

ITEM NO:

Development Management Ref No	No weeks on day of committee	Parish of	Ward	Listed by:
F/2014/2119	18/16	Arborfield	Arborfield	Scheme of Delegation

Applicant Location	Reading Football Club (C/O Barton Willmore) Former Bearwood Golf Course Mole Road Sindlesham Wokingham Berkshire	Postcode RG41 5DB
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Proposal Full application for the redevelopment of Former Bearwood Golf Course to provide a new football training ground and academy facility, comprising of 3 full size team pitches, 7 other pitches for use by various under 18 age groups and a goal keeping practice areas. A single storey extension and conversion of existing golf course clubhouse into security gatehouse and visitors cafe, new maintenance shed and maintenance store. Single storey changing block and medical suite. Refurbishment of West Lodge for junior academy trialists, refurbishment of apple store, retention and refurbishment of riding stables offices/stores to academy offices, new single storey academy building to provide changing rooms, medical suite, classrooms, player recreation and gymnasium area. Refurbishment of Mole Lodge to provide accommodation for senior academy trialists, new two storey first team building, single storey headquarters building. The refurbishment/rebuilding of existing housing and farm/industrial buildings to provide 26 residential units (net increase of 18 residential units) with associated parking, landscaping and access. Demolition of ancillary buildings plus garden wall to be made good and associated works relating to Bearwood Lake dam.

Type	Full
PS Category	EIA
Officer	Ashley Smith

FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Planning Committee on 01/04/15
REPORT PREPARED BY	Head of Development Management and Regulatory Services

SUMMARY

<p>The application is for the redevelopment of the site for use as the new training facility for Reading Football Club as well as the creation of 18 new residential units within converted or rebuilt buildings.</p>

<p>The site is located within the Countryside and with a Grade II* Historic Park and Garden. The park is currently on English Heritage 'at Risk Register'. In accordance EIA regulations and Environmental Statement was received with this application.</p>
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<p>The proposal does not significantly impact on neighbouring properties in terms of overbearing, overlooking or loss of light, or from any new activity subject to conditions.</p>

There are no objections from the Conservation Architect, Borough Ecologist or Trees and Landscape Officer. The Highway Authority is also satisfied that the proposal will not lead to significant adverse highway impact and provides an adequate level of vehicle parking.

Subject to the securing of a Conservation, Landscape and Environmental Plan (CLEMP), English Heritage does not object to the proposals. The proposal will require referral to the National Planning Casework unit.

The proposal is considered to not fully accord with the development plan due to conflict with countryside policy; however, on balance the scheme is recommended for approval, as the harm to rural character and the impact on the designated countryside is considered to be outweighed by the special circumstances and need of the applicant as well as the benefits to the historic environment, ecology, landscape, and most importantly the securing of a long term Management Plan for the park through the CLEMP.

PLANNING STATUS

- Countryside
- Grade II* Historic Park and gardens
- Listed Buildings on site (Grade II)
- Tree preservation orders
- Contaminated land consultation zone
- Landfill (small area in north of the site)
- Minerals Consultation Zone
- 7km Thames Basin Heath SPA
- Local Wild Life Site

RECOMMENDATION

A) That the Head of Development Management be authorised to GRANT planning permission subject to the completion of a satisfactory S106 Legal Agreement, referral to the NPCU and the following conditions:

B) That, should the legal agreement not be completed by the end of the 2nd April 2015, the Head of Development Management be authorised to GRANT planning permission subject to the completion of a satisfactory S106 Legal Agreement (Securing the CLEMP and Employment Skills Plan), CIL liability notice, referral to the NPCU and the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In pursuance of s.91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by s.51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

2. Before the development hereby permitted is commenced, samples and details of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the buildings shall

have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the external appearance of the building is satisfactory.

Relevant Policies: Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3

3. This permission is in respect of the following drawings:

Drawing No	Title
<i>Full schedule of all relevant plans to be included in Member's update.</i>	

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the application form and associated details hereby approved.

4. With the exception of the residential development (which may be disposed of separately), The permission hereby granted shall be personal to Reading Football Club for the purposes outlined in the planning application only.

In granting this permission the local planning authority has had regard to the special circumstances of this case, being the special requirements of Reading Football Club within the Borough, and wishes to have the opportunity of exercising control over any subsequent alternative use in the interests of the amenities of the area which may be more harmful to the countryside.

Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3, CP11.

5. Development shall not commence until a drainage strategy detailing any on and/or off site drainage works, has been submitted to and approved by, the local planning authority in consultation with the sewerage undertaker. No discharge of foul or surface water from the site shall be accepted into the public system until the drainage works referred to in the strategy have been completed.

Reason - The development may lead to sewage flooding; to ensure that sufficient capacity is made available to cope with the new development; and in order to avoid adverse environmental impact upon the community. Should the Local Planning Authority consider the above recommendation is inappropriate or are unable to include it in the decision notice, it is important that the Local Planning Authority liaises with Thames Water Development Control Department (telephone 0203 577 9998) prior to the Planning Application approval.

6. No development shall take place until a measured survey of the site and a plan prepared to scale of not less than 1:500 showing details of existing and proposed finished ground levels (in relation to a fixed datum point) and finished floor levels shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority, and the approved scheme shall be fully implemented prior to the occupation of the buildings.

Reason: In order to ensure a satisfactory form of development relative to surrounding

buildings and landscape. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3 and Managing Development Delivery DPD policy TB21.

7. The dwellings shall achieve Code Level 4 in accordance with the requirements of the Code for Sustainable Homes: Technical Guide [or such national measure of sustainability for house design that replaces that scheme]. No dwelling shall be occupied until a Final Code Certificate has been issued for it by an accredited assessor certifying that Code Level 4 has been achieved.

Reason: To ensure developments contribute to sustainable development. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 10 (Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change), Core Strategy policy CP1 and Managing Development Delivery DPD policy CC04

8. The buildings making up the Football Training facility shall Achieve the necessary mandatory Building Research Establishment Assessment Method (BREEAM) requirements or any future national equivalent. Furthermore the buildings shall meet or exceed statutory requirements for water resource management.

Reason: To ensure developments contribute to sustainable development. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 10 (Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change), Core Strategy policy CP1 and Managing Development Delivery DPD policy CC04

9. The measures for generating 10% of the predicted energy requirement of the development from decentralised renewable and/or low carbon sources outlined in the submitted Energy Statement shall be implemented before the development is first occupied and shall remain operational for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure developments contribute to sustainable development.

Relevant policies: Core Strategy policy CP1 & the Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document.

10. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning, (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended) (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no additional windows or similar openings shall be constructed in the flank elevations in the first floor levels or above of the residential dwellings hereby permitted except for any which may be shown on the approved drawings.

Reasons: To safeguard the residential amenities of neighbouring properties.

Relevant policies: Core Strategy CP3

11. Those windows shown on the approved residential dwelling drawings as having obscured glazing in part or full shall be so-fitted and shall be permanently so-retained, and shall remain fixed closed at all times

Reason: To safeguard the residential amenities of neighbouring properties.

Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3

12. No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved in

writing by the Local Planning Authority, a Communications Plan. The Plan shall specify methods for communicating with local residents, including the creation of a liaison group to meet in accordance with an agreed schedule. The Plan shall be carried out as approved until the final completion of the development

Reasons: In order to minimise disturbance to neighbours during construction works

Highways Conditions:

13. No part of any building(s) hereby permitted shall be occupied or used until the vehicle parking and turning space has been provided in accordance with the approved plans. The vehicle parking and turning space shall be retained and maintained in accordance with the approved details and the parking space shall remain available for the parking of vehicles at all times and the turning space shall not be used for any other purpose other than vehicle turning.

Reason: To provide adequate off-street vehicle parking and turning space and to allow vehicles to enter and leave the site in a forward gear in the interests of road safety and convenience and providing a functional, accessible and safe development and in the interests of amenity.

Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC07.

14. The Football Club Training Facility shall not be occupied until the turning space has been provided in full accordance with the approved plans. The turning space shall thereafter be retained in accordance with the approved details and shall be used for no other purpose.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory form of development and to avoid adverse impact on the public highway in the interests of highway safety. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

15. No residential building shall be occupied until the residential turning heads have been demarcated in accordance with details to be submitted and approved by the LPA.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory form of development and to avoid adverse impact on the public highway in the interests of highway safety. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

16. The existing vehicular access to former Bearwood Riding Stables shall be stopped up and abandoned, except for emergency vehicle access only, in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory form of development and to avoid adverse impact on the public highway in the interests of highway safety. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

17. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted details of secure and covered bicycle storage/ parking facilities for the occupants of and visitors to the Football Club Training Facility shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The cycle storage/ parking shall be implemented in accordance with such details as may be approved before occupation of the Football Club Training

Facility hereby permitted, and shall be permanently retained in the approved form for the parking of bicycles and used for no other purpose.

Reason: In order to ensure that secure weather-proof bicycle parking facilities are provided so as to encourage the use of sustainable modes of travel.

Relevant policy: NPPF Section 4 (Sustainable Transport) and Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3 & CP6 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC07.

18. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted details of secure and covered bicycle storage/ parking facilities for the occupants of and visitors to the residential element of the scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The cycle storage/ parking shall be implemented in accordance with such details as may be approved before occupation of the residential element of the scheme hereby permitted, and shall be permanently retained in the approved form for the parking of bicycles and used for no other purpose.

Reason: In order to ensure that secure weather-proof bicycle parking facilities are provided so as to encourage the use of sustainable modes of travel.

Relevant policy: NPPF Section 4 (Sustainable Transport) and Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3 & CP6 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC07.

19. Prior to the occupation of the development the proposed vehicular access shall have been formed and provided with visibility splays shown on the approved drawing number Drg No. 28289/001/SK004 Rev C. The land within the visibility splays shall be cleared of any obstruction exceeding 0.6 metres in height and maintained clear of any obstruction exceeding 0.6 metres in height at all times.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and convenience.

Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

20. No other development of the site as hereby approved shall take place until the access road has been widened in accordance with the approved plans.

Reason: To ensure adequate access into the site for vehicles, plant and deliveries associated with the development in the interests of highway safety and convenience.

Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6

21. No building shall be occupied until the accesses (and access roads) have been constructed in accordance with construction details to be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and convenience.

Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

22. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended) (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no gates or barriers shall be erected unless set back a distance of at least 15 metres from the highway boundary and so as to open away from the highway

Reason: To ensure that vehicles do not obstruct the highway whilst waiting for gates or barriers to be opened or closed, in the interests of road safety. Relevant policy: Core

Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

23. No building shall be occupied until the footpath as indicated on Drg No. 28289 / SK007 has been constructed in accordance with details to be submitted and approved by the LPA.

Reason: In order: to encourage the use of sustainable modes of travel/walking.

Relevant policy: NPPF Section 4 (Sustainable Transport) and Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3 & CP6 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC07.

24. No development shall be occupied until the off-site works comprising footway construction adjacent to Mole Road and associated footway dropped crossings proposed on Mole Road have been provided in accordance with details to be submitted and approved by the Council's Minor Works Engineer.

Reason: In the interests of highway/pedestrian safety and convenience.

Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

25. 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 approved Statement shall be adhered to throughout the construction period. The Statement shall provide for:

- i) the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors,
- ii) loading and unloading of plant and materials,
- iii) storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development,
- iv) the erection and maintenance of security hoarding including decorative displays and facilities for public viewing, where appropriate,
- v) wheel washing facilities,
- vi) measures to control the emission of dust and dirt during construction,
- vii) a scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from demolition and construction works.
- viii) measures to inform local residents of the commencement of development by letter and provide appropriate contact details for residents to contact the developer if they have concerns or issues.
- ix) Demolition and Construction Traffic Routing Agreement

Reason: In the interests of highway safety & convenience and neighbour amenities.

Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

26. Prior to the commencement of the development a Travel Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The travel plan shall include a programme of implementation and proposals to promote alternative forms of transport to and from the site, other than by the private car and provide for periodic review. The travel plan shall be fully implemented, maintained and reviewed as so-approved.

