



# Planning Committee

**Wednesday, 20 December 2023 at 6.30 pm**

**Council Chamber - Civic Centre**

## Members of the Committee

Councillors: M Willingale (Chairman), P Snow (Vice-Chairman), A Balkan, T Burton, V Cunningham, T Gates, E Gill, C Howorth, E Kettle, A King, C Mann, I Mullens, M Nuti, S Whyte and J Wilson

In accordance with Standing Order 29.1, any Member of the Council may attend the meeting of this Committee, but may speak only with the permission of the Chairman of the Committee, if they are not a member of this Committee.

## AGENDA

- 1) Any report on the Agenda involving confidential information (as defined by section 100A(3) of the Local Government Act 1972) must be discussed in private. Any report involving exempt information (as defined by section 100I of the Local Government Act 1972), whether it appears in Part 1 or Part 2 below, may be discussed in private but only if the Committee so resolves.
- 2) The relevant 'background papers' are listed after each report in Part 1. Enquiries about any of the Agenda reports and background papers should be directed in the first instance to **Democratic Services, Democratic Services Section, Law and Governance Business Centre, Runnymede Civic Centre, Station Road, Addlestone (Tel: Direct Line: 01932 425623). (Email: Democratic.Services@runnymede.gov.uk).**
- 3) Agendas and Minutes are available on a subscription basis. For details, please contact [Democratic.Services@runnymede.gov.uk](mailto:Democratic.Services@runnymede.gov.uk) or 01932 425620. Agendas and Minutes for all the Council's Committees may also be viewed on [www.runnymede.gov.uk](http://www.runnymede.gov.uk).
- 4) Public speaking on planning applications only is allowed at the Planning Committee. An objector who wishes to speak must make a written request by noon on the Monday of the week of the Planning Committee meeting. Any persons wishing to speak should email [publicspeaking@runnymede.gov.uk](mailto:publicspeaking@runnymede.gov.uk).
- 5) In the unlikely event of an alarm sounding, members of the public should leave the building immediately, either using the staircase leading from the public gallery or following other instructions as appropriate.

## 6) **Filming, Audio-Recording, Photography, Tweeting and Blogging of Meetings**

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Filming should be limited to the formal meeting area and not extend to those in the public seating area.

The Chairman will make the final decision on all matters of dispute in regard to the use of social media audio-recording, photography and filming in the Committee meeting.

## 7) **Commonly used acronyms:**

<b>ACEP</b>	Assistant Chief Executive (Place)
<b>ADM</b>	Assistant Development Manager
<b>BCM</b>	Building Control Manager
<b>CHPEBE or HoP</b>	Corporate Head of Planning, Economy & Built Environment (also referred to as Head of Planning for brevity)
<b>DLPM</b>	Deputy Local Plans Manager
<b>DM</b>	Development Manager
<b>PPSM</b>	Planning Policy and Strategy Manager

**List of matters for consideration**

Page

**Part I**

**Matters in respect of which reports have been made available for public inspection**

1. **Notification of Changes to Committee Membership**
2. **Minutes** 4 - 7  
  
To confirm and sign, as a correct record, the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 29 November 2023.
3. **Apologies for Absence**
4. **Declarations of Interest**  
  
Members are invited to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests or other registrable and non-registrable interests in items on the agenda.
5. **Planning Applications** 8
  - a) RU.23/1213 - Wentworth Golf Club, Wentworth Estate, Virginia Water, GU25 4NN 9 - 26
  - b) RU.23/0726 - Woburn Park Farm, Addlestone Moor, KT15 2QF 27 - 38
6. **Amendments to the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement** 39 - 48
7. **Exclusion of Press and Public**

**Part II**

There are no exempt or confidential items on this agenda.

Runnymede Borough Council

Planning Committee

Wednesday, 29 November 2023 at 6.30 pm

Members of the Council present: Councillors M Willingale (Chairman), P Snow (Vice-Chairman), A Balkan, T Burton, V Cunningham, T Gates, C Howorth, A King, C Mann, S Whyte, S Jenkins (Substitute) (In place of I Mullens) and S Williams (Substitute) (In place of E Gill).

Members of the Council absent: Councillors M Nuti, M Singh and J Wilson.

In attendance: Councillors A Berardi.

**32 Notification of Changes to Committee Membership**

To record the following substitutions:

Councillor S Jenkins for Councillor I Mullens  
Councillor S Williams for Councillor E Gill

**33 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 October were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

**34 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Cllr M Nuti and J Wilson.

**35 Declarations of Interest**

None received.

**36 Planning Applications**

**37 RU.23/0607 - Parklands, Bittams Lane, Chertsey, KT16 9RG**

*Proposal: Approval of reserved matters application (appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) for the construction of 172 dwellings*

The proposed achievement of carbon net zero on the scheme was welcomed by the committee, along with the fabric first approach and affordable housing provision.

The preservation of trees and biodiversity net gain was also acknowledged, and it was confirmed that the change of levels would mean there was no risk of overlooking the properties on Waverley Drive.

The Head of Planning confirmed that it would not be possible or necessary to impose a condition that restricted the number of occupants at the scheme pending the completion of the A320, as this was a reserved matters scheme and this was considered outline but not considered necessary. In any case were the scheme to be approved it was likely that the completion of the A320 works would occur prior to occupation of the scheme.

Clarification was also provided around the condition of the A320 that included a target to

achieve 100% clawback from development, however this was subject to viability. Clawback received on the scheme would go into further highways infrastructure improvements, the HIF money sought to fully fund the scheme in advance.

An elected member questioned the wording of a recommended condition requiring updates with regards replies, bats and badger surveys. The Head of Planning confirmed that the case officer would check this to ensure that this was consistent and in line with best practice.

**Resolved that –**

**The Head of Planning was authorised to grant planning permission subject to:**

- a) **Conditions 1-7**
- b) **Informatives 1-2**
- c) **Addendum notes**

**38 RU.23/1240 - Augustine House, Gogmore Lane, Chertsey, KT16 9AP**

*Proposal: Demolition of existing building and construction of a new mixed use redevelopment including up to 840sqm commercial space (Class E); 9 residential units; and associated refuse, cycle parking and landscaping.*

There was significant debate around the building's size, scale and mass, with many committee members considering the scheme overbearing and the building out of character with the area. Officers acknowledged that in terms of its size and mass the building was borderline a borderline recommendation, however it was considered that on balance the scheme was acceptable, was an efficient use of the land and not out of keeping with the character of the area. This however was a subjective matter and a decision for the committee who were entitled to disagree with this assessment.

There was concern around the scheme's relationship with the buildings on the neighbouring street, however officers confirmed distances to nearby properties had been fully assessed and were considered acceptable and comparable to similar schemes.

Following a query from a member it was also confirmed by officers that the applicant had gone into significant detail around additional loss of light studies, and there were no grounds for refusal based on loss of light to neighbouring properties.

Officers advised that loss of efficiency to neighbouring solar panels was a material planning consideration, however not one that in this case would attract significant weight and this alone was not considered a strong or compelling reason to turn down the application.

There was further concern from the committee on the balance of parking spaces for residential properties against commercial premise, and a desire to ensure that standards in the SPD were upheld. The Head of Planning advised of the flexibility available around parking standards when schemes were located in sustainable locations, which this one was given it was a town centre location with easy access to amenities. It was therefore considered that the parking provision was justifiable, which was backed up by technical advice from Surrey County Council.

Debate took place around the 24-hour access to the gym and the potential disruption to residents by the comings and goings of gym users as well as the potential for antisocial behaviour arising.

It was advised that the business model of many gyms was to operate on a 24 hour basis, and there was no evidence to suggest that that particular gym would generate more antisocial behaviour or impacts than any other 24-hour gym, of which there were several

others in the borough.

On this basis the committee were advised that adding a condition to limit the hours of use would not be suitable on antisocial behaviour grounds relating to the use of the inside of the commercial unit as a gym.

Members were further concerned about amenity issues potentially arising from gym users coming and going and the potential disruption this might cause. This was considered to be a potential issue as the car parking for the gym was in close proximity to the flats above and surrounding properties. Members were particularly concerned that late night users of the gym may disturb residential amenity through comings and goings, noise from vehicle usage (such as stereo usage, doors slamming, engine noise etc) as well as post work out conversations in the car park. Whilst some of this could occur in a residential setting the usage type of a gym, with customers coming at irregular hours for relatively short periods of time significantly increased this risk.

The presence of a gym contributing to the health and wellbeing of residents was acknowledged, however there was discomfort from the committee around the potential for loss of amenity particularly during night-time hours.

The risk of impact from amplified music also raised concern, however the committee indicated that this could be controlled by condition (either hours it can be played or soundproofing).

**Resolved that –**

**The HoP was authorised to REFUSE planning permission.**

In the subsequent debate around reasons for refusal, the committee unanimously voted that the proposed development by reason of position, form, scale, mass and significant bulk would result in an overtly prominent, dominant and visually overbearing form of development which would have a detrimental impact to the character and appearance of the area and streetscene in general.

Furthermore, the proposed use would result in a loss of residential amenity to surrounding residential properties. This loss of amenity would be due to due noise and disturbance from the likely numbers of comings and goings of customers and vehicles the proposed commercial use would attract, particularly at anti-social hours of the day and night.

*Mr Jeff Marshall, objector, and Mr John Mumby, agent for the applicant, addressed the committee on this application.*

**39 RU.23/1078 - 10 Larchwood Drive, Englefield Green, TW20 0SH**

*Proposal: Double storey side extension and change of use from a single dwelling to a HMO (Sui Generis)*

Some members of the committee were unhappy with the lack of parking spaces associated with the scheme, and made it clear their strong preference for a second parking space to be added. Some added to this by stating that there was an existing overspill of parking in the area, the bus network was inadequate and the nearest train station was a 39 minute walk. Some members highlighted that the area was also a hot-spot for learner drivers and the volume of existing parked cars meant that they considered there was a highways safety risk. However, Surrey County Council as highways authority had not objected on safety grounds and it was unlikely to be demonstrable that an increase of 2 bedrooms was likely to have a severe impact (which was the relevant NPPF test)

Members indicated that they would like to be certain that all efforts had been exhausted with regards improving parking on the site. A member indicated that they were minded to defer the item for further investigation of options by officers with the developer.

It became clear that most of the committee supported this position, officers would seek to negotiate with the developer to attempt to secure an additional parking space, and should an additional space be forthcoming officers would be authorised to issue permission under delegated authority. Failure from the developer to provide an additional space would result in the application coming back to committee for further debate.

During the debate several councillors commented on the conversion to HMO and the prospect of the property being permanently removed from family housing stock in the area, and there was debate on the overall issue of policy on HMOs. Officers advised that the use of the building as an HMO did not in principle conflict with planning policy.

The Head of Planning advised that for planning purposes the scheme continued to meet the need for housing in the borough, the design of the building was one that had previously been approved in a 2017 scheme on the site.

The concerns of some of the committee with regards HMOs was noted however the committee was sitting in an applications determination capacity rather than a policy formulation capacity. As such the scheme had to be judged on the council's existing policies rather than where it aspired to be. Any other issues must be taken up at the appropriate time, which was likely to be during the local plan review.

