



WARWICKSHIRE COUNTY CRICKET CLUB

Planning Framework



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This Framework Document was endorsed and adopted as supplementary planning guidance by the Development Control Committee of Birmingham City Council on the 26th October 2000 and by the Regeneration Advisory Team on the 1st December 2000

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Executive Summary

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Background

Warwickshire County Cricket Club was formed in 1882 and has been staging Test Matches at Edgbaston since 1902, with a record capacity of 32,000. WCCC has always supported innovation in sport; installing overall pitch protection and holding the UK's first competitive floodlit cricket match.

Mission Statement

Edgbaston is an important sports leisure and entertainment venue. The Club vision is "for it to be the leading venue of its kind in Europe and one of the best in the world".

Strategy

WCCC is developing a strategy to encourage cricket at "grass roots" level, build on the recent success within the first class game and enhance Edgbaston in its role as a Test Match ground. To achieve this the club will identify ways to raise additional revenue outside cricket and develop the established relationships with the local community, local authority, and funding partners and within Cricket.

Economic Environment

The grounds at Edgbaston exist primarily because of its status as a Test Match ground and the retention of the contract for Test Matches is of paramount importance. The increasing aspirations of the viewing public and ever more stringent safety precautions have placed ever greater pressure on grounds to develop and modernise. There is also competition from other grounds, which aspire to Test Match status. WCCC plans to develop income by progressively increasing the ground capacity from 20,000 to 25,000, promote innovative event scheduling and consolidate adjacent site areas in order to open up opportunities for co-related developments.

Planning Policy

Any development relating to a sporting activity needs to be prepared within the context of national and local planning policies. Particular reference is made of PPG17. Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 - Sport and Recreation (1991) and the adopted Development Plan for the area: the Birmingham Unitary Development Plan (July 1993)

Geographical Location

Edgbaston has an excellent location close to the city centre, and with easy access to a considerable area of central England.

Site Constraints

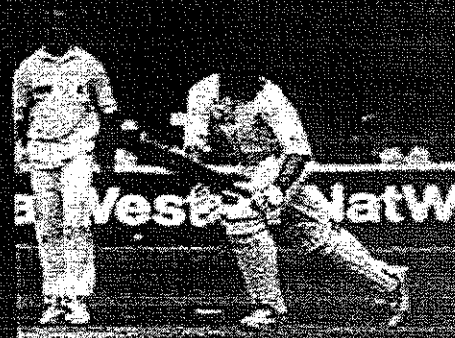
The site is constrained on all boundaries except the housing at the corner of Pershore and Edgbaston Road which has become isolated.

Existing Building Stock

Development has been incremental and a large proportion of the existing building stock, which provides 19,841 seats, is in need of attention. Currently the least effective stand is the Pavilion.

Site Access

The main vehicular access is from Edgbaston Road via the Members car park.



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Transportation

The Club has commissioned transportation studies to enable transport and parking to be managed to minimise disturbance to neighbouring residents, and encourage the use of public transport.

Playing Area

The key to any future development is to maintain the complete bowl of seating close to the action, and take advantage of advances in technology that will enhance the game and make more flexible use of the ground.

Overall Site Development

Much of the current site of the ground will be taken up with rationalisation of the method of entry to the Ground, car parking and safe circulation. Emphasis will be placed on upgrading the visual amenity and to create a unique cohesive identity. Utilising complementary building forms throughout the discrete, but related phases will achieve this.

Phasing

A 'Phased' approach to redevelopment will match the club's commitment to the projected revenue stream. When set within a Planned Framework the Club can provide immediate benefits to users, but respond to changes in the future environment.

An extensive schedule of Enabling Works is planned in advance of the first major phase of stand. A new Scoreboard and an Indoor Cricket Centre have already been completed.

The Pavilion is recommended for the first phase of redevelopment because it has the most immediate potential to increase capacity, add premium viewing seats and create a new 'front door' to the ground. Future phases would work away from both ends of the Pavilion.

On completion of the first phase and enabling works the ground capacity will have risen to 23,000 spectators.

Floodlighting

WCCC wish to install as soon as possible a permanent floodlight system. This will provide improved quality of illumination and the ability to accurately control the amount of light spillage to the surrounding neighbours. The Club is investigating alternative designs incorporating new technology which will reduce the visual intrusion and also ways in which the impact of late finishes can be reduced which would satisfy planning requirements.

