

Slough Borough Council

Date:	27 th November 2025
Subject:	Petition – "Concerns about the Construction of the Fenced Compound at Eltham Avenue Recreation Ground, Cippenham"
Chief Officer:	Pat Hayes, Executive Director Property and Housing
Contact Officer:	Peter Hopkins, Director Property and Assets
Ward(s):	Cippenham Village
Exempt:	No
Appendices:	None

1. Summary and Recommendations

- 1.1 This report sets out the details of a Petition titled "Concerns about the Construction of the Fenced Compound at Eltham Avenue Recreation Ground, Cippenham", which has been received under the Council's Petitions Scheme.
- 1.2 The petition is before the Council this evening and received a total of 1,712 signatures, comprising of 1,128 collected via an e-petition on the Council's website and 584 from a paper version of the petition collated by the Petition Organiser.
- 1.3 The Council is invited to review and agree its course of action in relation to the petition.

Recommendations:

Following the debate the Council is asked to:

- (i) Note the response set out by Officers within this report
- (ii) Consider whether to make any further recommendations to Cabinet in response to the petition.

Reasons

Article 17 of the Council's constitution contains the petition scheme. This confirms that where the threshold is met for a Council debate, if the issue is one on which the Council's Executive (Cabinet) is required to make, the final decision the Council will decide is whether to make recommendations to inform that decision. Full Council has no power to direct Cabinet to make a specific decision, but it can make recommendations.

Cabinet is expected to support the above recommendations taking account all relevant information, including this petition.

Commissioner Review

This report is outside the scope for pre-publication commissioner review; please check the [Commissioners' instruction 5 to CLT to sign off papers](#) for further details

2. Report

- 2.1 This report advises the Council of a Petition – Concerns about the Construction of the Fenced Compound at Eltham Avenue Recreation Ground, Cippenham, which was received by the Council in August 2025.
- 2.2 The Council's Petition Scheme states that if a petition receives 1,500 or more valid signatures, the petition will be debated at a full Council meeting.
- 2.3 The Petition has surpassed the threshold of triggering a debate at full Council and contains 1,712 signatories, comprising of 1,128 collected via an e-petition on the Council's website and 584 from a paper version of the petition collated by the Petition Organiser.
- 2.4 The Petition text reads as follows:

"We the undersigned petition the council to

- 1. Immediately halt any further development or use of the compound until a full public consultation and impact assessment are carried out.*
- 2. Conduct and publish a formal impact assessment on residents, local community groups, traffic, environment, and safety.*
- 3. Reassess the location of the compound, prioritising alternatives that do not undermine the wellbeing, safety, and utility of a vital community green space.*
- 4. Offer written assurance of continued access to facilities for FC Cippenham and EL Fitness, including potential fee re-negotiations in light of the disruption.*
- 5. Clarify and review traffic management plans, including proposed parking controls and their relationship to the new compound.*
- 6. Rebuild trust by establishing a formal resident liaison group for future consultations on changes to local public spaces.*
- 7. Consult and address the needs of disabled people and SEND children who need access to the site.*

The Council have constructed of an 8ft spiked fence around Eltham Avenue car park for the purposes of housing mini buses. The compound's presence represents not only a physical intrusion but a symbolic disconnect between Slough Borough Council and its residents. Community groups, particularly those supporting children, mothers, disabled individuals, and local health, have been sidelined. This is not just a planning oversight – it's a blow to the heart of our community.

We urge the Council to act swiftly, responsibly, and transparently to remedy this situation"

3. Supporting Information for Debate

- 3.1 The Petition Organiser has been invited to the Council meeting to speak on the Petition (up to five minutes) and the Petition will then be discussed by Members of the Council for a maximum of 15 minutes. The Mayor has discretion to extend this time taking account of the degree of public interest in the issue, the level of support given to the petition and the number of elected members wishing to express their views on the subject.
- 3.2 Following this discussion, the Council will need to decide what action to take with regard to the Petition. As this matter relates to an executive function, the Council can only decide whether to make recommendations to Cabinet since it (the Council) has no power to make a decision on an executive function.
- 3.3 The Scheme indicates that the Council's response to a petition will depend on what a petition asks for and how many people have signed it but may include one or more of the following (for executive functions, these could be formal recommendations to Cabinet).
- Taking the action requested in the Petition.
 - Considering the Petition at a Council Meeting.
 - Holding an Inquiry.
 - Commissioning relevant research.
 - Organising a public meeting.
 - Mounting a wider public consultation.
 - Meeting with the Petition Organiser or representatives of signatories.
 - Providing a written response outlining the Council's views on the subject.
 - Referring the issue to the Council's Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee **OR**
 - Referring the issue to the relevant Committee/Cabinet.
 - Consulting statutory partners and local service providers.
 - Instigating discussions with the voluntary and community sectors; and
 - Making representations to Commercial or other Interests.
- 3.4 The installation of a secure fence around the car park at Eltham Avenue recreation ground, has no effect on legitimate users of the facilities including hirers and or casual recreational visitors and the works has only re-enforced previous existing restrictions for unauthorised access and use of the car parking area.
- 3.5 Eltham Avenue recreation ground consists of open space, sports pitches, changing rooms, and a car park.
- 3.6 The site has 70 car parking spaces, as well as 2 disabled bays. The changing rooms and car park are locked unless there is a booking for the sports pitches and/or changing room.
- 3.7 For over the last 10 years, the car park has remained locked unless a booking for the sports pitches and/or changing rooms has been in place.
- 3.8 Bookings of the sports pitches and/or changing rooms are primarily used at weekends by FC Cippenham.
- 3.9 Having installed fencing to secure the car park area, FC Cippenham and other formal hirers of the sports pitches and/or changing rooms, continue to have access to the car park as they currently do.