**Resolved that –**

- a) **The application was deferred and delegated to the HoP to secure an additional parking space secured by condition.**
- b) **Should the additional parking space not be secured the application would be returned to planning committee for further debate.**
- c) **Should the additional parking space be secured the HoP was authorised to grant planning permission subject to the completion of a Section 106 legal agreement and conditions 1-6.**
- d) **The HoP was authorised to refuse planning permission should the S106 not progress to his satisfaction or if any significant material considerations arose prior to the issuing of the decision notice that in the opinion of the HoP would warrant refusal of the application. Reasons for refusal relating to any such matter were delegated to the HoP.**

40 **Proposed Fees and Charges 2024/25**

The Committee received the context and rationale for the changes to fees and charges for the next financial year for the services managed by this committee.

**Resolved that –**

**The proposed fees and charges were approved to be effective from the dates within appendix A or as soon as practical thereafter.**

(The meeting ended at 9.00 pm.)

Chair

## **5. Planning Applications**

The planning applications to be determined by the Committee are attached. Officers' recommendations are included in the application reports. Please be aware that the plans provided within this agenda are for locational purposes only and may not show recent extensions and alterations that have not yet been recorded by the Ordnance Survey.

**If Members have particular queries on the applications, please contact Ashley Smith, Corporate Head of Development Management and Building Control by two working days before the meeting**

Copies of all letters of representation are available for Members and the public to view on the Planning pages of the Council website

<http://planning.runnymede.gov.uk/Northgate/PlanningExplorer/GeneralSearch.aspx>.

Enter the planning application number you are interested in, and click on documents, and you will see all the representations received as well as the application documents.

**(To resolve)**

### **Background Papers**

A list of background papers is available from the Planning Business Centre.





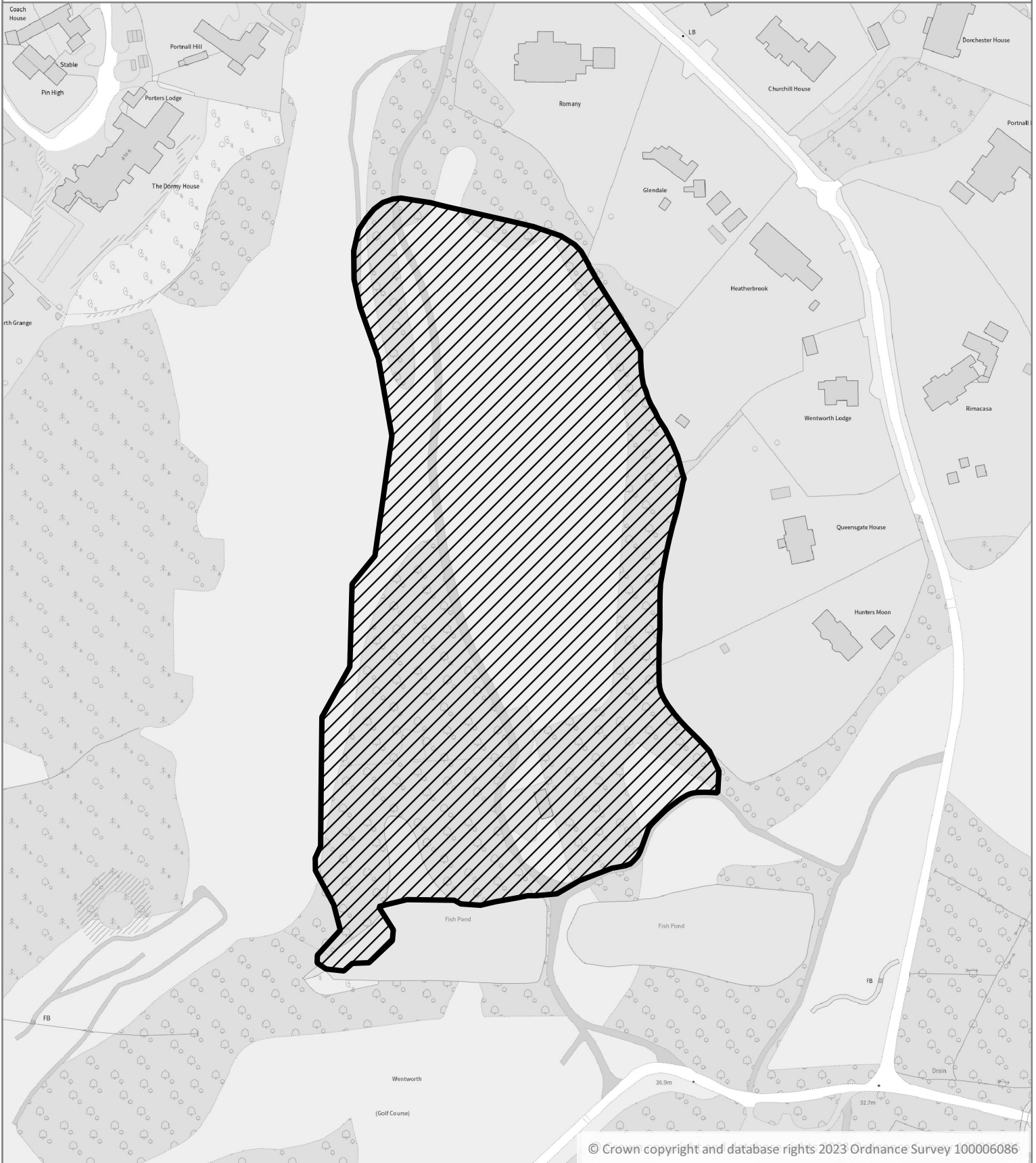
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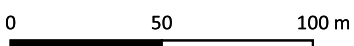
Date: 24/08/2023

Wentworth Golf Club



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Scale: 1:2,500



RU.23/1213



## COMMITTEE AGENDA REFERENCE: 5A

<b>APPLICATION REF:</b>	<b>RU.23/1213</b>
<b>LOCATION</b>	Wentworth Golf Club, Wentworth Estate, Virginia Water, Surrey, GU25 4NN
<b>PROPOSAL</b>	The erection of a building for golf performance training and practice with practice game area, landscaping and associated development following demolition of existing building
<b>TYPE</b>	Full Planning Permission
<b>EXPIRY DATE</b>	18/12/2023
<b>WARD</b>	Virginia Water
<b>CASE OFFICER</b>	Catrin Davies
<b>REASON FOR COMMITTEE DETERMINATION</b>	Major application
<i>If you have questions about this report please contact Ashley Smith, Victoria Gibson or the case officer.</i>	

### 1. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION

**It is recommended the Planning Committee authorises the HoP:**

- |    |   |
|----|---|
| 1. | <b>To grant planning permission subject to conditions as detailed in section 11 of this report.</b> |
|----|---|

### 2. DETAILS OF THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 The application relates to part of the Wentworth Club, which is a large private golf course within Virginia Water. The Wentworth Club comprises extensive grounds including three 18 hole golf courses and one 9 hole course, warm up driving range, grass range, main clubhouse, tennis and health club and various support facilities.
- 2.2 Within the site is an existing materials store with surrounding hard standing used to park buggies. There are currently several hardstanding pathways to enter and exit the application site.
- 2.3 Site planning constraints:
- Green Belt
  - Site of Nature Conversation Importance
  - Biodiversity Opportunity Area
  - Site of Special Scientific Interest Buffer Zone

### **3. APPLICATION DETAILS**

- 3.1 The application proposed to develop the existing practice area into a new “Performance Lab” building for the Wentworth Golf Club. The building would provide a golf coaching/teaching facility to enable using golf practice area in all weathers. The facilities within the building include x3 dedicated indoor teaching bays that open out onto the golf practice area, a dedicated indoor putting facility, a workshop and small office for the teaching professionals use and an ancillary café space.
- 3.2 As part of this planning application landscaping works associated with a “short game” practice area to the west and south of the building in the form of a putting green and two short game greens with bunkers are also proposed. The proposed scheme will require the partial infilling of the northern arm of the western fish pond to form a development platform for the southern edge of the short game area and the demolition of the existing store building.

### **4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 There is extensive planning history to the site as whole, the following history is considered relevant to this application:

<b>Reference</b>	<b>Details</b>
RU.90/0292	The laying out of a buggy track on the south golf course at Wentworth Club-Granted 14/05/1990

### **5 SUMMARY OF MAIN RELEVANT STRATEGIES AND POLICIES RELEVANT TO THE DECISION**

- 5.1 National Planning Policy Framework and Guidance.
- 5.2 The Runnymede 2030 Local Plan was adopted on 16 July 2020 and the policies have to be read as a whole. Any specific key policies will be referred to in the planning considerations.
- 5.3 SPD's which might be a material consideration in determination:
- Green and Blue Infrastructure (November 2021)
  - Runnymede Design Guide
- 5.4 This site falls within the designated Virginia Water Neighbourhood Area. However, a neighbourhood Plan has not been developed yet for this area.

## 6. CONSULTATIONS CARRIED OUT

### Consultees responses

Consultee	Comments
RBC Drainage Engineer	No objection subject to conditions
Environment Agency	No response
Surrey Wildlife Trust	No objections subject to conditions
Virginia Water Neighbourhood Forum	No comment
Archaeology	No objections

### Representations and comments from interested parties

6.2 Seven neighbouring properties were consulted in addition to being advertised on the Council's website. A site notice was also displayed at the site and it was advertised within the local press. 20 letters of representation have been received. These can be summarised as:

- There is no 'existing building' as such the proposal is inappropriate in the Green Belt
- Construction impact in terms of noise and traffic
- Noise pollution from the golf course.
- Increase traffic from the new facilities
- Loss of SNCI habitats
- Impact on bats
- Loss of trees
- Flooding
- The upgraded facilities are not needed.

## 7. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 In the determination of this application regard must be had to the Development Plan and National policy within the NPPF. This must be considered in light of the presumption in favour of sustainable development advocated by the NPPF. The key planning matters are:
- Principle of the development in the Green Belt
  - Design consideration including landscaping and trees.
  - Ecology and biodiversity
  - Energy and sustainability
  - Flooding
  - Neighbouring amenities
  - Other matters

Principle of the development in the Green Belt

- 7.2 The NPPF advises that the construction of new development, within the Green Belt should be considered inappropriate development, which is by definition harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Paragraph 149 details certain buildings can be exceptions to this, including the provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport. This is subject to the facilities preserving the openness of the Green Belt and not conflicting with the purposes of including land within it. Paragraph 150 sets out further exceptions, including certain engineering operations, however these are also subject to the above assessment concerning openness. Policy EE16 on Outdoor Sport and Recreation in the Green Belt and Policy EE18 relating to engineering operations in the Green Belt of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan are both consistent with the above national policy.
- 7.3 The existing use of the site is as a golf practice area. The proposed golf “Performance Lab” building is considered to be a building to be used in connection with the existing outdoor sport (i.e., golf) with any café area being ancillary to this use. In addition, the formation of a short game practice area to the west and south of the building is proposed in the form of a putting green and two short game greens with bunkers and other landscaping works, all of which are considered to be engineering operations. Therefore, in order for the principle of the development to be considered acceptable in the Green Belt it is necessary to consider if the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.
- 7.4 In terms of impact on openness, the key principles in relation to openness is that it is not simply about volume, visual impact is implicitly part of the concept of openness of the Green Belt and that greater floor area and/or volume does not necessarily mean that there is a greater impact. It is also necessary to consider the impact or harm, if any, wrought by the change. Case law establishes that openness of the Green Belt is not limited to the volumetric approach; the word ‘openness’ is open-textured and many factors are capable of being a material consideration. The redline for the planning application site includes part of the golf course including an existing open sided wooden store building, an area of hardstanding and open storage areas. The proposed single storey building would be located adjacent to this existing hardstanding, and as part of the proposal the wooden store building and approx. 1794 sqm of existing hardstanding is proposed to be removed as part of this planning application. It is considered that the proposed building has been designed in a suitable manner with the integration of the existing landscape and additional planting and screening proposed. The engineering operations are also considered to reflect the existing character of the golf course, and open sport/ recreational use of the area. Therefore, both

visually and spatially it is considered that the proposal would preserve the openness of the Green Belt.