Reason: To encourage the use of all travel modes.

Relevant policy: NPPF Section 4 (Sustainable Transport) and Core Strategy policy CP6.

Landscape Conditions:

27. Prior to the commencement of the development, full details of both hard and soft landscape proposals shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. These details shall include, as appropriate, proposed finished floor levels or contours, means of enclosure, car parking layouts, other vehicle and pedestrian access and circulation areas, hard surfacing materials and minor artefacts and structure (e.g. furniture, play equipment, refuse or other storage units, signs, lighting, external services, etc). Soft landscaping details shall include planting plan, specification (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment), schedules of plants, noting species, planting sizes and proposed numbers/densities where appropriate, and implementation timetable.

All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with a timetable approved in writing by the local planning authority. Any trees or plants which, within a period of five years after planting, are removed, die or become seriously damaged or defective, shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of species, size and number as originally approved and permanently retained.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity.

Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21 (and TB06 for garden development)

28. No trees, shrubs or hedges within the site which are shown as being retained on the approved plans shall be felled, uprooted wilfully damaged or destroyed, cut back in any way or removed without previous written consent of the local planning authority; any trees, shrubs or hedges removed without consent or dying or being severely damaged or becoming seriously diseased within 5 years from the completion of the development hereby permitted shall be replaced with trees, shrubs or hedge plants of similar size and species unless the local planning authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: To secure the protection throughout the time that development is being carried out, of trees, shrubs and hedges growing within the site which are of amenity value to the are. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21

29. a) No development or other operation shall commence on site until a scheme which provides for the retention and protection of trees, shrubs and hedges growing on or adjacent the site in accordance with BS5837: 2012 has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority (the Approved Scheme); the tree protection measures approved shall be implemented in complete accordance with the Approved Scheme for the duration of the development (including, unless otherwise provided by the Approved Scheme) demolition, all site preparation work, tree felling, tree pruning, demolition works, soil moving, temporary access construction and or widening or any other operation involving use of motorised vehicles or construction machinery.

b) No development (including any tree felling, tree pruning, demolition works, soil moving, temporary access construction and or widening or any other operation involving use of motorised vehicles or construction machinery) shall commence until the local planning authority has been provided (by way of a written notice) with a period of no less than 7 working days to inspect the implementation of the measures identified in the Approved Scheme on-site.

c) No excavations for services, storage of materials or machinery, parking of vehicles, deposit or excavation of soil or rubble, lighting of fires or disposal of liquids shall take place within an area designated as being fenced off or otherwise protected in the Approved Scheme.

d) The fencing or other works which are part of the Approved Scheme shall not be moved or removed, temporarily or otherwise, until all works including external works have been completed and all equipment, machinery and surplus materials removed from the site, unless the prior approval of the local planning authority has first been sought and obtained.

Reason: To secure the protection throughout the time that the development is being carried out of trees shrubs or hedges growing within or adjacent to the site which are of amenity value to the area, and to allow for verification by the local planning authority that the necessary measures are in place before development and other works commence (Please note: An arboricultural method statement will need to be submitted to provide more detailed information in accordance with BS5837:2012)

Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21

30. Before the development hereby permitted is commenced details of all boundary treatments (fences and walls) shall first be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall specify heights, materials, colours, types and designs. The approved scheme shall be implemented prior to the first occupation of the development or phased as agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be maintained in the approved form for so long as the development remains on the site.

Reason: To safeguard amenity and highway safety.

Relevant policies: NPPF, Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3 and CP6

31. Prior to the commencement of the development a landscape management plan, including long term design objectives, management responsibilities, timescales and maintenance schedules for all landscape areas, other than privately owned, domestic gardens, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The landscape management plan shall be carried out as approved.

Reason: In order to ensure that provision is made to allow satisfactory maintenance of the landscaping hereby approved. (Please note this is different to the CLEMP as it will relate to the management of the new planting within the site.)

Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21

32. Prior to the commencement of the development, details of earthworks shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. These details shall include the proposed grading and mounding of land areas including the levels and contours to be formed, showing the relationship of proposed mounding to existing vegetation and surrounding landform. The Earthworks shall be carried out in

accordance with the approved details and permanently so-retained.

Reasons: In the interests of the amenity and landscape character of the area. (Although details have been submitted in relation to proposed ground modelling across the site we will require detailed engineering drawings of level changes / proposed ground modelling, once these have been finalised as part of the detailed scheme)

Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21

Heritage Conditions:

33. Detailed Drawing And Schedule To Be Submitted – Mill Building

A detailed drawing and schedule showing all those parts of the building to be removed, dismantled or stripped out (including the removal of internal features, machinery, floors, and wall or ceiling surfaces) shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing prior to the implementation of any works in pursuance of this permission and shall thereafter be undertaken in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason: To protect and preserve the character of the heritage asset.

Policy: NPPF, Core Strategy CP1 & CP3, MDD Policy TB24

34. Schedule of repairs – Walled Garden, Mill Building, Estate Workers Cottages, Proposed Laundry Building

Prior to the commencement of these works, a description of the steps and works to be taken and carried out in relation to the repair and alteration of the Walled Garden, Mill Building, Estate Workers Cottages and proposed Laundry Building, including any additional elements to be inserted, shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing, and the development shall thereafter be undertaken in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason: To protect and preserve the character of the heritage assets.

Policy: NPPF, Core Strategy CP1 & CP3, MDD Policy TB24

35. Re-pointing - Sample Area On Site

Prior to any re-pointing of the external brickwork to the Walled Garden, Mill Building, Estate Workers Cottages or proposed Laundry Building, a sample area shall be prepared on site to show the proposed mortar composition and colour, and method of pointing, for the approval of the Local Planning Authority in writing. For the avoidance of doubt, the use of Portland Cement within the mortar/pointing mix to be used on these 19th century buildings shall be avoided unless otherwise approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall thereafter be undertaken in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To protect and preserve the character of the heritage assets.

Policy: NPPF, Core Strategy CP1 & CP3, MDD Policy TB24

36. External Brickwork To Match Existing

Any areas of external brickwork required to be re-instated in accordance with the approved plans shall match the original brickwork in brick colour and size, mortar colour, and pointing and bonding detail.

Reason: To protect and preserve the character of the heritage assets.

Policy: NPPF, Core Strategy CP1 & CP3, MDD Policy TB24

37. Joinery Details

Prior to the commencement of development detailed plans, elevations and cross sections of new or replacement external joinery, at a scale of 1:20 shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall thereafter be undertaken in accordance with the approved plans.

Reason: To protect and preserve the character of the heritage assets.

Policy: NPPF, Core Strategy CP1 & CP3, MDD Policy TB24

38. Replacement Windows/Doors

Further details of any new or replacement windows and doors to be inserted in the Walled Garden Buildings, Mill Building, Estate Workers Cottages or proposed Laundry Building in accordance with the approved plans shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing prior to their installation.

Reason: To protect and preserve the character of the heritage assets.

Policy: NPPF, Core Strategy CP1 & CP3, MDD Policy TB24

39. Further Details Of Rainwater And Drainage

Further details of all external rainwater, drainage and ventilation goods shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing and shall be installed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To protect and preserve the character of the heritage assets.

Policy: NPPF, Core Strategy CP1 & CP3, MDD Policy TB24

40. Reuse Of Clay Tiles/Slates

Any 19th century building roofs to be stripped, shall ensure that the existing clay tiles or natural slates are carefully removed from the roof and stored prior to re-use on the roof. Any deficit of tiles or slates shall be made up with matching clay tiles or natural slate as appropriate, a sample of which shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for written approval prior to the re-cladding of the roof.

Reason: To protect and preserve the character of the heritage assets.

Policy: NPPF, Core Strategy CP1 & CP3, MDD Policy TB24

41. Recording (Plans/Photos) – Former Store Building to be demolished

Prior to the commencement of any work to demolish this building a detailed record of the existing building in the form of 1:50 survey plans and elevations, photographs of all elevations, and typical interior and exterior details shall be made and submitted to the Local Planning Authority and to the Local Historic Environment Record maintained by Reading Museum.

Reason: To ensure an appropriate record of the building is made and retained.

Policy: NPPF, Core Strategy CP1 & CP3, MDD Policy TB24

Archaeology Conditions:

42. No development shall commence until a programme of archaeological work (which may comprise more than one phase of work) has been implemented in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure that any archaeological remains within the site are adequately investigated and recorded or preserved in situ in the interest of protecting the archaeological heritage of the Borough.

Ecology Conditions:

43. Prior to commencement of development a detailed reptile mitigation strategy shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The detailed reptile mitigation strategy shall be in accordance with the submitted Ecological Consultation – Review and Update Response to Wokingham Borough Comments (Aspect Ecology, March 2015) and the mitigation, contingency and enhancement measures contained within paragraph 9.203 – 9.212 of the submitted Environmental Statement (September 2014). The detailed reptile mitigation strategy shall be implemented in accordance with the approved plan unless otherwise approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure the continued protection of protected species

Policy: NPPF, Core Strategy CP7

44. Prior to commencement of development a detailed Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority for the development. The detailed Landscape and Ecological Management Strategy (LEMS) shall be in accordance with the mitigation, contingency and enhancement measures contained within paragraph 9.179 – 9.264 of the submitted Environmental Statement (September 2014). The submitted Landscape and Environmental Management Plan (LEMP) shall be implemented in accordance with the approved plan unless otherwise approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure the continued protection of protected species

Policy: NPPF, Core Strategy CP7

45. Prior to commencement of development a detailed Great Crested Newt Mitigation Strategy shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority for the development. The detailed Great Crested Newt Mitigation Strategy shall be in accordance with the mitigation, contingency and enhancement measures contained within paragraph 9.179 – 9.264 of the submitted Ecological Consultation – Review and Response to Wokingham Borough Council (Aspect Ecology, December 2014). The submitted detailed Great Crested Newt Mitigation Strategy shall be implemented in accordance with the approved plan unless otherwise approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure the continued protection of protected species
Policy: NPPF, Core Strategy CP7

Environmental Health Conditions:

46. No work relating to the development hereby approved, including works of demolition or preparation prior to building operations, shall take place other than between the hours of 8:00a.m. and 7:00p.m. Monday to Friday and 8:00 a.m. to 1.00p.m. Saturdays and at no time on Sundays or bank or national Holidays.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of neighbouring occupiers
Policy: NPPF, Core Strategy CP1 & CP3, MDD CC06

47. No construction deliveries shall be accepted or dispatched outside the hours of 8:00a.m. to 7:00p.m. Monday to Friday and 8:00 a.m. to 1.00p.m. on Saturday and at no time on Sundays or bank or national Holidays.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of neighbouring occupiers
Policy: NPPF, Core Strategy CP1 & CP3, MDD CC06

48. No development shall commence until an Environmental Health Management Plan (EHMP) has been submitted to the Local Planning Authority. The plan should detail items such as phasing of construction, types of piling rig and earth moving machinery to be utilized and measures proposed to mitigate the impact of construction operations. In addition the plan should make note of any temporary lighting that will be used during the construction phase of the development. The plan shall be implemented in full and retained until the development has been constructed. Any deviation from this Statement shall be first agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure disruption is minimised as much as possible during construction.
Policy: NPPF, Core Strategy CP1 & CP3, MDD CC06

49. Before development commences the applicants shall submit for written approval to the Local Planning Authority a scheme of works that sets out the measures that will be taken to minimise dust arising from the development. The dust mitigation measures identified in the scheme shall be carried out and maintained until construction is complete. The control of dust can also be included in a Environmental Health Management Plan (EHMP) for the site

Reason: To protect the amenity of local residents during the construction period

50. No sound reproduction equipment which conveys messages by voice or otherwise which is audible outside the curtilage of the premises shall be installed on the site.

Reason: In order to protect the amenities of occupiers of nearby properties.
Policy: NPPF, Core Strategy CP1 & CP3.

