOURING SITES

- 6.6.1 Shrewsbury Sports Village is located in Sundorne, to the north-east of Shrewsbury town centre, with existing residential areas to the north and west. The Site is bordered by existing buildings associated with Shrewsbury Juniors Football Club and Sundorne Youth Centre and Games Hall to the east, sports pitches to the south and west, and Shrewsbury Indoor Bowls Club to the north-west. The Severn Fields Health Village is located within a large three-storey building to the northwest of the Site.
- 6.6.2 The Environmental Protection Officer has reviewed the supporting information relating to potential noise impacts from the development. No objections are raised to the scheme; however, it is recommended that the internal noise standards

identified in the noise assessment are implemented within the final design.

It is further advised that noise from plant machinery associated with the new pool should be controlled by condition, requiring noise levels to be at least 5dB below the background level at the site boundary, in line with best practice. These details will be secured by condition to ensure the protection of surrounding amenity.

- 6.6.3 Given the site's established use as a sports and leisure facility within the built-up area of Shrewsbury, and its context, characterised by a mix of residential and commercial properties alongside highway infrastructure, officers consider that the proposed expansion of the sports centre is unlikely to result in any significant additional adverse impact on neighbouring amenity. In particular, it is not expected to give rise to notable issues in terms of noise disturbance, overbearing effects, or loss of light or privacy.

VISUAL AMENITIES

- 6.6.4 The application site includes the existing sports centre, car parking, tree and shrub planting, and several undeveloped grassed areas around its perimeter. Access is from Sundorne Road (B5062), with an existing car park and hedgerow along the northern boundary. The hedgerow is to be retained and enhanced.

The site is located on the north-eastern edge of the Shrewsbury Urban Landscape Character Type, with Principal Timbered Farmlands to the east and Riverside Meadows to the south. There are no landscape-specific designations for the site, but the adjacent canal corridor is a Local Wildlife Site (Sundorne Canal Great Crested Newt Site). The site is identified as having high landscape and visual sensitivity, but as a sports facility, the proposed development is considered to be in keeping with the existing character.

- 6.6.5 Detailed supporting information has been provided to include a landscape masterplan and site sections. The supporting information demonstrates how the development can be achieved without resulting in harmful impacts to the sites semi-rural location and the wider rural landscape.

As discussed above extensive new planting will take place as a result of the development with the retention of mature trees where possible.

Overall, the proposals are acceptable in landscape and visual terms, suitably worded conditions will be applied to ensure the long term maintenance of the sites landscaping as proposed.

6.7 PLANNING BALANCE

6.7.1 Benefits of Development

- Competition-standard swimming facilities in Shropshire, promote Shropshire within swimming championships events
- Provide an economic boost
- New facilities will support the wellbeing of the community.

- Help reduce associated carbon admissions (swimmers will no longer need to travel beyond the county to train and compete.
- Accessible, well-connected and inclusive design and layout of development
- Increased onsite parking provision
- Incorporates air source heat pumps and solar PV, and exceeds statutory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirements
- Creation of new public spaces and enhanced green infrastructure

6.7.2 Negative Impacts of Development

- Loss of mature trees

Any loss is compensated by significant new planting, which in turn also ensures a net gain in biodiversity.

- Potential Noise Impacts

Noise and amenity impacts are addressed through design and recommended conditions, ensuring protection for neighbouring uses. The expanded facility is not expected to result in significant adverse impacts on neighbouring amenity.

- 6.7.3 The proposal delivers community, health, and economic benefits, addresses a recognised local need, and is supported by relevant planning policies. Design, landscaping, and sustainability measures ensure the scheme is well-integrated and environmentally responsible.

Outstanding technical matters (e.g, drainage, solar array, BNG and landscaping details) are to be addressed by condition, ensuring compliance and mitigation.

The benefits of the development outweigh any limited negative elements, such as the loss of some trees and minor changes to existing facilities, which are mitigated and compensated for through robust planning and design.

7.0 **CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 The proposal seeks to extend and enhance the established Shrewsbury Sports Village, introducing much-needed swimming facilities and improving health and fitness provision for the local community.
- 7.2 Although the site is designated as countryside, planning policies (CS5, CS13, CS16, MD11, NPPF) support sustainable leisure developments that deliver economic and community benefits, especially where they enhance existing facilities and contribute to rural vitality.
- 7.3 The proposed extension of Shrewsbury Sports Village delivers substantial benefits to the local community, including the provision of a competition standard swimming pool, enhanced fitness and leisure facilities, and improved accessibility. The scheme is strongly supported by public representations and aligns with local and national planning policies that encourage sustainable development and community wellbeing.