- 7.5 In terms of the purposes of the Green Belt, the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence; these are set out in paragraph 138 of the NPPF (2021). Given the sites location and the development proposed it is not considered that the proposal would undermine the purposes of the Green Belt.
- 7.6 In view of the above, the proposal is considered to be appropriate development in the Green Belt and due to the reasons above is considered to preserve the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of the Green Belt. The proposal complies with the NPPF and policy EE16 and EE18 of the Local Plan.

#### Design consideration including landscaping and trees

- 7.7 Policy EE1 seeks attractive and resilient places that make a positive contribution to the landscape setting, paying respect to layout, form, and scale. Policy EE1 (Townscape and Landscape Quality), seeks to create high quality and inclusive design which responds to local context. Regard should also be had to the Runnymede Design Guide SPD. The NPPF further strengthens the importance of good design to create 'high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings, and places' (para. 126, NPPF).
- 7.8 The application site is an existing practice area with the southern end of the existing practice area overgrown and currently used for the storage of soil and sand including utilising an existing materials storage building. The proposed scheme is considered to be visually acceptable given the context and existing wider use of the land however it is recognised that the proposal would result in the loss of a number ecological features to facilitate the proposed development, this is discussed further below.
- 7.9 In terms of landscaping/ trees, a total of 79 trees are proposed to be removed as part of this planning application to facilitate the proposed development. 23 are category 'B'; 53 are category 'C' and 3 are category 'U'. The proposal will also result in the replanting of trees to mitigate the loss of those to be remove. The applicant's supporting Design and Access Statement states that in order to mitigate this, new planting is proposed as well as regeneration of the existing woodland. This is between the proposed building and northern edge of the site area as well as the section of grassland located north west of the application site, the regeneration and replanting area is illustrated on the landscape strategy plan. This area will be planted with whips, transplants standards and advanced nursery stock and some strategically placed semi mature trees, into an area that is currently acid grassland. Full details shall be secured by way of condition to secure suitable mitigation both in terms of quality and quantity of trees.
- 7.10 The proposal has been designed to protect the root protection areas of the trees with the building raised above ground level and fitted with screw piles by hand to minimise disturbance to the ground and the tree root systems Tree protection details can be secured by way of condition.

#### Ecology and biodiversity

- 7.11 Policies SD7 and EE9 of the Local Plan sets out that development should protect existing biodiversity and include opportunities to achieve biodiversity net gain. Policy EE11 states that the Council will seek development to contribute towards the delivery of a high quality multi-functional Green Infrastructure network by requiring proposals to provide and make enhancements to onsite Green Infrastructure assets with Policy EE12 requiring the delivery

of a high quality multi-functional blue Infrastructure network by expecting Blue Infrastructure assets to be provided, protected, maintained and enhanced to deliver multiple benefits and services for biodiversity, recreation and landscape.

- 7.12 The submission by the applicants includes an Ecology Appraisal and a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) metric.
- 7.13 In terms of mitigation the Ecology Report establishes that the important ecological features include bats, Fish Ponds SNCI and Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland. Some of the trees proposed to be removed/ affected as part of this planning application were found to have the suitability to support roosting bats, the applicant underwent a further study on these trees to establish their roost potential which has confirmed that that no trees with moderate or high roosting potential are proposed to be removed to facilitate the development. Surrey Wildlife Trust who provides the Council's ecology advice has reviewed this information and has confirmed these assessment are credible and raises no objections, subject to conditions. SWT has highlighted that the supporting information submitted by the Applicants has not stated if the Veteran (T76) tree is to be protected. This can be secured by way of condition.
- 7.14 In addition, the proposal would through the proposed landscaping works result in the loss of 0.05 ha of SNCI habitat – otherwise known as the fish ponds to the south of the application site (circa 19% of the total SNCI area). 03 ha of Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland also being lost within the wider site. In terms of the fish ponds, the proposal involves the infilling of the northern arm of the western pond to accommodate the proposed short game area. It is proposed that the loss of open water will be compensated by the removal of 0.05 ha of Mixed Scrub habitat that has developed along and outwards from the western bank of this pond, which will result in the restoration of 0.05 ha of standing open water.
- 7.15 In terms of the loss of woodland the application proposes that the habitat losses will be compensated by the enhancement of habitats within the wider golf course through the creation of new habitats. These are proposed to the south of the application site as shown on Map A.2 in the ecology report. It is also proposed that ongoing positive nature conservation management of all new and retained/enhanced habitats will be undertaken. This habitat enhancement, creation and management can be achieved by condition and a Landscape Environmental Management Plan.
- 7.16 In addition, the ecology report has identified mitigation and enhancement measures including:
- Inclusion of a green roof on the proposed building
  - Provision of wildlife boxes for birds, bats and invertebrates; and

Creation of habitats for invertebrates and reptiles within the woodland/woodland edge habitats, such as the construction of a stag beetle loggery and reptile hibernacula/brash enhancements. Based on the DEFRA biodiversity metric, which provides a quantitative means of assessing habitat losses against gains, before and after the proposed development, the proposed development has assessed that, despite the loss of SNCI and Section 41 Priority Habitat, that additional net gains can be achieved of 34%.

- 7.17 In addition, and given the presence of ecological receptors on site, there is a risk of causing ecological harm resulting from construction activities. Therefore, a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) will be required.

#### Energy and Sustainability

- 7.18 Policy SD8 of the RLP requires major development proposals to submit an energy statement demonstrating how the 'Be Lean, Be Clean, Be Green' energy hierarchy has been applied. An energy report by Senegy Building Services has been submitted in support of this planning application. This goes through the energy hierarchy and sets out the thermal efficiencies of the building, the use of air source heat pumps and Photo Voltaic Solar panels to meet the requirements of the Hierarchy.
- 7.19 Overall, the accompanying Energy Statement demonstrates that the proposed development will reduce energy consumption by the use of solar panel and hear pumps when compared to Part L of the Building Regulations by 17%. The proposed development therefore complies with Policy SD8.

#### Flooding

- 7.20 The NPPF at paragraph 94 requires that local authorities take full account of flood risk. Moreover, policy EE13 of the Local Plan requires that planning application submit a Flood Risk Assessment where appropriate, and that developments incorporating basements will need to demonstrate that the impact on ground water has been considered
- 7.21 The area of the pond that is proposed to be infilled as part of this proposal lies within flood zone 1 and compensatory storage is proposed as a result of the loss. It is understood that the proposed infill proposal provides an opportunity to restore the original perimeter of the pond, reclaiming the scrub area and providing compensatory storage equal to the storage removed, this will be on a level for level, volume for volume basis and is considered acceptable for the scheme proposed.
- 7.22 The Council's Drainage officer has been consulted and raised no objection subjection to suitable conditions regarding suds. With these conditions it is considered the proposal complies with EE13.

#### Neighbouring amenities

- 7.23 Due to the site location the proposal would not affect neighbouring properties in terms of loss of light and/or overbearing impact. The application site is an existing practice area associated with the wider established gold course. The proposal is not considered to result in a significant intensification of the use to the wider golf club use which would materially affect the amenity of residents in terms of noise and disturbance. The proposal complies with EE1.

#### Other matters

- 7.24 Regarding the letters received many concerns have been discussed above. In relation to several letters stating the existing structure is not a "building", the proposal has been assessed against the relevant policy considerations. Issues regarding traffic/noise in relation to the construction of the development is dealt with under separate Environmental Health Legislation.

## **8. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)**

- 8.1 The application proposes is not liable for CIL.



## 9. EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

9.1 Consideration has been given to Articles 1 and 8 of the First Protocol of the European Convention on Human Rights. It is not considered that the decision would result in a violation of any person's rights under the Convention.

Consideration has been given to s149 of the Equality Act 2010 (as amended), which has imposed a public sector equality duty that requires a public authority in the exercise of its functions to have due regard to the need to:

- (a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act
- (b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- (c) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

It is considered that the decision would have regard to this duty.

## 10. CONCLUSIONS

10.2 The development has been assessed against the following Development Plan policies – EE1, EE9, EE11 EE18 SD4 and SD7 of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan, the policies of the NPPF, guidance in the PPG, and other material considerations including third party representations. It has been concluded that the development would not result in any harm that would justify refusal in the public interest. The decision has been taken in compliance with the requirement of the NPPF to foster the delivery of sustainable development in a positive and proactive manner.

## 11. FORMAL OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

***The HoP be authorised to grant planning permission subject the subject to the following planning conditions:***

	Recommendation conditions
1.	<u>Standard three-year time limit</u> The development for which planning permission is hereby granted must be commenced no later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of