51. Noise resulting from the use of plant, machinery or equipment during the construction phase of this development shall not exceed a level of 5dB(A) below the existing background level (or 10dB(A) below if there is a particular tonal quality) when measured according to British Standard BS4142-1997, at a point one metre external to the nearest noise sensitive premises.

Reason: in the interests of protecting the local residents from unreasonable noise levels which would be detrimental to the residential character of the area.

Policy: NPPF, Core Strategy CP1 & CP3, MDD CC06

52. Before development commences details of any proposed external lighting scheme shall be submitted for written approval to the local planning authority. The scheme shall set out the steps that will be taken to ensure that external lighting does not cause a nuisance to local residents including future residents of the site. In particular this scheme shall detail proposed hours of operation for flood lighting.

Reason: To protect the amenity of local residents.

Policy: NPPF, Core Strategy CP1 & CP3

53. Development shall not begin until an air quality assessment has been carried out and where necessary a scheme for protecting proposed sensitive receptors from poor air quality has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. All works that form part of the approved scheme shall be completed before any dwelling hereby approved is occupied.

Reason - To ensure that sensitive receptors are not subject to poor air quality as a result of the development.

Policy: NPPF, Core Strategy CP1 & CP3

54. Unless otherwise agreed by the Local Planning Authority, development other than that required to be carried out as part of an approved scheme of remediation must not commence until conditions A to D have been complied with. If unexpected contamination is found after development has begun, development must be halted on that part of the site affected by the unexpected contamination to the extent specified by the Local Planning Authority in writing until condition 4 has been complied with in relation to that contamination.

Part A: Site Characterisation

An investigation and risk assessment, in addition to any assessment provided with the planning application, must be completed in accordance with a scheme to assess the nature and extent of any contamination on the site, whether or not it originates on the site. The scope of the assessment must be submitted to an approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken by competent persons and a written report of the findings must be produced. The written report is subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority. The report of the findings must include:

(i) a survey of the extent, scale and nature of contamination;

(ii) an assessment of the potential risks to:

- human health,
- property (existing or proposed) including buildings, crops, livestock, pets, woodland and service lines and pipes,
- adjoining land,
- groundwaters and surface waters,
- ecological systems,
- archeological sites and ancient monuments;

(iii) an appraisal of remedial options, and proposal of the preferred option(s).

This must be conducted in accordance with DEFRA and the Environment Agency's 'Model Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination, CLR 11'.

Part B: Submission of Remediation Scheme

A detailed remediation scheme to bring the site to a condition suitable for the intended use by removing unacceptable risks to human health, buildings and other property and the natural and historical environment must be prepared, and is subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority. The scheme must include all works to be undertaken, proposed remediation objectives and remediation criteria, timetable of works and site management procedures. The scheme must ensure that the site will not qualify as contaminated land under Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 in relation to the intended use of the land after remediation.

Part C: Implementation of Approved Remediation Scheme

The approved remediation scheme must be carried out in accordance with its terms prior to the commencement of development other than that required to carry out remediation, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Local Planning Authority must be given two weeks written notification of commencement of the remediation scheme works. Following completion of measures identified in the approved remediation scheme, a verification report that demonstrates the effectiveness of the remediation carried out must be produced, and is subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority.

Part D: Reporting of Unexpected Contamination

In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development that was not previously identified it must be reported in writing immediately to the Local Planning Authority. An investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of condition part A, and where remediation is necessary a remediation scheme must be prepared in accordance with the requirements of condition part B, which is subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority. Following completion of measures identified in the approved remediation scheme a verification report must be prepared, which is subject to the approval in writing of

the Local Planning Authority in accordance with condition part C.

Part E: Long Term Monitoring and Maintenance.

A monitoring and maintenance scheme to include monitoring the long-term effectiveness of the proposed remediation over a period to be agreed with LPA, and the provision of reports on the same must be prepared, both of which are subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority. Following completion of the measures identified in that scheme and when the remediation objectives have been achieved, reports that demonstrate the effectiveness of the monitoring and maintenance carried out must be produced, and submitted to the Local Planning Authority.

This must be conducted in accordance with DEFRA and the Environment Agency's 'Model Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination, CLR 11'.

Reason (common to all parts): To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other offsite receptors.

Policy: NPPF, Core Strategy CP1 & CP3, MDD CC06

55. No development shall commence until a detailed investigation, to determine the present and likely future impact of landfill gas on the site, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The method and extent of this investigation shall be agreed with the local planning authority prior to commencement of work. Where a risk from migrating gas is identified, details of appropriate measures to prevent ingress of landfill gas to inhabited spaces and outdoor areas, including provision for future monitoring, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the planning authority, before the development commences. The development shall proceed in accordance with the measures approved.

Reason – To protect occupiers of buildings that are close to the site from the risks associated with landfill gas.

Policy: NPPF, Core Strategy CP1 & CP3

56. Prior to the demolition and refurbishment phase, an Asbestos Management report shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The report shall provide full details of surveys, mitigation, and verification of asbestos management, and as appropriate, provision of contingency surveys, mitigation and verification to be adopted during the construction phase. The details shall be implemented in accordance with the approved plan unless otherwise approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure any contamination on the site is remedied to protect the existing/proposed occupants of the application site and adjacent land.

Policy: NPPF, Core Strategy CP1 & CP3

Additional Drainage/Flood risk mitigation conditions:

57. To follow in members update

Informatives:

1. Whilst the development does not fully accord with the policies contained within the adopted development plan, material considerations & the particular circumstances as they relate to this case, warrant a different decision being taken. The reasons for this are set out in the report.

2. The applicant is reminded that this approval is granted subject to conditions which must be complied with prior to the development starting on site. Commencement of the development without complying with the pre-commencement requirements may be outside the terms of this permission and liable to enforcement action. The information required should be formally submitted to the Council for consideration with the relevant fee. Once the details have been approved in writing the development should be carried out only in accordance with those details. If this is not clear please contact the case officer to discuss.

3. The applicant is reminded that should there be any change from the approved drawings during the build of the development this may require a fresh planning application if the changes differ materially from the approved details. Non-material changes may be formalised by way of an application under s.96A Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

4. This permission should be read in conjunction with the legal agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act the contents of which relate to this development. The applicant is particularly reminded of their obligations with regards the CLEMP.

5. The Head of Technical Services at the Council Offices, Shute End, Wokingham [0118 9746000] should be contacted for the approval of the access construction details before any work is carried out within the highway (including verges and footways). This planning permission does NOT authorise the construction of such an access or works.

6. Adequate precautions shall be taken during the construction period to prevent the deposit of mud and similar debris on adjacent highways. For further information contact the Highway Authority on tel.: 0118 9746000.

7. The developer's attention is drawn to the fact that this permission does not authorise the physical construction of the proposed off-site highway works and site access connections to the public highway. A separate legal agreement made with the Council under s.278 of the Highways Act 1980 is required. No work within or affecting the public highway shall commence until the agreement has been completed and the Council, as local highway authority, has approved all construction and installation details together with a programme of works.

8. Any works/ events carried out by or on behalf of the developer affecting either a public highway or a prospectively maintainable highway (as defined under s.87 New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (NRSWA)), shall be co-ordinated and licensed as required under NRSWA and the Traffic Management Act 2004 in order to minimise

disruption to both pedestrian and vehicular users of the highway.

Any such works or events, and particularly those involving the connection of any utility to the site must be co-ordinated by the developer in liaison with the Borough's Street Works team (0118 974 6302). This must take place AT LEAST three months in advance of the intended works to ensure effective co-ordination with other works so as to minimise disruption.

9. This permission does not convey or imply any approval or consent that may be required for the display of advertisements on the site for which a separate Advertisement Consent application may be required. You should be aware that the display of advertisements without the necessary consent is a criminal offence liable to criminal prosecution proceedings through the courts.

10. Thames Water wishes to inform the applicant that it will aim to provide customers with a minimum pressure of 10m head (approx. 1 bar) and a flow rate of 9 litres/minute at the point where it leaves Thames Waters pipes. The developer should take account of this minimum pressure in the design of the proposed development.

11. The requisite Travel plan would need to comply with the latest national and local guidance:

- 1) NPPF Section 4 (Sustainable Transport)
- 2) The Essential Guide to Travel Planning (DfT, March 2008)
- 3) Delivering Travel Plans Through the Planning Process (DfT, April 2009)
- 4) A Guide on Travel Plans for Developers (DfT)
- 5) Making Residential Travel Plans Work (DfT, June 2007) All accessible at:
<http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/sustainable/travelplans/>
<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/improving-local-transport>

Also:

WBC Transport Plan 3 and Active Travel Plan 2011 – 2026

WBC Workplace Travel Plan Guidance and Residential Travel Plan Guidance

Documents, covering workplace travel plans and residential travel plans provide local guidance and are available on the Borough's website.

12. The applicant is reminded that there are trees on site protected by a Tree Preservation Order. It is a criminal offence to wilfully or knowingly cause damage to those trees, including their roots unless in accordance with express planning permission.

PLANNING HISTORY

There is no recent planning history pertaining to the site of relevance to the current proposals.

The Heritage section below (and the Heritage Statement of Significance that accompanied the application) provide an appraisal of the history to the site and its surrounding area.

The site comprises a former golf club and nine hole course (Closed 31st March 2014) with limited ancillary residential, equine and limited industrial/commercial uses. A number of the buildings are no longer in use and in a state of disrepair. The site forms part of the wider Bearwood Park Grade II* listed Historic Park and Garden and includes two listed buildings (Park Lodge and West Lodge), a designated Local Wildlife Site, a designated Area of Special Landscape Interest and a 17 hectare manmade Lake and Dam.

SUMMARY INFORMATION

For Commercial Football element

Site Area	Circa 50 Hectares
Previous land use	Defunct golf course, some residential, equine uses and some business uses.
Change in non-residential floorspace (+/-)	c. 5700m ² increase
Number of jobs created/lost	At least 60 Jobs maintained with in the Borough (excluding players), some positions will be new, many will be transferred from the Hogwood Site.
Proposed parking spaces	198 Car + 4 Coach

For Residential Element

Existing units	8
Proposed units	26
Number of affordable units proposed	Commuted Sum (£300,000)
Previous land use	Existing residential
Existing parking spaces	Informal parking arrangements
Proposed parking spaces	51

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

English Heritage	Removed previous objections, subject to conditions and the securing of the CLEMP through the S106 agreement. (Conditions 33-41)
Conservation Architect	No Objection, subject to conditions and the securing of the CLEMP through the S106 agreement. (Conditions 33-41)
Trees and Landscape	No Objection, subject to conditions and the securing of the CLEMP through the S106 agreement. (Conditions 27-32)
Ecology	No Objection, subject to conditions and the securing of the CLEMP through the S106 agreement. (Conditions 43-45)
Highways Authority	No Objection, subject to conditions (13-26)

Highways Agency	No Objection
Environmental Health	No Objection, subject to conditions (46-56)
Affordable Housing	No objection raised. Provided advice on the required level of affordable housing provision required at the site.
WBC Drainage Officer	Awaiting Comments on revised drainage details. To be reported in members update.
Environment Agency	Revised comments to follow. It is hoped that these will be received in time for members update.
Thames Water	No Objection, subject to conditions (5)
Natural England	No objection, Offered general advice on landscape and ecological matters and recommended the Authority utilise the advice of relevant officers. Recommended the use of an Ecological Management Plan.
Borough Archaeologist	No Objection, subject to condition (42)
Sport England	Objected to the scheme due to the loss of a golf course (Please note that this is a non-statutory objection and therefore no referral to the National Planning Casework Unit is required)
Rights of Way	The rights of way officer supported the views of Loddon Ramblers, and noted that opportunities may be available to enhance

