

# Public Document Pack



## TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE **PLANNING COMMITTEE**

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Planning Committee to be held on Tuesday, 16 January 2024 at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber - Civic Offices.

The agenda for the meeting is set out below.

JULIE FISHER  
Chief Executive

NOTE: Filming Council Meetings

Please note the meeting will be filmed and will be broadcast live and subsequently as an archive on the Council's website ([www.woking.gov.uk](http://www.woking.gov.uk)). The images and sound recording will also be used for training purposes within the Council. Generally the public seating areas are not filmed. However by entering the meeting room and using the public seating area, you are consenting to being filmed.

## **AGENDA**

### **PART I - PRESS AND PUBLIC PRESENT**

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Declarations of Interest
  - (i) To receive declarations of disclosable pecuniary and other interests from Members in respect of any item to be considered at the meeting.
  - (ii) In accordance with the Officer Procedure Rules, any Officer who is a Council-appointed Director of a Thameswey Group company will declare an interest in any item involving that Thameswey Group company. The interest will not prevent the Officer from advising the Committee on that item.
3. Urgent Business

To consider any business that the Chairman rules may be dealt with under Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972.
4. Minutes (Pages 3 - 8)

To approve the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 12 December 2023 as published.

### **Matters for Determination**

5. Planning and Enforcement Appeals (Pages 9 - 10)

6. Planning Applications (Pages 11 - 14)

**Section A - Applications for Public Speaking**

6a. 2023/0835 Chobham Road, Island Site (Pages 17 - 176)

**Section B - Application reports to be introduced by Officers**

6b. 2023/0745 Unit 16 and 17 Monument Way West (Pages 179 - 190)

**Section C - Application Reports not to be introduced by officers unless requested by a Member of the Committee**

There are no applications under this section.

AGENDA ENDS

Date Published - 8 January 2024

For further information regarding this agenda and arrangements for the meeting, please contact Becky Capon on 01483 743011 or email [becky.capon@woking.gov.uk](mailto:becky.capon@woking.gov.uk)



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MINUTES  
OF A MEETING OF THE  
**PLANNING COMMITTEE**

held on 12 December 2023

Present:

Cllr L Morales (Chairman)  
Cllr T Aziz (Vice-Chair)

Cllr G Cosnahan	Cllr C Martin
Cllr S Dorsett	Cllr S Mukherjee
Cllr S Greentree	Cllr S Oades
Cllr D Jordan	Cllr T Spenser

Also Present: Councillors P Graves

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies for absence were received.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

In accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, Councillor C Martin declared a pecuniary interest in minute item 6d. 2023/0599 13 Petersham Avenue, West Byfleet – arising from the Councillor being the applicant. The interest was such that speaking and voting were not permissible and Councillor C Martin would leave the chamber during consideration of the application.

**3. URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of Urgent Business.

**4. MINUTES**

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 7 November 2023 be approved and signed as a true and correct record.

**5. PLANNING AND ENFORCEMENT APPEALS**

The Committee received a report on the planning appeals lodged and the appeal decisions.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

## **6. PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

The Committee determined the following applications subject to the conditions, informatives, reasons for refusal or authorisation of enforcement action which appear in the published report to the Committee or as detailed in these minutes.

### **6a. 2023/0779 Qaro, Pyford Heath, Pyford**

[NOTE 1: The Planning Officer updated the Committee that since the report had been published an email had been received from Mr A Grimshaw regarding Planning Policy, but this had not changed anything as set out in the report. An email had also been received from the Applicant, the comments made within the email did not change anything set out within the report.]

[NOTE 2: In accordance with the procedure for public speaking at Planning Committee, Mr Andrew Grimshaw attended the meeting and spoke in objection to the application. The applicant did not attend to speak in support.]

The Committee considered an application for the enlargement of a dwellinghouse by construction of an additional storey and alterations to fenestration.

Councillor P Graves, Ward Councillor, spoke in objection to the application and commented that the application failed to respect the host dwelling and the street scene of Pyrford, with its height mass and bulk; a reason it was previously refused on. The Councillor commented that there seemed to be a fall back to the 2020/0894 application, however there was a condition on this application that the work must be completed by March 2024, which seemed impossible when the work had not even commenced. Councillor P Graves commented that the only representations in favour of this application were from people outside of the Pyrford area. Comments were also made by the Ward Councillor regarding the trees on site and the protection of these.

The Planning Officer confirmed that a condition was included that would require all tree information to be submitted, prior to work commencing on site.

With regard to the comments made on the 2020/0894 application and the deadline date of March 2024, the Development Manager, Thomas James confirmed that this was correct. Mr James confirmed that should the applicant come back with the same application (2020/0894) it was not unreasonable to assume that this would be approved again if there was no material amendment.

Some members of the Committee commented that much of the argument around approval of this application, was based on prior approval given in 2021 and questioned why the fenestration element was subject to the a full planning application. The Planning Officer explained that there were restrictions on window openings and therefore this had to come back for approval just for amendments to the fenestrations.

Councillor S Dorsett proposed, and it was duly seconded by Councillor C Martin that the application be refused on the grounds that it was contrary to policies BE1 and BE3 of the

Pyrford Neighbourhood Plan and also in contrary to Policy CS2, effecting the street scene and property to the East.

Some Members felt that the policies within the Pyrford Neighbourhood Plan had not been given the appropriate consideration or relevant weight. The Planning Officer confirmed that Policies BE1 and BE3 had been considered and the details of this was set out in paragraph 4 of the report, along with Policy CS2 in paragraph 3 and Woking Design SPD in paragraph 5. The Planning Officer went on to explain that where prior approval was in place and still valid, that must be given considerable weight, which would also be the case on appeal. The existing prior approval was a legitimate fall back in this case as it could be built out with immediate effect.

Following a question regarding obscure windows and loss of privacy, the Planning Officer confirmed that condition 5 confirmed that these windows must be obscured and that they must be permanently retained as such. If this was breached, it would be a matter for Planning Enforcement.

It was questioned whether the trees would be protected. The Planning Officer confirmed that all the trees on site were subject to a TPO (Tree Protection Order).

Some Members commented that the application in front of the Committee was only regarding the amendments to the fenestrations and whether they considered these changes to be reasonable. The prior approval in place gave the Committee little grounds on which to refuse this application.

In accordance with the Standing Order set out in the Constitution, the Chairman deemed that a division should be taken on the motion to refuse. The votes for and against refusal of the application were recorded as follows.

In favour: Cllrs S Dorsett, D Jordan, C Martin and S Oades.

TOTAL: 4

Against: Cllrs T Aziz, G Cosnahan, S Greentree, S Mukherjee and T Spenser.

TOTAL: 5

Present but not voting: Cllr L Morales (Chairman)

TOTAL: 1

The application was therefore not refused.

The Chairman moved to the substantive Officer recommendation to approve the application. It was agreed a further named vote was not needed.

RESOLVED

That planning permission be GRANTED.

**6b. 2023/0500 26 Eve Road, Woking**

The Committee considered an application for subdivision of existing dwelling into 2 dwellings and erection of a part two storey, part single storey rear extension, rear dormer, front canopy, insertion of front rooflights and installation of external rendered insulation.

Councillor T Aziz, Ward Councillor, commented that he had called this application to be considered by the Committee due to there being no other issues other than the flooding risk. Councillor T Aziz commented that in the report the Local Lead Flood Authority did not object to the application and just asked that conditions be attached. The Councillor also commented that due to the nature of the application, he did not think there was justification to require the subsequential test.

Councillor T Aziz proposed, and it was duly seconded by Councillor S Greentree that the application be approved.

If the application was approved, delegated authority would need to be given to Thomas James, Development Manager, to apply the appropriate conditions.

The Committee agreed that the footprint of the building was not changing and they did not therefore think this application would result in an increased flood risk.

In accordance with the Standing Order set out in the Constitution, the Chairman deemed that a division should be taken on the motion to approve. The votes for and against approval of the application were recorded as follows.

In favour: Cllrs T Aziz, G Cosnahan, S Dorsett, S Greentree, D Jordan, C Martin, S Mukherjee, S Oades and T Spenser.

TOTAL: 9

Against: None.

TOTAL: 0

Present but not voting: Cllr L Morales (Chairman)

TOTAL: 1

The application was therefore approved.

RESOLVED

That planning permission be GRANTED, subject to S106 and delegated authority be given to the Development Manager to set the appropriate conditions.

**6c. 2022/0349 2 Eastgate Cottages, Heath House Road, woking**

The Committee considered an application for the erection of a first floor rear extension with balcony, single storey rear extension, insertion of front rooflights and external alterations. Erection of front gates and brick piers.

The Committee agreed with the Planning Officers summary that this application would be harmful to the Green Belt.

RESOLVED

That planning permission be REFUSED.

**6d. 2023/0599 13 Petersham Avenue, West Byfleet**

The Committee considered an application for the erection of a first floor side extension and single storey rear extension. Conversion of garage into habitable room and insertion of 2No front rooflights.

Councillor C Martin left the Chamber during the consideration of this item.

RESOLVED

That planning permission be GRANTED.

**6e. TPO/0017/2023 Land adjacent to Hertford Park**

The Committee considered a recommendation that a Tree Preservation Order be confirmed following the receipt of one letter of objection to the making of the Order. The Tree Preservation Order protects trees on Land Adjacent To Hertford Park Sited To The East Of Burdenshott Road, Worplesdon, Guildford, Surrey GU3 3RJ.

RESOLVED

That Tree Preservation Order Ref. TPO/0017/2023 be confirmed without modification.

**6f. TPO/0018/2023 Land at Midhope Close, Woking**

The Committee considered a recommendation that a Tree Preservation Order be confirmed following the receipt of one letter of objection to the making of the Order. The Tree Preservation Order protects four trees including one Lime and three False Acacia on Land at Midhope Close, Woking.

RESOLVED

That tree Preservation Order Ref. TPO/0018/2023 be confirmed without modification.

**6g. ENF/2018/00108 Land to the South of Brookwood Lye Road**

The Committee considered proposed enforcement action for an unauthorised material change of use of the land to residential comprising a caravan site for gypsies/travellers and associated ancillary storage.

The Committee requested that if delegated authority was given, they receive updates on what happened with this site. Thomas James, Development Manager agreed that when

there was something material to update, he would be happy to circulate this to the Planning Committee Members.

RESOLVED That

1. An Enforcement Notice be issued in respect of the above land requiring the following within two (2) years of the notice taking effect:
  - a) Permanently cease the unauthorised residential use of the land edged red on the attached location plan (comprising a caravan site and associated ancillary storage).
  - b) Permanently remove all caravans and mobile homes, any structures/vehicles capable of human habitation, other vehicles/trailers, walls/fences that demarcate pitches, building materials, and any other paraphernalia associated with the unauthorised use from the land edged red on the attached location plan.
2. That the Director of Democratic and Legal Services be instructed to issue an Enforcement Notice under Section 172 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 as amended, and officers be authorised in the event of non-compliance to prosecute under Section 179 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 or appropriate power and/or take direct action under Section 178.
3. Due to the nature of the use of the land edged red on the attached location plan, the situation can and will likely rapidly change. It is therefore further recommended that the Planning Committee delegate authority to the Head of Planning to pursue such enforcement action as was necessary in respect of any additional and future breaches of planning control at the site and to instruct the Director of Legal & Democratic Services to issue further Enforcement Notices. Any prosecutions would be authorised by the Director of Legal & Democratic Services under this standing delegation.

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm  
and ended at 8.50 pm

Chairman: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



PLANNING COMMITTEE – 16 JANUARY 2024

## PLANNING AND ENFORCEMENT APPEALS

The Committee is requested to:

### RESOLVE:

That the report be noted.

**The Committee has authority to determine the above recommendation.**

### Background Papers:

Planning Inspectorate Reports

### Reporting Person:

Thomas James, Development Manager.

### APPEALS LODGED

#### 2023/0492

Application for the erection of a 1.5 storey annexe outbuilding to rear of No.51 Waldens Park Road and associated sunken terrace and fencing at 51 Waldens Park Road, Horsell, Woking, GU21 4RW.

Refused under Delegated Authority  
25 September 2023.  
Appeal Lodged  
1 December 2023.

#### 2022/1018

Application for Section 73 application to vary Condition 2 (Approved Plans) of permission ref: PLAN/2019/0206 dated 15/07/2020 (Erection of 2x two storey dwellings (2x bed) following demolition of part of No. 117 Princess Road and erection of a part two storey, part single storey rear extension and single storey front extension to No.117 and associated landscaping and parking) to allow changes to landscaping and parking at 117 Princess Road Maybury Woking, GU22 8ER.

Refused under Delegated Authority  
24 May 2023.  
Appeal Lodged  
5 December 2023.

#### 2023/0444

Application for erection of part two storey part single storey rear extension and single storey front extension at 39 Courtenay Road Woking Surrey GU21 5HG.

Refused under Delegated Authority  
26 July 2023.  
Appeal Lodged  
6 December 2023.

#### 2023/0488

Application for the erection of a single storey rear extension at 2 Pearl Court Woking Surrey GU21 3QZ

Refused under Delegated Authority  
27 July 2023.  
Appeal Lodged  
6 December 2023.

#### 2023/0635

Application for the erection of a part two-storey, part single storey rear extension at 62 Courtenay Road, Woking, GU21 5HQ.

Refused under Delegated Authority  
17 October 2023.  
Appeal Lodged  
12 December 2023.

2022/1149

Application for the erection of a garden storage building and car port at Barnaby House Roundbridge Park Old Woking Road Woking, GU22 8JH.

Refused under Delegated Authority  
6 July 2023.  
Appeal Lodged  
22 December 2023.

2023/0237

Application for the erection of a single storey rear extension and improvements to roof at Longheath Blackhorse Road Brookwood Woking, GU22 0QT.

Refused under Delegated Authority  
30 October 2023.  
Appeal Lodged  
05 January 2024.

**APPEALS DECISION**

2023/0033

Application for the construction of an additional storey and associated hipped roof and the installation of external insulation, increase in height of ridge, changes to external materials, changes to fenestration, front porch addition and installation of solar panels at Qaro Pyrford Heath Pyrford Woking Surrey GU22 8SR.

Refused by Delegated Authority  
23 May 2023.  
Appeal Lodged  
4 August 2023.  
Appeal Dismissed  
21 December 2023.

## PLANNING COMMITTEE AGENDA

### PLANNING APPLICATIONS AS AT 16 JANUARY 2024

This report contains applications which either fall outside the existing scheme of delegated powers or which have been brought to the Committee at the request of a Member or Members in accordance with the agreed procedure (M10/TP 7.4.92/749). These applications are for determination by the Committee.

This report is divided into three sections. The applications contained in Sections A & B will be individually introduced in accordance with the established practice. Applications in Section C will be taken in order but will not be the subject of an Officer's presentation unless requested by any Member.