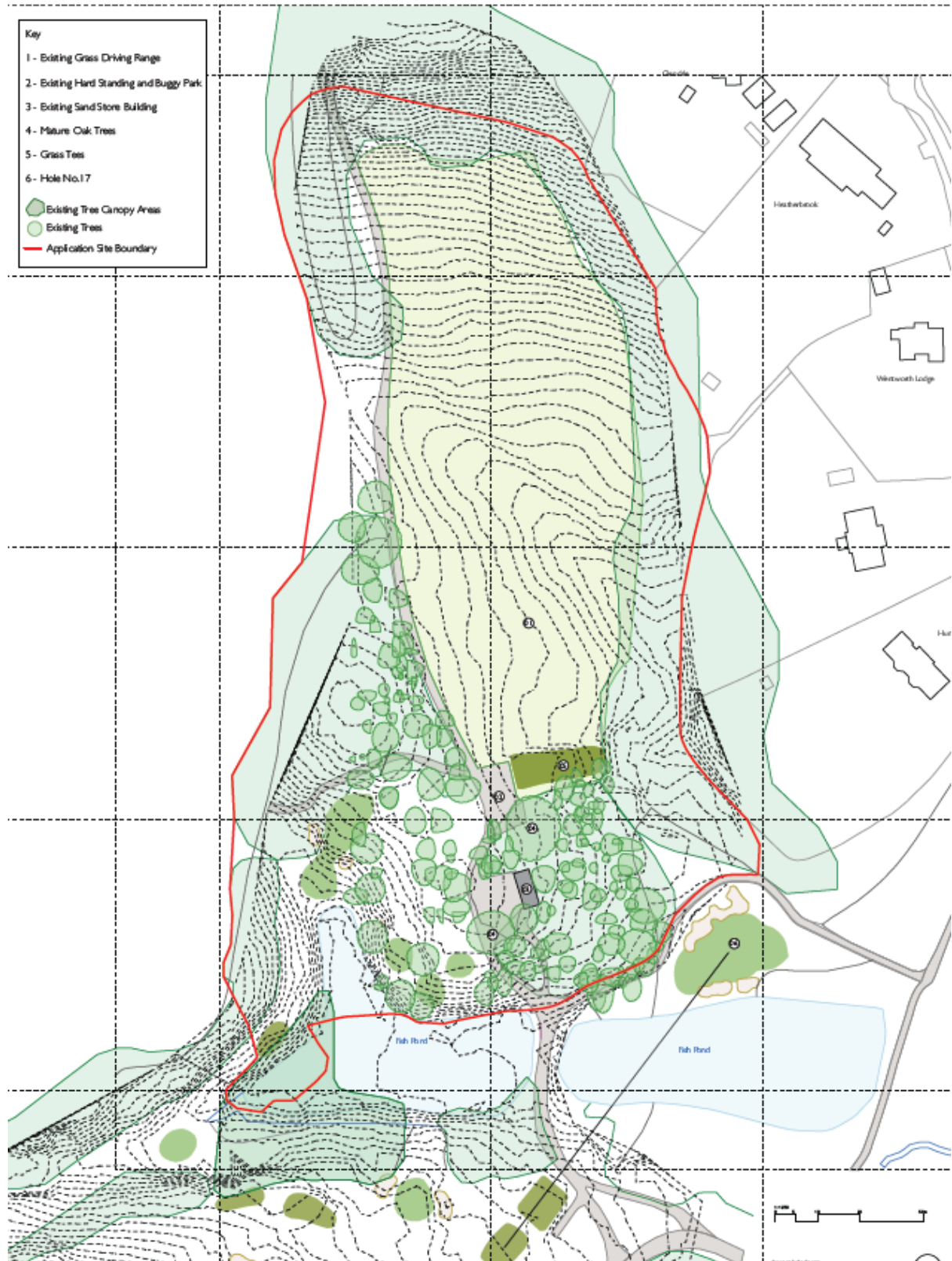
	<p>this permission.</p> <p>Reason: To comply with Section 51 of Part 4 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.</p>
2.	<p><u>Approved Plan</u></p> <p>The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out except in complete accordance with the approved the drawings as set out in the submitted schedule of approved plans. This includes finish floor levels.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure high quality design and to comply with Policy EE1 of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan and guidance in the NPPF.</p>
3.	<p><u>Materials</u></p> <p>The development hereby permitted shall be constructed entirely of the materials as stated in the Design and Access stated prepared by Mador architects dated July 2023</p> <p>Reason: To ensure high quality design and to comply with Policy EE1 of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan and guidance within the NPPF.</p>
4.	<p><u>Energy and sustainability</u></p> <p>The development hereby approved shall be undertaken in accordance with the energy efficiency and sustainable development report.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure the provision of suitable energy efficiency and suitability in accordance with Policy SD9 of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan and guidance within the NPPF.</p>
5.	<p><u>Ecology and biodiversity</u></p> <p>The development hereby approved shall be undertaken in accordance mitigation/compensation/enhancement measures as set out in the Ecological Impact Assessment prepared by Ecological Planning &amp; Research Ltd (EPR) dated 29<sup>th</sup> august 2023. Development shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved details for the construction of the development and the mitigation proposed within the above reports shall be undertaken prior to occupation of the development hereby approved.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure the provision of suitable mitigation for bats in accordance with Policy EE9 of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan and guidance within the NPPF.</p>
6.	<p><u>Tree protection</u></p> <p>The works shall be carried out in accordance with the Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan prepared by Merewood dated 16/11/2023. The protective measures shall remain in place until all works are complete and all machinery and materials have finally left site. Nothing shall be stored or placed in any area fenced in accordance with this condition, nor shall any fires be started, no tipping, refuelling, disposal of solvents or cement mixing carried out and ground levels within those areas shall not be altered, nor shall any excavation or vehicular access, other than that detailed within the approved plans, be made without the written consent of the LPA.</p>

	<p>There shall be no burning within six metres of the canopy of any retained tree(s). Where the approved protective measures and methods are not employed or are inadequately employed or any other requirements of this condition are not adhered to, remediation measures, to a specification agreed in writing by the LPA, shall take place prior to first occupation of the development, unless the LPA gives written consent to any variation.</p> <p>Reason: To protect the trees to be retained, enhance the appearance and biodiversity of the surrounding area and to comply with Policies EE1, EE9 and EE11 of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan and guidance within the NPPF.</p>
7.	<p><u>Surface water drainage system</u></p> <p>Prior to works above ground level, details of the proposed surface water drainage system shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The submitted details must provide the following:</p> <p>a) The results of detailed infiltration testing completed in accordance with BRE DG Digest: 365 and confirmation of groundwater levels.</p> <p>b) Detailed drainage design drawings and calculations to include: a finalised drainage layout detailing the location of drainage elements, pipe diameters, levels, and long and cross sections of each element including details of any flow restrictions and maintenance/risk reducing features (silt traps, inspection chambers etc.);</p> <p>c) A plan showing exceedance flows (i.e. during rainfall greater than design events or during blockage) and how property on and off site will be protected;</p> <p>d) Details of drainage management responsibilities and maintenance regimes;</p> <p>e) Details of how the drainage system will be protected during construction and how runoff (including any pollutants) from the development site will be managed before the drainage system is operational.</p> <p>2. No building shall be in use until demonstration (such as as-built drawings and/or photographic evidence) of the as-built surface water drainage system has been carried out by a suitably qualified person and written confirmation submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.</p> <p>Reason: To provide sustainable development, prevent an increased risk of flooding and to accord with policies SD7, EE12 and EE13 of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan and NPPF.</p>
8.	<p><u>Landscaping</u></p> <p>Notwithstanding the approved plans or any indication given otherwise, prior to any works above ground level full details of hard and soft landscaping scheme (including full details of replacement tree planting as shown on the landscape strategy plan and the proposed green roof of the building) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority</p> <p>This shall include a 'schedule of undertaking' the proposed works and samples of all hard surfacing.</p> <p>All approved landscaping details shall be undertaken and completed in</p>

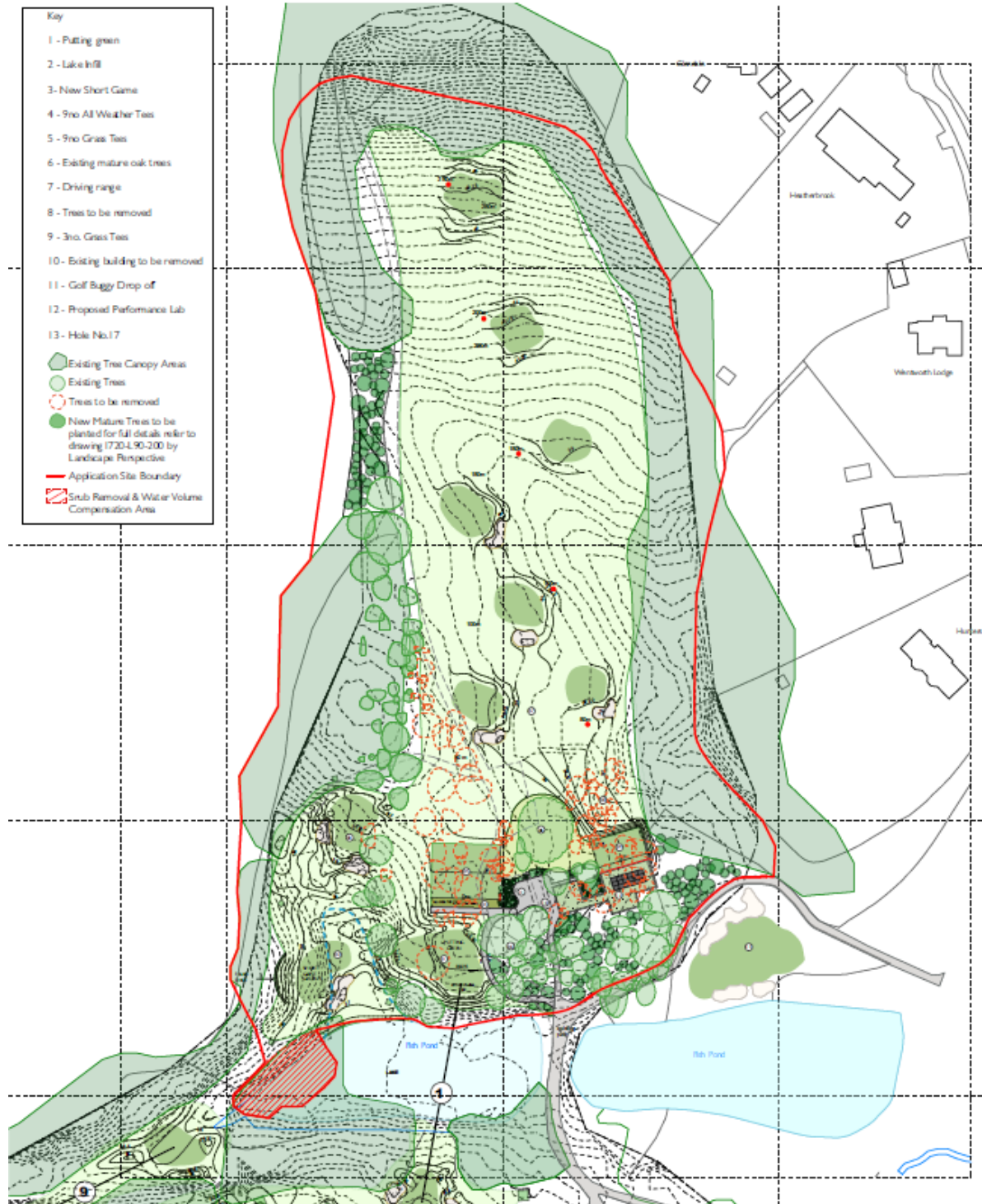
	<p>accordance with the approved 'schedule of undertaking.'</p> <p>All approved landscaping works shall be retained in accordance with the approved details. If within a period of five years from the date of planting of any tree or shrub shown on the approved landscaping plan, that tree or shrub, or any tree or shrub planted in replacement for it, is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies, or becomes seriously damaged or defective, another tree or shrub of the same species and size as that originally planted shall be planted in the immediate vicinity, unless the Local Planning Authority gives its prior written permission to any variation.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure the development is adequately landscaped and to comply with Policy EE9, EE11 and EE12 of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan and guidance within the NPPF.</p>
9.	<p><u>Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP)</u></p> <p>Prior to the commencement of the development (including demolition) a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The submitted details must provide the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Map showing the location of all of the ecological features.</li> <li>b) Risk assessment of the potentially damaging construction activities</li> <li>c) Practical measures to avoid and reduce impacts during construction.</li> <li>d) Location and timing of works to avoid harm to biodiversity features.</li> <li>e) Responsible persons and lines of communication</li> <li>f) Use of protected fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs</li> <li>g) Details of the 'Soft Fell' method to all trees which will be felled, even if they have been assessed as having negligible suitability to support a bat roost.</li> <li>h) Details confirming that all trees having high or moderate suitability are protected from the proposed development and retained</li> </ul> <p>The development shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved details for construction of the development.</p> <p>Reason: In the interest of protecting potential ecological value and species in the site as required by Policies EE9, EE11 and EE12 of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan and guidance within the NPPF.</p>
10.	<p><u>Landscape Environmental Management Plan</u></p> <p>Prior to the commencement of the development including demolition, a <u>Landscape Environmental Management Plan</u> shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The management plan needs to secure the retention and enhancement of habitats within the Site and selected elements within the wider SNCI, by the creation of new habitats within the blue line, and the ongoing positive nature conservation management of all new and retained/enhanced habitats. These shall includes measures within the biodiversity net gain strategy and non-metric enhancements, as well as a ecological sensitive</p>