REPRESENTATIONS	
Arborfield Parish Council	<p>Commented on the application.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Arborfield Parish would like to see the speed limit outside the development reduced to improve highway safety. - Highlighted that public transport was not very good near the site so pedestrian and cycle links should be provided. - Requested that listed building applications be particularly carefully reviewed by conservation architect. - Floodlights should be carefully used/controlled - As much vegetation as possible should be retained. - Arborfield PC also highlighted the work it does with regards football in the parish and indicated that any assistance Reading FC could provide would be gratefully received.
Winnersh Parish Council	Noted the proposed development in an adjoining Parish. Did not offer formal comment on plans.
Ward Member(s)	<p>Cllr Gary Cowan offered the following comments:</p> <p>“I support this Planning Application as I did for the previous one in their current site, but there are a few areas I feel need to be</p>

	<p>addressed or at least considered as part of the process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Transport; The only public transport is the 145 bus which is a once a week service so public transport is very limited. • Mole Road is unsuitable for a national speed limit especially as it is used by horses, cyclists and walkers. <i>(Officer Note: This cannot be addressed through the planning process. Highways have been made aware of Cllr Cowan's concerns and if members share this concern could be minuted at the committee.)</i> • A reduction of the speed limit and considerably better signage/road markings especially at the junction of Cope Barnhill lane and Gravel Hill Pit Lane which forms part of an extensive network well used by riders and walkers is a necessity. <i>(Officer Note: This cannot be addressed through the planning process. Highways have been made aware of Cllr Cowan's concerns and if members share this concern could be minuted at the committee.)</i> • Provision of a footpath from Arborfield Cross Roundabout to Lockey Farm would also be an improved highway safety feature. • On site I would like to ensure all the trees and hedges where possible are protected and remain so as to retain the rural character of the area. • Floodlights must be restricted in use and must be of a kind that eliminates light spill for the benefit of the wellbeing of the local residents. A Condition is requested to deal with this issue."
Resident Comments	<p>14 letters of objection and comment. The planning issues raised were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proposal will lead to the closure/forced relocation of Bearwood Riding centre. Bearwood Riding Centre offers riding opportunities to up to 25 disabled riders. This will disadvantage disabled groups. The charity was relocated here in October 2013. - Walled garden area might not be structurally suited for development - Will lead to loss of jobs at the equine centre - Golf Course was a valued facility - Will increase traffic - Will lead to the loss of attractive features - May lead to general disturbance - Will reduce highway safety - Could be cumulative traffic problems with Arborfield Garrison development. - WBC shouldn't approve building everywhere - Development is too modern and would be detrimental to the historic park - May effect ecology

- Floodlights could lead to a loss of amenity or affect rural character
- Would cause harm to the countryside
- Potential for noise
- Footpath Provision needs to be made for this development (Officer note: This has been included in the revised plans)
- An independent Environmental / Heritage 'Clerk of the Works' should be appointed to oversee this project should this development proposal be accepted. (Essential that CLEMP is implemented)
- Football Club has over represented the local enthusiasm for the scheme
- Could lead to competition for parking in the area
- Could lead to increased flood risk
- TPO's and orchards should be protected
- Hedges and vegetation should be retained
- Football club will generate higher water usage than the golf club
- Risk of pollution

2 Letter of comment:

- WBC should ensure that the parking is adequate
- Speed limits should be reviewed on Mole Road
- More Public Transport should be provided

2 Letter of support. The issues raised were:

- Good use of land
- Good for the community
- Good for the profile of Wokingham Borough
- Following discussions held with Reading Football Club independently of the Planning Process the 'Red Spinners Angling Club' who operate on Bearwood Lake offered their support for the scheme.

Berkshire Garden Trust commented on the scheme. The Garden Trust raised a number of concerns with regards historic landscapes issues that would need to be considered. [Officer note: These have been considered by officers and aspects of this will be taken forward through the Conservation, Ecological and Landscape Management Plan for the site]

The Mid and West Berkshire Local access forum highlighted the needs of horse riders and also indicated that they considered the Rights of Way S106 contributions should be spent improving byway 4. This view was also put forward by **the Loddon Valley Ramblers**.

Binfield Badger Group – Are unaware of Badgers on the site, however there have been records of Badger road casualties in

	the wider area. Advice on protected species should be sought from the Borough Ecologist
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APPLICANTS POINTS

- Would provide a world class training facility to enable the club to maintain FA Category 1 status in line with the FA's Elite Player Performance Plan.
- Reading Football Club is a large and successful football club with strong links to the area and community.
- Will help with the restoration and provide a future for historic park and gardens
- Will continue to secure and improve the clubs links to Wokingham Borough, including its young people and the wider community (including its school links e.g. Forest School).
- New and enhanced facilities will allow the club to become more self-sufficient and produce more of its' own high quality academy players.
- Will deliver Employment Opportunities during construction
- Will ensure that existing jobs remain within the Borough
- Will restore redundant buildings and provide much needed housing.
- Will deliver Biodiversity benefits
- The club considers that the development is economically, environmentally and socially sustainable.

PLANNING POLICY

National policies:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

National Planning Policy (NPPG)

Wokingham Borough Local Development Framework – Core Strategy:

CP1 – Sustainable development

CP2 – Inclusive communities

CP3 – General Principles for Development

CP4 – Infrastructure Requirements

CP5 – Housing mix, density and affordability

CP6 – Managing Travel Demand

CP7 – Biodiversity

CP8 – Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area

CP9 – Scale and location of development proposals

CP10 – Improvements to Strategic Transport Network

CP17 – Housing delivery

Managing Development Delivery Local Plan Document:

Cross Cutting Policies:

CC01 – Presumption in favour of sustainable development

CC02 – Development Limits
CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping
CC04 – Sustainable Design and construction
CC05 – Renewable energy and decentralised energy networks
CC06 – Noise
CC07 – Parking
CC09 – Development and Flood Risk
CC10 – Sustainable Drainage

Topic Based Policies:

TB05 – Housing Mix
TB04 – Development near Atomic Weapons Facilities
TB07 – Internal Space Standards
TB21 – Landscape Character
TB20 – Servicing arrangements for employment uses
TB23 – Biodiversity and development
TB26 – Buildings of traditional local character and areas of special character.

Other guidance:

- Borough Design Guide SPD
- Sustainable Design and Construction SPD

Planning Advice Note (Infrastructure Impact Mitigation Contributions for New Development – Revised November 2010)

PLANNING ISSUES

The Proposal

1. Full application for the redevelopment of Former Bearwood Golf Course to provide a new football training ground and academy facility, comprising of 3 full size team pitches, 7 other pitches for use by various under 18 age groups and a goal keeping practice areas. A single storey extension and conversion of existing golf course clubhouse into security gatehouse and visitors cafe, new maintenance shed and maintenance store. Single storey changing block and medical suite. Refurbishment of West Lodge for junior academy trialists, refurbishment of apple store, retention and refurbishment of riding stables offices/stores to academy offices, new single storey academy building to provide changing rooms, medical suite, classrooms, player recreation and gymnasium area. Refurbishment of Mole Lodge to provide accommodation for senior academy trialists, new two storey first team building, single storey headquarters building. The refurbishment/rebuilding of existing housing and farm/industrial buildings to provide 26 residential units (net increase of 18 residential units) with associated parking, landscaping and access. Demolition of ancillary buildings plus garden wall to be made good and associated works relating to Bearwood Lake dam.

The Principle of Development

2. Policy CP9 of the Core Strategy (Scale and location of development proposals) states that *'The scale of development proposals in Wokingham Borough must reflect the existing or proposed levels of facilities and services at or in the location, together with their accessibility'*. The application site is located within an area classified as outside of development limits within the countryside, and therefore Core Strategy policy CP11 (*Proposals outside Development Limits*) is relevant. Development proposals will not normally be permitted except where one or more of the specified exceptions apply:

- Criteria 1 of CP11 states that development will be permitted if it *'contributes to diverse and sustainable rural enterprises within the borough, or in the case of other countryside based enterprises and activities, it contributes and/or promotes recreation in, and enjoyment of, the countryside'*.
- Criteria 2 relates to encroachment and expansion of development away from original buildings, and Criteria 3 to conversion of *'suitably located buildings'* and replacement buildings that would bring about environmental improvement. Criteria 5 goes on to state that replacement dwellings must not result in *'inappropriate increases in the scale, form or footprint of the original building'*.

3. Section 3 of the NPPF (*Supporting a Prosperous Rural Economy*) also applies and states that planning policy should support economic growth in rural areas by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development. This includes the requirement to *'support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings'*.

4. The proposed scheme will primarily provide a new football academy and headquarters for Reading FC (to replace the existing site at Hogwood Park in Finchampstead) with associated football pitches and goalkeeping practice areas, campus buildings and 26 residential units - formed from the refurbishment / rebuilding of existing housing and farm/industrial buildings - as well as the demolition of some existing ancillary buildings associated with Bearwood Golf Club and Bearwood Riding School. (Works to listed buildings have been applied for separately).

5. A football academy would not be classed as a rural enterprise and it is not considered that this development would strictly constitute a community facility, given the nature of proposed private use (though the club provides some wider community benefits). The existing site of the Club's training ground (Park Lane, Finchampstead) was already in use for sports activities by Arborfield Garrison before being developed by the Football Club in 2003. However, the submitted Design and Access Statement notes that the proposed site at Bearwood is also in established sports/recreational use (the golf club and stables) and its continued use as a sporting facility could be considered to contribute to/promote recreation and sport in the countryside even if the use is largely private. In addition, the DAS refers to the retention and development of local services and community facilities (see paragraph 7.1.12, page 22) as well as strong links to the community (parts 7 and 8, page 23) in line with section 3 (paragraph 28) of the NPPF.

6. It is important to consider as part of the balancing exercise whether potential benefits to the historic environment, wider community, employment, sport and economy (as well as the applicant's special circumstances) would be sufficient to justify the development and related harm to the countryside. Chapter 4 of the Environmental Statement states

that alternative approaches were considered prior to the decision to redevelop the Bearwood Golf Course site, including alternative locations, uses and site layouts and these alternatives have been discussed with officers, the needs of the club are considered further below.

7. In this case the creation of additional housing in the countryside – 26 dwellings, a net increase of 18 - would not be contrary to policy CP11 as it would consist of replacement dwellings / conversions of existing buildings. Policy CP11 of the Core Strategy is consistent with para 55 of the NPPF in stating that Local Authorities should avoid isolated new homes in the countryside except where there are special circumstances such as the re-use of redundant or disused buildings that would lead to an enhancement of the immediate setting, or development that would secure the future of heritage assets. MDD policy TB05 (*Housing Mix*) requires that residential development should provide an appropriate mix of accommodation reflecting the character of the area; the proposed residential development will consist of a mix of 2/3 bedroom properties and one 4 bed dwelling (Table 3.1 - Schedule of Accommodation of the Residential Units, Chapter 3: Site and Development) which is considered to be in line with this policy.

8. In accordance with Core Strategy Policy CP3 (*General Principles for Development*), proposals must conform to the conditions listed, being of ‘an appropriate scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area’. In addition Core Strategy policy CP11 criteria 2 states that should not lead to ‘*excessive encroachment or expansion of development away from the original buildings*’ within the countryside (as noted above). Policy TB21 of the MDD (*Landscape Character*) requires that proposals shall retain or enhance the condition, character and features that contribute to the landscape.

9. It is noted that the proposed football academy will involve the erection of new buildings (some of which will be two storey) and the conversion (with some extension) of existing buildings, as well as the provision of a significant number of formal pitches with associated facilities (including fencing and lighting). The scheme includes the reuse of some existing buildings and demolition of others. Whilst the proposal involves an increase in built form in this location through the establishment of the academy buildings and football pitches, it is noted that attempts have been made to lessen the visual impact e.g. by reducing the scale and height of the HQ building and removing the indoor pitch from the proposal.

10. Para 70 of the NPPF indicates that “To deliver the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should:

- plan positively for the provision and use of shared space, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, *sports venues*, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments;.....”

11. Para 74 indicates that existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

- an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
- the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by

equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or

- The development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.

The land has been used for sport (golf and equine uses). However as the proposed use also supports sport, and the provision is considered to be of higher quality no conflict arises with regards this paragraph.