**The committee has the authority to determine the recommendations contained within the following reports.**

Key to Ward Codes:

BWB = Byfleet and West Byfleet  
GP = Goldsworth Park  
HO = Horsell  
KNA = Knaphill  
PY = Pyrford

C = Canalside  
HE = Heathlands  
HV = Hoe Valley  
MH = Mount Hermon  
SJS = St. Johns





Applications: 2

**Item:** 6A  
**Case ref:** PLAN/2023/0835  
**Recommendation:** Recomm'n to Grant Subj. to Legal Agr't  
**Ward:** Canalside  
**Address:** Cleary Court (Church Street East), Nos.33-45 Chobham Road Incl. (Odd Numbers) and Nos.2 And 4 Christchurch Way, Woking, Surrey GU21 6JD

**Item:** 6B  
**Case ref:** PLAN/2023/0745  
**Recommendation:** Permit  
**Ward:** Canalside  
**Address:** Thamesway, Unit 16 And 17 Wintonlea, Monument Way West, Woking, Surrey GU21 5EN

Section A - A

Section B - B

Section C -



**SECTION A**

**APPLICATIONS ON WHICH  
PUBLIC ARE ELIGIBLE  
TO SPEAK**

**(Note: Ordnance Survey Extracts appended to the reports are for locational purposes only and may not include all current developments either major or minor within the site or the area generally)**

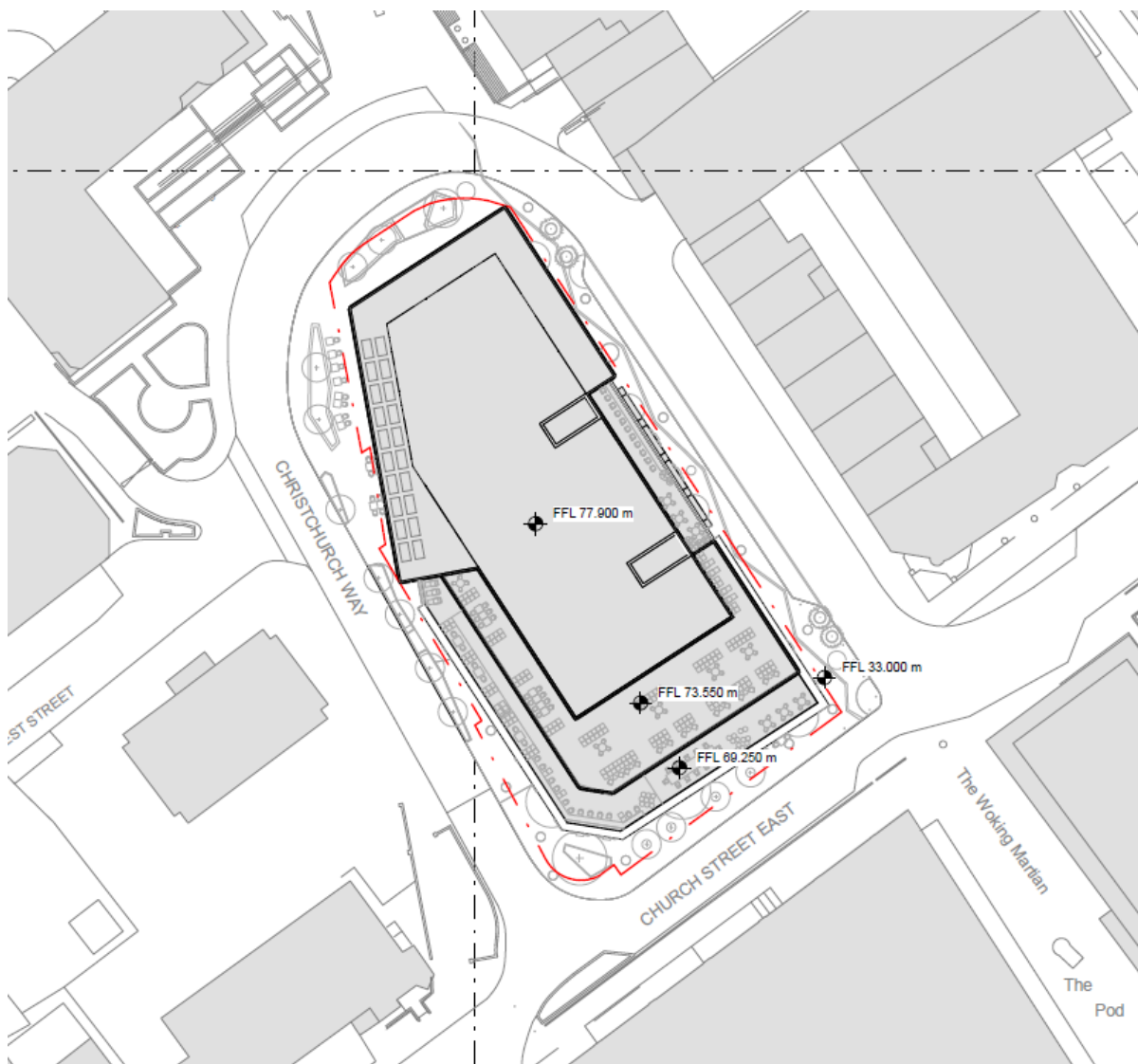




# Chobham Road Island site

## PLAN/2023/0835

Demolition of existing buildings to provide a new building of up to 11 storeys (10 storeys plus ground floor) comprising Use Class E(g)(i) office space (levels 2-10 incl.) and flexible Use Class E ground and first floor space, cycle parking facilities and associated public realm improvements.

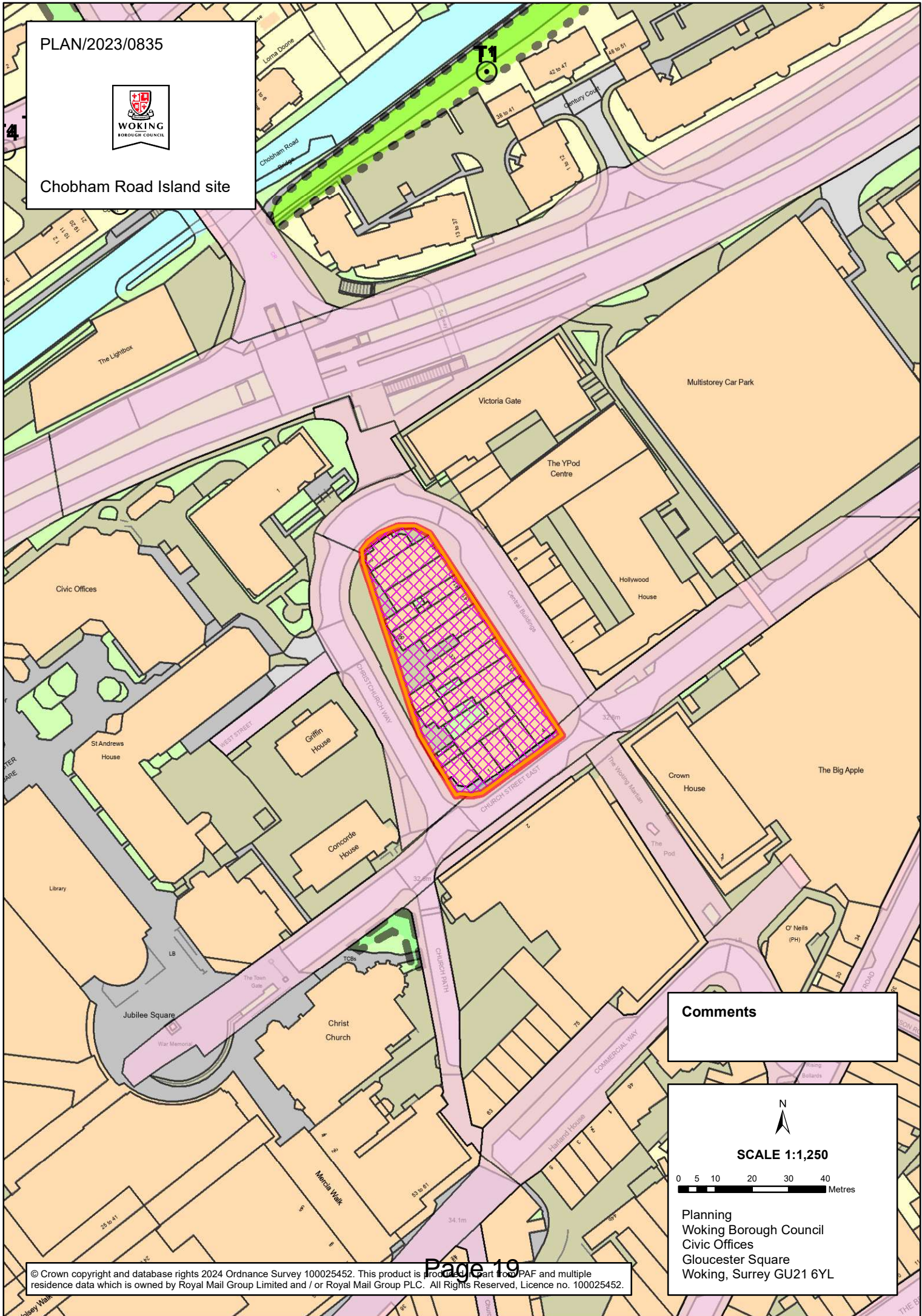




PLAN/2023/0835



Chobham Road Island site



Comments

N

SCALE 1:1,250

0 5 10 20 30 40 Metres

Planning  
Woking Borough Council  
Civic Offices  
Gloucester Square  
Woking, Surrey GU21 6YL



## 16 JANUARY 2024 PLANNING COMMITTEE

6a PLAN/2023/0835

WARD: Canalside

**LOCATION:** Cleary Court (Church Street East), Nos.33-45 Chobham Road Incl. (Odd Numbers) and Nos.2 and 4 Christchurch Way, Woking, Surrey, GU21 6JD

**PROPOSAL:** Demolition of existing buildings to provide a new building of up to 11 storeys (10 storeys plus ground floor) comprising Use Class E(g)(i) office space (levels 2-10 incl.) and flexible Use Class E ground and first floor space, cycle parking facilities and associated public realm improvements.

**APPLICANT:** Acklam Investments Limited

**OFFICER:** Benjamin Bailey

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### **REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE**

This is an application for planning permission, where the recommendation is for approval, for the provision of buildings where the floor space to be created by the development is 1,000 square metres or more. As such, the application falls outside of the Development Manager - Scheme of Delegation.

### **PLANNING STATUS**

- Urban Area
- Woking Town Centre
- Primary Shopping Area
- Secondary Shopping Frontage
- Proximate to Statutory Listed Buildings (Christ Church and Woking War Memorial - both Grade II)
- Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (TBH SPA) Zone B (400m-5km)

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Planning Committee resolves to **Grant** planning permission subject to:

1. The prior completion of a Section 106 Legal Agreement to secure the requirements as set out at the conclusion of this report; and
2. Planning conditions set out at the end of this report.

The Planning Committee is also requested to authorise the Development Manager (or their authorised deputies) to take all necessary action(s) in connection with points 1-2 above.

### **SITE DESCRIPTION**

The site is located relatively centrally within Woking Town Centre, it is bound to the north and east by Chobham Road, to the south by Church Street East and to the west by Christchurch Way and comprises a number of buildings fronting these surrounding roads. The buildings fronting Chobham Road are mostly Victorian terraces with shops on the ground floor and offices (and/or other non-residential spaces) above, and generally are around three storeys in height, although there is some variation in height across the site. Christchurch Way

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predominantly provides service entrances and parking areas for the Chobham Road fronting buildings, meaning that many of the buildings are set back from the road on this side. Cleary Court is a four storey 1980s building providing shops at ground floor level and office spaces above. Overall, the buildings within the site are of varying age, with some being presently vacant offices and shops, and have provided for a variety of businesses over the years operating within a range of planning use classes, albeit most of the uses on the site now fall within Class E (Commercial, Business & Service) or are *Sui Generis* uses [i.e., the nail bar, hot food takeaway and taxi office].

### **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

The site has an extensive planning history, including for numerous replacement shopfronts, numerous changes of use (albeit generally between uses which now all fall within Class E), for the numerous display of advertisements (under the Advertisement Regulations) and for numerous minor extensions and alterations to individual buildings within the site, which have occurred over the years. As such, only the most recent, significant, and relevant, planning history is shown below:

#### Whole site:

PLAN/2023/0784 - Screening Opinion in relation to proposed demolition of existing buildings to provide a new 11 storey (10 storeys plus ground floor) building comprising Use Class E office space (levels 2-10) and flexible Class E ground and first floor space, cycle parking facilities and associated public realm improvements.  
Environmental Statement Not Required (02.10.2023)

#### Cleary Court:

83/0490 - Relaxation of condition 3 of Consent 82/0566 to allow division of office building by individual floor areas and not into suites of 300 sq.m or less. Granted (14.09.1983)

82/0566 - The erection of a four storey building comprising retail on ground floor and offices on upper floors on land bounded by Church Street East, Chobham Road and Church Path, Woking. Granted (17.12.1982)

#### No.2 Christchurch Way:

PLAN/2016/0905 - Variation of condition 6 of PLAN/2015/0685 dated 15.09.2016 and for Variation of condition 6 (Opening Hours) of PLAN/2014/0603 (Proposed Change of Use of existing ground floor from retail (A1 use) to a hot food take away (A5 use) to open from 11am to 11pm. Granted (28.09.2016)

84/0915 - Erection of a single storey shop unit. Granted (02.10.1984)

#### No.4 Christchurch Way:

PLAN/2007/0366 - Change of Use from offices (B1) to Taxi Base Station including the erection of a radio mast. Granted (12.06.2007)

#### No.45 Chobham Road:

PLAN/2022/0669 - Proposed new shutter to shopfront. New sign boards. Opening hours - Monday to Thursday (including Sunday and Bank Holidays) 08:00 to 23:00. Friday and Saturday 08:00 to 00:00. Change of use to Restaurant (Class E) - to include takeaway (*Sui Generis*). Granted (13.10.2022)

#### Adjoining highways:

79/1696 - Construction of a highway joining Church Street, Church Path, West Street and Chobham Road, Woking (Consultation under Reg 10). No Objection (22.04.1980)

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74/1229 - Provision of a highway joining Church Street, Chobham Road & West Street (Footways 2m. wide, Carriageway 5.5m wide), Woking (Consultation under Reg 10). No Objection (20.03.1975)

### **SUMMARY OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

The planning application proposes the demolition of all existing buildings on the site and consequent redevelopment to create a building with a maximum height of x11 storeys, stepping down towards Church Street East.

The proposed development will deliver nine floors of new Grade A office space as well as flexible (Class E) commercial, business and service units at ground and first floor levels. Both internal and external communal amenity space will be provided for office occupiers.

The introduction of new public realm will continue to ensure that the route past/through the site is a key connection from the area to the north of Victoria Way to the Town Centre and rail station, incorporating mature trees and plants to introduce urban greening to this part of Woking Town Centre. Given its historical significance, the proposed layout has emphasised the diagonal of Church Path on the ground floor, with the main (office) entrance located in a natural point when approached along Church Path from the railway station.

The proposed development includes:

- A total of 16,309 sq.m of office space, comprising:
  - 12,639 sq.m GIA of dedicated Class E Grade A office accommodation;
  - 721 sq.m GIA of office amenity space;
  - 2,949 sq.m GIA of core/plant office ancillary space;
- 2,204 sq.m GIA Flexible Class E units at ground and first floor levels;
- 225 cycle parking spaces (indoors) and 6 cycle parking spaces (outdoors);
- Creation of public realm to all four sides that connects the existing urban fabric and provides an accessible public frontage to the development, animated by spill out spaces, raised planters and outdoor seating spaces;
- External amenity space in the form of roof terraces including planting, seating, recreational decking area and semi-private co-working area and outdoor meeting pods; and
- Internal amenity space for the office occupiers to relax, work and enjoy in the form of a lounge, breakout space.

The proposed development incorporates energy efficiency measures, including All-Electric Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHPs) for energy efficient cooling and heating system, for commercial elements of the scheme.

### **CONSULTATIONS**

Active Travel England (ATE) (Updated response dated 21 December 2023):	ATE recommends approval of the application, subject to the agreement and implementation of planning conditions and/or obligations as set out in the ATE response. The means by which employees and visitors to the development will access it is of key concern. This will have a direct bearing upon the residual impacts of the development, but more importantly the health and lifestyles of future occupiers of the development and the wider area.
Affinity Water:	Affinity Water has no comments to make regarding planning

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	application PLAN/2023/0835.
Basingstoke Canal Authority:	No comments received.
Basingstoke Canal Society:	No comments received.
County Archaeologist (Surrey County Council):	Satisfied that there are no archaeological concerns regarding these proposals.
County Highway Authority (Surrey County Council) (Updated response dated 20 December 2023):	The proposed development has been considered by the County Highway Authority who, having assessed the application on safety, capacity and policy grounds, recommends the following conditions be imposed in any permission granted: 11 (Landscaping, On-street Parking and Servicing), 13 (Construction Management Plan), 14 (Service and Delivery Management), Travel Choice/Plan (which is to be secured via the S106 Legal Agreement) and 12 (Cycle Parking).
Contaminated Land Officer (WBC):	No objection subject to recommended conditions: 34 (Asbestos Condition - Demolition), 35 (Contamination - Investigation and Risk Assessment), 36 (Contamination - Remediation Method Statement) and 37 (Contamination - Remediation Validation Report).
Elmbridge Borough Council:	No objection.
Environment Agency:	No comments received.
Environmental Health (WBC):	There are no adverse comments to submit, particularly in relation to the Acoustic assessment report and Air Quality report, subject to there being no change in the proposed plant and all recommendations and mitigation works being carried out in full, including a further acoustic assessment report to ensure compliance with the criteria outlined (condition 16 refers). It is noted that a detailed Construction Environmental Management Plan will be provided which is usually a Planning requirement (condition 10 refers). No delivery hours have been proposed as these should be line with those for existing town centre businesses which have residential use close by. If minded to approve please also attach the following; External Lighting (condition 28 refers).
Fairoaks Airport:	I have assessed the above application against safeguarding criteria and can confirm that Fairoaks Airport has no safeguarding objections to the proposed development.
Farnborough Airport:	No objection (During the construction planning phase could we request early engagement on the planned use of cranes as a building mounted crane may have an impact on Farnborough Airports Instrument Flight Procedures) (informative 18 refers).
Guildford Borough Council:	Guildford Borough Council has no comments to make on this application.
Heathrow Airport Ltd:	No comments received.
NATS Safeguarding:	The proposed development has been examined from a technical safeguarding aspect and does not conflict with our safeguarding criteria. Accordingly, NATS (En Route) Public Limited Company ("NERL") has no safeguarding objection to the proposal. However, please be aware that this response applies specifically to the above consultation and only reflects the position of NATS (that is responsible for the management of en route air traffic) based on the information supplied at the time of this application.
Network Rail:	No comments received.
Surrey Police Designing Out Crime Officer:	No comments received.
Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) (Surrey County Council):	We are satisfied that the proposed drainage scheme meets the requirements set out in the aforementioned documents and are content with the development proposed, subject to our