	<p>light management plan. The development shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved details.</p> <p>Reason: In the interest of protecting potential ecological value and species in the site as required by Policies EE9, EE11 and EE12 of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan and guidance within the NPPF.</p>
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Site Location Plan



# Proposed block plan



Proposed Landscape strategy





## Proposed ground floor plan



## Proposed elevations





WEST ENTRANCE ELEVATION - SCALE 1:100



EAST ELEVATION - SCALE 1:100

2no wall mounted  
Air Source Heat Pump Units  
1100h x 870w x 460d

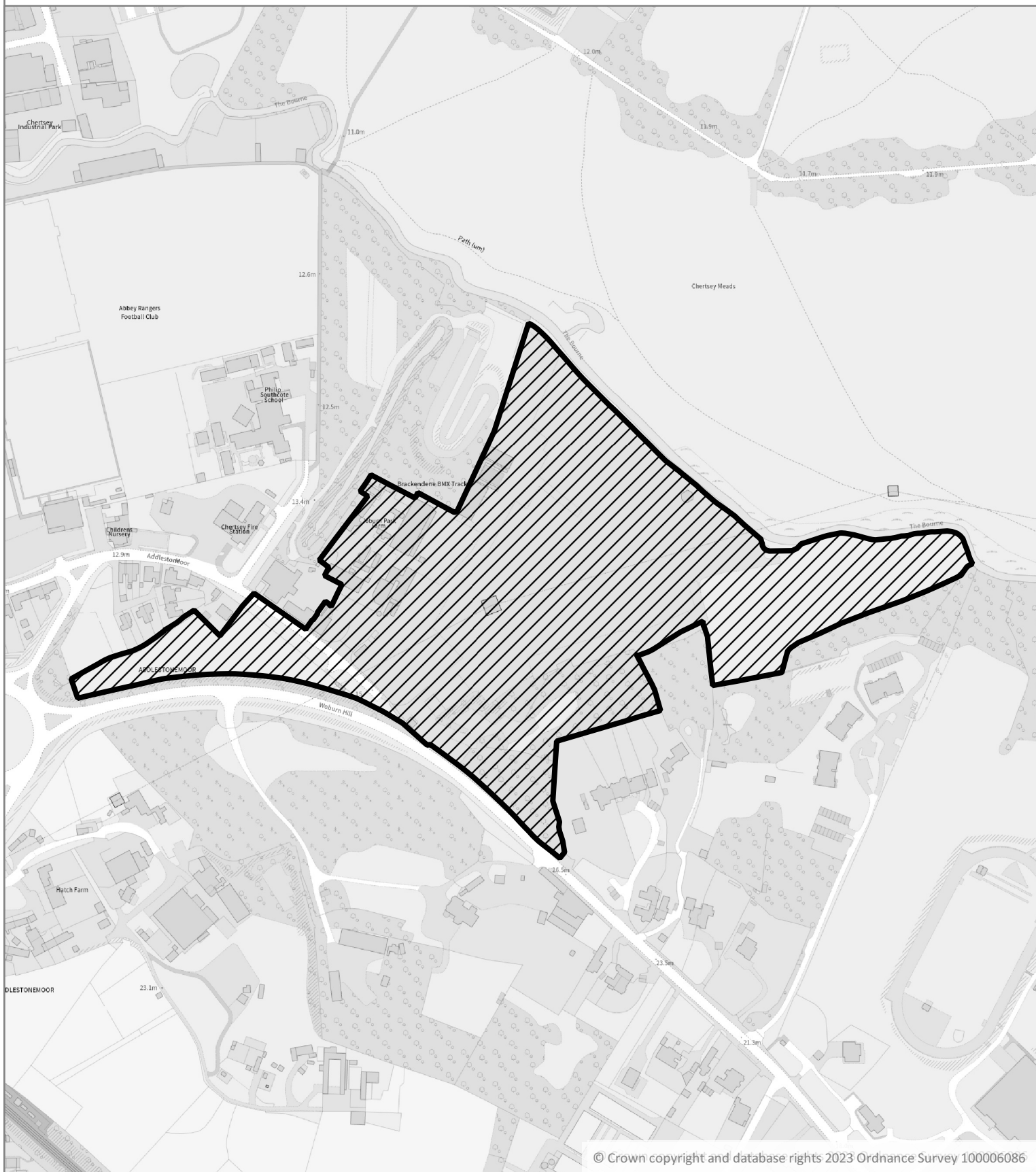


FOR LOCATION PURPOSES ONLY

Runnymede Borough Council  
Runnymede Civic Centre  
Station Road  
Addlestone  
Surrey KT15 2AH

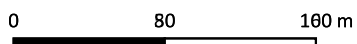
Date: 24/08/2023

Woburn Park Farm Addlestone Moor



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Scale: 1:4,000



RU.23/0726



## COMMITTEE AGENDA REFERENCE: 5B

<b>APPLICATION REF:</b>	<b>RU.23/0726</b>
<b>LOCATION</b>	Woburn Park Farm, Addlestone Moor, Addlestone, Surrey, KT15 2QF
<b>PROPOSAL</b>	The erection of 2 x replacement warehouses/operational buildings following the demolition of buildings 6 and 7.
<b>TYPE</b>	Full Planning Permission
<b>EXPIRY DATE</b>	17/08/2023
<b>WARD</b>	Chertsey Riverside
<b>CASE OFFICER</b>	Adam Jackson
<b>REASON FOR COMMITTEE DETERMINATION</b>	Major Application
<i>If you have questions about this report please contact Ashley Smith, Victoria Gibson or the case officer.</i>	

### 1. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION

<b>It is recommended the Planning Committee authorises the HoP:</b>	
1.	Grant Consent - subject to conditions set out in section 11 of this report.

### 2. DETAILS OF THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 The application site is situated off the A320/A317 gyratory to the south of Chertsey. The principal access to the site is from Addlestone Moor which is a service road accessed from the gyratory. There is a secondary access direct onto the A317. The lawful use of the site, as established under RU.20/1726, is for quarters for travelling show people and an operating depot for a business named Movie Makers which provides trailers, vehicles and equipment to the entertainment industry. The use includes the siting of caravans for residential purposes as well as the storage, repair, and maintenance of vehicles and mobile homes, trailers and equipment associated with Movie Makers.
- 2.2 The site is an irregular shape and the land within the client's ownership, which is denoted by the blue line on the Location Plan, has an area of 9.1hectares. However, this includes land which is not included within the site area for application RU.20/1726, which is 5.9 hectares and is the area in which travelling show people and Movie Makers can lawfully occupy/operate within. The site area to which this application relates is 0.49ha and comprises of the two existing warehouses to be replaced and their associated hardstanding. The application site is fully enclosed with no public access.
- 2.3 The River Bourne runs along the northern boundary of the wider site and flows between the

application site boundary and Chertsey Meadow. The northern boundary of the site is within Flood Zone 3, however the area for development is outside of the flood zone. The area for Building 7 is in a 1 in 1000-year risk of surface water flooding. The topography of the site is generally flat. The site is within the Green Belt. Trees along the southwest and northeast boundaries of the wider site are protected by tree preservation order. Trees adjacent to the area of the proposed development also contribute positively to the character and appearance of the area.

### 3. APPLICATION DETAILS

- 3.1 The application proposes the erection of 2 x new warehouse/operational buildings following the demolition of two existing buildings on site (Buildings 6 & 7 on the plans). The replacement building 6 has a footprint of approximately 850sqm (gross external area) and is 7.5m tall to the top of the pitched roof. The replacement building 7 is 340sqm (gross external area) and 6.25m tall with a flat roof. Both buildings are in the same location as the buildings they are replacing.

### 4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 The following history is considered relevant to this application:

Reference	Details
<b>RU.20/1726</b>	Certificate of lawfulness of existing use to confirm the current use of the land as a mixed use comprising: a. A permanent site for travelling show peoples' quarters which comprises of the following uses: the siting of caravans for residential purposes, the storage, repair and maintenance of vehicles, mobile homes, caravans and equipment and; b. An operating depot for Movie Makers and TEL (a business for the provision of vehicles, trailers, caravans, mobile homes and equipment to the entertainment industry) comprising the following uses: storage, maintenance and repair of vehicles, equipment, mobile homes, caravans and trailers and ancillary uses including an office use which is ancillary to operations of Movie Makers and TEL – <b>Granted (19/112021)</b>

### 5. SUMMARY OF MAIN RELEVANT STRATEGIES AND POLICIES RELEVANT TO THE DECISION

- 5.1 The Runnymede 2030 Local Plan was adopted on 16 July 2020 and the policies have to be read as a whole. Any specific key policies will be referred to in the planning considerations.
- 5.2 Relevant Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance:
- Runnymede Design SPD (July 2021)

### 6. CONSULTATIONS CARRIED OUT

#### Consultees responses

<b>Consultee</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Gardens Trust</b>	Do not wish to comment.
<b>Thames Water</b>	No objection provided the sequential approach to the disposal of surface water is followed.
<b>RBC Contaminated Land Officer</b>	No objection subject to conditions.
<b>LLFA</b>	Comments Awaited

### **Representations and comments from interested parties**

- 6.1 25 neighbouring properties were consulted, a site notice displayed, in addition to being advertised on the Council's website and local press. No letters of representation have been received.

## **7. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

- 7.1 In the determination of this application regard must be had to the Development Plan and National policy within the NPPF. The application site is located within the Green Belt where only certain forms of development are considered appropriate. This must be considered in light of the presumption in favour of sustainable development advocated by the NPPF. The key planning matters are whether the development is appropriate in the Green Belt and whether there would be any harm to the character and appearance of the area.
- 7.2 The application site is in the Green Belt where the National Planning Policy Framework sets out that Local Planning Authorities should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate development in the Green Belt unless one of the exceptions in paragraphs 149 or 150 apply. One such exception, set out in paragraph 149 (d) as well as within policy EE14 of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan, is the replacement of a building provided the new building is in the same use and is not material larger than the one it replaces.
- 7.3 A comparison between the existing and proposed buildings is set out in the below table.