12. Paragraph 34 of section 4 of the NPPF (*Sustainable Transport*) states that decisions should ensure developments that generate significant movement are located where the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes will be maximised (taking into account policies set out elsewhere in the Framework, particularly in rural areas). In the same vein, policy CP6 (part b) of the Core Strategy (*Managing Travel Demand*) requires that permission should be granted for schemes that are located where there are choices in the mode of travel available and that minimise the distance people need to travel. The accessibility of the site is further explored in the transport section of this report.

13. The site is designated as a Grade II* Historic Park and Garden (Bearwood College) and also contains Grade II listed buildings. The site includes a Local Wildlife Site (Bearwood Estate – Woods and Lakes). Core Strategy policy CP7 (*Biodiversity*) states that development in designated areas or that may harm habitats will only be permitted if it has been clearly demonstrated that the need for the proposal outweighs the harm, that there is no alternative site or that no harm will be caused, and that appropriate mitigation measures can be put in place where necessary. Policy TB23 of the MDD (*Biodiversity and Development*) builds on this by requiring that schemes demonstrate measures to enhance biodiversity, including ensuring that sites are ecologically permeable, which would be of relevance in this rural location.

14. In summary there are a wide range of factors to be given consideration with regards this proposal. The use of the land for an alternate sporting purpose to golf or horse riding is broadly acceptable. The use however is not purely sporting and is also a business and training use that significantly increases built form in a rural locality. As such there is a degree of conflict with the Development Plan by virtue of the use not entirely conforming with rural exception policy and the significant new volume of buildings introduced. However this conflict must be balanced against the special circumstances and needs of the applicant, heritage benefits and other material considerations that are explored below.

Heritage Principle:

15. The site is designated as a Grade II* Historic Park and Garden (Bearwood College) and also contains Grade II listed buildings. Policy TB24 of the MDD Local Plan (Designated Heritage Assets – including listed buildings and Historic Parks) states that the Council will require development to demonstrate how it will seek to preserve and enhance the affected heritage assets and/or their setting. Chapter 6 of the submitted Environmental Statement deals with Cultural Heritage and the Planning Statement notes that the scheme has been developed in conjunction with English Heritage and will 'retain the existing character and key landscape features of the site' (paragraph 7.30). Significant negotiation has been undertaken with English Heritage and this is detailed further in this report.

16. Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (“NPPF”) (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment) advises LPAs to recognise heritage assets as an “*irreplaceable resource*” and to “*conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance*” (para. 126).

- When determining planning applications, LPAs are advised to take into account of: “*the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation*”;
- *the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality*; and
- *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness*” (para.131)

17. Paragraph 132 confirms that it is the significance of the heritage asset upon which a development proposal is considered and that “*great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation*”. LPAs need to consider whether a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset. Proposals that lead to substantial harm or loss to a designated heritage asset should be refused unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh the harm or loss, or it meets with the test identified at paragraph 133. Where a development will lead to less than substantial harm, the harm is to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use (para. 134).

18. Paragraph 135 provides guidance in relation to non-designated heritage assets. The development proposal must also be assessed against the significance of the heritage asset, and “*a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset*”. In addition, at paragraph 137, LPAs are also advised to look for opportunities for new developments within conservation areas and within the setting of heritage assets to better reveal their significance. Where a proposal preserves those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably.

19. The NPPF provides a glossary of terminology at Appendix 2. The relevant heritage terms include:

- “**Heritage Asset:** *A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).*”
- **Setting of a heritage asset:** *The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral*
- **Significance (for heritage policy):** *The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting.*”

20. The National Planning Practice Guidance (“NPPG”) provide some guidance on the term “public benefit” at paragraph 20:

“Public benefits may follow from many developments and could be anything that delivers economic, social or environmental progress as described in the National Planning Policy Framework (Paragraph 7). Public benefits should flow from the proposed development. They should be of a nature or scale to be of benefit to the public at large and should not just be a private benefit. However, benefits do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public in order to be genuine public benefits.

Public benefits may include heritage benefits, such as:

- *sustaining or enhancing the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting*
- *reducing or removing risks to a heritage asset*
- *securing the optimum viable use of a heritage asset in support of its long term conservation”*

Landscape and siting Principle:

21. The Landscape Character Assessment identifies the site as falling within Type L1 – Bearwood Wooded Sand and Gravel Hills – which is described as a self-contained, relatively sparsely populated area of undulating wooded landscape (page 367 – 378). Much of the area is taken up by the ‘private’ landscape of the 19th Century historic Bearwood Park and the artificial lake, and is in recreational use (e.g. Bearwood Golf Club and Riding School). It is noted that the *‘lack of settlement in the heart of the area is a key characteristic’* (paragraph 16.20). The landscape is defined as high quality, having strong character and good condition: *‘The good condition of the landscape relates to the privacy and secrecy resulting from the relative absence of intrusive infrastructure and development (including roads)’* (paragraph 16.26).

22. The overall strategy is to conserve and strengthen the existing character focused on the woodland and historic park. However, the landscape is considered to have moderate sensitivity and the *‘wooded context and ‘private’ secluded character may mean that some changes can be accommodated without being visually apparent. However, the area is particularly sensitive as a result of its function as the wooded backdrop to the western edge of Wokingham town. Any large scale change such as clear felling on construction of tall, visually dominant structures would have an impact on these important views from the town’* (paragraph 16.28). Where there is pressure for formal recreation facilities, the Landscape Character Assessment recommends that these should be sympathetically sited and integrated into the landscape. Built development must be planned to conserve the unsettled character of the area and avoid wooded ridgelines, and the creation of new roads should be avoided.

Background and need of Reading Football Club:

23. Reading Football Club is a football club who currently play in the Championship (The second tier of English Professional Football). The Club have also played in the Premier League for 3 seasons since 2006, most recently in the 2012-2013 season). The Club plays its matches at the 24,161 capacity Madjeski stadium, located in the Reading Borough Council administrative area just outside of Wokingham Borough. The club

have previously received planning permission to increase their stadium to approximately 38000 Capacity. The club currently trains at Hogwood Park in Finchampstead which is sited adjacent to the boundary of the Arborfield Strategic Development Location.

24. Despite investment, expansion and refurbishment the Club's existing facilities at Hogwood are no longer fit for purpose. When the Elite Player Performance programme (EPPP) was announced, Reading Football Club states that it made the strategic decision to invest a huge amount of time and effort in ensuring that it gained the best possible grading. On 12th July 2013, the Club's Academy was awarded provisional Category One status, the highest ranking under the Premier League's Elite Player Performance Plan (EPPP). "The Royals Academy is one of only six outside the Premier League to receive the Category One award. The award followed a rigorous FA auditing process which found that the Club met the highest standards in football and coaching philosophy, facilities and personnel and player development". The club state that Category One status was granted partly on the basis of existing enhancements to the current training facilities and Academy but was largely informed by the Club's future development plans which are the subject of the submitted planning application.

25. The club has stated that once categorised, reviews begin every two years and failure to meet key criteria could affect Reading's Category One Status. As such the club believes there is a pressing need to secure planning permission for the new Academy and training facility at a new site which has the potential to achieve the requisite long term standards which Hogwood is unlikely to be able to achieve. The club has also identified the following benefits of moving to Bearwood Park.

- Would provide a world class training facility to enable the club to maintain FA Category 1 status in line with the FA's Elite Player Performance Plan.
- Reading Football Club is a large and successful football club with strong links to the area and community.
- Will help with the restoration and provide a long term sustainable future for historic park and gardens.
- Will continue to secure and improve the clubs links to Wokingham Borough, including its young people and the wider community (including its school links e.g. Forest School).
- New and enhanced facilities will allow the club to become more self-sufficient and produce more of its' own high quality academy players.
- Will deliver Employment Opportunities during construction
- Will ensure that existing jobs remain within the Borough
- Will restore redundant buildings and provide much needed housing.
- Will deliver Biodiversity benefits
- The club considers that the development is economically, environmentally and socially sustainable.

26. Officers have reviewed the club's submissions and the relevant FA standards as well as the facilities available to other clubs in the Premiership, which is the level that the club should reasonably be aspiring to compete at. New training facilities for Premier League and Championship clubs are regularly located in rural locations, indeed the training facilities for Chelsea Football Club and Tottenham Hotspur have been relatively recently been accommodated in green belt locations which is subject to more stringent safeguards than countryside locations.

27. Having reviewed a significant number of new training facilities in other boroughs, it

is considered that the level of facilities proposed are broadly comparable to other training grounds recently constructed at similar clubs. Having training facilities of a lesser standard may make RFC a less attractive prospect for future investment and also can be an issue when it comes to attracting talent to the club both at academy and senior playing levels, additionally lesser facilities can affect training and development outcomes.

28. The indoor training facility has been removed from the proposal at the request of officers, as on reviewing FA standards this could not be justified as Reading Football Club have an existing indoor pitch by the Madjeski Stadium and this met the FA's criteria for alternative indoor facilities. All other facilities provided appear reasonable and proportionate for a high level professional club and should ensure that the club's current and future needs are met.

29. It is acknowledged that the existing site has been selected because of its proximity to Reading and it having the potential to meet the Football Association requirements for a Category One training facility (which are detailed in the submission). The club has explored alternative options including a site near Aldermaston outside the Borough as well as a number of other sites that were discounted due to poor suitability. Sites that have sufficient land, prospect of approval and are of sufficient quality are infrequently available and very few have established sporting/leisure uses and usable buildings on them.

30. The quantity of land required for football pitches means that locations within settlement limits are unlikely to be able to provide sufficient land to accommodate the use, particularly given the competition for housing land and the greater market value of settlement land for housing. It is considered by officers that there is a need for Reading Football Club to improve its training facilities and this should be given reasonably significant weight in determining the application.

Environmental Statement

31. Reading Football Club sought screening and scoping opinions from Wokingham Borough Council (REF: SO/2013/2484). It was agreed that the development constituted EIA development. The application has been advertised as EIA development and an Environmental Statement has been provided with the application.

Referral to the National Planning Casework Unit

32. The proposal introduces over 5000m² of additional floor space outside of a town centre location and has a business/leisure use. In accordance with the referral guidance contained in the NPPG, the proposal will need to be referred to the National Planning Casework Unit before final approval.

Layout, character, scale and design:

33. The development has two distinct elements to it, the parts that are required for the football club's needs and an effectively separate residential element. Whilst the future use of these two parts will be largely separate, the developments are intrinsically linked as the redevelopment, restoration and maintenance of the residential area of the site is an important part of bringing this part of Bearwood Park in to a long term sustainable and

well maintained use. This is particularly important with regards the importance of the restoration of the Mill Building.

Bearwood Park Training Ground Proposed Masterplan

34. Below is the overall masterplan for the park. Which shows the location of the football pitches and ancillary structures in the northern part of the park, the main training/administrative building, academy and HQ building clustered in the centre of the site and residential elements in converted, rebuilt and restored buildings in the Southern part of the park.



35. The proposed football facility will involve the conversion (with some extension) of existing buildings and the erection of new buildings (some of which will be large and two storey), as well as the provision of a significant number of formal pitches with associated facilities (including fencing and lighting). The scheme includes the use of some existing buildings and demolition of others which, which on balance, would not have a detrimental impact on the existing landscape. Whilst the proposal involves an increase in built form in this location through the establishment of the academy buildings and football pitches, attempts have been made to lessen the potential visual impact.

Main Football Club buildings:

36. The main buildings making up the football club buildings are the First Team Building, the Academy building, the Headquarters Building and a number of supporting facilities including visitor changing rooms, groundskeepers facilities and other similar structures.

37. The principle buildings for both the First Team and Academy have been carefully located on the site of the historic farm, vegetable garden and gas works. Historically this is an area of the site which has always had buildings within it and also been a centre of activity for the estate. The applicant states that they are looking to regenerate this area of the site, whilst bringing back into use the significant heritage buildings.