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	<p>advice below.</p> <p>Our advice would be that, should planning permission be granted, suitably worded conditions are applied to ensure that the SuDS Scheme is properly implemented and maintained throughout the lifetime of the development (recommended conditions 31 and 32 refer).</p>
RPS (Jo Evans, Director - Built Heritage Advisor to the Council):	<p>Woking Town Centre Conservation Area - Agree with the conclusions that the proposals would result in no harm to the Conservation Area.</p> <p>Basingstoke Canal Conservation Area - Concur with the conclusions of no harm.</p> <p>Wheatsheaf Conservation Area - Concur with the conclusions of no harm.</p> <p>Woking War Memorial - Concur with the conclusions of no harm.</p> <p>Christ Church - Concur with the conclusions of no harm.</p> <p>Chobham Road (the site) - The assessment of the existing buildings on the site is sound and I have no comment on that part of the statement.</p>
Runnymede Borough Council:	No objection to the proposed development subject to the development complying with the relevant policies and any representations made taken fully into account.
South Western Trains Ltd:	No comments received.
Surrey Fire & Rescue Service:	The above application (including any schedule) has been examined by a Fire Safety Inspecting Officer and it appears that it will meet with the access requirements of Approved Document B Section B5 of the Building Regulations when the initial notice is submitted.
Surrey Heath Borough Council:	After careful consideration, it is considered that the Council [Surrey Heath Borough Council] have no objection to make on the proposals, subject to the following conditions (if any). I nevertheless trust that the proposals will be considered in the context of your local planning policies and that any representations received from nearby occupiers, including those from Surrey Heath Borough Council, will be fully taken into account.
Surrey Wildlife Trust Ecology Planning Advice Service:	No objection subject to; (i) implementation of submitted Construction Environmental Management Plan (condition 10 refers), (ii) advise that the LPA review whether contribution is required due to the presence of the Thames Basin Heath SPA within 1.4km, (please see report main text), (iii) the bat presence/likely absence survey (carried out in August 2023) has identified the likely absence of active bat roosts within the development site however, bats are highly mobile and move roost sites frequently. Unidentified bat roosts may still present. A precautionary approach to works should therefore be implemented (condition 27 refers), (iv) an Ecological Management Plan, which includes a Swift Mitigation and Compensation Strategy, should be secured through a prior to commencement planning condition and should also incorporate all measures and designs to provide the biodiversity net gain that is reported to be feasible (please see report main text and conditions 26 and 30 refer) and (v) we would advise that the Construction Environmental Management Plan is followed throughout the works to avoid disturbance to a potential nesting site (peregrine falcon) during the construction phase of the project (condition 10 refers).
ThamesWey Energy Ltd:	Object - As submitted, ThamesWey strongly believes the application's energy strategy fails to justify that connecting to

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	<p>ThamesWey's DHN is unfeasible and therefore does not meet the requirements of the Core Strategy and the Climate Change SPD.</p> <p><i>(Officer Note: Subsequent to this response being submitted the applicant and their design team have met with ThamesWey Energy Ltd. The applicant has also provided a response to the comments of ThamesWey Energy Ltd. This matter is covered within the report main text).</i></p>
<p>Thames Water Development Planning (Updated response dated 16 November 2023):</p>	<p>Thames Water would advise that with regard to foul water sewerage network infrastructure capacity, we would not have any objection to the above planning application, based on the information provided. Thames Water would advise that with regard to surface water network infrastructure capacity, we would not have any objection to the above planning application, based on the information provided. Recommend informatives and Piling Method Statement condition (condition 33 refers, together with informatives 09-13 incl.).</p>

### **REPRESENTATIONS**

**x4 letters of objection** have been received (x2 of which originate from the same household), raising the following points:

- The proposed development will have a detrimental effect on the existing townscape of this part of Woking.
- The building will dwarf all the surrounding buildings and will have an adverse impact on the Wheatsheaf Conservation Area to the north of Victoria Way.
- The close proximity of the outer walls of the proposed building to the boundaries of the site, combined with its height, will create a tunnel effect and remove the current openness of the area as you look towards the north from Church Street East. This open area should be retained as landscaped public open space as has been done with the open area containing the statue of H.G.Wells.
- The exterior design of the development is cold and unimaginative, it has no consideration for the surrounding older buildings in the immediate vicinity such as Christ Church or the buildings on the east side of Chobham Road.
- The building will cause further light pollution of nearby residential areas (unless a condition of any consent places restrictions on the lighting of the building between say 10pm and 6am).
- There is an excess of modern/refurbished office buildings - following the changes in working practices due to the pandemic - and an excess of modern shop premises in the centre of Woking.
- This is too tall for this part of town.
- We, the people of this town, had a consultation regarding building heights. If this 11 storey project is allowed, then what was the point?  
*(Officer Note: This comment is assumed to refer to the consultation which was undertaken by the Council, between July and October 2022, on the draft Woking Town Centre Masterplan. As the Planning Committee will be aware that Masterplan document presently attracts no weight in the determination of planning applications – please refer to the ‘General policy framework for the consideration of the application’ report section for further commentary)*
- There is no lack of office space within Woking, lots currently sit empty. Trends are that companies are moving away from office requirements in favour of remote working so why should we have to put up with another 11 storey building, wasting valuable land in the Town Centre to just sit empty?

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- Doesn't the town look like a disaster enough already with its mish mash of planners dreams that went wrong?

**x9 letters of support** have been received (including from Woking Chamber of Commerce and Surrey Chambers of Commerce), raising the following points:

- Woking is currently going through a purple patch of demand from office occupiers and is on course to record one of its strongest years of take up despite a challenging economic climate. With limited Grade A stock remaining this development is much needed in order to not lose momentum.
- Woking is at long last reaping the benefits of the significant investment it has received over recent years. This scheme, against a backdrop of limited speculative development in the wider South East office market, has the potential to attract new corporate occupiers to Woking and bring with it significant economic benefits.
- We have seen the rewards of recent new office developments in towns such as Reading, Maidenhead and Windsor in attracting new businesses. On the back of several high profile new occupiers moving to Woking over the next 6-9 months this scheme has the chance to further cement Woking's growing reputation as a thriving, well connected and business friendly location.
- It is so disappointing to see the decline of our high streets and thus it is reassuring to see some positive reinvestment.
- I viewed the proposal at the open day and was impressed with the energy and integrity of the developer.
- When developers go beyond the Building Regulation standards to create more sustainable construction it is very positive and impactful. The developer has embraced the higher levels of BREEAM, which is the market leading sustainable construction standard. Provided they deliver to this standard they should be encouraged and would set a great example for further redevelopment in an around Woking.
- The built environment is one of the largest emitters of CO<sub>2</sub>, both in the products used and the energy used across its lifecycle, new build standards like this will help the country meet its Net Zero target. Well done, let's encourage ethical development.
- I think the development will be positive for Italia Conti as the new ground floor F&B [Food & Beverage] space will be more substantial than the fast food which envelops Woking currently. I also hope all the additional jobs it creates, and the boost it will have on the success and growth of the town centre, will have a positive impact for our students.
- Following the flurry of office lettings this year, Woking is in desperate need of new quality offices which office occupiers are demanding, with the loss of office stock to Permitted Development (PD) conversions the total office stock in Woking Town Centre has reduced dramatically over the past 10 years.
- Office occupiers are seeking better quality buildings with strong ESG credentials [Environmental, Social, and Corporate Governance] and good EPC's [Energy Performance Certificates].
- The proposed development will provide much needed office stock in Woking which will significantly help to attract new corporate occupiers to the town with the resulting economic benefits.
- This proposed development represents the only significant pipeline of new office space in Woking.
- 2023 has been a strong year for the town in terms of take-up of office space. Much of the success has been because of the availability of Grade A, sustainable office schemes which forms the majority of tenant demand. However, the vast majority of the best office space has now been let with more secondary, older options forming the remaining office supply in the town centre.

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- 2023 has seen around 77,000 sq.ft of new businesses move into Woking who were not previously in the town which brings major economic benefits. All of these companies have moved into best in class office space. To continue this trend, the Grade A supply needs to be replenished otherwise businesses will begin to look elsewhere. This is why this proposed development is such an important office scheme to bring forward, not only will it re-invigorate a tired part of the town centre, but it will ensure Woking remains a major destination for corporate office occupiers.
- On behalf of Woking Chamber of Commerce we support this application as it improves the area and adds quality office space to the stock within the town. Also this will bring in more workers to the town and hence benefit the shops and restaurants.
- As the CEO of Surrey Chambers of Commerce I would like to share our full support for this planning application, as an organisation representing businesses, we understand only too well the challenges which are facing local businesses.
- Surrey Chambers of Commerce constantly hear of the significant lack of high-quality Grade A office space available in the town, so this scheme would be very well received. Over the last 18 months we have seen some of the greatest grade A office take up on record in Woking, which has been great for the town, particularly at the current time and demonstrates the growing demand.
- If this application does not go ahead there is a real danger of losing businesses, which has a knock-on effect to the vibrancy of the town.
- This scheme has clearly been designed to suit the needs of the current market in terms of layout and quality proposed, and it is especially good to see that it is hitting all the right notes in respect to sustainability targets. Employers are constantly having to make themselves attractive to potential employees so quality offices that also recognise the importance of sustainability help them to recruit and retain their workforce, enabling them to create a successful business.
- The economic benefits this development will have to Woking are significant in terms of number of jobs created, money spent in the town and income generated for the council.
- The developer has been engaging with the community, which demonstrates a long-term commitment and a will to create something that works for all. Surrey Chambers of Commerce look forward to working with the developer on the development as local suppliers get an opportunity to get involved.
- This is a truly important development for Woking Town Centre, whilst the majority of the town's development sites are proposing residential use, it is crucial that the town centre offers employment opportunities, (specifically) office to attract and bring inward investment of new companies whilst also offering some of the major corporate occupiers located within the town the opportunity to expand within a quality property.
- The proposed development will revitalize this end of the town and an opportunity to create a business district within the town.
- The town is facing a deluge of residential development which I believe will be to the detriment of office development and thus the growth of the town, there has to be a balance and I believe this proposed development will help create an impressive business growth opportunity for Woking.
- A number of the proposed residential developments are seeking to attract young professionals and their families to the town, but they will need somewhere to work. Without these employment opportunities Woking will become nothing more than a commuter town.
- This is an opportunity Woking Borough Council must not miss.
- I own and run a local business which trades from part of one of the buildings on the subject site. Half the site is occupied by a number of small very dated buildings that are no longer viable for the requirements of modern day business occupiers and so various parts are vacant. The remainder of the site is occupied by Cleary Court which

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provides dated office and retail floorspace, which again falls below what tenants now require.

- In addition to not providing modern day office and retail accommodation, the existing buildings significantly detract from the setting and public realm for such a prominent site in the heart of Woking, the proposed redevelopment will provide a single high quality sustainable Grade A office building, significantly enhance the central part of Woking and greatly benefit the public's enjoyment of the environment. I therefore encourage the Planning Committee to approve the application.

### **RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES**

#### National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2023)

Section 2 - Achieving sustainable development

Section 4 - Decision-making

Section 6 - Building a strong, competitive economy

Section 7 - Ensuring the vitality of town centres

Section 8 - Promoting healthy and safe communities

Section 9 - Promoting sustainable transport

Section 11 - Making effective use of land

Section 12 - Achieving well-designed and beautiful places

Section 14 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

Section 15 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Section 16 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

#### Woking Core Strategy (2012)

CS1 - A spatial strategy for Woking Borough

CS2 - Woking Town Centre

CS7 - Biodiversity and nature conservation

CS9 - Flooding and water management

CS15 - Sustainable economic development

CS16 - Infrastructure delivery

CS18 - Transport and accessibility

CS20 - Heritage and conservation

CS21 - Design

CS22 - Sustainable construction

CS23 - Renewable and low carbon energy generation

CS24 - Woking's landscape and townscape

CS25 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development

#### Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (DM Policies DPD) (2016)

DM1 - Green infrastructure opportunities

DM2 - Trees and landscaping

DM6 - Air and water quality

DM7 - Noise and light pollution

DM8 - Land contamination and hazards

DM16 - Servicing development

DM17 - Public realm

DM19 - Shopfronts

DM20 - Heritage assets and their settings

#### Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

Design (2015)

Outlook, Amenity, Privacy and Daylight (2022)

Parking Standards (2018)

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Climate Change (2023)

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)

Heritage of Woking (2000)

Other Material Considerations

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended)

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990 (as amended)

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) (online resource)

National Design Guide: Planning practice guidance for beautiful, enduring and successful places (January 2021)

Circular 06/2005: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation - Statutory obligations and their impact within the planning system

The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 - 2nd Edition, December 2017, Historic England

Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 2, July 2015, Historic England

Woking Character Study (2010)

Woking Borough Council Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) (November 2015)

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule (2015)

### **PLANNING ISSUES**

The main planning issues for consideration in this case are:

- General policy framework for the consideration of the application;
- Spatial strategy and principle of development (including employment and economic activity);
- The effect on the character and appearance of the area, including on nearby heritage assets;
- Archaeology (below-ground heritage);
- Transport, highways, parking and servicing;
- Impacts on neighbouring and nearby residential amenities;
- Wind microclimate;
- Solar glare;
- Air quality;
- Contamination;
- Flooding and water management;
- Noise;
- Ecology and biodiversity;
- Energy and water consumption;
- Fire safety;
- Aviation;
- Local finance considerations; and
- Conclusion and planning balance.

### **General policy framework for the consideration of the application**

1. Where determining applications for planning permission the Local Planning Authority is required to have regard to (a) the Development Plan, so far as is material, (b) any local finance considerations, so far as is material, and (c) to any other material considerations. Local finance considerations mean the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

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requires that “if regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the Planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise”.

### The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) / Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

2. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2023) comprises an overarching set of planning policies and details how the Government expects them to be applied. The NPPF is a material consideration in the determination of this planning application. However, the starting point for decision making remains the Development Plan, which retains primacy.
3. The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) is a web-based resource and provides detailed Government advice on matters which relate to the operation of the planning system in practice. The guidance in the PPG supports the policies contained within the NPPF.

### The Development Plan / SPDs / SPGs

4. The Development Plan comprises the Woking Core Strategy (2012), the Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (DM Policies DPD) (2016), the Site Allocations Development Plan Document (Site Allocations DPD) (2021), various Neighbourhood Plans (none of which are relevant in this instance), the Surrey Minerals Plan Core Strategy and Primary Aggregates DPDs (2011) (which are not relevant in this instance), the Surrey Waste Plan (2020) and Saved Policy NRM6 of the South East Plan 2009 (which is relevant principally to residential development).
5. A number of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPGs) are also relevant to the consideration of this application (albeit these do not form part of the Development Plan although are material considerations, where relevant) and these generally provide more detailed information on topic based matters.
6. The Woking Core Strategy (2012) was reviewed in 2023. That review demonstrated that all the policies of the Core Strategy currently remain up-to-date and are in general conformity with the NPPF and that changing circumstances since the last review have been successfully adapted to by the adoption of the Site Allocations DPD (2021), the revision of SPDs and by the flexibility built into the Core Strategy policies themselves. The Council must begin an update to the Core Strategy as soon as possible, in order to adopt it before the expiry of the current Local Plan period in 2027. The fact that the Core Strategy policies remain up-to-date means that they can continue to be applied to planning decisions during the update process.

### Draft Woking Town Centre Masterplan

7. Between July and October 2022 the Council consulted on a Draft Town Centre Masterplan. At the Executive meeting on 2 February 2023 the Executive received a report setting out that, on 3 November 2022 the Planning Inspectorate issued their decision on the Crown Place Development, granting planning permission for a scheme of up to x28 storeys within the east of Woking Town Centre, thus changing the nature of the townscape and having a considerable impact on the proposed townscape. That report also set out that the Masterplan as drafted, conflicts with the Development Plan, in particular with the adopted Site Allocations DPD (2021), in

terms of site yields for some individual sites which are lower than what the adopted policy states, and that the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill (which is now an Act), a forthcoming amended NPPF (which was published on 20 December 2023) and proposed National Development Management Policies set out proposed changes to the planning policy framework, including changes to legislation on planning policy. As such, at the Executive meeting on 13 July 2023 the Executive agreed that Woking Town Centre's Masterplan policies will be integrated into the borough's new Local Plan, when the current plan period ends in 2027. Therefore, at the present time, the Draft Woking Town Centre Masterplan attracts no weight in determining planning applications.