	<b>Building 6 – Existing</b>	<b>Building 6 – Proposed</b>	<b>Increase or decrease</b>	<b>Building 7 – Existing</b>	<b>Building 7 – Proposed</b>	<b>Increase or decrease</b>
<b>External Gound Covered Area (Sqm)</b>	830sqm	850sqm	20sqm increase (2.4%)	340sqm	340sqm	No Change
<b>Height</b>	7.4m (3m to top of lean-to)	7.4m	No change	6.25m	6.25m	No Change

	section – 130sqm of building)					
<b>Eaves Height</b>	4.2m	6.7m	2.5m increase (59.5%)	4.85m	6.25m (Flat roof)	1.1m- 1.4m increase

- 7.4 Whilst the replacement building 6 includes an increase to the eaves height and there is an increase in height over the existing single storey lean to section, the overall height is remaining the same at 7.4m. The existing lean to is only a small portion of the existing building (130sqm) and as such extending over this is not considered to have a material impact on the scale of the building when compared to the existing. Furthermore, the increase in footprint is minimal. Therefore, whilst the proposed building does increase the scale and bulk of the building at first floor, the proposed building is not considered to be materially larger overall.
- 7.5 With regards to the replacement building 7, there is also an increase to the eaves height as a result of the new flat roof design, however the increase is not as great as that of building 6. The overall height of the building is also remaining the same. Furthermore, there is no increase in the footprint of the building compared to the existing. The existing plans for building 7 show the containers to the rear of the building, however these do not form part of the building themselves and the containers are not proposed to be removed. Therefore, as with building 6, whilst there would be an increase in scale and bulk at first floor, the proposed building is not considered to be materially larger overall.
- 7.6 Both buildings will continue to be used for the same purposes as the existing buildings, and the increase in eaves height are required to improve the operational efficiency of the buildings which are required to house large vehicles and equipment for storage and maintenance in accordance with the Movie Makers business which operates from the site.
- 7.7 Furthermore, the buildings form part of a wider cluster of buildings which are used for the storage, repair and maintenance of vehicles, equipment, mobile homes etc. The proposed buildings are also in the same location as those which they are replacing and therefore do not result in a spread of development across the site.
- 7.8 Woburn Farm, which the application site forms part of, is classed as a Park/Garden of Special Historic Interest. Policy EE6 of the Local Plan sets out that proposals for development within such Parks or Gardens will be required to protect, conserve and where appropriate enhance its significance, character and appearance. However, both the existing and proposed buildings are of a utilitarian design and as the proposed buildings are not materially larger, it is not considered that there would be any harm to the significance of the Park/Garden or any harm to its character and appearance or of the character and appearance of the wider area in general.
- 7.9 Building 7 is partly within an area considered to be at a 1 in 100 risk of surface water flooding, however the replacement building 7 has the same footprint as the existing building and is located in the same position so would not materially impact on drainage or surface water flooding.
- 7.10 The existing buildings are steel framed single skinned warehouses/industrial buildings. The entire internal space is open and in use, and as such there are no opportunities for bats to

roost within the buildings, nor are the buildings or the areas immediately surrounding them of any material ecological value. There is an area of woodland adjacent to the building outside of the site, however the proposed buildings would have no greater impact on these than the existing buildings, and Chertsey Meads is to the north of the site, which is a Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) and a Biodiversity Opportunity Area, however the proposed buildings are over a 120m away.

- 7.11 It is not considered therefore that the loss of the buildings would negatively impact on biodiversity and given that the proposed buildings are of a similar footprint and in the same location as the existing buildings there would be no material harm to biodiversity. Notwithstanding, policy EE9 of the Local Plan sets out that the Council will seek net gain in biodiversity, through the creation/expansion of habitats and features to improve the status of priority habitats and species, especially where a site is adjacent to a SNCI. Policy SD7 of the Local Plan also sets out that developments will be supported where they include opportunities to achieve net gain in biodiversity. As such a condition has been added required details of how a net gain in biodiversity will be achieved to be submitted.
- 7.12 The proposed development will not materially impact on site operations and will not therefore result in any material increase in traffic or any highway safety implications.
- 7.13 The Council's Contaminated Land Officer has commented that the historic and current use of the area represents a potentially contaminative use, and therefore suggests a condition requiring an assessment of the nature and extent of contamination be carried out. However, the use of the site is not changing and as such there would be no increase in risk posed to the occupiers of the site when compared to the existing situation. A condition is not therefore considered necessary.

## **8. EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS**

- 8.1 Consideration has been given to Articles 1 and 8 of the First Protocol of the European Convention on Human Rights. It is not considered that the decision would result in a violation of any person's rights under the Convention.

Consideration has been given to s149 of the Equality Act 2010 (as amended), which has imposes a public sector equality duty that requires a public authority in the exercise of its functions to have due regard to the need to:

- (a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act
- (b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- (c) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

It is considered that the decision would have regard to this duty.

## **9. CONCLUSIONS**

- 10.1 The development is considered appropriate in the Green Belt and is acceptable in terms of appearance and with no harmful impacts on residential amenities. It is also not considered



that the development would cause issues in terms of drainage, biodiversity, traffic or contaminated land. The development has been assessed against the following key Development Plan policies – policies SD4, SD7, EE1, EE3, EE6, EE9, EE13 EE14 and EE17 of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan, the policies of the NPPF, guidance in the PPG, and other material considerations including third party representations. It has been concluded that the development would not result in any harm that would justify refusal in the public interest. The decision has been taken in compliance with the requirement of the NPPF to foster the delivery of sustainable development in a positive and proactive manner.

## **11. FORMAL OFFICER RECOMMENDATION**

***The HoP be authorised to grant planning permission subject the subject to the following planning conditions:***

***And the subject to the following planning conditions:***

### **1. Full application (standard time limit)**

*The development for which permission is hereby granted must be commenced not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.*

*Reason: To comply with Section 51 of Part 4 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.*

### **2. List of approved plans**

*The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out except in complete accordance with the following approved plans:*

- Existing Location Plan (008 - Rev B)*
- Proposed Site Plan (060 - Rev B)*
- Building 6 Replacement GA Floor Plan & Elevations (105 - Rev B)*
- Building 7 GA - Plan & Elevations (150 - Rev A)*

*Reason: To ensure high quality design and to comply with Policy EE1 of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan and guidance in the NPPF*

### **3. External materials (details required)**

*Before the above ground construction of the development hereby permitted is commenced, details of the materials to be used in the external elevations shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details.*

*Reason: To ensure high quality design and to comply with Policy EE1 of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan and guidance within the NPPF.*

### **4. Biodiversity**

*The above ground construction of the development hereby approved shall not commence until details of the measures to improve and enhance biodiversity at the site have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such details as shall be approved shall be fully implemented prior to the first use or occupation of the development.*

*Reason: To enhance the biodiversity of the site and to comply with Policies EE9, EE11 and EE12 of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan and guidance within the NPPF.*