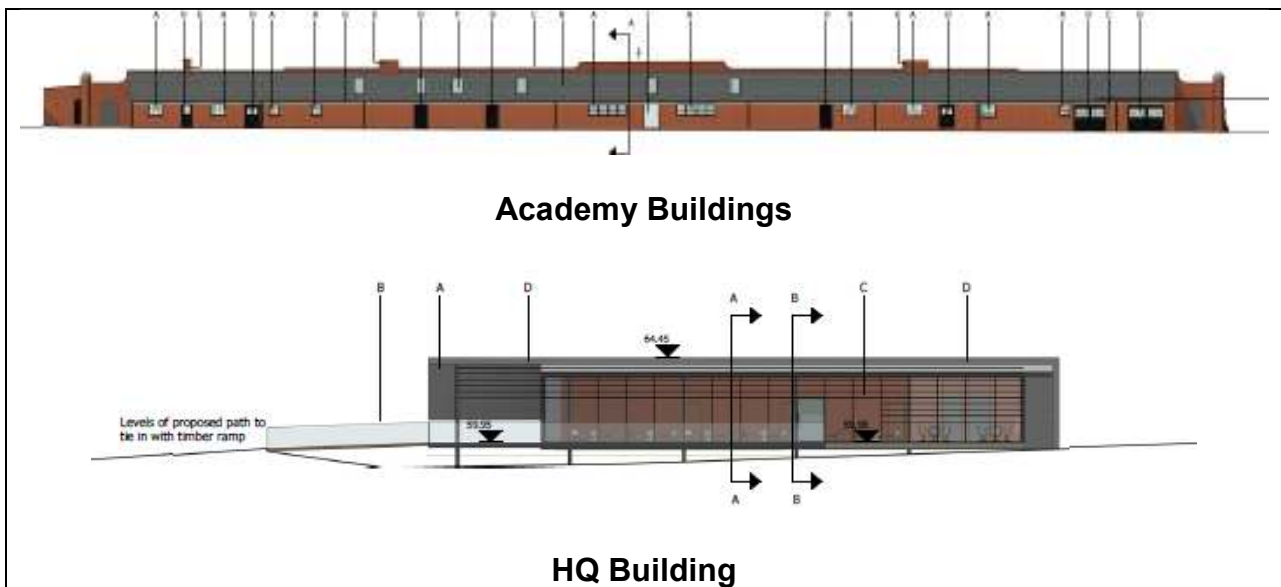
38. The new buildings have been arranged around a series of courtyards to create functional pockets of space. They have been carefully located to ensure that they don't sit too close to the existing buildings such as the West Lodge and the walled garden. Root protection zones of retained trees have also been considered with none of the proposed buildings encroaching into these areas.

39. Both the first team and academy buildings are large buildings of modern appearance with significant quantities of glazing incorporated into their design. It is considered that both buildings are sited in the best possible location on the Bearwood Park site in order to minimise their visual impact. The First team building is the largest building proposed, at a full two storeys with a flat roof, and has been sited within the main building cluster.

40. To the North, east and west it will benefit from significant vegetative screening which will mean that it is not unduly visible from long or medium views. The academy building is single storey and discreetly located within the former orchard. As can be seen in the images below the building is of lesser height than the 'lean to' building to the north of it, however will be more visible from the South. Due to the screening available in this area it is however considered that the academy building is well sited and will be of more attractive appearance than the barn that it replaces.



Proposed First Team Building



41. Both the main first team building and the academy building are considered to be of acceptable design (however the materials used will be determined by condition 2). The HQ building is set within a densely wooded area which provides an intimate setting for the building and is also acceptably designed. The building has corporate entertainment and food facilities as well as an office and will mainly be utilised for corporate matters and negotiations and is significantly smaller in scale than the other buildings. Other minor buildings include a visitor changing room and groundskeeping facility, these are considered to be of acceptable design and form and appropriately located. The site will be supported by a range of car parks and ancillary paraphernalia which are all considered to be reasonable and proportionate.

42. These buildings will house all the training and development facilities for all of Reading FC's teams as well as the administrative and ancillary functions for the club. As previously detailed above, the level of accommodation and its form is considered to be proportionate to other clubs in the top two tiers of English Football.

43. It is considered that the main club buildings are generally well sited and of acceptable design and form to accommodate the identified needs of the club.

Lodges and Converted buildings:

44. Where possible existing buildings have been retained and sympathetically converted. These include:

- West Lodge (To be used as ancillary accommodation for trialists and academy players)
- Park Lodge (Security and visitors building)
- Mole Lodge (Ancillary residential for senior academy players)
- The academy 'lean to' building
- The historic apple store

45. The amendments and restoration of the lodge buildings are considered acceptable in planning terms and listed building applications for these proposals are being considered separately. The reuse of these buildings is considered to be acceptable and there are no significant character or layout concerns with regards this element of the

proposal.

Pitches and paraphernalia:

46. It is proposed that a range of artificial & natural pitches will be provided of varying sizes to meet the needs of both the Academy and First Team squads. These will be sites on the former 9 hole golf course and will be built to a very high standard. The layout of these pitches has been subject to significant negotiation in order to maintain the most appropriate amount of vegetation in line with the historic vegetative layout of the park. This retention has been informed by historic maps of the park. The layout and form of the pitches are considered acceptable in planning terms subject to final agreement of the landscaping and contouring of the land by planning condition. The pitches will attract a certain amount of paraphernalia such as goals, netting, flood lights etc., the level of paraphernalia shown in the illustrative plans and DAS is considered reasonable and these are easily removed from the site, as such any harm caused by ancillary paraphernalia is largely reversible.



Artist's impression of the site

(Please note the indoor pitch in the background has been withdrawn from the application)

Housing

47. In this case the creation of additional housing in the countryside – 26 dwellings, a net increase of 18 - would not be contrary to policy CP11 as it would consist of replacement dwellings/conversions of existing buildings. Policy CP11 of the Core Strategy is consistent with para 55 of the NPPF in stating that Local Authorities should avoid isolated new homes in the countryside except where there are special circumstances such as the re-use of redundant or disused buildings that would lead to an enhancement of the immediate setting, or development that would secure the future of heritage assets. MDD policy TB05 (*Housing Mix*) requires that residential development should provide an appropriate mix of accommodation reflecting the character of the area.

48. The proposed residential development will consist of a mix of 2/3 bedroom properties and one 4 bed dwelling (Table 3.1 - Schedule of Accommodation of the Residential Units, Chapter 3: Site and Development) which is considered to be in line with this policy. The majority of the proposed dwellings would meet the minimum gross

internal area stated in MDD Policy TB07 (*Internal Space Standards*) apart from units 6 and 7. However, this shortfall is relatively small and is not considered significant enough to warrant changes to the proposal. This is because these dwellings are single storey conversions and effectively have the characteristics of flats, and whilst technically terraced housing, they comfortably exceed the minimum requirements for two bedroom flats and would still provide good amenity for occupants. Plots 11-13 require a little more rebuilding than would usually be allowed for a rural conversion as the framework of these buildings is relatively poor, however more significant rebuilding is considered justified in the context of the historic benefits delivered on the site, as the conversion of this part of the site secures its long term future and brings a long term and sustainable use to the mill buildings. The private residential development has its own access road which is separated from the principle site entrance. This keeps the majority of vehicle movements for each site separated and allows them to function without impacting on each other.

49. Plots 1-14 are all catered for with gardens, these are all usable and of reasonable size however five of these are significantly shorter than the Borough Design Guide requirements, however as they serve the existing cottages, and several of these do not have existing gardens this is considered to be a betterment of the existing situation and so would not warrant refusal. The Mill conversion of 8 residential flats and 3 Courtyard properties do not have their own dedicated private amenity space, though they will have access to several communal grass areas to the south of the mill. Normally some form of amenity space would be expected to be provided, however in the context of securing the long term future of the mill and park it is considered that this should be allowed, due to the special circumstances of the case.



Housing Layout

Residential Amenity of neighbours and occupiers

50. The nearest residential dwellings are located over 80m away from any of the proposed new buildings, as such no significant issues with regards loss of light, overbearing or overlooking are considered likely to arise with regards neighbouring

properties. All relationships within the converted properties are considered to be broadly acceptable given the converted nature of the units and importantly the existing relationships on site (e.g. overbearing from plot 11 is already an existing issue for the Garden Cottages from the existing building). Noise, light and environmental matters are addressed later in this report in the Environmental Health section.

Impact upon the Countryside

51. As previously detailed in the principle of development section, the application site is located in the countryside where development is strictly controlled. The development does not fall within the permitted forms of development allowed by the exceptions listed in policy CP11 and therefore the development is considered contrary to the development plan.

52. The proposal leads to large new buildings being erected on the site introducing approximately 5700m² of new floorspace to a countryside location. The buildings will be of significant size and therefore significant harm is caused to the character of the rural locality and the openness of the countryside due to introduction of significant new volume, mass and bulk within the countryside. This would urbanise the rural locality and contributes significant weight against the proposal.

53. The NPPF does encourage developments for sport in rural areas, this adds some weight in favour of the development, however the quantity of buildings and floor space proposed is substantial, and the use is not a traditional community sport and recreational facility. As the harm to the countryside is considered great and other material considerations in favour will have to be significant to overcome this harm.

Heritage and Historic Environment:

Background

54. The current 192 acre historic park is bounded to the west by Mole Road, to the east by Bearwood Road and to the north by a lane that connects the two roads. To the south, the park is bounded by Coombe Lane and Gravelpit Hill Lane. The house and park became the seat of the Walter family in 1816 when Walter II (owner of the Times newspaper) bought the estate and, in 1822 built a classical villa on the site of the current house. The overall form of the park, 20 hectare lake and brick walled kitchen garden 800m to the southwest of the house date from around 1820. John Walter III inherited the estate in 1847 and replaced the classical villa with the current (Robert Kerr) house, formal terrace and south lawns (1874), and created other notable features such as the main entrance drive (Wellingtonia Avenue) and rock garden (Gilpin; Pulman). The coachhouse and stables to the west of the house are also evident by 1872.

Designation and Significance

55. Both the historic park and garden, and the main house at Bearwood are listed at grade 2*, being of national or international importance. In addition, two Mole Road entrance lodges (West Lodge and Park Lodge), and within the application site, are individually listed at grade II.

56. The basic area and shape of the woodland is little changed from the 1820's and,

with the intervening fields, are large scale features which form a naturalistic setting, and frame views to and from the lake and house. The lake and its islands form the dominant feature of the park. The informal pleasure grounds are split into two areas to the south east and south west of the house. Tracks and rides within these grounds and around the lake are shown on the 1872-9 Ordnance Survey Map, many of which survive. The area to the north and northwest of the house has largely retained its parkland character. The brick walled kitchen garden and single storey lean-to to the north wall have been used by a pony club since the 1970's. The estate workers cottages to the south east of the walled garden also remain in use (and are proposed for restoration and conversion as part of this application), and a number of the workshop buildings next to the mill have a relatively low key commercial use, although the mill building itself is disused and run-down. The complex of entrance and approach drives from numerous points around the park largely survive, albeit in a simplified form. The survival of the basic structure of the park as it was in the late C19th, together with notable landscape features and designed views, contribute to the understanding and significance of the park and its buildings.

57. There are also areas and features which have been lost or have declined, undermining the significance of the park. These negative impacts include:

- A lack of co-ordinated management of the park during the C 20th leading to the overgrowth of gardens around the house and the intrusion of scrub woodland into open areas, partially obscuring designed views of, and around, the lake;
- The 1950's and 1960's Forestry Commission conifer planting to the east of the lake;
- The operation of two golf clubs, to the west and east of the house, resulting in an intrusion of fairways and greens and their separation through the planting of stands of unsympathetic tree species. Part of an historic orchard to the west of the coach house has also been lost to a fairway;
- The loss of the chestnut avenue to the east of Gravelpit Hill Lane and the avenue of limes to the north of Coombe Lane;
- The squaring off of the soft edge to the south-western boundary of woodland south of the lake;
- The loss of the historic orchard to the south of the walled garden.