- 7.4 The design is modern and inclusive, with robust sustainability measures such as BREEAM Excellent targets and significant biodiversity net gain. The development is well-integrated into its surroundings, with careful attention to landscaping, parking, and access arrangements.
- 7.5 Any minor adverse impacts, such as the loss of some trees and changes to existing facilities, are mitigated through replacement planting and planning conditions. Technical matters, including drainage and landscaping details, will be addressed by condition.
- 7.6 Overall, the benefits of the proposal outweigh any limited harm. The scheme is recommended for approval, subject to the imposition of appropriate planning conditions and a Memorandum of Understanding.

8.0 RISK ASSESSMENT AND OPPORTUNITIES APPRAISAL

8.1 RISK MANAGEMENT

There are two principal risks associated with this recommendation as follows:

- As with any planning decision the applicant has a right of appeal if they disagree with the decision and/or the imposition of conditions. Costs can be awarded irrespective of the mechanism for hearing the appeal, i.e. written representations, hearing or inquiry.
- The decision may be challenged by way of a Judicial Review by a third party. The courts become involved when there is a misinterpretation or misapplication of policy or some breach of the rules of procedure or the principles of natural justice. However their role is to review the way the authorities reach decisions, rather than to make a decision on the planning issues themselves, although they will interfere where the decision is so unreasonable as to be irrational or perverse. Therefore they are concerned with the legality of the decision, not its planning merits. A challenge by way of Judicial Review must be made a) promptly and b) in any event not later than six weeks after the grounds to make the claim first arose.

Both of these risks need to be balanced against the risk of not proceeding to determine the application. In this scenario there is also a right of appeal against non-determination for application for which costs can also be awarded.

8.2 HUMAN RIGHTS

Article 8 gives the right to respect for private and family life and First Protocol Article 1 allows for the peaceful enjoyment of possessions. These have to be balanced against the rights and freedoms of others and the orderly development of the County in the interests of the Community.

First Protocol Article 1 requires that the desires of landowners must be balanced against the impact on residents.

This legislation has been taken into account in arriving at the above recommendation.

8.3 EQUALITIES

The concern of planning law is to regulate the use of land in the interests of the public at large, rather than those of any particular group. Equality will be one of a number of 'relevant considerations' that need to be weighed in Planning Committee members' minds under section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

9.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are likely financial implications if the decision and / or imposition of conditions is challenged by a planning appeal or judicial review. The costs of defending any decision will be met by the authority and will vary dependent on the scale and nature of the proposal. Local financial considerations are capable of being taken into account when determining this planning application – insofar as they are material to the application. The weight given to this issue is a matter for the decision maker.

10. Background

Relevant Planning Policies

Central Government Guidance:
NPPF

Core Strategy and Saved Policies:

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

- 13/00039/FUL Construction of a skateboard ramp GRANT 13th February 2013
- 18/03781/FUL Refurbishment of existing Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP); replacement and extension of high level fence enclosure; installation of new hard standing areas adjoining the AGP perimeter complete with associated porous asphalt surfacing (replacing previous surplus areas of artificial grass); refurbishment of existing floodlight system with sixteen new luminaires mounted onto eight existing (and retained) floodlight masts and installation of new maintenance equipment store GRANT 19th October 2018
- 20/00141/FUL Proposed change of use of land for an outdoor crown bowling green and the erection of a scoring shelter and storage shed and four flood lighting columns (amended description) GRANT 16th March 2020
- 21/02974/FUL Installation of 2 number modular/container buildings to provide social/welfare and storage facilities for the existing cycle track GRANT 6th August 2021
- PREAPM/25/00197 Extension and remodelling of the existing Shrewsbury Sports Village including Swimming Pools with viewing, Fitness Suite, Studios, Group Cycle and Ancillary spaces PREAMD 27th June 2025
- SA/05/1268/DDM Erect and display an internally illuminated box sign, a non illuminated post mounted entrance sign and 2 non illuminated post mounted site map signs. PERCON 19th October 2005
- SA/04/1519/DDM Construction of dry sports centre, including sports hall, climbing area, cafe, function room, squash courts and changing rooms; erection of 12, 16m high flood lights and 6m high fencing in association with new pitches; 15, 10m high floodlights and

3m high fencing in association with 2 areas of multisports pitches; 6m high floodlights in association with new cycle track, BMX/skateboard/small multisports area (inc. 3m high fencing); 156 seater spectator stand; formation of new roundabout at existing access and controlled crossing with ancillary ground works, landscaping, footpaths and servicing facilities after demolition of existing changing rooms (amended description)
PERCON 13th January 2005

11. Additional Information

View details online: <http://pa.shropshire.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=SZLX1HTDJEO00>

List of Background Papers
Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder) - Councillor David Walker
Local Member Cllr Mandy Duncan
Appendices APPENDIX 1 - Conditions