**RU.23/0726 – Woburn Park Farm Appendices**

Location Plan



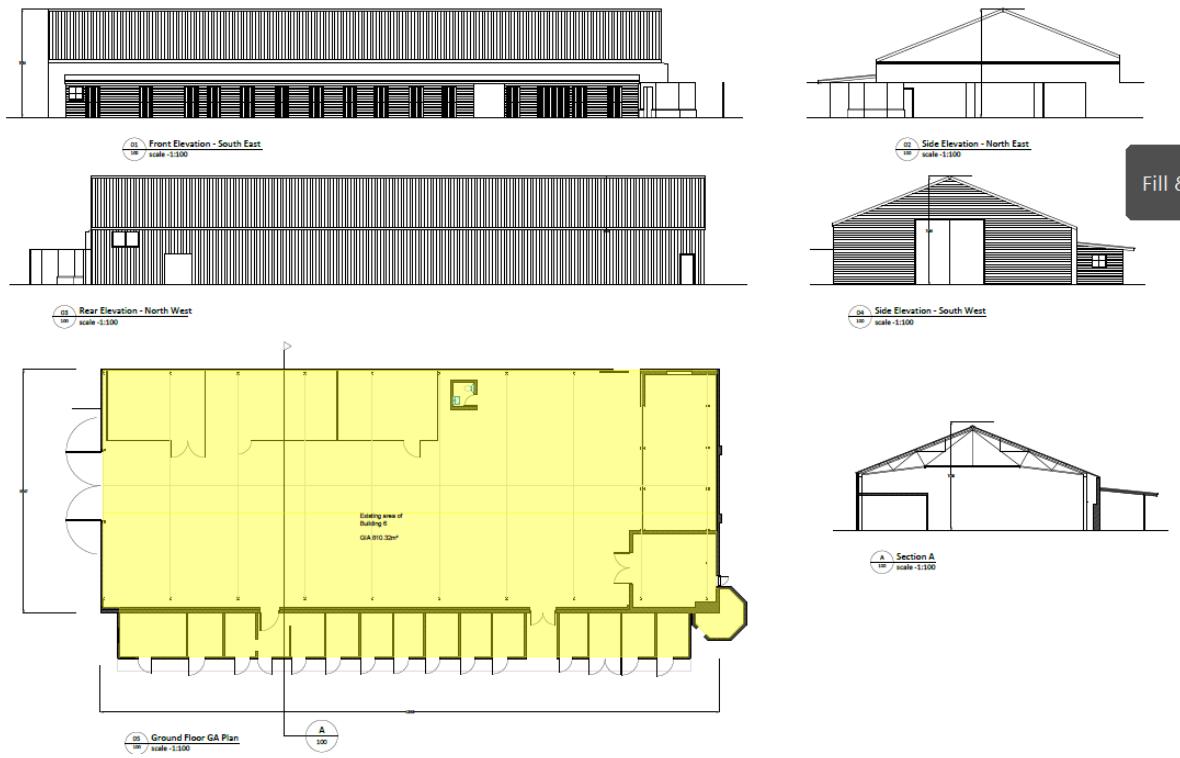
Existing Block Plan



Proposed Block Plan

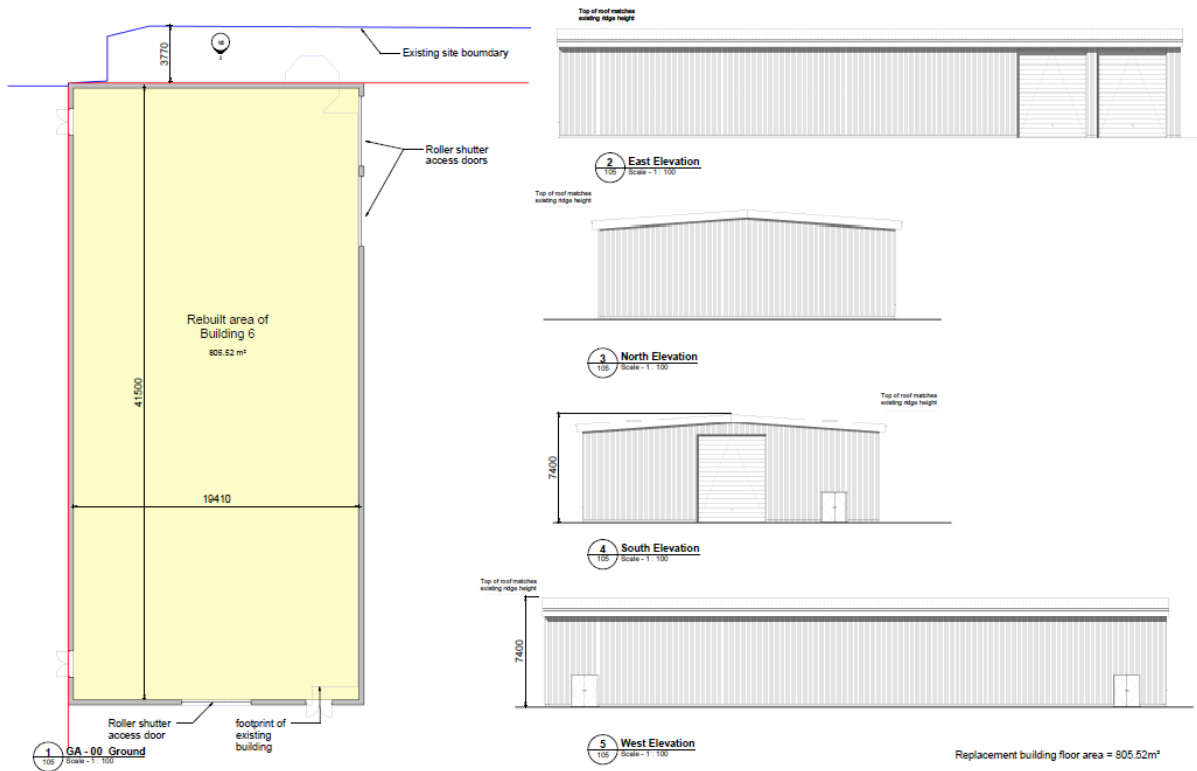


## Existing Building 6 Plans

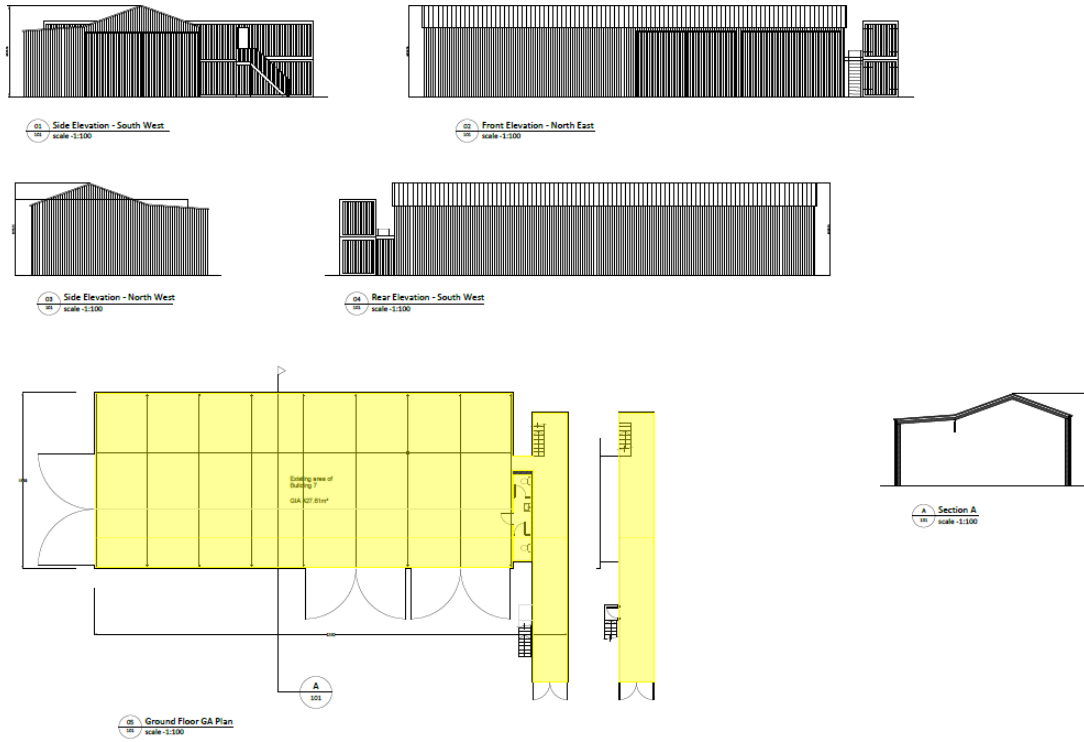


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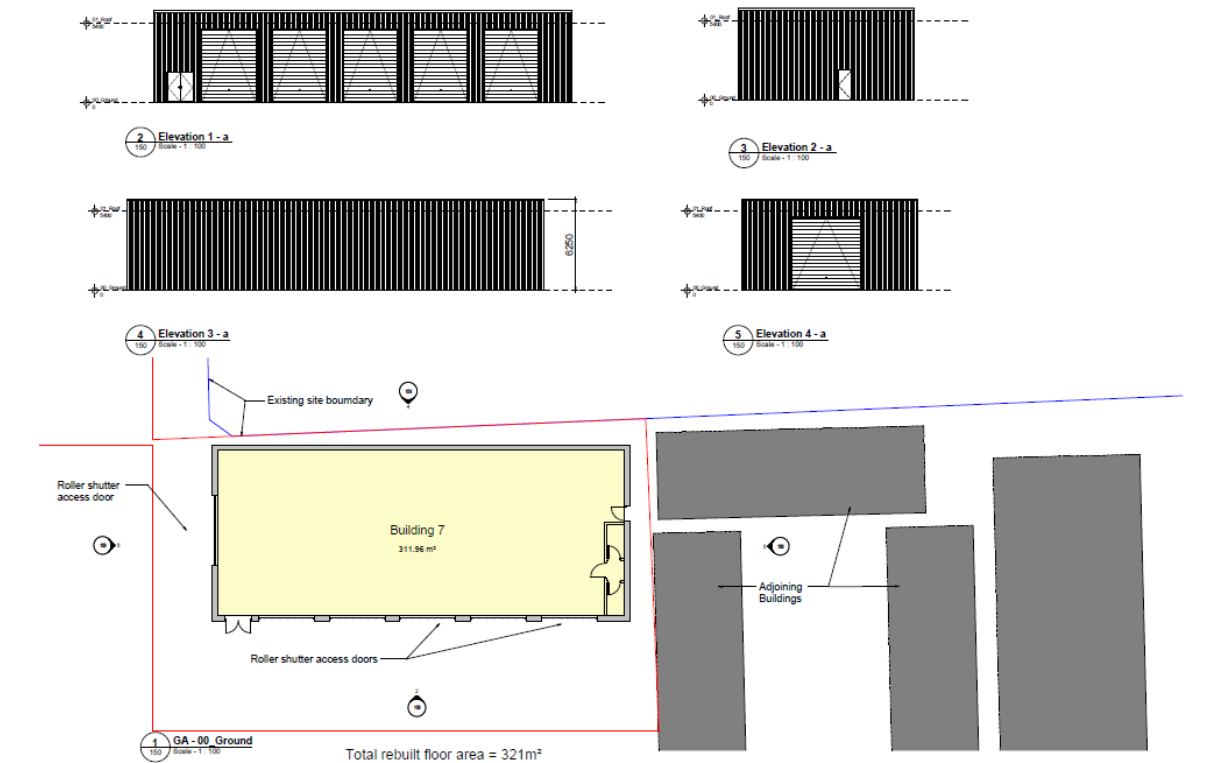
## Proposed Building 6 Plans



## Existing Building 7 Plans



## Proposed Building 7 Plans



<b>Report</b>	<b>Amendments to the Council’s adopted Statement of Community Involvement</b>
<b>Report author</b>	Paul Wade, Planning Policy Officer
<b>Department</b>	Planning Policy
<b>Exempt?</b>	No

**Purpose of report:**

**The purpose of this report is to gain the consent of the of the Planning Committee to carry out public consultation on a small number of proposed amendments to the Council’s adopted Statement of Community Involvement.**

**Synopsis of report:**

**This report sets out how officers are recommending that the Council, in its role as Local Planning Authority, amends the digital format of representations which it will accept in response to planning consultations from email to standardised web form.**

**This approach is recommended to significantly reduce the risk of breaches of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) legislation occurring, with regards to the accidental publication of personal data.**

**To enable this change, a limited number of amendments to the Council’s adopted Statement of Community Involvement are required.**

**Recommendation(s):**

**That the Planning Committee AGREES that:**

**The proposed amendments to the Statement of Community Involvement, as presented in the extracts at Appendix 1, are published for public consultation for a period of 4 weeks between 3rd January and 31<sup>st</sup> January 2024.**

**1. Context and background of report**

1.1 Regulation 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires each Local Authority to prepare a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The SCI is a document that explains the process by which a Local Authority involves the community and other stakeholders in the key processes that affect the spatial development of an area: including during the formulation of Local Development Documents and as part of the consideration of planning applications / enforcement processes.

1.2 In accordance with regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning Act (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended), these documents should be

updated every 5 years. The last comprehensive update of the SCI was undertaken in 2021, with adoption occurring in the same year.

- 1.3 The adopted SCI outlines the minimum standards for public consultation that will take place during the production of various planning policy documents and during the planning application and enforcement processes. However, the document also includes a range of additional consultation techniques which can be/are already utilised by the Council during consultation / engagement. Before any consultation is undertaken, officers carefully consider the nature of the planning document to be consulted upon and then decide the relevant consultation techniques which need to be used to ensure effective engagement.
- 1.4 The SCI also provides details of the Council's role in the preparation of neighbourhood plans and local development orders, although the process is community led. The stages at which the Council's assistance is required is clearly set out in the SCI. This is intended to assist and support the neighbourhood fora in Runnymede.
- 1.5 The Government has proposed to remove the requirement for Local Authorities to prepare SCIs and introduce new requirements. More can be read about the Government's proposals in the consultation titled [Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill: consultation on implementation of plan-making reforms](#) which was published in July 2023 (see paragraphs 136 to 141). However at the time of writing, SCIs are still required, and most of the sections in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act directly related to development management and plan-making have not commenced and will require further changes to legislation.

## **2. Report and, where applicable, options considered and recommended**

### Background

- 2.1 In processing planning applications, the Council handles a very significant quantity of documentation. The Council handles in the region of 2000 planning matters each year (not all are planning applications). Even assuming an average of 15 documents per matter, the Council will process and publish in the region of 30,000 documents each year. Each one of these documents could have any amount of personal data in it at any point. Whilst some of these such as planning application forms are in a standardized format, a large proportion of supporting documents are in non-standardised formats where personal data could be unexpectedly included in any section.
- 2.2 The Planning Technical Administration team review the documents submitted and look to redact personal data as thoroughly as possible. Unfortunately this is a human process and is susceptible to occasional human error. With circa 30,000 documents, even a very low error rate of 0.001% would result in 30 potential GDPR issues.
- 2.3 At RBC one of the most sensitive areas when it comes to GDPR, is neighbour representation letters. These are received in a variety of formats and information is often split between attachments and email bodies, making it unpredictable where personal data may be contained.
- 2.4 Recently, a number of incidents have occurred where the personal details of those responding to planning consultations have not been fully redacted and have been published online as a result of human error. These have been relatively minor breaches, however have led to complaints from residents and third parties.



