

TRING ROAD GROUND: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Where is the new ground?

On the Tring Road next to the Wendover Heights Vets. The postcode is HP22 5PN.

What stage of construction are we at now?

The 12-pitch playing square was laid in August 2025 and is looking very good. The outfield and training ground have recently had land drainage installed and have been seeded, with the grass now coming through.

The pavilion is now weathertight, with the building envelope completed except for the larch cladding. Internally, the underfloor heating is in and screeded over, whilst plumbing and electrics are due to start in January.

Civil engineering subcontractors are on site working on drainage, surfacing and the site entrance.

What facilities will the new ground contain?

The ground will be home to:

- One beautiful new playing area for matches, with a 12-pitch square.
- A grassed practice area with a non-turf pitch.
- 3-lane synthetic practice nets.
- A fabulous new pavilion with an impressive social space and great views across the grounds through glazed screens at the front and one side. There is a kitchen and bar; spacious home and away dressing rooms; a separate female changing room; an officials room; showers, toilets and stores, although storage space is limited. Outside there is a terrace for spectating.
- 50 parking spaces including 3 disabled bays and 3 electric vehicle charging points.

The facility has been designed to achieve all the current building and other regulations, as well as complying with planning permission conditions. It will be a fabulous asset to the club.

Are there any disadvantages/ downsides to the new ground?

- Being on the outskirts of Wendover, it is likely that most people will drive to the ground and it will be more difficult if using public transport (though it is on a bus route).
- Compared to the Witchell and old Ellesborough Road ground, there will be significantly increased maintenance required - a lot of steep banks and greater grassed areas.
- As part of the planning conditions, there is a 30-year Habitat Management Plan to adhere to.
- It is a windy site which will be noticeable when playing or watching; we are exploring some screening around the pavilion's terrace.
- Running costs will be greater and regular building maintenance will be essential.

When will we get access to it?

No matches can be played at Tring Road until the 2027 season, but handover of the pavilion is due in March 2026 and the remainder of the ground on 1st May 2026. Hedgerow planting to most of the eastern and western boundaries will be done in winter 2026/27.

A public Open Day is planned and will include a staffed display of the archaeological finds from the site; the timing is currently uncertain because we need to keep people away from the non-playing grassed areas, which won't be seeded until Spring 2026, until they're established.

It is planned to have some events/ open-bar days during 2026.

When can we play there?

The square needs to be given time to become properly established before games can be played on it. So that means a fifth season of playing at hired grounds and the Witchell in 2026 and playing at Tring Road and the Witchell from the start of the 2027 season.

We should be able to use the 3-lane nets and the pavilion from mid-April 2026.

Who is paying for it?

The ground is largely being funded by HS2 Ltd as part of the "equivalent reinstatement" for HS2 having taken possession of the old Ellesborough Road ground in October 2021.

Via the HS2 House of Lords petitioning process in late 2016, WCC secured a sum of £200,000, originally for financial help in relocating both existing grounds to Tring Road but then, when the land area proved insufficient for 2 grounds, for creating the club's "sporting and social hub".

Additionally the club is using up its accumulated reserves but these are not sufficient for everything we need or want to put in, to make the new site ready from Day One, without further investment/ works required. Therefore funds will need to be raised and donations secured to buy extra things such as sightscreens, covers, boundary ropes, etc.

Who is building it?

The initial feasibility report with outline designs was produced in November 2016 by Sports Clubhouses.

The pitch and groundworks are being undertaken by Agripower Ltd from Great Missenden. Agripower will be responsible for maintaining the playing area and square until it is handed over to Wendover CC for the 2027 season

The pavilion is being built by Boom Construction Ltd from St Albans. Boom have experience of building sports pavilions at Chorleywood and Merchant Taylors School.

Why has it all taken so long?

In short, delays stem from the fact that the new ground has been tied up with HS2, which took possession of the club's Ellsborough Road ground in October 2021, and all the uncertainties and approvals that project entailed. In particular, the project suffered from HS2

Ltd first taking years to decide whether the cricket ground needed to move at all, then the need to identify a suitable available site and have HS2 Ltd agree the plans for the site and the funding. We then had to allow archeological excavation of the site before the cricket ground works could begin in earnest. All of this has meant the cricket club has had to make use of grounds at Kimble, Monks Risborough, Little Missenden, Elmbrook and Aylesbury to fulfil its fixtures from the 2022 to 2026 seasons inclusive.

Who is building it?

The initial feasibility report with outline designs was produced in November 2016 by Sports Clubhouses, who then produced the designs for the pavilion and parking etc., whilst Agripower designed the regrading of the levels over the whole site and the cricket areas.