APPENDIX 1

Conditions

STANDARD CONDITIONS

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
Reason: To comply with Section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990 (As amended).
2. The development shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved plans, drawings and documents as listed in Schedule 1 below.
Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans and details.
3. The external materials shall match in colour, form and texture as those detailed on the approved plans and within the submitted Design and Access Statement.
Reason: To ensure that the works harmonise with the existing development.
4. Prior to the erection of any external lighting on the site, a lighting plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The lighting plan shall demonstrate that the proposed lighting will not impact upon ecological networks and/or sensitive features, e.g. bat and bird boxes (required under a separate planning condition). The submitted scheme shall be designed to take into account the advice on lighting set out in the Bat Conservation Trust's Guidance Note GN08/23: Bats and Artificial Lighting At Night, GN01/21: The Reduction of Obtrusive Light and Guidance Note 9/19: Domestic exterior lighting: getting it right. The development shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved details and thereafter retained for the lifetime of the development.
Reason: To minimise disturbance to bats, which are European Protected Species.
5. Prior to their installation full details of the solar array shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The installation of the solar panels shall be carried out in complete accordance with the approved details.
Reason: To safeguard the visual amenities of the locality.

CONDITIONS THAT REQUIRE APPROVAL BEFORE THE DEVELOPMENT COMMENCES

6. No development shall take place until a scheme of surface and foul water drainage has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be fully implemented before the development is occupied/brought into use (whichever is the sooner).
Reason: The condition is a pre-commencement condition to ensure satisfactory drainage of the site and to avoid flooding.

7. 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 Statement shall provide for:
- The parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors;
 - Loading and unloading of plant and materials;
 - Storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development;
 - The erection and maintenance of security hoarding including decorative displays and facilities for public viewing, where appropriate;
 - Wheel washing facilities;
 - Measures to control the emission of dust and dirt during construction;
 - A scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from demolition and construction works;
 - Delivery, demolition and construction working hours.

The approved Construction Method Statement shall be adhered to throughout the construction period for the development

Reason: In the interest of highway safety.

8. No part of the development hereby approved shall be brought into operational use until a Full Travel Plan including a Parking Management Strategy has been submitted and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The approved Plan and Strategy shall be adhered to throughout the lifetime of the development.

Reason: In the interest of highway safety

CONDITIONS THAT REQUIRE APPROVAL DURING THE CONSTRUCTION/PRIOR TO THE OCCUPATION OF THE DEVELOPMENT

9. Prior to first use of the site, an appropriately qualified and experienced Ecological Clerk of Works (ECW) shall provide a report to the Local Planning Authority demonstrating implementation of the GCN RAMMS as set out in section 6.2 of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal & Biodiversity Gain Assessment (Arbor Vitae, July 2025).
Reason: To demonstrate compliance with the GCN RAMMS to ensure the protection of great crested newts, which are European Protected Species.
10. Prior to first occupation / use of the buildings, the makes, models and locations of bat and bird boxes shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The following boxes shall be erected on the site:
- A minimum of 4 external woodcrete bat boxes or integrated bat bricks, suitable for nursery or summer roosting for small crevice dwelling bat species.
 - A minimum of 6 swift bricks.
 - A minimum of 2 artificial nests, of either integrated brick design or external box design, suitable for starlings (42mm hole, starling specific) and/or sparrows (32mm hole, terrace design)/
- Boxes shall be sited at an appropriate height above the ground, with a clear flight path and where they will be unaffected by artificial lighting. Bat boxes should be erected on southerly aspects (south-west, south or south-east) and bird boxes should be erected on northerly or shaded east/west aspects. Swift bricks should be positioned: 1) Out of direct

sunlight; 2) At the highest possible position in the building's wall; 3) In clusters of at least three; 4) 50 to 100cm apart; 5) Not directly above windows; 6) With a clear flightpath to the entrance; and 7) North or east/west aspects preferred. (See <https://www.swiftconservation.org/Leaflet%20%20Swift%20Nest%20Bricks%20%20Installation%20&%20suppliers-small.pdf>.)

The boxes shall thereafter be maintained for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure the provision of roosting and nesting opportunities, in accordance with MD12, CS17 and section 180 of the NPPF.

Informatives

1. Exceedance Flow

Shropshire Council's Local Standard D of the SUDS Handbook requires that exceedance flows for events up to and including the 1% AEP plus CC should not result in the surface water flooding of more vulnerable areas (as defined below) within the development site or contribute to surface water flooding of any area outside of the development site.

Vulnerable areas of the development are classed by Shropshire Council as areas where exceedance flows are likely to result in the flooding of property or contribute to flooding outside of the development site. For example, vulnerable areas may occur where a sag curve in the carriageway vertical alignment coincides with lower property threshold levels or where ground within the development slopes beyond the development boundary.

Contour and/or exceedance route plans should be submitted for approval demonstrating that the above has been complied with and that there is sufficient provision to remove surface water from the developed areas.

2. Memorandum of Understanding

The land and premises referred to in this planning permission are the subject of a Memorandum of Understanding. The Memorandum of Understanding may include the requirement for a financial contribution and the cost of this should be factored in before commencing the development. By signing a Memorandum of Understanding you are legally obliged to comply with its contents, irrespective of any changes to Planning Policy or Legislation.