- 2.5 This issue has been discussed with the Council's GDPR team who has recommended that the Planning Department looks to address this issue as a matter of urgency.
- 2.6 There are a number of options available to address this issue. The first option is to stop publishing neighbour representations entirely. There is no statutory requirement to publish neighbour letters. Not publishing them is an approach being taken in a growing number of Boroughs, particularly in London. This approach is however **not the recommended approach** for Runnymede for a number of reasons. Firstly, residents and councillors value seeing the issues being raised in letters, secondly this option is not expected to address the issue as it generates Freedom of Information requests from applicants and third parties which means that the redaction work needs to be done later in the process and carries the same risk.
- 2.7 The better and **recommended approach** is that the Council stops accepting comments by direct email and instead uses a standardised webform which would enable most of the personal data within a letter of representation to be separated from the substance of a person's comments on submission.
- 2.8 Such an approach is taken in a number of Boroughs including in Surrey. Elmbridge and Tandridge in particular only accept electronic comments via webform.
- 2.9 The approach at Runnymede would be that comments can be submitted by webform, or by attachment via the webform. This would allow shorter comments to be submitted via the form only, however would still provide residents with the opportunity to provide a comprehensive document where required on more complex matters. Those submitting attachments would be advised not to include personal data in the attachments at point of submission. The documents would continue to be reviewed by the Planning Technical Administration Team.
- 2.10 To support this change in approach, the following amendment to the SCI is proposed at paragraph 4.15 which currently reads:
- "Applications, including all of their supporting information, are made available on the Council's website. Comments can be made in writing direct to the Council through the online consultation option or via e-mail. We will also accept comments made in letter format"*
- 2.11 It is proposed that this text is replaced with the following text:
- "Applications, including all of their supporting information, are made available on the Council's website. Comments and supporting information can be submitted in writing direct to the Council through the Planning Representations Comments Form which can be accessed on the Council's website. We will also accept comments made by postal letter"*
- 2.12 The SCI is currently silent in terms of how representations can be made in response to planning policy consultations. To ensure consistency across the Planning Department, the following new text is proposed to be introduced at 1.34:
- "Anyone who wishes to respond to a planning policy consultation will need to make their comments in writing direct to the Council through the Planning Representations Comments Form which can be accessed on the Council's website. This form provides the facility to attach further supporting documentation. We will also accept comments made by postal letter"*

- 2.13 Both of the proposed amendments can be viewed in the extracts from the adopted SCI as attached at Appendix 1.
- 2.14 It is envisaged that this approach would have three tangible benefits to the Council which are:
- Standardised formatting – By requiring comments to be submitted through a standardised webform, all submissions will be uniform in their construction. This will enable officers to be able to process them more efficiently.
  - Automatic redaction – The standardised webform will require a number of fields to be completed before the representation can be completed, submitted and published. The intention is to program this in such a way that all fields containing sensitive data (such as the name and address fields) will not be published on the website and only the substance of the comments will be visible to the public. Including any personal details in the substance of a person's comments will be discouraged.
  - Freeing up resources – Currently the Technical Administration Team and Planning Policy Team redact representations as required. Automating this process will free up these officers to complete other tasks to support the service area.

### **3. Policy framework implications**

- 3.1 Every Local Planning Authority is currently required to prepare an SCI in line with the provisions contained in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. As officers are recommending a material change to the content of the Council's adopted SCI in relation to the way that it receives representations during the planning consultation process, it is considered best practice to consult local stakeholders on the proposed amendments so that the Council can consider any views expressed before formalising any changes to the SCI and its planning consultation processes.

### **4 Resource implications/Value for Money**

- 4.1 Any costs associated with the amendment of the SCI itself, and any subsequent changes to the Council's processes will be met within the existing annual budgets allocated to the different teams within the Planning Department, and within existing resource.

### **5. Legal implications**

- 5.1 The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) upholds information rights in the public interest. They have various powers to take action for a breach of the GDPR or the Data Protection Act 2018.
- 5.2 Tools at the ICO's disposal include assessment notices, warnings, reprimands, enforcement notices and penalty notices (administrative fines). For serious breaches of the data protection principles, they have the power to issue fines of up to £17.5 million or 4% of an organisation's annual worldwide turnover, whichever is higher.

5.3 There are other associated risks with sensitive information being disclosed such as reputational damage to the Council and harm to the individual.

## **6. Equality implications**

6.1 The Council has a Public Sector Duty under the Equalities Act 2020 to have due regard to the need to:

a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation;

b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a Protected Characteristic and persons who do not share it;

c) Foster good relations between those who share relevant and persons who do not share those characteristics;

in relation to the nine 'Protected Characteristics' stated within the Act.

6.2 An Equalities screening has been carried out in support of this report. This screening has assessed that there are unlikely to be any potential negative impacts on any protected characteristics if the proposed amendments to the SCI are adopted. Instead it is anticipated that there would be positive impacts for all parts of the community as a result of the decreased likelihood of a data breach occurring which could release sensitive personal information, potentially related to protected characteristics into the public domain. Allowing stakeholders to still respond to planning consultations by postal letter will continue to ensure that those who are unable to respond digitally, which could include older people, are not excluded from the planning process.

## **7. Environmental/Sustainability/Biodiversity implications**

7.1 No environmental /sustainability/biodiversity implications are anticipated by the proposed amendments to the SCI given that the amendments only seek to amend the format of digital communication which the Council will accept for planning consultations.

## **8. Risk implications**

8.1 The changes proposed to the SCI as shown in Appendix 1 are designed to limit risks associated with sensitive information being accidentally disclosed due to human error. Such disclosures can cause reputational damage to the Council as well as harm to the individual whose information has been disclosed. Only allowing representations to be submitted through an online webform as proposed through this report is expected to minimise these risks.

## **9. Other implications**

9.1 None identified.

## **10. Timetable for implementation**

10.1 If the Committee agrees to allow public consultation to occur on the proposed amendments to the Statement of Community Involvement, this consultation will occur between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> January 2024. It is proposed that the outputs from the

public consultation will be reported to the Planning Committee at their meeting of 28<sup>th</sup> February 2024. At this point, if after consideration of the stakeholder comments, officers remain of the view that the proposed amendments to the SCI should be made, the amended SCI will be recommended for adoption.

**11. Background papers**

- None

**12. Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Extracts from the adopted 2021 Statement of Community Involvement

## **Appendix 1-Relevant extracts from the adopted 2021 Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)**

Please note that in the extracts below, proposed new text is shown **bold and underlined**. Text for deletion is shown ~~struck through~~.

### How will the Council consult? (extract taken from pages 11-13 of the adopted Statement of Community Involvement)

1.29 Runnymede Borough Council will look to involve people as early as possible in drafting local documents and will invite feedback on draft documents. The Council recognises there is no one way to engage with the community. Depending on what the council is consulting on, the number and type of methods which are employed to engage with the community are likely to vary. The methods shown in bold in the box below will be utilised, as a minimum for all consultations. The Council may also use one or more of the additional methods listed:

- **Make consultation material clearly available on our website;**
- **Notify everyone registered on the Planning Policy and Strategy consultation database (email or postal);**
- Publish news/press releases to local media;
- **Use social media (e.g. Facebook and Twitter);**
- Utilise public exhibitions/displays and stalls - (hosted by staff and un-staffed);
- Publish leaflets and bulletins (paper and/or email);
- Publish formal notices in local newspapers distributed across the Borough;
- Place notices/posters on the Council owned notice boards;
- Hold public meetings;
- Hold one-to-one workshops/meetings (which could be facilitated by consultants, held by Neighbourhood Forums, with stakeholders etc.);
- Carry out targeted workshops with specific interest groups for example children, the elderly, the travelling community;
- Carry out targeted work with community groups, voluntary organisations, residents' associations etc.;
- Hold meetings of the Community Planning Panel and Developers Forum;
- Circulate articles and advertisements in internal publications/the intranet (aimed at informing staff and local councillors);
- **Send letters to statutory bodies;**
- Hold on-line interactive workshops via zoom/teams or other video conferencing software (particularly during periods of lockdown associated with the COVID-19 pandemic);
- **Make documents available for public inspection at the council offices and local libraries (unless this is unachievable due to lockdown restrictions associated with COVID-19).**

1.30 For the duration of any COVID-19 lockdown measures, at times it may be necessary to tailor the consultation methods from what is normally expected to maximise engagement during the development of planning policy documents, whilst recognising the restrictions placed on the Local Authority and local communities by the Government's lockdown measures. These methods are likely to be limited to one or more of the following: sending letters, placing local adverts, placing information in local Council owned noticeboards, using digital consultations, use of video conferencing, use of social media, providing documents for inspection on the Council's website and providing hard copies of documents on request to those who do not have ready access to the internet.

1.31 The Council will also work to ensure that people are kept informed throughout the document production process. The Council reviews and summarises the key points raised at each stage of consultation during the preparation of all planning policy documents and confirms where changes are to be made in response to consultation feedback. Whilst individuals will not receive individual responses to their comments, they can review the summary of comments received and the Council's responses on the Council's Planning Policy webpages. <https://www.runnymede.gov.uk/localplanconsultation>

1.32 Consultation events, where utilised, will be arranged with advance notice and held in accessible venues and, where appropriate, at a range of times.

1.33 The Council will continue to utilise social media, especially through Facebook to publicise planning policy consultations and notifications to local residents' groups, interest groups and local amenity groups, as well as to other local people and interested parties. The Council will also continue to use Twitter to share information relating to planning policy updates and consultations.

**1.34 Anyone who wishes to respond to a planning policy consultation will need to make their comments in writing direct to the Council through the Planning Representations Comments Form which can be accessed on the Council's website. This form provides the facility to attach further supporting documentation. We will also accept comments made by postal letter.**

~~1.34~~ **1.35** In regards to planning applications, the Council is unable to respond individually to all questions and comments made, however, all the comments that are submitted on a planning application are taken into account by the planning officer in their assessment of the proposal within their case report. Reference should be made to Section 4 on Development Management for further information.

The application stage (extract taken from pages 32 and 33 of the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement)

4.9 Certain types of development or works require permission from the Council before works can commence. It is at this point when the majority of residents first become involved in the planning system, especially if they consider that the proposed development affects them directly.

4.10 Opportunities for formal community involvement occur when applications are lodged, regardless of any pre application process that has occurred. These may be planning applications and other applications types such as listed building applications or tree works applications.

4.11 There are also statutory consultees that need to be notified on specific planning applications before a decision is made. Consultation depends on the application type and location of the proposed development.

4.12 The consideration of these applications follows a regulatory process, and regulations require certain types of consultation to take place; and certain bodies to be consulted. Whether formally consulted or not, anyone can submit comments on an application and all comments from statutory consultees, neighbours and other interested parties are published on the website. Information on how to comment on a planning application can be found on the Council's website.

4.13 The requirements for advertising and notification on planning applications are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended). As well as meeting these statutory requirements, the Council has well-established processes for publicising planning applications. These include:

- Letters to residents/businesses/properties immediately adjacent to the red line of the application site for most types of applications
- Letters to statutory organisations and interest groups
- Site notices (under certain circumstances)
- Newspaper adverts, where required
- Providing planning alerts via sign up on the Council website
- Access to the councils online planning register/website
- The interactive map on the Council's website.

4.14 In circumstances outside its control or in an emergency the Council may need to amend its standard consultation processes, however any consultation will still meet the minimum requirements set out in Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).

4.15 Applications, including all of their supporting information, are made available on the Council's website. Comments **and supporting information** can be **submitted** made in writing direct to the Council through the **Planning Representations Comments Form** **which can be accessed on the Council's website** ~~online consultation option or via e-mail~~. We will also accept comments made **by postal** ~~in letter format~~.

4.16 More information about these types of applications can be found on the national Planning Portal website at:

[https://www.planningportal.co.uk/info/200126/applications/59/how\\_to\\_apply/5](https://www.planningportal.co.uk/info/200126/applications/59/how_to_apply/5)