Agripower were contracted to undertake the pitch and groundworks and they will be responsible for maintaining the playing areas and surrounds until probably the end of the 2027 season, although WCC will assume responsibility for the square from March 2027 (to get it ready for playing matches on).

The pavilion and car parking areas etc. are being constructed by Boom Construction Ltd.

We have a team of consultants looking after the building contracts, checking the designs and construction to ensure it all complies with the requirements; this is led by Sports Clubhouses (Andy & Steve MacDonald).

HS2 Ltd fund the “equivalent reinstatement” of the old Ellesborough Road ground at Tring Road but it is WCC’s project, which WCC has to deliver (whilst HS2 vet everything).

Why has it all taken so long?

In short, delay has been due to the process being associated with HS2. From the time the club attended the House of Lords petitioning stage in late 2016, we found that HS2 always took an age to approve anything including reimbursing our costs.

Designs for Tring Road progressed during 2017 and early 2018 until in late March 2018, HS2 advised they were looking to keep WCC playing at the Ellesborough Road ground during the HS2 works and therefore the relocation was off the table; HS2 confirmed this in September 2018 after their engineering team had decided it was feasible. It took until well into 2020 to acknowledge that this was not viable and then our design consultants had to be re-mobilised, designs progressed and the Tring Road planning application submitted.

We had a final season in 2021 at the ground before becoming nomadic. Tenders were received for the ground works in February 2022, having expected planning permission earlier but it was given in April 2022 along with numerous conditions, one of which was archaeology. Another HS2 delay meant the archaeology didn’t start until July 2023. A second phase of archaeology was necessary, undertaken in February to April 2024.

A ‘funding agreement’ had to be agreed between our respective solicitors – a seemingly endless process and just when it was finally agreed in September 2024, HS2 threw VAT into the mix – leading to more time and expense, plus the need for HS2 to approve to the correct sums and to enable WCC to sign the building contracts.

Can I help?

Yes!

The new facility is vast compared to what WCC had previously (Ellesborough Road & Witchell). We still have a lease to use the Witchell and this will continue to operate as

previously, mainly for juniors up to U12 and the Village Cup. Compared to the previous 4 years, there will be less pressure on Witchell once Tring Road is operating and once it is, both grounds and pavilions will need to be maintained. Volunteers are required for Witchell to:

- a) Be the point of contact for the pavilion and the booking/hiring team (who currently manage the hires and cleaning) and any repairs/ maintenance needed.
- b) Manage the bar – ordering in supplies, stocking, arranging staff as necessary, etc.
- c) Maintain the ground – regular mowing, marking creases and maintaining the nets.

At Tring Road, to:

- d) Maintaining the cricket grounds including the square and nets, and the non-cricket areas – this cannot possibly be undertaken by one person. Preparing pitches.
- e) Managing the maintenance of the shrub beds, hedges and wildflower areas – a condition in the planning permission and covered by the Habitat Management Plan.
- f) A bar manager – that doesn't mean manning the bar but stocking and maintaining the beers etc.
- g) Joining a group for staffing the bar – either voluntary or paid.
- h) A facilities manager to oversee annual maintenance of the pavilion (including services & drainage) and parking areas.
- i) Cleaning /weekly maintenance of the pavilion.
- j) Managing bookings and hirers (even if routed via the website, it will still have to be managed).

If you are interested in helping or sponsoring the club, please contact any WCC Officer or Jonathan Seabrook jseabrook@wendoveremail.co.uk

What did the archaeological excavation of the site find?

Briefly, some evidence from the Iron Age 2,000 years ago and more recently, the eastern edge of a Roman village dating from 300-400 AD and including 9 human skeletons. See the WCC website for more details and the December 2024 Newsletter.

An open day is planned during summer 2026 at which Cotswold Archaeology will attend with artefacts and details of what was uncovered; they will also be issuing a Stage 2 Report which should be available some 15 months after HS2 give their approval to start. There is also likely to be a webinar covering the site's archaeology.

HS2 have had to finance all the archaeology because it is a condition of the site's planning permission and it won't be signed off until the Buckinghamshire Archaeology Department have received and agreed the Stage 2 Report.

Can I hire the new pavilion/ the other Tring Road facilities?

Not immediately. The committee has yet to decide how the new pavilion and bar will operate, although the current thinking is that it will predominantly be managed for WCC members and not as a facility to hire out more widely. When not in regular WCC use, then hiring may be possible.

The new site is first and foremost a cricketing facility and although we envisage a lot of interest to play there and/or use the facilities, WCC and its members must take priority. Those members who have stayed with the club during the last 5 challenging years should, at least initially, share in the benefits of the new facility.