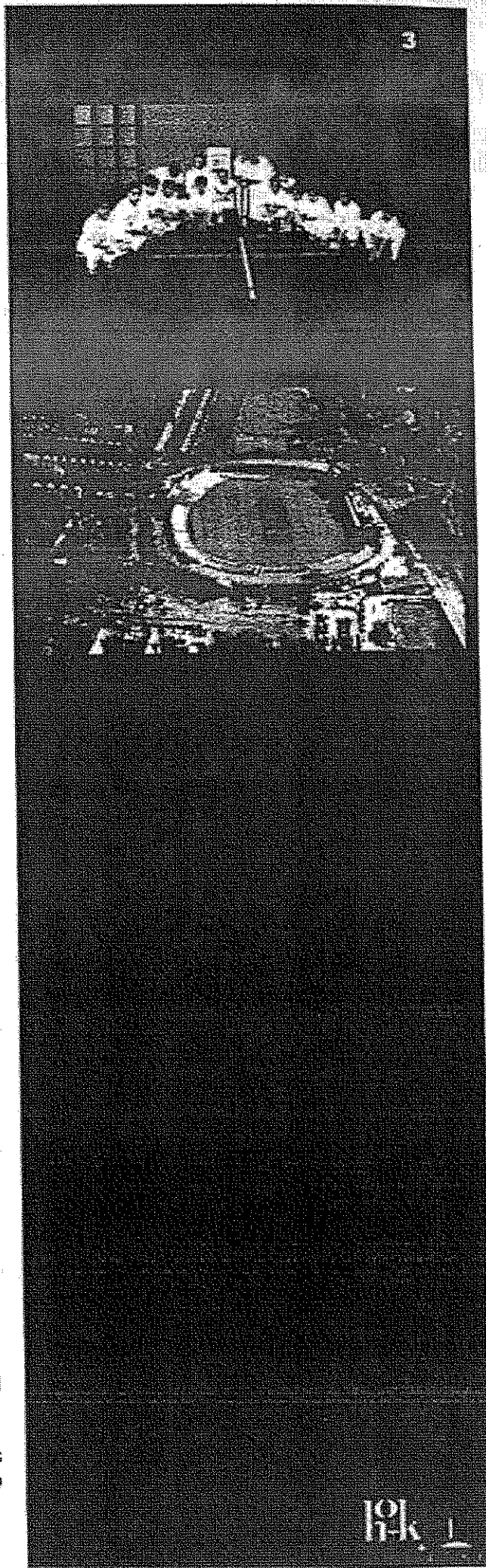
Landscape

The Club intends that the quality and extent of landscaping will create a distinctive character at Edgbaston, linking with local materials and details, and including artistic elements to reflect the Birmingham location and cricket.

Consultations

WCCC has held consultations with the local community, local planning, Building Regulations and safety team.

The Club will keep local residents and other interested parties informed of development intentions in good time in order to develop and maintain constructive relationships.



Background

Warwickshire County Cricket Club was formed in 1882. The initial first class match staged at Edgbaston was against Kent in 1894 and the ground was recognised as suitable for staging Test Matches in 1902. Test Matches were played until 1925 and then from 1957 to the present day.

The main part of the ground was acquired freehold from the Calthorpe Estate in 1886, and has been added to as opportunity arose. The Colts' ground is leased from the Trustees of King Edward School on a short-term basis.

The current capacity is in the region of 20,000. The record capacities were 28,000 for a County Championship match in 1951 against Lancashire and 32,000 for a single day of a Test Match against West Indies in 1957.

Until 1950 there were few permanent buildings, but since then there has been a continuous sequence of discrete developments, often funded by money raised by the Warwickshire County Cricket Supporter's Association. (It has been a tradition at Edgbaston to name the bars around the ground after fielding positions, and since 1989 this has been supplemented by calling areas of the ground after key Warwickshire personalities).

WCCC has always supported innovation in the sport, installing overall pitch protection known as the "Brumbrella" and holding the UK's first competitive floodlit cricket match on 23rd July 1997.

WCCC successes on the field during the 1990's.

- First Class Counties Championship 94, 95
- Natwest Bank Trophy 93,95
- Benson & Hedges Cup 94
- AXA Equity & Law League /AXA Life League 94, 97
- First Class Counties 2nd XI Championship 96
- Warwick Pool Under 25 Competition 90,91

It is the Club's aim to continue to be a major force in cricket both as a winner and an innovator.