**Spatial strategy and principle of development**

8. The site is located centrally within Woking Town Centre, as this is defined by the Council's Proposals Map. Woking is a town that is experiencing significant growth and regeneration, in large part due to the constraints that affect large parts of the Borough, including Green Belt.
9. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2023) emphasises three elements to sustainable development; economic, social and environmental and sets out (at paragraph 10) a presumption in favour of sustainable development (although the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision-making). Paragraph 11 of the NPPF sets out that for decision-taking applying the presumption in favour of sustainable development means "*approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay*".
10. The Woking Core Strategy (2012) (at paragraph 3.3) sets out 13 objectives (in no particular priority order) which will deliver the spatial vision of the Core Strategy. These objectives include (most relevant to the proposed development) (emphasis added):
  - "1) To enable a diverse range of development such as offices, housing, shops, leisure and cultural facilities in Woking Town Centre to enable its status as a centre of regional significance to be maintained. Development will be of high quality and high density to create an attractive environment for people to live, do business and visit
  - 5) To enable a buoyant local economy with good quality offices, business parks and industrial areas, which meet the needs of modern business. This will mainly be encouraged in Woking Town Centre, West Byfleet District Centre and the employment areas.
  - 10) To work in partnership with Surrey County Council and other stakeholders with an interest in transport provision to deliver a transport system that enables people to access key services, facilities and jobs by all relevant modes of travel. In particular, by encouraging the use of public transport and creating a safe environment for people to walk and cycle to the town, district and local centres.
11. Policy CS1 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) states that "*The Core Strategy will make provision for the following scale of uses between 2010 and 2027 [only relevant uses shown]*:
  - 28,000 sq.m of additional office floorspace; [and]



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- 93,900 sq.m of additional retail floorspace”

12. Policy CS1 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) recognises the constraints to development by stating that *“Most of the new development will be directed to previously developed land in the town, district and local centres, which offers the best access to a range of services and facilities. The scale of development that will be encouraged in these centres will reflect their respective functions and nature”*. Table 2 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) sets out a Hierarchy of Centres within the Borough, with Woking Town Centre identified at the top of this hierarchy, as the Borough’s principal centre, and therefore the primary focus for sustainable growth due, amongst other things, to its role as a key transport interchange and being an important location for shopping, offices, entertainment, cultural and community activities, with a primary role within the regional economy.

13. Policy CS1 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) further states that:

*“Woking Town Centre will be the primary focus of sustainable growth to maintain its status as an economic hub with a flourishing, diverse and innovative economy and a transport hub which provides transport services, links and communication linking people to jobs, services and facilities. The town centre is designated as a centre to undergo significant change and the provision of a range of shops, cultural facilities, jobs and housing to meet locally identified needs and the needs of modern businesses will be encouraged. Main town centre uses as defined in the NPPF, will be acceptable in principle, subject to the requirements of the policies of the Core Strategy.”*

*In the town centre, well designed, high density development that could include tall buildings and which enhances its image will be encouraged, but without compromising on its character and appearance and that of nearby areas.”*  
(emphases added)

14. Policy CS2 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) states that *“The Council will support the development of the town centre as the primary centre for economic development in the Borough and as a primary economic centre in the South East. The Town Centre is the preferred location for town centre uses and high density residential development. New development proposals should deliver high quality, well designed public spaces and buildings, which make efficient use of land, contribute to the functionality of the centre and add to its attractiveness and competitiveness”* (emphases added). The reasoned justification text to Policy CS2 states (at paragraph 4.7) that *“In order to retain and attract businesses to Woking Town Centre and enhance its role as a business location, the majority of further office development required in the Borough over the plan period will be accommodated in the town centre and the Council will support the redevelopment of outmoded stock.”*

15. Policy CS2 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) sets out a table of development type and indicative amount as follows (only relevant land uses shown):

Development type and indicative amount	When
<p><b>Employment</b> Approximately 27,000 sq.m of additional office floorspace to be provided in the town centre as part of mix-use developments*</p> <p><i>(*Up to 15% of this could be accommodated within</i></p>	Over the life of the Core Strategy

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<p><i>the Butts Road/Poole Road employment area, which lies adjacent to the town centre boundary)</i></p>	
<p><b>Retail</b> Potential for up to 75,300 sq.m of additional A class floorspace including 67,600 of A1 retail made up of 59,300 sq.m of comparison and 8,300 sq.m of convenience floorspace</p>	<p>2012 – 2016 17,500 sq.m of A1 retail including 10,800 sq.m of comparison and 6,700 sq.m of convenience floorspace.</p> <p>2016 – 2021 26,200 sq.m of A1 retail including 25,400 sq.m of comparison and 800 sq.m of convenience floorspace</p> <p>2021 – 2027 up to 23,900sq.m of A1 retail. Up to 23,100 sq.m of comparison and 800 sq.m of convenience floorspace</p>

16. Policy CS2 sets out that:

*“The proposals will be achieved through:*

- *mixed-use high density redevelopment of existing sites*
- *refurbishment of outmoded sites*
- *intensification of existing sites*
- *change of use of existing employment uses where this will not undermine the delivery of the proposed development set out in the policy and the other objectives of the Core Strategy*
- *safeguarding of existing office floorspace where there is evidence to justify that.”*

17. The site is located within the Primary Shopping Area, and a Secondary Shopping Frontage, as defined by the Proposals Map. Policy CS2 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) also states that:

*“The primary shopping area comprises primary and secondary frontages and will be the main focus, particularly at ground floor level, for A1 retail uses...The Council will consider favourably change of use proposals to other A Class uses within secondary frontages if it can be determined they would not have significant harmful effects on the frontage, crime and disorder and the vitality and viability of the town centre”.*

18. Policy CS2 also states that *“The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, the Employment Land Review and the Town, District and Local Centres Study provide sufficient justification of the need for the proposed development and the town centre’s capability to accommodate the proposed level of growth”* and that *“The town centre will also be the preferred location for other town centre uses as defined in the Glossary”*. The Glossary to the Woking Core Strategy (2012) defines ‘Town Centre Uses’ as:

- *retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres)*
- *leisure, entertainment facilities, and the more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, night-clubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres, and bingo halls)*
- *offices, and*

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- arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities).

19. Policy CS15 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) states that:

*“To accommodate the predicted future growth in economic development\* required for Woking’s economy to grow, ensure sustainable employment development patterns, promote smart growth and business competitiveness, and allow for flexibility to cater for the changing needs of the economy the Council will:*

- *permit redevelopment of outmoded employment floorspace to cater for modern business needs*
- *support small and medium sized enterprise (SME) formation and development by encouraging a range of types and sizes of premises including provision for incubator units, managed workspace and serviced office accommodation*
- *encourage improved ICT infrastructure in refurbished and redeveloped sites*
- *encourage workspace and ICT infrastructure as an integral part of residential development, where appropriate to support home working*
- *support childcare facilities close to places of employment”*

*(\*Economic Development: For the purposes of the policies in this Core Strategy, economic development includes development within the B Use Classes, public and community uses and main town centre uses.)*

20. Policy CS25 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) states that *“When considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework”* and that *“Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Core Strategy and/or other development plans for the area (and, where relevant, with policies in neighbourhood plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.”*

21. Whilst the site itself is not allocated within the Site Allocations DPD (2021) (although clearly the absence of allocation within that document does not preclude the site from being redeveloped) proximate sites are allocated, being UA17 (Griffin House, West Street) and UA18 (Concord House, 165 Church Street East). Griffin House is allocated for office development, with an anticipated site yield of 1,000 sq.m net (1,700 sq.m gross). The reasoned justification text to Policy UA17 states (at paragraph 8.110) that *“This site is in a sustainable location within the town centre. The existing office building is a four storey brick building with parking to the rear. The offices are in use and are considered to be good quality. However the site is low density in comparison to the surrounding offices in this location. There is potential to intensify the office use on this site”* (emphasis added). Concord House is also allocated for office development, with an anticipated site yield of 800 sq.m net (1,800 sq.m gross). The reasoned justification text to Policy UA18 states (at paragraph 8.114) that *“This site is in a sustainable location within the town centre. The building is a four storey office building, currently in use. These are good quality offices however they are low density. There is opportunity to intensify the current office use”* (emphasis added). It is material that both Griffin House and Concord House are four storey office buildings, existing Cleary Court (on the south part of the application site) is also a four storey office building, thus has a similar intensity of office use/floorspace as both Griffin House and Concord House, which the Development Plan allocates for intensified office use/floorspace given their sustainable location within Woking Town Centre. Moreover, the remainder of the existing buildings on the application site are

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below four storeys in height, thus less intensive in use/floorspace terms than proximate buildings, including Griffin House and Concord House.

22. Section 11 of the NPPF (December 2023) relates to 'Making effective use of land' and identifies that *"Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions"* (emphasis added, paragraph 123) and that planning policies and decisions should, inter alia, *"encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through mixed use schemes and taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains [and] give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs"* (paragraph 124).
23. Section 6 of the NPPF (December 2023) relates to 'Building a strong, competitive economy' and states that *"Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future"* (emphasis added, paragraph 85). Section 6 also states that planning policies should *"a) set out a clear economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth, having regard to Local Industrial Strategies and other local policies for economic development and regeneration; b) set criteria, or identify strategic sites, for local and inward investment to match the strategy and to meet anticipated needs over the plan period; [and] d) be flexible enough to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan, allow for new and flexible working practices (such as live-work accommodation), and to enable a rapid response to changes in economic circumstances"* (paragraph 86).
24. Section 7 of the NPPF (December 2023) relates to 'Ensuring the vitality of town centres' and states (at paragraph 90) that *"Planning policies and decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation. Planning policies should [inter alia]:*
  - a) *define a network and hierarchy of town centres and promote their long-term vitality and viability – by allowing them to grow and diversify in a way that can respond to rapid changes in the retail and leisure industries, allows a suitable mix of uses (including housing) and reflects their distinctive characters;*
  - b) *define the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas, and make clear the range of uses permitted in such locations, as part of a positive strategy for the future of each centre;*
  - c) *allocate a range of suitable sites in town centres to meet the scale and type of development likely to be needed, looking at least ten years ahead. Meeting anticipated needs for retail, leisure, office and other main town centre uses over this period should not be compromised by limited site availability, so town centre boundaries should be kept under review where necessary"*.
25. Since the Woking Core Strategy (2012) was adopted (including Policy CS2) in 2012 Government has issued amendments to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, with substantive changes coming into force on 1 September

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2020. The changes that Government introduced are intended to give businesses greater freedom so that they can adjust more quickly, and with more planning certainty, to changing demands and circumstances. A single Use Class E (Commercial, Business & Service) now comprises use, or part use, for all or any of the following purposes:

- *for the display or retail sale of goods, other than hot food, principally to visiting members of the public* [formerly Class A1],
- *for the sale of food and drink principally to visiting members of the public where consumption of that food and drink is mostly undertaken on the premises* [formerly Class A3],
- *for the provision of the following kinds of services principally to visiting members of the public* [all formerly within Class A2] *comprising: (i) financial services, (ii) professional services (other than health or medical services), or (iii) any other services which it is appropriate to provide in a commercial, business or service locality,*
- *for indoor sport, recreation or fitness, not involving motorised vehicles or firearms, principally to visiting members of the public* [formerly within Class D2(e)],
- *for the provision of medical or health services, principally to visiting members of the public, except the use of premises attached to the residence of the consultant or practitioner* [formerly Class D1(a)],
- *for a crèche, day nursery or day centre, not including a residential use, principally to visiting members of the public* [formerly Class D1(b)],
- *for-*
- *an office to carry out any operational or administrative functions* [formerly Class B1(a)],
- *the research and development of products or processes* [formerly Class B1(b)], *or*
- *any industrial process* [formerly Class B1(c)], *being a use* [in all three cases, as in the former Class B1] *which can be carried out in any residential area without detriment to the amenity of that area by reason of noise, vibration, smell, fumes, smoke, soot, ash, dust or grit.*

26. As explained in Paragraph 009a of the PPG, the Commercial, Business and Service Use Class (Class E) includes a broad and diverse range of uses which principally serve the needs of visiting members of the public and or are suitable for a town centre area. The class incorporates the whole of the previous Shops (A1) Use Class (although not, according to the PPG, those that now fall within the scope of the F.2 Local community Use Class), Financial and professional services (A2), Restaurant and cafés (A3) and Business (B1 including offices) Use Classes, and uses such as nurseries, health centres and gyms (previously in classes D1 Non-residential institutions, and D2 Assembly and leisure) “*and it seeks to provide for new uses which may emerge and are suitable for a town centre area*”.

27. There are ten existing buildings on the site, as follows (on following page):

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<b>Address</b>	<b>Description / Use</b>	<b>GIA Floorspace (sq.m)</b>
2 Christchurch Way	A single-storey takeaway/restaurant, accessed via Chobham Road ( <i>Sui Generis</i> ).	55 sq.m
33 Chobham Road	Occupied by an estate agent on the ground floor and a recruitment agency on the first floor. The second floor is currently vacant (Use Class E).	390 sq.m
35 Chobham Road	A three-storey building, which is currently vacant (Use Class E).	269 sq.m
37 & 37A Chobham Road	A three-storey building, which is occupied by a hairdresser on the ground floor and a charity on the first and second floors (Use Class E).	208 sq.m
39 Chobham Road	A three-storey building, which is occupied by a furniture shop on the ground floor and an accountants office on the first and second floors (Use Class E).	211 sq.m
41 Chobham Road	A three-storey building. The ground floor unit and the first floor are occupied by an architecture practice. The second floor is currently vacant (Use Class E).	379 sq.m
41A Chobham Road	Ground floor unit occupied as a nail bar (Class E / <i>Sui Generis</i> ).	39 sq.m
43 Chobham Road	A two-storey building, which is occupied by a locksmith (Use Class E).	201 sq.m
45 Chobham Road & 4 Christchurch Way	A two-storey building, which is occupied by a taxi service's office. The ground floor is currently vacant but was previously in use as a shop ( <i>Sui Generis</i> and Use Class E).	231 sq.m
<b>Cleary Court</b>		
Unit 1 Cleary Court	Unit occupied by a shop (Use Class E).	
Unit 2 Cleary Court	Unit is vacant but was previously occupied by a shop (Use Class E).	
Unit 3 Cleary Court	Unit is occupied by a shop (Use Class E).	
Unit 4 Cleary Court	Unit is occupied by a café (Use Class E).	
Unit 4A Cleary Court	Unit is occupied by a café (Use Class E).	
<b>GROUND FLOOR TOTAL</b>		<b>377 sq.m</b>
1st floor Suite 1 & 2 Cleary Court	In use as offices (Use Class E).	
1st floor Suite 3 Cleary Court	In use as offices (Use Class E).	
1st floor Suite 4 Cleary Court	In use as offices (Use Class E).	
<b>FIRST FLOOR TOTAL</b>		<b>507 sq.m</b>
2nd floor Suite A Cleary Court	In use as offices (Use Class E).	
2nd floor Suite B Cleary Court	In use as offices (Use Class E).	
2nd floor Suite 3 Cleary Court	Unit is currently vacant but was previously in use as an office (Use Class E).	
<b>SECOND FLOOR TOTAL</b>		<b>507 sq.m</b>
3rd floor Suite A Cleary Court	Unit is currently vacant but was previously in use as an office (Use Class E).	
3rd floor Suite B Cleary Court	In use as offices (Use Class E).	
<b>THIRD FLOOR TOTAL</b>		<b>507 sq.m</b>
<b>SITE TOTAL</b>		<b>3,881 sq.m</b>

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28. The site comprises a four-storey building known as Cleary Court and otherwise a number of buildings varying in height between single storey and three storeys. The buildings within the site are of varying age, with some being presently vacant offices and shops, and have provided for a variety of businesses over the years operating within a range of planning use classes, albeit most of the uses on the site now fall within Class E (Commercial, Business & Service) or Sui Generis [i.e., nail bar, hot food takeaway and taxi office].
29. The applicant's submissions set out that options for repurposing the existing Victorian terraces and 1980s Cleary Court have been explored by the applicant but that, given the age and condition of the existing buildings, the opportunity for substantial extension vertically or repurposing would be limited without significant strengthening work to the foundations and vertical structure, full facade replacement, and substantial fabric performance improvements to meet modern office development design requirements. Moreover, the applicants submissions demonstrate that the embodied carbon spend associated with a heavy refurbishment scheme may result in losing the low embodied carbon position which the proposed development is presently targeted to achieve (i.e., BREEAM 'Excellent').
30. In line with policies at all levels, the proposed development seeks to make efficient use of land by redeveloping an existing underutilised Woking Town Centre site with much-improved public realm and a commercial building which has been designed to meet market demand and modern end-user expectations. The proposed employment use and high-quality facilities/finishes would represent a significant improvement, in respect of employment and economic activity, when compared to the existing buildings on the site, providing very notable employment generation, and economic activity, in a highly sustainable location and adding to the vitality and viability of Woking Town Centre as a whole.
31. The site presently accommodates approximately 1,317 sq.m GIA of floorspace at ground floor level, all of which is either within use for purposes falling within Class E (Commercial, Business & Service) or Sui Generis [i.e., nail bar & hot food takeaway], so as to provide uses which principally serve the needs of visiting members of the public and or are suitable for a town centre area (i.e., the takeaway/restaurant at No.2 Christchurch Way and the nail bar at No.41A Chobham Road, albeit the nail bar could be said to fall within Class E). There is a further approximate 2,564 sq.m floorspace above ground floor level (i.e., at first, second and third floor levels inclusive). Again, all of this floorspace is either within use for purposes falling within Class E or Sui Generis, so as to provide uses which principally serve the needs of visiting members of the public and or are suitable for a town centre area (i.e., the taxi office at No.4 Christchurch Way). Policies within the Development Plan, and other material considerations, do not seek to protect Sui Generis uses and, in this case, such uses which are present on the site (i.e., the hot food takeaway at No.2 Christchurch Way, the nail bar at No.41A Chobham Road - albeit the nail bar could be said to fall within Class E - and the taxi office at No.4 Christchurch Way) are very modest in overall floorspace, in the context of the whole site.
32. This ground floor flexible Class E (Commercial, Business & Service) floorspace would measure around 701 sq.m GIA (and around 620 sq.m GIA if the development was to connect to the District Energy Network, DEN). Whilst there would be a reduction in Class E floorspace across the ground floor as a whole, such floorspace calculation is simplistic and fails to take into account the 'back of house' (BoH) nature of much of the existing ground floor area, which takes the form of store rooms, W/Cs etc. and thus is not accessible to the public and does not form part of 'tradeable' floorspace.