58. The establishment in the early C 20th of the Royal Merchant Navy Foundation and school initially secured the future of the house and immediate setting, but since then the subdivision of the park into two golf courses and lack of specialist guidance and resources have challenged the integrity and survival of the historic landscape. This has resulted in English Heritage putting the park on its Heritage at Risk Register.

English Heritage Involvement & Conservation, Ecological and Landscape Management Plan (CLEMP):

59. This scheme has involved significant consultation with English Heritage. English Heritage initially objected to the proposals; primarily due to harm caused by the indoor pitch building, various impacts of features proposed within the historic park, and due to insufficient mitigation and management for the park.

60. Following a significant amount of discussions a number of changes and improvements have been made to the scheme which have satisfactorily overcome English Heritage's initial objections to the proposal (subject to the securing of a CLEMP

via the S106 agreement).

61. English Heritage comment that the removal of the indoor pitch and changes to the fencing are highly positive amendments which markedly reduce the level of harm entailed to the registered park and comment that the revised landscaping plans have overcome concerns they had with the treatment of the area to the South of the walled garden.

62. When carrying out works and building within a Historic Park a certain degree of harm is likely to be caused and this has been acknowledged by English Heritage and Officers. English Heritage commented:

“Despite the amendments the level of harm to the significance of the park still remains relatively high: the historic interest and character of the western parkland would effectively be lost by the creation of pitches and however well designed the large first team building and extensive parking would severely compromise the historical interest and character of this area. However, the proposed development is not sited in an area of amenity land essential for the setting of the house, and is not located in an area that unacceptably compromises the main landscape structure and features of the park, or its overall original design intentions. Furthermore, the development proposals are set within a section of the park where previous change has weakened the strength of character and affected its setting, lessening its significance. English Heritage could therefore accept the harm entailed if the scheme also delivered real benefits to the rest of the registered landscape and helped secure the long term future.

The applicant is now offering to fund a Conservation, Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (CLEMP) and make contributions through a section 106 agreement towards restoration works to key vistas and the Pulhamite Garden, both of which are within the School’s landholding. While a CLEMP cannot offset the harm that this development would entail if appropriately resourced it could providing the first positive steps for all parties to understand the site, prioritise funding and guide future change that protects, conserves or enhances its historical significance. This would help secure the future of the landscape left which is at risk because of lack of understanding, maintenance, fragmented ownership and development. To achieve these aims the CLEMP and s106 agreement will need to be a robust document and the s106 contributions sufficient to both restore the Pulhamite Garden and Lake views and ensure that they are maintained in the short term.”

63. As previous identified above, the NPPG indicates that “Public benefits may include heritage benefits, such as “sustaining or enhancing the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting, reducing or removing risks to a heritage asset, securing the optimum viable use of a heritage asset in support of its long term conservation”

64. English Heritage comments that :

“The proposed Conservation, Landscape and Ecology Management Plan and Section 106 contributions are very welcome and if the structure of the plan can be refined in accordance with our advice and contributions can be extended to cover maintenance of the restored elements for 5 years we believe that they would go a considerable way to addressing the problems faced by this landscape at risk.

Therefore, if the outstanding design elements are satisfactorily resolved and agreement can be reached on the form of the CLEMP and the Section 106 contributions we would be content to recommend this application is approved. Any approval would need to be very carefully conditioned and the s106 agreement would need to be carefully drawn up in order to secure the potential benefits to the registered landscape.”

65. The outstanding design issues mentioned in this comment relate to the materials used in the training building and academy and this is addressed by condition 2 which requires all materials to be agreed prior to commencement, other landscape matters have been addressed by revised plans.

66. A framework for the CLEMP is being agreed and this framework will be delivered by the S106 agreement. English Heritage is advising Wokingham Borough on the requirements of the CLEMP and its goals. The S106 agreement will require a fully detailed CLEMP to be submitted and agreed by WBC and English Heritage prior to the commencement of development in accordance with the framework agreed within the S106 agreement.

67. Following on from English Heritage’s advice and the advice of WBC Conservation Architect it is considered that the proposal will, through the details agreed already and through the CLEMP, secure heritage benefits and importantly secure a managed future for this the Historic Park. These measures would help secure the future of the landscape left which is at risk because of lack of understanding, maintenance, fragmented ownership and development. This is considered a relatively significant benefit and it is considered that this should be given significant weight in making a decision over whether or not to award planning permission.

Landscape consideration:

68. The main landscape features have been identified above in the landscape principle section. Whilst the proposal involves an increase in built form in this location through the establishment of the academy buildings and football pitches, it is noted that attempts have been made to lessen the visual impact e.g. by reducing the scale and height of the HQ building and changing the design of the indoor pitch. Significant information on landscape and visual impact has been included in the Environmental Statement

69. The Tree and Landscape Officer has reviewed the application and considers that that there are no significant long distance views from outside the estate due to the heavily wooded landscape within and surrounding the site. The Landscape Architect is generally content with the proposal subject to final material and planting details.

70. The pitch contouring and other landform alterations are assessed as having a potential significant moderate adverse effect by the Landscape Architect. As such it is important that all final; details of pitch lay out are agreed at the conditions stage to preserve both the landscape & historic character of the site (condition 32).

71. The Tree and Landscape Officer notes that the applicant has made a number of changes to the proposal, notably the removal of the indoor pitch and realignment of the security fencing and changes to the boundary treatments within the site. This has now addressed previous landscape concerns with regards the introduction of the large buildings into this sensitive site. Subject to the provision of the CLEMP and

a separate Landscape management plan (Condition 31) the Landscape Architect is satisfied with the scheme. The proposal is considered to accord with policies CP3, TB21 with regards landscape and form.

Employment, Training and other benefits

Employment

72. The proposal will ensure the retention of at least at 60 jobs within the Borough from support staff positions and will create significant employment during the construction phase. Additionally a significant number of academy and professional first team players will be employed at the site.

73. The quantity of new jobs generated is not significant, and as such this is afforded only limited to moderate weight, however it is considered to be advantageous to retain a significant number of jobs within the Borough. Some jobs will be displaced from the site from the loss of the existing riding centre and the limited commercial uses around the mill. The number of jobs lost at the site is however significantly offset by the jobs retained and created by the proposal.

74. Furthermore the academy does offer training, education and personal development within a sporting context, and a number of the clubs academy members come from the local area. The opportunity for training and education at the site adds additional weight in favour of the development.

Employment Skills Plan:

75. MDD policy TB12 (Employment Skills Plan) states that proposals for major new development should be accompanied by an Employment and Skills plan in line with the Council's Economic Development Strategy (2010). Employment at the construction phase and the ongoing retention of the training facility in the Borough are cited as benefits in the Design and Access Statement (page 22) and the applicant has proposed to provide a Construction Employment Skills Plan (ESP) at least one month prior to the implementation of development and an End User ESP at least six months prior to the occupation of the development for the Borough Council's approval as part of the Section 106 agreement to meet the requirements of policy TB12 and this has been included in the legal agreement.

Loss of equine centre and golf course:

76. A number of letters have been received with regards the loss of the riding school. The riding school is located at the courtyard where the academy building is proposed to be built. The loss of the riding centre is regrettable; however the riding centre only operates on this site on a short term lease and does not own the site. Whilst it would be preferable that provision for riders was able to be retained there is no requirement legally or in planning terms for this use to be retained. Some limited weight can be placed against the scheme for the loss of a community riding centre however the amount attached to it should not be significant. For the avoidance of doubt the 9 hole golf course closed in March 2014 and was suffering significantly in viability terms at the time. It is considered that the replacement of one non-viable sporting facility with a sporting facility of significantly higher quality is acceptable and it should be noted that

the Football Club proposals have their own community benefits which help to offset this unfortunate loss.

Highways

Highway Safety & Road Design

77. The application site was formerly occupied by Bearwood Golf Club, Bearwood Riding Stables and a mixture of residential/light industrial use. There are three separate accesses from B3030 Mole Road into the site which serve each of these uses.

78. Mole Road (B3030) is subject to a 50mph speed limit requiring visibility splays of 2.4m x 160m. There have been a number of personal injury accidents on Mole Road in the past. These accidents have been reviewed within the Transport Statement (TS) and it has concluded that these were primarily attributed to driver error and that road layout was not a contributory factor.

79. As a result of the development there will be intensification in use of the existing accesses. Currently visibility at these accesses is restricted. It is proposed to stop up the existing riding centre access which is not considered suitable to accommodate additional traffic; this will remove conflict at this location. However the access would remain available for emergency use only and removable bollards provided and set back from the highway boundary.

80. This would leave two accesses serving the site. The northern access (currently serving the golf club) would be retained as the main entrance to the training facility. The Transport Statement states that visibility will be improved at this access by cutting back vegetation (Drg No. 28289/001/SK004/C). The layout of the junction will be amended to provide a simplified priority junction large enough to accommodate coaches.

81. The southern access (currently serving the residential/commercial uses) would be retained to serve the proposed residential units. It is proposed to widen the junction to 4.8m and improve visibility by cutting back vegetation (Drg No. 28289/001/SK004/C). The proposed housing would be for general market and therefore the access road should be designed to an appropriate standard.

82. The applicant has provided revised plans (28289-001-007 Rev B, 28289-001-006 Rev B) which improve the width of the residential and service vehicle access road. The drawings indicate a number of passing places and it has been demonstrated by swept path analysis that these are suitable to accommodate the Council's refuse vehicle passing a 7.5t delivery vehicle. Based on the applicant's service strategy information this is likely to represent the worst case scenario. It is considered that the improvements to the access road are now suitable to accommodate the increase in residential traffic. It will also provide a potential quiet route for pedestrians/cyclists to access public rights of way.

83. Turning areas have also been increased in size (28289-001-008 Rev A) to accommodate turning for service/delivery vehicles and these are now considered acceptable. There will need to be demarcation of the turning areas to ensure that they remain available for this purpose (secured by conditions 14-15)

84. The internal road and car park layout for the training facility has been designed to an appropriate standard. The proposed use is likely to generate movements by coaches and other delivery vehicles and these have been catered for with turning area provided.

Traffic Impact

85. Reading Football Club has an existing training facility at Hogwood Lane, Finchampstead. The traffic generation associated with this facility has been surveyed and the data used to provide a baseline figure for the traffic generation anticipated from this proposal. Allowance has been made for the proposed facility which includes improvements to academy age groups and the overall development traffic has been assessed. The Transport Statement concludes that there will be a net gain of 23 AM peak hour movements arising from both the training facility and residential uses (combined).

86. The Transport Statement has assessed the likely impact of development traffic and has taken into account other predicted development traffic (which includes SDL's) for assessment year 2015. It is considered that the training ground facility would generate the majority of vehicle movements outside of the peak hours. The Transport Statement anticipates that there will be a 4.2% increase in northbound traffic during the AM peak hour on Mole Road arising from both the training ground and residential uses of the site. An increase of 1.25% is anticipated within the AM peak on Mill Lane. After reviewing this data the Highway Authority considers that the traffic could be accommodated without a material impact on the local road network.

87. There is likely to be a number of vehicle movements associated with the construction period, including HGV's and LGV's. This has been assessed and the predicted peak period for construction is considered to be in the month of July when approximately 36 two-way HGV movements will occur over a 1 month period. A construction traffic management plan and routing agreement is recommended to be provided by condition (Condition 25).

Parking

88. In respect of the proposed training facility, the development has assessed the level of parking provided for the existing Hogwood training facility (155 parking spaces) and it is acknowledged that this operates satisfactorily without impact on the public highway. The proposal has also made an allowance for anticipated increase in use for this facility. A total of 198 car spaces are provided and 4 parking spaces for coaches. The level of parking is considered to be acceptable by the Highway Authority.

89. In terms of residential parking this has been assessed against the Council's parking guidance and a mixture of allocated and unallocated parking has been provided. The overall level of parking is considered acceptable in this instance.

Sustainable travel

90. The site is not in a particularly sustainable location however some allowance has to

be made for the redevelopment of the existing uses (which are already located in an unsustainable location).