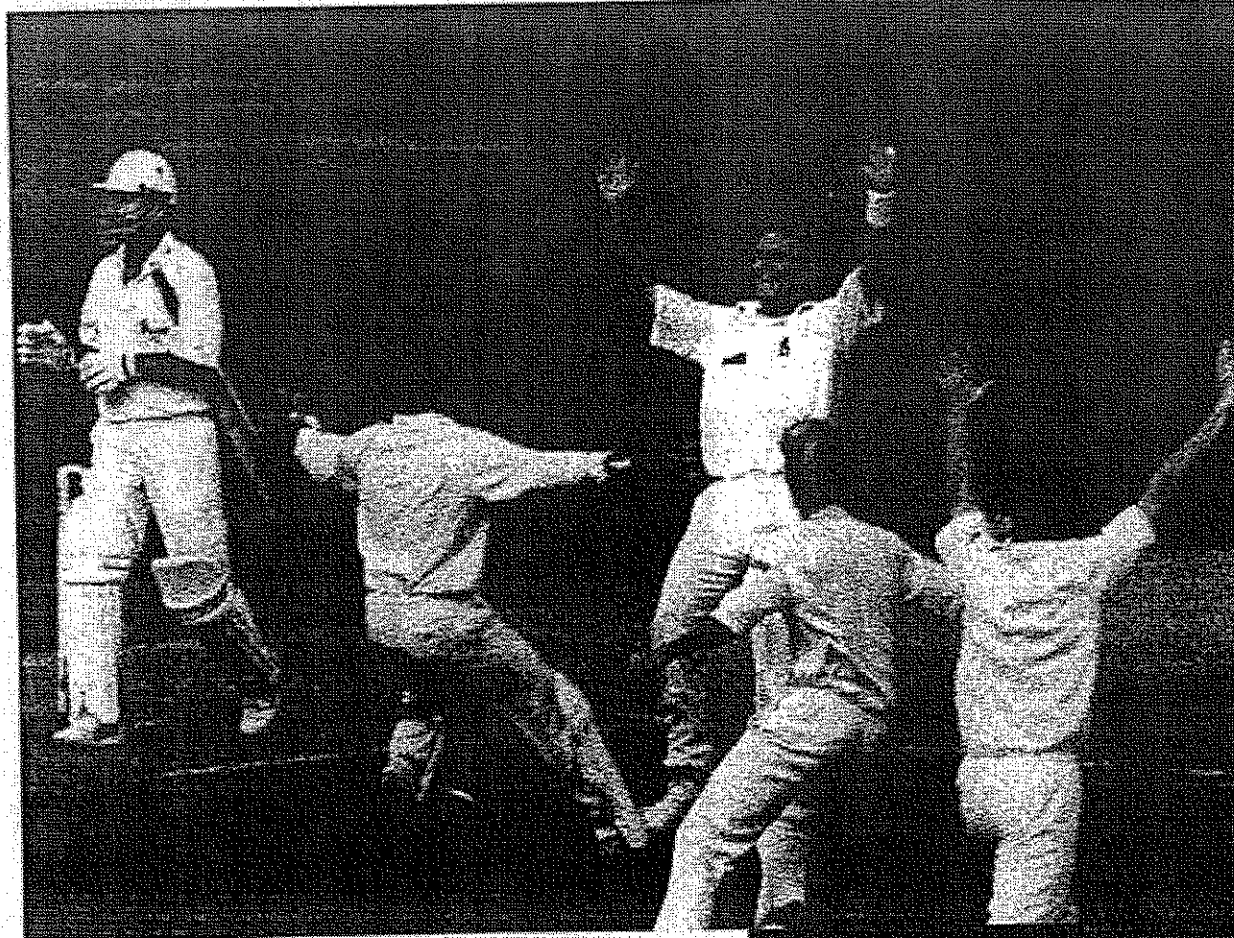


Mission Statement

Edgbaston is an important sports, leisure and entertainment venue. Our vision is for it to be the leading venue of its kind in Europe and one of the best in the world.

To do this Warwickshire County Cricket Club will develop links within cricket, the city of Birmingham, West Midlands, Warwickshire and the wider community to encourage appreciation, enjoyment and achievement throughout all levels of cricket.

The Edgbaston ground will continue to be developed as a multi-use venue, while enhancing its position as a leading Test Match arena. It will cater for a wide variety of expectations and provide an experience where quality is paramount.