Moreover, the proposed development would provide a notable amount of modern, high quality flexible Class E floorspace at ground floor level which would be prominent on Church Street East, Chobham Road and Christchurch Way, and which would provide fully active frontages along both Church Street East and Christchurch Way, and a mostly active frontage along Chobham Road (only the bin store, substation and x2 fire exits would be non-active frontage extents). The provision of modern, high quality flexible Class E floorspace at ground floor level would enhance the commercial attractiveness, vitality and viability of this part of Woking Town Centre. Moreover, at first floor level the proposed development would provide a further 1,364 sq.m GIA of flexible Class E floorspace. As such, the proposed development would provide around 2,204 sq.m GIA in total of flexible Class E floorspace, which would be in addition to the (approx. 12,639 sq.m GIA) Office (Class E(g)) floorspace at higher levels.

33. The ground floor Class E space is designed to be capable of subdivision or amalgamation in order to accommodate a range of uses in the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors depending on operator demand. The first floor space has been designed such that operators can take double height space should that suit their requirement [the Design & Access Statement illustrates this further]. It is considered the proposed flexible Class E uses at ground (and first) floor levels are the best way to contribute to the vitality and viability of Woking Town Centre and to maintain active frontages in the Primary Shopping Area, and this Secondary Shopping Frontage. Flexible Class E uses include a broad and diverse range of uses which principally serve the needs of visiting members of the public and or are suitable for a town centre area and provide for new uses which may emerge and are suitable for a town centre area.
34. The proposed development will reenvision the current inactive and unengaged frontages along Chobham Road and Christchurch Way into an animated active frontage around all edges of the building through the provision of shopfronts serving the Class E (commercial, business and service) units with improved public realm. The flexible Class E units will likely be frequented by the future office occupiers of the proposed development in addition to the wider residents/visitors of Woking frequenting this new destination in Woking Town Centre. Spill out areas are intended to be provided along the perimeters for shop or other commercial opportunity with the aim being to provide relaxation and leisure as well as an attractive environment for shopping and eating.
35. Given the existing uses fall principally within Class E (with the exception of small areas within *sui generis* use, which is not protected by Development Plan policy) and that the proposed uses also fall within Class E, there is no 'loss' of floorspace and therefore the proposed development is acceptable in respect of spatial strategy and the principle of development, in accordance with Policies CS1 and CS2 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012).
36. Clearly, the proposed development would also contain a significant quantum of office floorspace between second and tenth floor levels (inclusive), this would amount to a total of 16,309 sq.m of office space, comprising:
  - 12,639 sq.m GIA of dedicated Class E Grade A office accommodation;
  - 721 sq.m GIA of office amenity space; and
  - 2,949 sq.m GIA of core/plant office ancillary space.
37. The office floorspace has been flexibly designed to be partitioned up to accommodate a number of different sized businesses or alternatively become a headquarters (HQ)



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building for a large occupier. The applicant states that *“Single floorplates meet the size requirements of a number of requirements in the market and multiple floors will allow larger businesses to acquire larger space in a town centre environment that is not on offer in a number of competing surrounding towns such as Weybridge, Chertsey or Staines. The space has the potential to generate over 1,000 FTE jobs”* (Planning Statement, paragraph 7.18).

38. The Planning Statement contains, at Appendix 3, a Woking Office Review report, prepared by CBRE. This report provides an overview of the Woking office market, taking into account current and future office supply in and around Woking, occupier demand levels and general key market trends. This report concludes as follows:

*“there is significant shortage of Grade A space in the town, at a time of extremely strong occupier demand for office space in Woking by existing businesses as well as businesses in neighbouring office centres. This is highlighted by the deals transactions under offer and the lack of supply shown in Appendix 1 [of the CBRE report], almost all of which won't be available by the end of 2023 and well before planning committee decision is made on this project. Simply put there will only be c20,000 sq ft of Grade A office space in Woking by end of 2023 and then there will be no new Grade A space available until the Chobham Road site arrives. Woking will have a significant shortage of office space available compared to annual take up and given there is no future new supply coming forward this needs to be addressed in the town to avoid Woking town centre losing its appeal as a key place to both work and live. Woking already falls significantly short on grade a space compared to neighbouring centres and wider office centres such as Guildford, Reading, Maidenhead, Staines and other key towns in the south east, which will naturally see occupier demand go elsewhere if Woking is unable to offer sufficient high quality and sustainable Grade A space in the town.”*

39. At this point it is important to stress that the applicant has already made a very significant financial investment (i.e., architectural and other professional fees, the statutory planning application fee, legal fees and land assembly costs etc.) in order to prepare and submit this planning application. Clearly, the Planning Committee must determine the planning application only on planning grounds. The applicant is a private developer, and it is a commercial decision for the applicant, whether or not to proceed with the proposed development should planning permission be granted. However, there is no reason to doubt that the applicant fully intends to construct the proposed development (should planning permission be granted) and clearly they would not make a decision to do unless they were content that a sufficient market demand exists for the proposed office and other (i.e., flexible Class E) floorspace. As set out in this report, the proposed office and other (i.e., flexible Class E) floorspace are town centre uses which are acceptable in principle, in this Woking Town Centre location, in land use planning terms.

40. The Planning Statement states that (at paragraph 7.19):

*“At the outset, the Applicant engaged with CBRE to advise on the potential market for a new commercial development. The Woking Office Review prepared by CBRE attached at Appendix 3 [of the Planning Statement] provides an overview of the Woking office market, taking into account current and future office supply in and around Woking, occupier demand levels and general key market trends. The Review highlights that occupier demand is high as employers look to relocate to the best, most flexible space in the market in the*

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*wake of the Covid pandemic. At the same time, as with many markets in the South East, the supply of Grade A office space is limited. There is a distinct lack of speculative development and Grade A refurbishments underway or scheduled to happen for the foreseeable due to cost rises and a lack of good sites available, with this downward trend expected to continue creating a supply and demand imbalance.”*

41. The Planning Statement also states that (at paragraph 7.21):

*“The clear trend is for occupiers to choose the best in class accommodation, close to good public transport and larger conurbations which offer greater amenities to attract employees. Over and above the office space itself are additional services such as active and hotel like reception areas with cafes and co-work space, rooftop amenity/break out spaces for enjoyment, entertainment and exercise and ‘end of journey’ facilities such as secure cycle parking, a cycle maintenance ‘spa’, showers and storage that enable employers to offer a healthy working environment. In addition to this, any new office building will need to meet an EPC Rating of A and offer ratings such as BREEAM/WELL to optimise how buildings are designed and run to support human health and wellbeing.”*

42. The site provides an excellent opportunity to bring forward a Grade A office development centrally located within Woking Town Centre, where national and local planning policy seeks to direct such development. So far as potential planning conditions are concerned, it is well settled law that a planning condition can preclude a change of use within a single Use Class (for example within Use Class E, notwithstanding section 55(2)(f) and Article 3(1) of the Use Classes Order 1987). Such a planning condition is recommended in this instance (recommended condition 07 refers) to prevent a potential future change of use (without planning permission) from Class E(g) (Office) to any other use(s) which are subsumed within Class E (for example to a use within Class E(a) etc.). The applicant is agreeable to this condition given that their intention is to provide Grade A office floorspace between second and tenth floor levels (inclusive), with the flexible Class E use restricted to ground and first floor levels (whereby recommended condition 06 refers).
43. The proposed development would not only generate and/or retain employment opportunities and jobs within Woking Town Centre but would contribute to the supply chain in the area and result in increased vitality and activity within this eastern part of Woking Town Centre, boosting the economy throughout the day (i.e., lunchtime, evening and night time economy).
44. The NPPF (December 2023) requires that local planning policies promote a positive approach to the growth, management and adaptation of town centres and provide a diverse retail and leisure offer which reflects the individuality of the centre. The recognition that town centres are at the heart of communities is also established and thus their vitality, viability and growth is to be supported (paragraph 90). The site falls within the Woking Town Centre boundary and falls within the Primary Shopping Area as well as a Secondary Shopping Frontage. Consequently the proposed uses are in accordance with Policies CS1 and CS2 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012).

### Employment and economic activity

45. One of the core objectives of achieving sustainable development, as the NPPF (December 2023), is an economic objective – to support economic growth and

productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.

46. The Planning Statement contains, at Appendix 4, an Economic Benefits Summary (prepared by Savills). This summary identifies that the economic benefits of the proposed development would be:
- Providing a new flexible commercial development, including a significant quantum of Grade A office floorspace, of high quality design that contributes to the economy and reinforces Woking's status as a principal economic hub in the region;
  - Creating 144 estimated annual average on-site full time equivalent (FTE) jobs during the construction phase;
  - Creating 1,022 estimated permanent on-site FTE jobs, a significant increase on the circa 100 estimated on-site FTE jobs as existing;
  - Adding £66 million per annum net additional Gross Value Added upon (targeted) completion in 2026 to the economy (GVA associated with the number of jobs);
  - Generating £940k estimated in annual local spend on work lunches by the new on-site workforce with a significant boost to the day and night time economy through linked trips to local shops, bars, restaurants, theatre and cinema.
47. As such, it is clear that the employment and economic activity benefits of the proposed development would be very significant, and this factor weighs heavily in favour of the proposed development.

*Conclusion on Spatial Strategy and Principle of development*

48. Overall, the proposed development is a major opportunity for regeneration of previously developed land in the built-up urban area within Woking Town Centre, the principal centre of the Borough. The proposed Commercial, Business and Service floorspace, most particularly the proposed Grade A office floorspace, would have significant economic benefits during both construction and operation, and would provide a range of opportunities for the intensified generation, and retention, of employment opportunities, jobs and economic activity within Woking Town Centre.

**The effect on the character and appearance of the area, including on nearby heritage assets**

*Policy approach to tall buildings in Woking Town Centre*

49. Woking is a town that is experiencing significant growth and regeneration. This is in large part due to the constraints that affect large parts of the Borough, including Green Belt and areas covered by environmental restrictions (i.e., TBH SPA etc.).
50. Policy CS1 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) recognises the constraints to development by directing most new development to “*previously developed land in the town, district and local centres, which offers the best access to a range of services and facilities*”. Table 2 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) sets out a Hierarchy of Centres within the Borough, with Woking Town Centre identified at the top of this hierarchy and therefore the primary focus for sustainable growth due, amongst other things, to its transport links and accessibility to shops and services.

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51. To date the major redevelopment and/or regeneration projects have mainly taken place in the western part of Woking Town Centre. These include Victoria Place, which comprises large scale buildings including towers rising up to 34 storeys. Planning permission was granted on appeal for buildings rising up to 37 storeys at Nos.20-32 Goldsworth Road (WBC Ref: PLAN/2020/0568, Appeal Ref: APP/A3655/W/21/3276474) (often referred to as 'EcoWorld'). That development will extend the cluster of tall buildings in a westerly direction. More recently planning permission was granted on appeal at Crown Place (WBC Ref: PLAN/2019/1141, Appeal Ref: APP/A3655/W/20/3259819), for a development which includes towers rising up to 22, 25 and 28 storeys within the eastern part of Woking Town Centre.
52. Policy CS1 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) encourages high-density and well-designed development within Woking Town Centre stating that *"The town centre is designated as a centre to undergo significant change...[and that] In the town centre, well designed, high density development that could include tall buildings and which enhances its image will be encouraged, but without compromising on its character and appearance and that of nearby areas"*. Policy CS2 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) states that *"The Town Centre is the preferred location for town centre uses and high density residential development. New development proposals should deliver high quality, well designed public spaces and buildings, which make efficient use of land, contribute to the functionality of the centre and add to its attractiveness and competitiveness."*
53. As the Inspector stated within the recent Crown Place appeal decision (at paragraph 11) *"What comprises a tall building is not specified in the development plan, although the Woking Design Supplementary Planning Document (2015) (the Design SPD) indicates that, bearing in mind prevailing heights in the town centre, a tall building would generally be regarded as above 6 storeys. There is no locational differentiation as to where such buildings should go, either in the CS or the Design SPD."*
54. Due to the nature of the issues, there is considerable overlap between heritage and townscape/design. This report is therefore structured with townscape character and appearance first, and then an assessment in respect of heritage, and then design of the proposed development. This is considered the most logical format in light of the significant overlap between the topics.

### Demolition of Existing Buildings

55. The application has been submitted with a Heritage, Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment, dated September 2023 (hereafter referred to for brevity as the HTVIA) which identifies that the site does not contain any heritage assets, with no statutory listed buildings (designated heritage assets), or locally listed buildings (non-designated heritage assets), falling within the site boundary. In addition, the site does not fall within any Conservation Area (designated heritage asset) and does not adjoin any Conservation Area.
56. The HTVIA identifies that a historic map regression illustrates the changes within the site and its surroundings between 1873 and 1970. The OS map of 1870-1873 indicates that the site was undeveloped at this time, albeit that Chobham Road ran along the north-east boundary of the site, and Church Path on a diagonal axis to the south-west. The HTVIA identifies that development on the site first occurred between 1873 and 1896 and comprised of terraced housing within the northern and southern parts of the site fronting Chobham Road, including the current Nos.43-45 Chobham Road, which comprises a paired two-storey cottage, with a symmetrical composition

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formed by canted bays and gabled dormers, although the ground floor of Nos.43-45 Chobham Road is entirely modern and has been extended to the back of the pavement.

57. The HTVIA identifies that Nos.33-41A Chobham Road (incl.) appear by the time of the 1914-1916 map and, based on their architectural style, it is likely they were constructed shortly after the 1896 map. The side elevation of No.41A Chobham Road features a ghost sign that reads 'Allnutt Brothers – corn & seed store', who were trading at the turn of the century. Nos.37-41A Chobham Road are architecturally similar, which would suggest they were built in the same phase. The HTVIA identifies that Nos.33 and 35 Chobham Road differ in style to Nos.37-41A, although are likely from a similar period, originally constructed as two storey buildings in brick (although since painted), and that, whilst they are architecturally plain, they have some sense of hierarchy through the proportion of sash windows at first floor level with keystone architraves, and that at some point after 1955 the original roof and dormers were replaced with a third-floor brick extension.
58. The HTVIA includes a historic photograph from around 1955, looking south along Chobham Road (in which the site is on the right-hand side), it is shown alongside a recent site visit photograph, which shows the alterations that have been made to the Chobham Road buildings, including the removal of the dormer windows on Nos.33 and 35 Chobham Road and construction of upper storeys (with modern UPVC windows) to match Nos.37-41A Chobham Road. Over time the historic Chobham Road shopfronts have been lost (all buildings now having modern shopfronts), and there have been fenestration alterations to some of the properties, including, at Nos.41-41A Chobham Road, the replacement of first floor sash windows with timber casements of inappropriate proportions, the removal of first floor pediments and central mullions to windows and the replacement of second floor sash windows with timber casements, all of which dilute the architectural value of these buildings.
59. The HTVIA sets out that the Chobham Road buildings were originally configured with lean-to extensions at the rear, forming back-to-backs, but that rear elevations of these buildings have been significantly altered over time through incremental extensions and alterations. These have served to obscure the historic configuration.
60. The HTVIA states that, taken as a whole, the Chobham Road elevation would have originally featured different compositions representing the phases of development, and that, whilst it has some limited architectural merit, it is generally plain and is not remarkable nor of any notoriety, and does not exhibit any features of particular architectural or historic interest, with its architectural uniformity and aesthetic value having, over time, been undermined by piecemeal and incremental extensions and alterations. Indeed, there are better examples to be found elsewhere, such as within the Woking Town Centre Conservation Area. In addition, the loss of the south part of the terrace to construct Cleary Court in the 1980s, and the re-configuration of Church Path to create Christchurch Way around the same time, has served to erode the legibility of the historic street pattern and isolate the surviving terrace of Nos.33-45 Chobham Road in the townscape.
61. The HTVIA sets out that Cleary Court replaced the historic terraces in the southern part of the site with the roads also having been reconfigured to create Christchurch Way. The HTVIA sets out that Cleary Court, constructed in the 1980s, forms a detracting element in the streetscape and is of ordinary to poor architectural quality, being a utilitarian red brick building with an overhanging mansard roof and UPVC fenestration set within brick piers panels. Cleary Court is bounded by hardstanding

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and has no public realm offering, it does not relate to the historic street pattern or to the adjacent surviving terrace at Nos.33-45 Chobham Road.