- 3.10 Residents and local groups continue to have access to all recreational facilities within the open space, as they currently do.
- 3.11 The new fencing of the site ensures no unauthorised access to the car park occurs unless there is a booking for the sports pitches and/or changing rooms.
- 3.12 Fees for use of the sports pitches and changing rooms will remain in line with the Full Council approved fee structure, due to all facilities remaining to be accessible.
- 3.13 Following the sale of the Haymill site at Burnham Lane and an extensive site search for an appropriately sized site that the Community Transport team can operate from, Eltham Avenue was identified as being suitable.
- 3.14 For operational reasons, a temporary site was used in the interim whilst works were prepared for the site at Eltham Avenue.
- 3.15 The Community Transport team provide a statutory service, by providing transport for vulnerable children and young people, including those who have accessibility requirements such as wheelchairs use, from their homes to SEN schools within Slough. Without this service, these children would struggle to attend an education setting.
- 3.16 Under Section 508B and 508C of the Education Act 1996, must provide free transport to children who cannot reasonably be expected to walk to school due to SEND, disability or mobility issues.
- 3.17 Within the Cippenham area there are currently 49 children who access SEND services and are transported to and from school.
- 3.18 The Community Transport team operate Monday to Friday and the car park is being used for safe parking overnight of the minibuses.
- 3.19 As a result and to ensure the safety of the minibuses an alternative fence has been installed around the car park. In addition, CCTV will be installed to ensure the safety of the vehicles and deter any anti-social behaviour.
- 3.20 In direct response to the points raised in the petition.
 - 1. *Immediately halt any further development or use of the compound until a full public consultation and impact assessment are carried out.*
The council is not proposing to undertake a public consultation or formal impact assessment, as no development is planned and access to the recreational facilities remains unchanged for residents. Formal Hirers still have access to car park facilities, changing rooms and/or sports pitches as currently provided.
 - 2. *Conduct and publish a formal impact assessment on residents, local community groups, traffic, environment, and safety.*
All facilities remain available to local groups and residents. The council is not proposing to undertake a formal impact assessment. It has the right to use the car park in furtherance of its statutory duties.
 - 3. *Reassess the location of the compound, prioritising alternatives that do not undermine the wellbeing, safety, and utility of a vital community green space.*
There is no impact on the green space, with access remaining for local community groups and residents.

The Property and Assets department has undertaken a review across the estate of suitable assets. Due to the locality and suitability of the site to provide the most cost efficient service, this site was identified as the most suitable.

4. *Offer written assurance of continued access to facilities for FC Cippenham and EL Fitness, including potential fee re-negotiations in light of the disruption.*

The Council will continue to provide access to the car park facilities to any formal hirers of the sports pitches and/or changing rooms. Residents continue to have access to the open space and recreational facilities.

Fees and charges will remain in line with the Full Council approved fee structure.

5. *Clarify and review traffic management plans, including proposed parking controls and their relationship to the new compound.*

The car park controls will continue as those currently in place, which is that the car park will be opened for hirers of the sports pitches and/or changing rooms.

There are currently no plans to review the traffic management plans.

6. *Rebuild trust by establishing a formal resident liaison group for future consultations on changes to local public spaces.*

Community engagement remains at the heart of the council's operations and the council would welcome working with community groups to explore and understand how statutory services can be delivered in the future. Currently the Council is undertaking a review and seeking to implement new processes as part of its emerging themes as part of the Council's transformation strategy and plans.

7. *Consult and address the needs of disabled people and SEND children who need access to the site.*

The service being delivered from this site supports the forty-nine SEND children within Cippenham Village area, who access transport from home to school as well as the wider cohort of children from across the borough.

Access to the changing rooms and sports pitches has remained unchanged with a pathway leading up to the sports pitches.

4. Implications of the Recommendation

4.1 Financial Implications

Failure to place the Community Transport team in a suitable and accessible location, would have a negative impact on the council's finances, as alternative accessible accommodation would have to be sought, at cost, or third parties would need to be used to deliver the service. Continuity of service internally provides a medium to long term financial benefit as the cost of providing the service provides greater value for money. A full financial appraisal would need to be undertaken prior to either option being considered.

4.2 Legal Implications

- 4.2.1 Slough Borough Council adopted a petition scheme in July 2010. This Petition meets the criteria listed in the [Council's Petition Scheme](#).
- 4.2.2 Under the Council's published Petitions Scheme a Petition that contains 1,500 signatures triggers a debate at Council.
- 4.2.3 Functions relating to car parking and recreation grounds are executive matters and Full Council does not have the power to instruct Cabinet to make a specific decision. Therefore Council's options are to note the report and officers' response or to make recommendations to Cabinet.

4.3 Risk Management Implications / Environmental implications

There are no environmental implications. The recreation ground remains open to residents access and utilise.

4.4 Equality implications

The Council did not undertake a formal equality impact assessment prior to erecting the fencing, however it has considered its duties under the Equality Act. The decision to erect the fence supports the Council to deliver community transport services to children and young people with SEND.

Background Papers

There are no background papers arising from this report.