"It is paramount that our generation move the Club forward into the New Millennium in a planned and ordered fashion"

Dennis Amiss – Chief Executive WCCC

Strategy

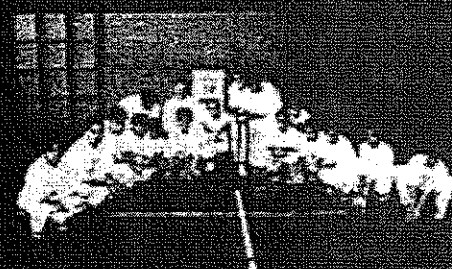
WARWICKSHIRE COUNTY CRICKET CLUB WILL:

1. Instigate, develop and action a long term plan to ensure the financial security of the Club, in order that the combined aims of the Club, cricket and the community can be achieved. This includes working with the local community to enhance the area and provide local employment possibilities.
2. Ensure the long term future of cricket by encouragement at "grass roots" level throughout the County and local community.
3. Build on the recent Warwickshire County Cricket Club success within the first class game.
4. Work to enhance the status of Edgbaston in its role as a Test Match ground.
5. Further enhance facilities and programmes as a regional centre of cricket excellence. This includes the need to establish a nursery ground with appropriate facilities.
6. Develop new facilities at Edgbaston to provide greater safety, comfort and quality for players, spectators and the local community.
7. Manage improvements to the play on the field, the viewing off the field and the involvement of the local community to enhance further the Edgbaston Ground's reputation as a **PREMIER VENUE**.
8. Identify ways in which the stadium can raise additional revenue outside cricket e.g. banqueting, health and sports club and other related developments etc.
9. Develop established partnerships with the following sections of the community:
 - Cricket community
 - Funding partners
 - Local community
 - Local Authority



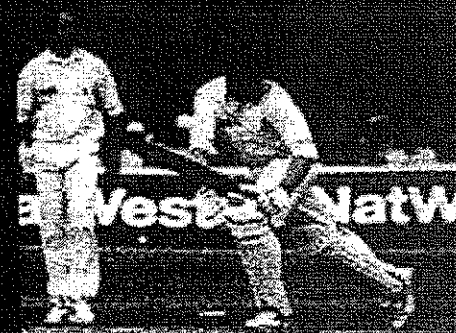
"We will certainly continue to work with the club to further develop opportunities, which will enhance the provision of and access to sporting facilities in the city"

Michael Lyons,
Chief Executive, Birmingham City Council.



"The youth development programme at Edgbaston has given me the opportunity to play cricket at the highest level"

Mark Wagh, Captain, Oxford University



Economic Environment

The existence of the ground at Edgbaston is primarily because of its status as a Test Match ground. The retention of the contract for Test Matches is of paramount importance, as without them all financial plans and associated Frameworks are irrelevant. The increasing international aspect of cricket, combined with ever more stringent safety provisions and increasing aspirations of the viewing public has placed ever greater pressures on the existing Test Match Grounds to develop and modernise. There is also greater competition from Grounds which would aspire to Test Match status.

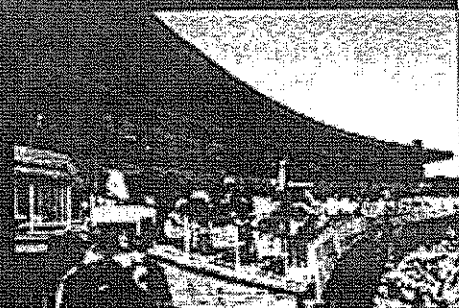
In order to maintain its status, WCCC must secure a successful financial future. The income raised from International Cricket is controlled by the England & Wales Cricket Board (ECB). The ECB is currently reviewing the distribution of this income and this may lead to a reduction in the overall level of income for individual Test Match Grounds. WCCC must maintain its status as a Test Match Ground, but needs to develop income from other sources, including domestic cricket, which are under the Club's direct control.

At this juncture specific financial projections have not been included within this Framework.

To secure a successful financial future, the Club plans to:

1. Increase seating capacity from the existing 20,000 to around 25,000 to take advantage of the additional potential demand for Test Matches and one day internationals.
2. Promote innovations in cricket scheduling such as floodlit games to promote fixtures which will encourage greater attendances.
3. Promote youth, sport and training schemes to broaden the base of attendances.
4. Provide more and better facilities to encourage a greater spend per head per visit.
5. Investigate alternative forms of membership, subscription, and debenture seating to consolidate regular income.
6. Investigate the feasibility of compatible sporting/events for the playing area in the medium term.
7. Promote more non-cricket activities for the site throughout the year.
8. Consolidate certain adjacent site areas, in order to open up opportunities for co-related developments e.g. Health Club, Community Sports Facilities, Restaurants, Real Tennis Club, Sports administration offices, Sports Shops, Hotel/Motel, Studio facilities.