62. Overall, the HTVIA concludes that the terrace at Nos.33-45 Chobham Road is not of sufficient heritage interest to warrant consideration as a non-designated heritage asset (to be clear no part of the terrace is presently identified as a non-designated heritage asset by the Council). Given its age (dates from the 1980s), and poor to ordinary architectural quality, Cleary Court is not considered to constitute a non-designated heritage asset (again, to be clear, Cleary Court is not presently identified as a non-designated heritage asset by the Council).
63. The Council's Built Heritage Advisor comments that, the (heritage value) assessment of the existing buildings on the site is sound and that they have no comment on that part of the HTVIA. Overall, for the reasoning set out previously (including the assessment contained within the HTVIA), no objection is raised in respect of the principle of demolishing all existing buildings and structures within the site, subject to the quality of the replacement building, and the impact of the replacement building on townscape character and appearance and nearby built heritage assets, topics which will be considered subsequently within this report.

### Townscape character and appearance

64. The HTVIA includes a Townscape Character Area Plan (TCAP), identifying the following Townscape Character Areas (TCAs) within a 500 metre radius of the site:
- 1 - Town Centre
  - 2 - Walton Road
  - 3 - Heathside and The Hockerings
  - 4 - Wheatsheaf
  - 5 - Horsell
65. The HTVIA identifies that the proposed development does not have the potential to impact on the following TCAs given that it would only be glimpsed from these locations (due to distance and/or intervening existing buildings and/or tree/vegetation cover), and would not have any impact on the townscape functions of these areas:
- 2 - Walton Road
  - 3 - Heathside and The Hockerings
  - 5 - Horsell

66. The site is located within TCA 1 (Town Centre) and would be readily visible from TCA 4 (Wheatsheaf).

### Townscape Character Area 1 (Town Centre)

67. The HTVIA identifies that the existing townscape of TCA 1 (Town Centre) is a product of development since the late-18th and early-19th Century, when the Basingstoke Canal was completed in 1794 and followed by the construction of Woking railway station (then known as Woking Common Station) in 1838, both of which provided Woking with vastly improved trading capabilities, in particular with London. The area around the railway station becoming the central focus of development within the town. During the same period, Woking also established a linked dependency with London through the implementation of Brookwood Cemetery, which was conceived

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by the London Necropolis and National Mausoleum Company (LNNMC) in 1849 to meet rising demand from London's growth. Having bought 5,000 acres of common land in the early 1850s, the LNNMC used only 400 acres to develop Brookwood Cemetery. The rest of the land was sold in 1859.

68. Early development of Woking was largely focussed to the north of the railway station, buildings from the late Victorian and Edwardian eras are typically located around the railway stations at Brookwood, Woking and West Byfleet. Woking's population increased exponentially through the late-19th century with new residential properties and shops. Further extensive development occurred between the end of the 19th Century and the 1930s, resulting in most greenfield land in central Woking being infilled, including for institutional buildings to cater for the growing population. In the early 1970s, Woking Town Centre was comprehensively redeveloped, sweeping away much of the historic townscape. By the 1980s Woking was recognised as a commuter town and an accessible office location. The result is many single use, commercial buildings, some with areas of car parking which sit in amongst pockets of earlier development which the HTVIA considers is, on the whole, of poor to ordinary quality, citing existing Cleary Court as evidence of this type of development. Woking Town Centre has been subject to continued iterative redevelopment and whilst some of the older development has survived intact, and there are some statutory and locally listed buildings (principally, although not exclusively, within the Woking Town Centre Conservation Area), none are located within the site.
69. The Woking Character Study (2010) states that: *“Much of Woking’s original Victorian town centre has been demolished. The town centre has been extensively redeveloped over the last forty years, with Listed Christ Church the only remaining historic building in the shopping and commercial core. There has been a large amount of office and retail development within the town centre, with most buildings displaying individual architectural design. Buildings are large and typically have at least three storeys. The main Town Square and surrounding streets are pedestrianised.”*
70. More recently development of tall buildings within Woking Town Centre have delivered a step-change in scale, height and massing, including the introduction of buildings of a contemporary character, including the recent cluster of high density residential-led mixed use tall buildings as part of the Victoria Place development. Even more recently, this more eastern part of Woking Town Centre, has emerged as a focus for regeneration and the introduction of tall buildings. The Crown Place scheme, allowed on appeal in November 2022, includes construction of buildings up to 28 storeys in height and remains extant until November 2025.
71. The HTVIA sets out that the site, located within the north part of TCA 1, is surrounded by roads (i.e., Church Street East, Chobham Road and Christchurch Way), that the Victorian terrace within the north part of the site has active frontages to Chobham Road, reflecting the historic arrangement, and that to the rear, the creation of Christchurch Way necessitated the clearance of historic terraces which would formerly have run along Church Path, the result being that Christchurch Way is bounded by the rear of the Chobham Road terrace, with rather haphazard rear extensions and car parking areas creating a hostile and uninviting road frontage. There is no meaningful soft landscape and/or planting on the site at present and public realm is limited to the pavements and roads around its edge. Existing Cleary Court, to the south of the site, contrasts with the terraces to the north in architectural style and massing, with, the HTVIA advances, the result being a disjointed and unattractive townscape character.

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72. Overall, the age, condition, scale, and materiality of buildings in Woking Town Centre is mixed and there has recently been a step change in scale, height and character of buildings, including a number of tall buildings (both constructed, extant and proposed).
73. The proposed development would directly affect TCA 1, including through the construction of a tall new building (of up to 11 storeys). The HTVIA sets out that the proposed development seeks to transform the experience of the site and its surrounding area, improving the existing configuration of buildings by offering a cohesive and considered design approach for the site that better relates to and links with its surroundings.
74. The proposed development would provide a new active frontage along Christchurch Way, providing flexible Class E space at ground floor, together with the main entrance to the office component of the building. The building line along Christchurch Way would be set back to enable ample space for pedestrians and so as to deliver landscaping improvements. The result would be a dynamic and attractive ground floor experience, which would encourage pedestrian movement and activate this currently rather inactive and vehicular-dominated area. The ground floor layout would reflect the historic alignment of Church Path, which formerly ran at a diagonal axis in this location before being replaced by Christchurch Way. This would serve to link the route past the site with Church Path to the south, increasing pedestrian permeability and legibility through this part of the Town Centre.
75. The south-west corner of the proposed building is chamfered, in order to frame views of Grade II listed Christ Church opposite and create a direct visual link between the two, the chamfering also softens the building edge, with rich brick detailing making it a point of emphasis. The selection of brick as the principal material for the southern elevations reflects the townscape character in these locations, with an overall character of brick-led historic buildings, whereas the glazed northern element is appropriate in the context of the existing commercial buildings in this location, for example Victoria Gate, Chobham Road and ONE, No.1 Christchurch Way. The two contrasting building elements are linked by the consistent rhythm and proportions of the single order facade grid, and by the single storey flexible Class E units fronting Chobham Road. The brick bays at ground floor respond to the widths of the existing Victorian terraces on Chobham Road which would be replaced, and the double height entrance would be tempered by the single order facade grid of the upper storeys which better relates with the surrounding context.
76. The building would incorporate stepped terraces to the south, principally in response to the setting of Christ Church so as to reduce the height of the building down towards the south. The upper storeys would be faced in lighter coloured materials, so they are visually recessive. The taller height (up to 11 storeys) is concentrated to the north of the site where the townscape context is less sensitive and in order to provide a marker for the entrance into Woking Town Centre from the north.
77. The proposals would offer notable public realm and green infrastructure enhancements. The landscape design will provide a variety of public realm spaces, including outdoor seating and planting areas to the north-west and south-east which would relate to and complement the active (flexible Class E) ground floor uses. Green infrastructure will be provided throughout the site, comprising a mix of planting, including new street and other trees, roof terraces will also incorporate new planting.



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78. The HTVIA advances that the proposed development would provide a considered, contextual response to townscape character, relating better with its surroundings than the existing buildings on the site, which are disjointed, with fragmentary and isolated remains of the Victorian terrace on Chobham Road relating poorly with the unattractive and dated Cleary Court to the south. The HTVIA also advances that whilst much pedestrian movement is concentrated along Commercial Way and surrounding secondary and tertiary routes to the south, Chobham Road is a principal route linking the town centre with the north, and the proposal represents the opportunity for re-establishing the historic route of Church Path into Christchurch Way.

### Townscape Character Area 4 (Wheatsheaf)

79. The proposed development would indirectly affect TCA 4 (Wheatsheaf), which comprises (where to the north of Victoria Way) the area to each side of Chobham Road, which is one of the main roads leading into Woking Town Centre from the north. TCA 4 roughly equates to the Wheatsheaf Conservation Area but also includes Wheatsheaf Common, a recreational green space on the eastern side of Chobham Road (and which is designated as Green Belt and Common Land on the Council's Proposals Map). The housing on the eastern side of Chobham Road principally consists of high quality mid-to-late Victorian/Edwardian detached and semi-detached houses. On the western side of Chobham Road the townscape is more mixed, and includes a number of locally listed buildings, such as the Wheatsheaf Public House.
80. The HTVIA sets out that the proposed development would be located at the apex of the axial route along Chobham Road into Woking Town Centre from TCA 4 (Wheatsheaf). Chobham Road provides vehicular and pedestrian access into Woking Town Centre and, as a consequence, the character of this main road is markedly different from the adjacent residential streets (i.e., Ferndale Road, The Grove and Broomhall Road), with an obvious and apparent proximity to the principal centre of the Borough (Woking Town Centre) created by the clear and direct sight lines.
81. The relevant verified views within the HTVIA illustrate how the proposed development would perform as a marker for the town centre when approaching from TCA 4 from the north, aiding legibility and wayfinding of the town centre from within TCA 4. This would most clearly be the case on the approach into Woking Town Centre southwards along Chobham Road, where the proposed development would be seen clearly at the end of the axial route. In closer views, the public realm enhancements and active ground floor uses (flexible Class E) would come into view, encouraging movement and exploration through the site and into Woking Town Centre. The landscaping improvements would link with the existing area of public realm in the location of the HG Wells Statue at the juncture between TCA 1 and 4, creating new links and connectivity.
82. When seen from TCA 4, the simple glazed design of the northern element of the proposed development would form an attractive gateway into Woking Town Centre, the use of contemporary materials and a simple form, would be appropriate in this context.

### Proposed development plus cumulative (committed/approved) schemes

83. The HTVIA also considers the townscape impacts of the proposed development plus cumulative (committed/approved) schemes, setting out that relevant committed/approved schemes are generally located a considerable distance from the

site including the approved schemes at Portugal Road & Marlborough Road (ref: PLAN/2019/0904), and EcoWorld, Goldsworth Road (ref: PLAN/2020/0568). It identifies that the approved schemes at the Former Rat & Parrot PH, No.46 Chertsey Road (ref: PLAN/2017/0802) and Crown Place, Chertsey Road (ref: PLAN/2019/1141) are much more proximate to the site. The HTVIA identifies that in this scenario the scale of development in this eastern area of Woking Town Centre will be subservient to the tallest existing and approved development, which centres around the junction of Goldsworth Road and High Street in the more westerly part of the town centre (i.e., completed Victoria Place and the extant EcoWorld scheme) and that there will, therefore, be a balance to the overall townscape composition that is readily recognisable, and which reinforces a hierarchy. It identifies that the approved schemes will principally comprise residential-led development (i.e., Crown Place) and that, as a commercial scheme the proposed development will thus add to the mix of use, and vitality of development in the area, encouraging pedestrian movement and animation along Church Street East in particular. The HTVIA identifies that the approved schemes are likely to be complementary to the appearance and function of TCA 1, reinforcing the continued regeneration of this more eastern area of Woking Town Centre.

*Proposed development plus cumulative (committed/approved) schemes and pending/emerging schemes (i.e., those not yet approved)*

84. The HTVIA identifies that pending schemes within close proximity to the site comprise that at Concord and Griffin House (ref: PLAN/2018/0660) and that much more recently submitted at the Former BHS, No.81 Commercial Way (ref: PLAN/2023/0911) and that, if these pending schemes are approved, and subsequently built out, that they would intensify the townscape transformation around the site. This scenario would provide further modern transformational development in the vicinity of the site with corresponding public realm improvements. The HTVIA identifies that the public realm plan for the proposed development at Concord and Griffin House (ref: PLAN/2018/0660) illustrates that the proposed building footprint (of that proposed development) would respond to the historic alignment of Church Path, which would complement and echo the plan form of the proposed development which is also aligned to reflect the historic route, and that landscaping would be delivered along Christchurch Way in the form of pockets of planting, similar to the proposed development opposite.

*Built heritage legislation, policy and guidance*

85. The proposed development has the potential to affect the setting of statutory listed buildings, including Grade II listed Christ Church and Woking War Memorial. In respect of statutory listed buildings Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that *“In considering whether to grant planning permission [or permission in principle] for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses”*.
86. The proposed development does not involve any buildings or other land in a Conservation Area and, therefore, Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is not engaged because no Conservation Area would be directly affected. This is because the setting of a Conservation Area is not enshrined in legislation and therefore does not attract the weight of statutory protection. However, it is clear that the proposed development, and the application

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submission (most particularly the HTVIA), has been designed and prepared bearing in mind that the impact on the setting of a Conservation Area, as a designated heritage receptor, is nonetheless enshrined in planning policy (i.e., the NPPF).

87. It has been confirmed that Parliament's intention in enacting section 66(1) of the 1990 Act was that decision makers should give "*considerable importance and weight*" to the desirability of preserving the setting of listed buildings, where "*preserve*" means to "*to do no harm*". This duty must be borne in mind when considering any harm that may accrue and the balancing of such harm against public benefits as required by the NPPF (December 2023). The Secretary of State has confirmed that 'considerable importance and weight' is not synonymous with 'overriding importance and weight'. Importantly, the meaning of preservation in this context, as informed by case law, is taken to be the avoidance of harm.
88. Chapter 16 of the NPPF (December 2023) (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment) sets out the Government's policies regarding planning and the historic environment. Paragraph 200 states that "*In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary*".
89. 'Significance' (for heritage policy) is defined in the NPPF (December 2023) (Annex 2: Glossary) as:
- "The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting"*.
90. 'Setting of a heritage asset' is defined in the NPPF (December 2023) (Annex 2: Glossary) as:
- "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"*.
91. Paragraph 201 states that "*Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.*"
92. Paragraph 203 states that "*In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:*
- a) *the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
  - b) *the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*

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- c) *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.*"
93. Paragraph 205 states that *"When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance."* Annex 2 (Glossary) of the NPPF (December 2023) defines *"Conservation (for heritage policy): The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance"*.
94. Paragraph 206 states that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification and paragraph 207 states that *"Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:*
- a) *the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and*
  - b) *no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and*
  - c) *conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and*
  - d) *the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use."*
95. Paragraph 208 states that *"Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use."*
96. Policy CS20 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) states that:
- "New development must respect and enhance the character and appearance of the area in which it is proposed whilst making the best use of the land available. New development should also make a positive contribution to the character, distinctiveness and significance of the historic environment, including heritage assets at risk through neglect, decay or other threats.*
- The heritage assets of the Borough will be protected and enhanced in accordance with relevant legislation and national guidance as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. The definition of what comprises the heritage assets of the Borough is included in the Glossary and also where relevant identified on the Proposals Map. There will be a presumption against any development that will be harmful to a listed building."*
97. It should be noted, that in the Crown Place appeal decision (Appeal Ref: APP/A3655/W/20/3259819, Decision date: 3 November 2022), the Inspector stated (at paragraph 28) that *"Policy CS20 in the CS includes a presumption against any development that is harmful to a listed building and requires it to make a positive contribution to the character, distinctiveness and significance of the historic*

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*environment. Reference is made to the Framework in the policy, but it seems to me that it is not altogether consistent because there is an absence of reference to any balance against public benefits.”*

98. Policy DM20 of the Development Management Policies DPD (2016) states:

*“A proposal affecting the character, appearance and/or setting of heritage assets will be required to show:*

- that the works or development preserve and/or enhance the heritage asset and/or its setting in terms of quality of design and layout (scale, form, bulk, height, character, street pattern and features), materials (colour and texture) and historic street pattern of the area;*
- how relevant features and elements that contribute to the heritage asset’s significance and character will be conserved and/or reinstated if they have been lost. This includes chimneys, windows and doors, boundary treatments, original roof coverings, as well as internal features such as fireplaces, plaster cornices, doors, architraves, panelling and any walls in Listed Buildings;*
- where appropriate, that external elements such as street furniture, lighting and paving are sympathetically designed (further guidance is provided within the Design SPD);*
- that it would not have an adverse impact on views of or from the heritage asset or of the open spaces, trees or street scene which contributes positively to any asset and its setting; and*
- that the use of the heritage asset is compatible with the conservation of its significance (i.e. uses that are not compatible with or damaging to the significance of the asset should be avoided). In appropriate cases the relaxation of policies controlling change of use may be considered to secure the retention of the building.*

*The Council will not permit the demolition of heritage assets except in exceptional circumstances. Where partial or total demolition of a heritage asset is permitted in exceptional circumstances, a high standard of design will be required in any replacement building. Where possible, special elements of the building should be salvaged and re-used in the development scheme. The applicant will also be required to:*

- instigate a programme of recording of the lost asset; and*
- ensure the publication of that record in an appropriate form.”*

99. It must also be borne in mind however that setting is not an asset in its own right. The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 - 2nd Edition, December 2017 (hereafter referred to for brevity as GPA3) states that *“Its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset or to the ability to appreciate that significance”* and it provides *“advice on understanding setting and how it may contribute to the significance of heritage assets”*, recommending a staged approach to proportionate decision taking. If, having carried out stages one to four, a proposed development is held to cause harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, the NPPF (December 2023) stipulates it be categorised as either ‘less than substantial’ or ‘substantial’, the NPPF (December 2023) does not define ‘substantial’, and the PPG simply states it is a ‘high test.’