91. The applicant is preparing a framework Travel Plan to form the basis of a Travel Plan to be taken forward upon occupation of the development and this will contain targets to improve sustainable modes of travel to the site.

92. There is an existing footway along Mole Road to the north of the site and this ceases approx. 120m from the proposed entrance to the training facility. The applicant has submitted details of a new 1.2m wide private footpath (Drg. 28289/SK007) which will link the proposed dwellings to the existing footway network adjacent to Mole Road (to the north).

93. The footpath will run within the boundary of the site and shall consist of a compacted rural finish surface suitable for use by pushchairs and wheelchairs. To maintain security for the football training ground the applicant is proposing a residents' gated entry system which the Highway Authority has no objection to.

94. At the point that the footpath links to Mole Road the highway will need to be surfaced with a standard footway construction and dropped footway crossings provided on both sides of Mole Road to link to the existing footway. These works will be subject to a condition and Minor Works Agreement.

95. There has been suggestion that a full length footpath to Arborfield along Mole Road would be beneficial. Whilst this is likely to be beneficial to the wider community, this is not required as a result of this development and it would be unreasonable to require this as part of this development and as such this cannot be required.

96. An appropriate level of secure, covered cycle storage will be required to cater for a mixture of staff, players, visitors and residents. This is acknowledged within the Transport Statement and detailed design and location of storage areas is recommended by condition (Condition 17).

Sustainable Development:

97. Core Strategy policy CP1 requires that proposals contribute towards the goal of zero-carbon development by including appropriate on-site renewable energy features and minimise energy and water consumption (subsection 12a and b). Emerging policy CC04 of the MDD Local Plan (*Sustainable Design and Construction*) requires that all new residential development should seek Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4 and non-residential development (of more than 100m² gross floorspace) should seek to achieve BREEAM requirements (those set through Building Control for all non-residential buildings; the Council (as per paragraph 2.26 of the MDD) would encourage the proposal to go beyond what it set out in Building Control Standards) as well as requirements for water resource management. MDD policy CC05 (*Renewable Energy*) requires that residential schemes of more than 10 dwellings and non-residential schemes of over 1000m² gross floorspace should provide for a minimum 10% reduction in carbon emissions through on-site renewable energy or low carbon sources. An Energy Statement has been submitted which includes a series of measures to reduce emissions and utilise low and zero carbon energy options in order to meet the requirements of policies CC04 and CC05. These measures are secured by Condition 7, 8 and 9.

Environmental Health:

Land Affected by Contamination

98. The development site has been historically occupied by several commercial and industrial land uses including sewage filter beds, a gas works, a saw mill, a blacksmiths forge and farm buildings. The site has been most recently occupied by a golf course and riding stables. There is also a known landfill site in the northern part of the site. These land uses have the potential to cause significant contamination at the site. The proposals include a sensitive end use being residential with private gardens. In accordance with Paragraph 121 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012 the Local Planning Authority must be satisfied that the land will be suitable for the proposed residential use. An assessment of potential contamination is therefore required.

99. A preliminary risk assessment (Phase 1 desk study) has been submitted with the application as part of the Environment Statement. The following reports have been reviewed by the Environmental Health Officer:

- Bearwood Park, Sindlesham, Wokingham Geotechnical and Phase 1 Ground Condition (Contamination) Assessment dated July 2014 by Peter Brett Associates.

The report provides a detailed Phase 1 assessment and site walkover survey including a Conceptual Site Model. Several sources of potential contamination have been identified on site which could present a risk to the proposed end users. The report has classified risks to future users of the site as moderate/low and for construction workers, surface water, property and buildings as low. Intrusive investigation is recommended to confirm and refine the Conceptual Site Model.

100. The Environmental Health Officer (EHO) disagrees slightly with the risk classification to future end users. The EHO considers that overall the risk should be classified as moderate and even potentially high in the areas previously used for commercial purposes such as the former gas works. However, further investigation is proposed and this is acceptable to the EHO. To ensure these works and any necessary remediation are carried out The Environmental Health Officer recommended inclusion of the conditions 54.

Noise

101. The proposed football training development is close to existing residential properties and has the potential to cause a nuisance if not managed correctly. As a result a number of conditions have been recommended by the Environmental Health Officer to control Noise at the site (Conditions 48, 50 and 51). Subject to the implementation of these conditions it is considered that this issue can be adequately controlled.

Lighting

102. The proposed development is relatively close to existing residential properties and the Environmental Health officer notes that two of the football pitches are to have flood lighting installed. A 'lighting effects' assessment has been carried out and that mitigation

measures have been highlighted (Section 8.215), however no confirmation that these or any other mitigation measures will be implemented has been given. It is considered that details of lighting, and the hours of use of flood lighting can be secured by condition (condition 52).

Air Quality – Operational Phase

103. Having regards to the nature of the proposal the Environmental Health Officer considers that a detailed air quality impact assessment is required in accordance with the criteria set out in Appendix 3 'Air quality considerations for new developments' of Wokingham Borough Council's Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document (2010). The assessment is required to determine if the proposal will result in a deterioration of local air quality, to ensure that new receptors are not being put into an area of existing poor air quality and to assess the impacts from construction on nearby residents. No information on air quality has been provided with the application. The Environmental Health Officer therefore has recommended the inclusion of condition 53.

Air Quality – Demolition and Construction Phase

104. The demolition and construction phases are likely to give rise to significant dust and particulate generation. A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) is required in accordance with Wokingham Borough Council's Sustainable Design and Construction SPD and measures to control demolition and construction dust should be included in this. The Environmental Health Officer therefore has recommended the inclusion of condition 49.

Land Affected by Contamination – Landfill Gas

105. There is a historic landfill on site known as Bearwood College (1) Filled Ground and a second landfill site known as Gypsy Lane, Sindlesham Filled Ground within 200m of the site. The proposal may be affected by migrating toxic or flammable gas from these landfill sites. The Environmental Health Officer therefore has recommended the inclusion of condition 55.

Asbestos

106. The proposal includes demolition and refurbishment of existing buildings on site. Such structures and their demolition and refurbishment may give rise to contamination of the site through the presence of asbestos in the buildings to be demolished and refurbished. The Environmental Health Officer therefore has recommended the inclusion of condition 56.

Ecology:

107. The Borough Ecologist is satisfied that subject to the inclusion of conditions (43-45) and the provision of the CLEMP and LEMP, that the submitted Ecological Consultation ('Review and Response to Wokingham Borough Council' Aspect Ecology, December 2014) has addressed all of the potential issues for scheme on the Local Wildlife Site, Bats, reptiles and great crested newts. As such the Borough Ecologist does not object to the proposals.

S106 and Affordable Housing

Service, Amenity and Infrastructure impact:

108. In line with policies CP4 of the Core Strategy and the Planning Advice Note, contributions would be required for this scheme based on the provision on a net provision of 18 new dwellings. The applicant is currently negotiating a S106 agreement with the Council for this scheme. The agreed level of contribution shall be reported in the members update. Due to the CLEMP a legal agreement under S106 will be required for this scheme even if it is approved post the implementation of CIL.

Potential CIL liability.

109. CIL comes into effect in Wokingham Borough on 6th of April. Should a S106 not be completed in time for the committee date the CIL liability for the scheme will be reported to members in the update.

Affordable Housing:

110. The threshold for affordable housing is 5 dwellings or more or residential sites of 0.16 hectares or larger. The site exceeds this threshold and therefore there is a requirement for the provision of affordable housing.

111. To meet the requirements of Policy CP5 of the Core Strategy, a minimum of 40% of the total number of units (net) should be provided as affordable housing. The developer is proposing an off-site contribution to deal with the affordable housing element. There are a number of viability issues with the housing element of the scheme including high conversion costs due to the condition of the mill as works relating to the dam and its surroundings. These have been reviewed by the Affordable Housing Officer and relevant Executive members and resultantly a commuted sum of £300,000 index-linked towards affordable housing in the borough has been negotiated.

Archaeology

112. Advice was provided at pre-application stage by the Borough Archaeologist regarding this site, the response to which was to secure a more detailed Desk Based Assessment for the site, which was submitted with the application. This assessment, undertaken by Thames Valley Archaeological Services, provides a comprehensive assessment of the archaeological potential of the site. The Borough Archaeologist agrees with its conclusions that due to the general archaeological potential of the area, the scale of the site and the unknown nature of previous landscaping, i.e. whether ground levels have been reduced or raised, there is a significant potential for archaeological remains from all periods to be present within the site.

113. As noted in the Desk Based Assessment the potential for remains to be present and impacted upon varies across the site. The areas of standing buildings to be retained would be least impacted upon and the areas outside of previous development retaining a higher potential for archaeological remains to present. It is therefore advised that in order to further inform decisions regarding the strategies required in order to adequately mitigate the impact of the development on any archaeological remains that a

programme of exploratory archaeological investigation through trial trenching is undertaken. This will provide further information on the presence or absence of archaeological remains, their significance and the potential impact of the proposed development. This programme of works is secured by condition 42.

Flooding & Drainage

Flood Zones and Flood risk

114. The NPPF carries forward the sequential approach to flood risk, establishing the development should be directed away from the areas at highest risk and, where development is necessary in areas at risk of flooding, it should be made safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere. Core Strategy Policy CP1 and MDD submission policy CC09 are consistent with this approach, requiring that new development should avoid increasing and where possible reduce flood risk.

115. The Core Strategy, which was subject to a strategic Flood Risk Assessment, identifies the area of the site where the dwellings are to be built in as being situated in Flood Zone 1, where the risk of flooding is low and as such all forms of development - including 'more vulnerable' uses - are acceptable. Therefore, the proposal complies with the sequential test with regards flooding.

116. Both WBC Drainage and the Environment Agency have been consulted on the proposals and have objected to the drainage strategy. The objections are not 'in principle objections' and can be overcome by additional information with regards drainage strategy, however given the scale of the development and the sensitivity of the site it is important that the principles of the drainage strategy are agreed prior to the award of permission. Both the EA and the WBC drainage officer are currently reviewing a revised strategy and it is hoped that feedback will be available by the committee date.

Balancing material considerations

117. There are a substantial number of material considerations in favour and against the proposal. Against the proposal is the harm to the rural locality by the introduction of significant new volume and built form in a countryside location; it is considered that this should contribute significant weight against the proposal. Moderate weight against the proposal is also contributed by the negative historic impacts of the scheme (i.e. not restoring it to its' exact original form, and the introduction of large new buildings and different landscaping to the site). Limited weight against is contributed by the loss of the existing uses.

118. In favour of the development are the benefits to the historic environment. Most notably through the securing of a viable long term use for the site and crucially the securing of the Conservation, Landscape and Ecological Management Plan. This is given very significant weight and the securing of the future of this heritage asset is considered to be a significant public benefit. The needs and special circumstances of the applicant are also given significant weight. Moderate weight is given to the ecological and landscaping enhancements provided and the maintenance of jobs within the Borough. Some very limited weight is provided by the provision of additional windfall housing.

119. It is considered that on balance the main benefits of the scheme outweigh the harm caused by the proposal and as such the proposal is recommended for conditional

approval.

CONCLUSION

It is considered that on balance the main benefits of the scheme outweigh the harm caused by the proposal and as such the proposal is recommended for conditional approval. The benefits to the historic environment and special circumstances of the applicant have been given significant weight.

The proposal does not significantly impact on neighbouring properties in terms of overbearing, overlooking or loss of light, or from any new activity. There are no objections from the Conservation Architect, Borough Ecologist or Landscape Architect. The Highway Authority is also satisfied that the proposal will not lead to significant adverse highway impact and provides an adequate level of vehicle parking.

Subject to the securing of a Conservation, Landscape and Environmental Plan (CLEMP), English Heritage does not object to the proposals.

The proposal is considered to not fully accord with the development plan; however, on balance the scheme is recommended for approval, as the harm to rural character and the impact on the designated countryside is considered to be outweighed by the special circumstances and need of the applicant as well as the benefits to the historic environment, ecology, landscape, and most importantly the securing of a long term Management Plan for the park through the CLEMP.

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