The Club will work with it's partners to ensure that the amenity of the local community is safeguarded within any proposed development.



Planning Policy

Any development relating to a sporting activity needs to be prepared within the context of both national and local planning policies.

At a national level, the key guidance issued by Government is Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 – Sport and Recreation (1991). Referred to as PPG17, this document provides a framework for all forms of sports. It suggests that sport and recreation are 'vital components in civilised life' and have a valuable 'social and economic role'. Accordingly, it acknowledges that different sports can take place in a wide variety of locations. In the case of cricket this can range from a small village green to a major international venue such as the Warwickshire County Cricket Ground at Edgbaston.

PPG17 notes that there are links between sport, recreation and tourism. Sport can be a strong motive for many people to visit an area and in turn have a positive impact on its economic growth. This has been highlighted recently in research undertaken by the English Sports Council. In a modern economy, as part of the natural growth of any sporting venue, particularly of the stature of the Warwickshire Ground, there is a need to look to the future and identify commercial capabilities. Indeed, there is national encouragement to make the best possible use of urban land. The Planning Framework described within this document outlines how the Warwickshire Ground could be developed to its best commercial potential while still being a centre of excellence for cricket.

The Warwickshire Ground is clearly a location of regional importance and PPG17 advises that, as such, strategic and regional guidance should provide for appropriate policies. This is indeed the case.

The adopted Development Plan for the area is the Birmingham Unitary Development Plan (July 1993). Within the Edgbaston sub-section, the plan notes at paragraph 16.15 that:

'There are several visitor and recreational facilities near to Cannon Hill Park. These include Edgbaston County Cricket Ground... Edgbaston Cricket Ground is recognised as an important cricket and sporting facility. High quality improvements to the facilities and safety standard will be encouraged, subject to the need to safeguard local amenity'

The need for improvement has been reflected in a series of local authority economic and social strategies, including 'A Policy for Sport in Birmingham – December 1997' and the recently published Tourism Strategy – Feb 1999. These documents emphasise the importance of the Ground, not only as a sporting venue, but also as a catalyst for the local economy. It is, therefore, within the context of both national and local planning policies that this Planning Framework has been prepared.

In looking to the future and the need to improve the facilities at the Ground, a series of improvements are being proposed. Some of these are environmental and will improve the visual appearance of the Ground. Others are educational and concern, for example, the creation of a new Indoor Cricket School. Others are technical and concern the installation of an electronic score board and floodlights.

All the improvements and indeed the longer term commercial development will be introduced with the highest possible regard to all environmental issues and will help maintain the Warwickshire County Cricket Ground as a regionally and internationally significant venue.

Geographical Location

Edgbaston has an excellent location close to the city centre (approximately 2 miles), but with easy access to a considerable area of central England.

Visitors may reach the ground by Rail (Birmingham New Street), bus/coach (Digbeth Coach Terminal) or road. Edgbaston is served by the A38 arterial feeder road giving access to South West Birmingham and the motorway network. Birmingham International Airport is approximately 30 minutes drive away.

The University of Birmingham is located close to Edgbaston and has extensive sports facilities that complement the Ground. There are considerable numbers of students and staff who contribute to the local demand for viewing cricket matches and specialist cricket coaching.

Birmingham has benefited from considerable public and private sector investment recently, making it a key location for leisure, entertainment, exhibitions and sport. There is the International Conference Centre and Symphony Hall only 2 miles away, three city centre theatres, the National Indoor Arena and slightly further a field the National Exhibition Centre.

Site Constraints

The main ground is bounded by housing to the North, the River Rea to the West, Edgbaston Road to the South and to the West (Pershore Road) fronted by University accommodation and a row of houses.

The River Rea divides the main Ground from the Colt's Ground, which is bounded by the river, housing to the North and roads to the remaining two sides.

All existing boundaries would appear fixed apart from the housing fronting Pershore Road, which has become isolated by the major road works and the proposed cricket school development.

There are restrictions within the site to development in the form of a 7 metres clearance either side of the River Rea and 6 metres clearance for the main drain/sewers (see diagram)