100. Lord Justice Lindblom, in the Court of Appeal, stated that *“what amounts to ‘substantial harm’ or ‘less than substantial harm’ in a particular case will always*

*depend on the circumstances', based on 'matters of fact and planning judgment'" (Bramshill v SSHCLG [2021] EWCA Civ 320). A separate Court of Appeal judgement confirmed that where a development would affect a listed building or its setting in different ways, some positive and some negative, the decision maker may conclude that although each of the effects has an impact, taken together there is no overall adverse effect on the listed building (Palmer v Herefordshire Council & Anor [2016] EWCA Civ 1061). This approach was upheld by Lord Justice Lindblom who stated that the NPPF policies "do not preclude a balancing exercise as part of the decision-making process" (Bramshill v SSHCLG [2021] EWCA Civ 320). Where public benefits - including heritage benefits - outweigh the identified harm, then planning permission may be granted subject to a proportionate assessment being undertaken.*

*Effect on built heritage assets*

101. The site does not contain any designated built heritage assets (i.e., statutory listed buildings, conservation areas) nor does it contain any non-designated built heritage assets (i.e., locally listed buildings). As such, any impacts on built heritage assets are only indirect (i.e., development within their setting).
102. Due to the major nature of the proposed development in this instance, and the proximity of the site to several built heritage assets (both designated and non-designated) the Council has appointed an independent built heritage consultant (Jo Evans, at the time a Director at RPS). Jo Evans attended meeting(s) at pre-application stage, including Design Review Panel attendance (alongside Planning Officers), and has been consulted at planning application stage.

*Woking Town Centre Conservation Area (WTCCA), including locally listed buildings within*

103. The site is around 80 metres north-west of the closest boundary of the Woking Town Centre Conservation Area (WTCCA), and largely set beyond (i.e., north-west of) intervening No.81 Commercial Way (Former BHS store). The WTCCA comprises the Victorian core of the Town Centre to the north of the railway station and is historically important as it largely comprises the original commercial developments of Woking Town Centre which were developed in association with the railway station following the land sale of 1859 by the London Necropolis and National Mausoleum Company (LNNMC). Although Commercial Way and Chertsey Road existed as routes prior to the land sale of 1859, all the street patterns and building plots within the area have remained largely unchanged from the Town Plan prepared for the LNNMC, specifically for the land disposal. In 1900 the High Street, Broadway and Chertsey Road were the principal shopping and business streets in the Town Centre and the majority of the original buildings remain.
104. The character of the WTCCA is mainly that of late Victorian and Edwardian purpose-built shopping parades, mostly of three storey construction, interspersed with individually designed period buildings. The architectural quality of buildings varies considerably and although none of the buildings are statutory listed many have interesting features and attractive architectural ornamentation such as decorative terracotta panels at the first floor level and many are locally listed. The limited historical period during which most of the buildings in the WTCCA were constructed is such that, taken together, buildings within each street have a group value, which gives the area a special character.

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105. As SPG Heritage of Woking (2000) states *“With the development of the Wolsey Place Shopping Centre in the early 1970’s and its more recent refurbishment, together with the pedestrianisation of Commercial Way, the focus of the shopping centre has gradually moved away from the High Street, Chertsey Road area and gravitated toward more recent shopping developments in Woking”* including The Peacocks Shopping Centre. The SPG also states that *“although many properties may have been spared by being less subjected to commercial pressure for redevelopment, a number of properties have become jaded in appearance through neglect, even though most of their fabric is still intact. Additionally, many of the shopfronts on the Victorian and Edwardian buildings have been altered or replaced by unsympathetic designs in inappropriate materials and there have been a limited number of modern infill redevelopments...which have detracted from the coherent character of the area and contributed to the resulting decline in the quality of the visual environment”*. There are no statutory listed buildings in the WTCCA although there are a number of locally listed buildings, including (where closest to the site) the O’Neil’s Public House and No.1 Chobham Road, both Neo-Queen Anne style red brick buildings with dormer windows, the latter with stone facing to ground floor.
106. The significance of the WTCCA is mainly derived from its historic value and, to a lesser extent, its architectural value in terms of individual buildings as well as building groups. In terms of the setting of the WTCCA in the Crown Place appeal decision the Inspector stated (at paragraph 19) that *“The area beyond the boundaries [of the WTCCA] seems to me to contribute relatively little to significance. This is because there is not much of the Victorian townscape remaining and redevelopment has taken place that has been generally unsympathetic in terms of its grain and massing”*. In respect of the Woking Town Centre Conservation Area (WTCCA) this was designated in 1991, it has since been subject to change.
107. The WTCCA is experienced within a distinctly urban context; it is surrounded by late twentieth century and modern built development which indicates the expansion of Woking Town Centre and the movement of its principal retail core towards the area around The Peacocks Shopping Centre. The setting of the WTCCA has therefore been significantly altered through the modern development of the town, including a range of modern architectural styles that juxtapose with the historic core. The character of the surrounding townscape is different within other parts of the setting of the WTCCA, as well as the site, and that this means the WTCCA is a contained historic enclave.
108. The character of the WTCCA is determined to a large extent by the tight and compact grain of the townscape, the layout of the streets and the plot ratios and density in many parts of the WTCCA form a tight and intimate townscape. This is, in some locations within the WTCCA, a greater contributor to its character and significance than the architecture of the buildings themselves.
109. The site and its existing buildings are generally occluded in views from the WTCCA, with only glimpsed views afforded from Chobham Road (at the junction with Chertsey Road). As such, the site has an incidental visual relationship with the WTCCA, and the existing site does not meaningfully contribute to the significance of the WTCCA. Whilst the late Victorian terrace within the site (along Chobham Road) dates from the same period as buildings within the WTCCA, there is no historic or intrinsic relationship between the two.
110. When looking north from Chertsey Road (i.e., from within the WTCCA) towards the site, locally listed Nos.20-24b Chertsey Road sit in the foreground on the left, with the

O'Neil's Public House glimpsed beyond No.26 Chertsey Road on the corner. These two buildings have group value due to their shared architectural appearance, date of construction, scale and materiality. Beyond the immediate environment, the wider setting of these locally listed buildings has been substantially altered and generally comprises modern commercial buildings which contrast with the lower scale historic buildings within the WTCCA. These buildings draw their significance from their inherent local architectural and historic interest and the conservation area setting, the site does not contribute to their heritage interest.

Impact on Woking Town Centre Conservation Area (WTCCA), including locally listed buildings within

111. The HTVIA sets out that the site is located approximately 80 metres north-west of the boundary of the WTCCA and that the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) indicates that visibility of the proposed development from within the WTCCA will be very limited. This is because the proposed development will be occluded along the principal street, Chertsey Road, which runs through the WTCCA, with the exception of around its junction with Chobham Road where the proposed development will be visible in views looking north.
112. The visual impact from around the junction between Chobham Road and Chertsey Road is the subject of a verified view (HTVIA View 3) within the HTVIA which shows that the proposed development will be visible to the rear of the Former BHS, No.81 Commercial Way building. However, the scale of the proposed development would sit below the prevailing building line in the foreground, although will be visible due to the alignment of Chobham Road in this area (i.e., running north-south). However, whilst the proposed development would clearly represent an increase in scale and height compared to the existing buildings, the verified view shows that it would sit comfortably within the existing context due to the separating distance and the adherence to the existing height datum established by surrounding buildings. The verified view also illustrates that the proposed brick materiality selected for the southern elevations of the proposed development draws reference from brick tones prevalent in the WTCCA and results in a pleasingly cohesive visual relationship between the proposed development and the WTCCA in this view, including with the locally listed buildings located to each side of Chobham Road, which both use red brick as the predominant material. Furthermore, the single order facade grid design uses proportions and geometry on a human scale, ensuring that the proposed development visually relates to its surroundings and does not appear incongruous in views from more sensitive locations. The upper storeys of the proposed development step back (to the north) from Church Street East, and thus also step back from the WTCCA, and would utilise a lighter material that would appear more recessive on the skyline.
113. Verified view 13 (located on Church Path), is also located within the WTCCA. The proposed development would be glimpsed from this location due to the alignment of Church Path and the enclosure created by existing buildings. The proposals would be seen in conjunction with other buildings of various periods and would not appear incongruous in the existing street scene, due to the combination of the architectural design and the use of brick as the principal material for the closest element.
114. Overall, the proposed development would not be visible from the majority of the WTCCA and, where visible from the area around the junction of Chobham Road and Chertsey Road, it would sit comfortably in context with the existing built form. In views from within the WTCCA the massing and height of the proposed development would



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not readily draw the eye or distract from the significance of the WTCCA. Where glimpsed, its simple geometrical form would make a positive contribution to the townscape, but it would have no impact on the intrinsic historic and architectural interest of the WTCCA.

115. In conclusion, for the reasoning set out the proposed development would cause no harm to, and would thus preserve, the significance of the Woking Town Centre Conservation Area (WTCCA) and of the most proximate locally listed buildings to the site, which all fall within the WTCCA (i.e., Nos.20-24b Chertsey Road, the O'Neil's Public House & No.26 Chertsey Road). The Council's built heritage consultant agrees with the conclusions that the proposed development would result in no harm to the Woking Town Centre Conservation Area (WTCCA).

### Basingstoke Canal Conservation Area

116. The site is around 65 metres south-east of the closest boundary of the Basingstoke Canal Conservation Area (BCCA) and is separated from it by the intervening commercial building of ONE, No.1 Christchurch Way and the dual-carriageway of Victoria Way. The BCCA was first designated in March 1984 and extended in April 1992. The Basingstoke Canal is a historic canal (completed in 1794) which traverses the Borough (as well as through some adjoining Boroughs), its boundary forms a linear Conservation Area and is focused upon the canal as well as some of the immediate adjoining land and built development. The canal was significant as one of the first agricultural waterways, designed primarily to stimulate agricultural development in Hampshire and was particularly significant in opening up the countryside. It was originally used to transport agricultural produce across Hampshire, then for the export of fertiliser, flour, coal and timber to London through the later 19th century.
117. Where proximate to the site the Basingstoke Canal cuts through at a lower level than the development on each side. It retains much of its original features, with towpaths and locks, but, where proximate to the site, its setting has changed significantly with the development of Woking Town Centre, particularly during the 20th century, and as such the environs of this part of the Basingstoke Canal have a readily urban character (in other areas of the Borough, as well as within adjoining Boroughs, it has a more rural character). It is also pertinent that, whilst today the canal corridor provides for wildlife and recreational activities, the Basingstoke Canal was originally constructed as a form of industrial engineering and transport infrastructure. The BCCA is generally self-contained, and its special interest and significance is defined by the historic waterway, as a good example of heroic industrial engineering and transport infrastructure, and its role in the development of the areas it traverses. The Lightbox – a modern museum of art, sculpture and inventions – is one of very few buildings located within the BCCA, and the only building within it where the BCCA is proximate to the site.
118. In the existing situation the site can be glimpsed from the BCCA, including from Chobham Road Bridge, but only from a very limited part of the BCCA, which is linear in nature. This intervisibility is incidental and the site does not contribute meaningfully to the significance of the BCCA.

### Impact on Basingstoke Canal Conservation Area

119. The proposed development would be glimpsed from some, oblique, locations within the BCCA, such as from the town quay just south of the WWF Living Planet Centre.

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However, this glimpsed intervisibility would be incidental and the proposed development would be experienced as part of the urban context of Woking Town Centre in such views.

120. Around 85 metres to the north/north-west of the site the Basingstoke Canal is traversed by Chobham Road Bridge, which provides vehicular and pedestrian access to and from Woking Town Centre (see HTVIA View 7). This location is markedly different from the prevailing character and appearance of the BCCA, with an obvious and apparent proximity to the urban environment of Woking Town Centre created by the clear sight lines. The water channel of the canal, and the towpath beside it, are at a lower-level, running beneath Chobham Road Bridge. As such, whilst the proposed development would be readily visible from this location, it is wholly congruent with the existing townscape context. Moreover, the high quality of architecture would be readily apparent and represent a positive visual impact to the general townscape in this location/from this view.
121. The experience along the water channel and towpath of the canal itself would not be adversely impacted by the proposed development, which would be glimpsed in the wider setting as part of a mixed, existing urban Woking Town Centre environment. Moreover, where proximate to the site, views towards Woking Town Centre from the water channel and towpath of the canal are marked by mid-to-late 20th century (i.e., The Peacocks Shopping Centre, WBC Civic Offices) and more modern commercial buildings along Victoria Way (i.e., Victoria Gate), and the proposed development would be seen within this existing built context, whereby it would not be harmful to the setting of the BCCA.
122. In conclusion, for the reasoning set out the proposed development would cause no harm to, and would thus preserve, the significance of the Basingstoke Canal Conservation Area (BCCA). The Council's built heritage consultant concurs with the conclusion that the proposed development would cause no harm to the Basingstoke Canal Conservation Area (BCCA).

### Wheatsheaf Conservation Area

123. The site is around 100 metres south-east of the closest boundary of the Wheatsheaf Conservation Area and is separated from it by the intervening commercial building of ONE, No.1 Christchurch Way (in part), the dual-carriageway of Victoria Way and the Basingstoke Canal (which is designated as a separate, linear, Conservation Area, albeit adjoins part of the Wheatsheaf Conservation Area). Wheatsheaf was designated as a Conservation Area in April 1992; it forms a focal point at the entrance into Woking Town Centre from the north having been developed in association with the growth of Woking as a railway town. Properties date from the mid-Victorian to late Victorian period, the architectural quality of the buildings in the area is mixed, but it has a strong character in its relationship with the Wheatsheaf Recreation Ground, Horsell Common and the Basingstoke Canal.
124. The Wheatsheaf Conservation Area Character Appraisal states the character of the Conservation Area varies within two different sections:
  - Area 1 - The west side of Chobham Road, including Broomhall Road and Broomhall Lane, is characterised by properties mostly set deeply within their curtilage. Plot sizes are generally large.
  - Area 2 - The east side of Chobham Road, including Ferndale Road and The Grove, is characterised by a traditional frontage pattern of development,

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spaced at regular intervals and consistent depths of frontage with established building lines. Narrow and wide plots are included.

125. There are no significant landmarks in the Wheatsheaf Conservation Area (WCA), however the Wheatsheaf Public House, which is locally listed, forms an important localised landmark. Open green spaces provide an attractive setting for the WCA, including Wheatsheaf Common and Horsell Moor (i.e., the triangle of wooded space north of Brewery Road). Generally, there is an abundance of green space, trees and vegetation, which contributes positively to setting of the WCA.
126. The WCA is located to the north of Woking Town Centre, separated by the dual-carriageway of Victoria Way and the Basingstoke Canal. Notwithstanding this, there is an acute awareness of Woking Town Centre in the wider setting of the WCA when moving through it, particularly when travelling southwards towards Woking Town Centre along Chobham Road, where commercial development in Woking Town Centre terminates views southwards. The character of this Town Centre development contrasts with that of the WCA but is clearly part of a different townscape context. The existing tall buildings forming part of Victoria Place can be glimpsed above and beyond houses in some locations from within the WCA, signalling the transformative redevelopment of Woking Town Centre.
127. Because the site is located around 100 metres south-east of the closest boundary of the WCA, and physically separated from it by the dual-carriageway of Victoria Way and the Basingstoke Canal, there is no functional link between the two and the site does not contribute towards the significance of the WCA.

### Impact on Wheatsheaf Conservation Area

128. The proposed development would have no impact on the functioning of the WCA and is physically separated by the dual-carriageway of Victoria Way and the Basingstoke Canal. As such, the only potential impacts to the WCA would therefore be visual.
129. The Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) indicates intervisibility between the proposed development and the WCA, in particular along Chobham Road and within the open green spaces (noting that the Wheatsheaf Recreation Ground falls outside of the WCA). Views from residential roads to the east (i.e., The Grove and Ferndale Road) and west (i.e., Broomhall Road) are demonstrated to be more limited.
130. This visibility has been further interrogated through analysis of several verified views located within, and looking across, the WCA. View 7 (which is located within the BCCA), view 8 (which is located outside of the WCA although looks across part of it), and view 10 (which is located within the WCA) together form something of a kinetic sequence looking southwards along Chobham Road and illustrates the visual impact of the proposed development from this principal route through the WCA. Chobham Road provides vehicular and pedestrian access to and from Woking Town Centre from the north and therefore the character of this main road is markedly different from the adjacent residential streets, with an obvious and apparent proximity to the urban town centre create by the clear sight lines. In this kinetic sequence of views the proposed development can be seen terminating the axial route into Woking, marking Woking Town Centre, the scale of the proposed development would be greater than buildings immediately adjacent to it on each side, albeit one that is commensurate with the Woking Town Centre location and readily apparent as separate from the foreground due to the busy dual-carriageway of Victoria Way (running east-west across the views) and existing commercial development, including Victoria Gate and

ONE, No.1 Christchurch Way. The proposed development would thus clearly be read as part of the townscape of Woking Town Centre, and this would not conflict with the experience of domestic scale architecture within the WCA.

131. The detailed architectural design of the proposed development would also reflect its context within an existing and emerging, principally commercial, part of Woking Town Centre. Whilst View 7 is taken from within the BCCA this location is just south-east of the closest boundary of the WCA and thus represents a 'worst case' scenario of likely views from the WCA. In this view it can be seen that the glazed and metallic northern building element would have a light colouration which would appear more 'lightweight' against the skyline (say, as opposed to brick), with the glazed single order grid-facade appearing as an appropriate addition to the skyline in this context.
132. Verified views have also been 'scoped' in from elsewhere looking towards the site across parts of the WCA to further interrogate the ZTV. View 6 is located towards the north of the Wheatsheaf recreation ground (which is outside of the WCA, although looks across it) and View 12 on the townpath which runs between Brewery Road and Horsell Park (which is immediately adjacent to the western boundary of the WCA). The ZTV indicates a high degree of visibility from both of these locations, however, the verified views demonstrate that the proposed development would sit behind, and subservient to, a dense tree canopy in both instances. From View 12 during the summer months the proposed development would be wholly occluded, and during the winter months the bare tree canopy would heavily filter views in such a way that the proposed development would be peripheral. In View 6, the occlusion provided by intervening tree canopies would be less (in comparison to View 12) although in View 6 the existing visual experience from Wheatsheaf recreation ground (which is outside of the WCA, although looks across it) is already characterised by buildings of height within Woking Town Centre, including the towers at Victoria Place and with the extant Crown Place development being much more prominent in this view than the proposed development.
133. In conclusion, for the reasoning set out the proposed development would form a neutral part of the wider setting of the Wheatsheaf Conservation Area. It would therefore cause no harm, and would thus preserve, the character and appearance of the Wheatsheaf Conservation Area (WCA). The Council's built heritage consultant concurs with the conclusion that no harm would be caused to the Wheatsheaf Conservation Area (WCA).

Statutory listed buildings

Christ Church

134. Christ Church is statutory listed at Grade II and (at its closest) located around 40 metres south-west of the site. It was built in the latter part of the 19th century and as the town rapidly expanded, its location within the residential area made it central to the congregation that it served. It is an impressive building and is a good example of Victorian Gothic architecture which was popular in civic and ecclesiastical buildings at the time. It is constructed mainly of red brick and detailing includes tall narrow arched windows, decorative banding, buttresses and turrets and two elegant copper spires. It has group value with the Woking War Memorial (also statutory listed at Grade II) located in the centre of Jubilee Square, the church and war memorial are intervisible and have shared messages regarding commemoration and as a focal point for civic and religious functions.

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135. Christ Church is a local landmark, situated at the south-east corner of Jubilee Square, where it meets Church Street East. Its external architectural interest is best appreciated from the centre of Jubilee Square, where there are uninterrupted views of its whole composition. Intervening built form restricts views from the north, east and south however, the tall spires can be seen in longer distance views throughout Woking Town Centre. The scale of the church is such that it would have been a prominent feature within the original residential environment around it. However, the surroundings of the church have changed considerably, and it now stands at one side of a public square (Jubilee Square) amidst the modern shopping centre (Wolsey Place Shopping Centre, dates from the 1970's and was refaced in 2012). The significance of Christ Church is derived not only from its fabric and architecture but also from its historical and communal associations. It provides a solid and permanent presence within a built environment that has continually evolved around it, especially latterly. The setting in which Christ Church is appreciated and experienced is now quite different in terms of grain, scale and uses. It is a modern commercial context, including buildings with a far greater height and scale than the church itself. Christ Church is separated from the WTCCA (to the south) where historic street forms are better retained, the asset's closer setting possessing only a few isolated remnants of 19th and early-20th century built form. Overall, development forming the asset's setting makes a neutral contribution to its significance.
136. The site is located to the north-east of the church, separated by Church Street East and Christchurch Way. However, as existing, there are clear sight lines between the church and the existing development on the site and therefore the proposed development would also form a readily visible part of the wider setting of Christ Church. In overall terms, the site makes a neutral contribution to the significance of Christ Church as part of its wider setting.

### *Impact on Christ Church*

137. Impacts on Christ Church will be only indirect, via change in part of its townscape setting. The fabric, architecture and historical and communal associations of the church would not be impacted by the proposed development and therefore these elements of its significance would be retained, as would the group value with the Woking War Memorial. Aside from visual impacts, the more kinetic aspects of the setting of Christ Church within this very central Woking Town Centre context (i.e., noise, activity, bustle etc. associated with the role of Woking Town Centre as the principal centre within the Borough) would remain undiminished by the proposed development.
138. Verified views 1 (looking north/north-east from Church Path) and 2 (looking east/north-east from Jubilee Square) within the HTVIA illustrate the visual impact on the church in the principal views of this listed building (in which the proposed development would be readily visible).
139. Verified view 1 is located on Church Path on the approach from the south-west along this historic route. The proposed development would reinforce the alignment of the building line along Christchurch Way, aligning with the route of historic Church Path. As such, this historic route would become more legible and this part of the proposed development would help link, or connect, the site to the rest of its immediate townscape context. This would be a clear benefit.
140. The main entrance to the office floorspace within the proposed building would relate well to this route, providing a visual link with Church Path (in approaching views from

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the south-west), and would provide a much improved public realm along Christchurch Way. The proposed development would reinforce the axial alignment of Church Path, with Christ Church located to the left of this view. As illustrated by verified view 2 the massing and height of the proposed development would sit comfortably within the context of existing town centre buildings, including the existing former BHS store (at No.81 Commercial Way) in particular. In relation to the church, two setback storeys at the top of the southern element of the proposed development would be recessive, stepping down towards the church. The overall height of the proposed development has been demonstrably reduced during the pre-application process as part of this design response.

141. The external materiality of the southern component of the proposed development has been developed in response to the proximity of Christ Church, with brick utilised to reflect the historic vernacular of Woking and provide a sympathetic aesthetic in views with the church. The single order grid facade, which is enhanced by refined brickwork detailing to the ground floor, provides a simple yet attractive aesthetic that serves to complement the Victorian Gothic architecture of the church.
142. Looking east/north-east (i.e., along Church Street East) from Jubilee Square (verified view 2) the proposed development, again, would reinforce the building line and trajectory of Church Street East and would sit comfortably in relation to Christ Church, with the turrets and two elegant copper spires of the church still the dominating visual feature in views from this side. The chamfered (south-west) corner of the proposed development, with full height glazed panel, can be appreciated, reflecting the chamfering on the church and creating an attractive architectural detail. The rich detailing of the chamfered corner, with deep reveals to the staggered brickwork, would provide an attractive corner feature that will orientate towards, and emphasise the location of, the church.
143. The proposed landscaping scheme, which is not visible in the respective verified views, would enhance the immediate setting of the church with an improved pedestrian environment, and will include planting beds and green infrastructure. In conjunction with the provision of activity provided by the flexible Class E ground floor uses, the improved landscape environment would enhance the opportunity to dwell and appreciate the special interest of the listed church.
144. Overall, the proposed development will form a new visual element in that it would be viewed in conjunction with Christ Church, principally when approaching the site from the south-west along Church Path and in some east/north-easterly views (i.e., looking along Church Street East) from Jubilee Square. However, the overall height, siting, disposition and tonality of the brickwork (this being the principal external material which would be visible together with the church) of the southern element of the proposed development means that it would not diminish the focal prominence of Christ Church, nor the reciprocal relationships with the Woking War Memorial. Moreover, the above effects would be confined to a relatively small part of the setting. Overall, the proposed development would cause no harm to the significance of Christ Church, the Council's built heritage consultant concurs with this conclusion.
145. It is recognised that, in allowing the Crown Place appeal, the Inspector identified that that proposed development would cause a degree of detriment to the significance of Christ Church, albeit at the lower end of the scale of less than substantial harm. However, this was because the Inspector found (at para 25) that *"The proposed towers...would be evident in easterly views from Jubilee Square and from some places would be seen to rise directly behind the church. Because of their height they*

would diminish the focal prominence of the heritage asset and detract from an appreciation of features such as the copper spires". Whilst slightly more distant from the church (in views from Jubilee Square) the Crown Place development clearly has a different positioning in relation to the church in comparison to the proposed development and, moreover, was of a much greater height (up to 28 storeys) than would be the case with the proposed development in this instance (up to 11 storeys, which would be to the north, away from the church). As such, there are material differences between the impact of the two schemes on the setting of the church, hence the differing conclusions which have been reached (i.e., no harm in this case, 'less than substantial' harm in the case of Crown Place).

Woking War Memorial

146. The Woking War Memorial is statutory listed at Grade II and located around 100 metres south-west of the site. It forms the centrepiece of Jubilee Square and is an important commemorative sculpture remembering the lives lost in the conflicts of the 20th century. It is of architectural and historic interest, and has communal value, featuring a bronze statue of winged Victory, who stands on a globe and pedestal which is in turn set atop a sandstone column and plinth, which stands on a two-stepped base. It has inscribed dedications to those who were lost in both the First and Second World Wars. Having been relocated from Victoria Garden (which was otherwise known as Sparrow Park) to Jubilee Square in 1975, the memorial is experienced within the context of a busy, urban centre which is continually undergoing change. The memorial has group value with Christ Church, though there is no historical or functional relationship between the two structures, the proximity of the church reinforces the public, commemorative function of the memorial.
147. As set out above the war memorial is not in its original location and its setting has altered significantly since it has been in Jubilee Square. Nonetheless, its prominent, central position in this open, civic space amplifies the aesthetic interest of the memorial, by reinforcing an appreciation of its special architectural and historic interest as a piece of public art and as a local landmark and focal point of remembrance. More widely, the war memorial is located within Woking Town Centre, which is a varied urban townscape, characterised by a broad mix of buildings and structures of different ages, styles, forms and uses. This wider setting does not contribute positively to an understanding or appreciation of the memorial's special interest. The memorial can only be experienced by pedestrians from within Jubilee Square (together with more limited views from Church Street East, Market Walk and Mercia Walk, on approach to Jubilee Square). There are some, albeit relatively limited, existing views between the site and the memorial, the site makes no contribution to significance as an element of its setting.

*Impact on Woking War Memorial*

148. Impacts on Woking War Memorial will be only indirect, via change in part of its townscape setting. It is in looking north-east from Jubilee Square where the new visual relationship between the war memorial and the proposed development would be most evident. As would be the case with Christ Church the proposed development will form a new visual element in that it would be evident in some east/north-easterly views (i.e., looking along Church Street East) from Jubilee Square although the proposed development would be offset from the memorial in these views, as well as set beyond the intervening built form of existing development enclosing Jubilee Square (i.e., Town Gate House, which contains Barclays), as well as that of Concord House. The overall height, siting, disposition and tonality of the brickwork (this being

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the principal external material which would be visible together with the war memorial) of the southern element of the proposed development means that it would not diminish the focal prominence of the war memorial in views from Jubilee Square and the reciprocal relationships with Christ Church (this is best illustrated by Verified view 2, within the HTVIA). Moreover, the above effect would be confined to a relatively small part of the setting. Overall, the proposed development would cause no harm to the significance of Woking War Memorial, the Council's built heritage consultant concurs with this conclusion.

### Cumulative

149. The heritage assessment within the HTVIA recognises that there are a number of extant schemes, and schemes currently under consideration by the LPA, in proximity to the site, as listed on the following page:

LPA Ref:	Site Address:	Development Type:	Status:
PLAN/2017/0802	46 Chertsey Road (Former Rat & Parrot PH)	12 storey residential building.	Granted on 11.04.2018, present status unknown
PLAN/2019/0904	Nos.12-16, 25-31 Portugal Road & Lok N Store, Marlborough Road	Three 3-4 storey residential buildings.	Granted on 07.04.2020, understood to be under construction
PLAN/2019/1141	Crown Place, Chertsey Road	Maximum height of 28 storeys, residential-led mixed-use scheme.	Extant (until 03.11.2025)
PLAN/2023/0911 (referred to as Donard scheme in HTVIA)	Former BHS, 81 Commercial Way	Maximum height of 26 storeys, residential-led mixed-use scheme.	Submitted to the LPA on 02.11.2023 – Pending consideration
PLAN/2019/0352	Christ Church, Jubilee Square	Extensions and alterations to Church.	Extant (until 29.01.2025)
PLAN/2023/0667	Hollywood House, Church Street East	Extension to add two additional storeys (i.e., at sixth and seventh floors)	PLAN/2023/0667 since refused (on 25.09.2023) (although the applicant has a right of appeal which they may yet exercise).*
PLAN/2018/0660	Concord & Griffin House	Maximum height of 34 storeys, residential-led mixed use scheme.	Pending consideration
PLAN/2020/0568	EcoWorld, Goldsworth Road	Maximum height of 37 storeys, residential-led mixed use scheme.	Extant (until 10.01.2025)
PLAN/2023/0645	3 - 12 High Street, Woking	Maximum height of 17 storeys, residential-led mixed-use scheme.	Planning Committee resolved to grant on 07.11.2023 – S106 agreement in process.

*(Officer Note: Whilst a planning application at Hollywood House (ref: PLAN/2023/0650) for two additional storeys (i.e., at sixth and seventh floors) to provide x20 (additional) flats was refused on 15.12.2023 the massing and form of that proposal is very similar to that refused prior approval under ref: PLAN/2023/0667,*



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*which has been considered within the applicant's cumulative assessment. Moreover, planning application ref: PLAN/2023/0650 was refused on 15.12.2023 and therefore is not extant and/or committed.)*

150. The heritage assessment identifies that the extant granted developments are generally located a considerable distance away from the site, including those at Portugal and Marlborough Roads (ref: PLAN/2019/0904), 3 - 12 High Street (ref: PLAN/2023/0645) (which has a resolution to grant subject to S106) and that at EcoWorld, Goldsworth Road (ref: PLAN/2020/0568). However, the heritage assessment recognises that the granted developments at the Former Rat & Parrot PH, Chertsey Road (ref: PLAN/2017/0802) and that at Crown Place, Chertsey Road (ref: PLAN/2019/1141) are located much more proximate to the site. It should be noted that the proposed developments at Concord & Griffin House (ref: PLAN/2018/0660) and the Former BHS Store, 81 Commercial Way (ref: PLAN/2023/0911) remain under consideration by the LPA and that those schemes at Hollywood House (ref: PLAN/2023/0650 & ref: PLAN/2023/0667) were both recently refused).
151. The heritage assessment (and relevant verified views) identify that (extant) Crown Place would be visible from within the setting of Christ Church and Woking War Memorial, as well as from the Basingstoke Canal Conservation Area and Woking Conservation Area, and that it would intensify the urban town centre and higher density development in close proximity to these heritage assets. It identifies that the Crown Place development would be seen in close proximity to Christ Church in views from the west and that from the Basingstoke Canal and Woking Conservation Areas a greater amount of Woking Town Centre development would be visible as consequence of the Crown Place scheme. Whilst the scale of development would be a marked uplift relative to the existing context, this is a scale of development which already benefits from extant planning permission, and which is in line with the aspirations of the Development Plan which identifies that Woking Town Centre is to undergo significant change.
152. The heritage assessment (and relevant verified views) identifies that the proposed development would not give rise to any additive change to settings in conjunction with these extant granted developments, that is that the additional impact of the proposed development on top of the cumulative schemes would not change the impact arising from the cumulative schemes alone. This is due to the demonstrably lesser height of the proposed development (at 11 storeys in maximum height in comparison to x28 storeys in maximum height at Crown Place for example), together with its considered architectural design and material palette, and its siting within a central location within Woking Town Centre. As such, whilst the heritage assessment identifies that there is potential for other extant granted developments to give rise to harmful effects to heritage assets, the proposed development would not contribute towards or exacerbate that impact.

### Conclusion on built heritage

153. In conclusion, for the reasoning set out the proposed development would cause no harm to, and would thus preserve, the significance of the Woking Town Centre Conservation Area and of the most proximate locally listed buildings to the site, which all fall within the Woking Town Centre Conservation Area (i.e., Nos.20-24b Chertsey Road, the O'Neil's Public House & No.26 Chertsey Road). The proposed development also would cause no harm to, and would thus preserve, the significance of the Basingstoke Canal Conservation Area. For the reasoning set out the proposed

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development would form a neutral part of the wider setting of the Wheatsheaf Conservation Area. It would therefore cause no harm to, and would thus preserve, the character and appearance of the Wheatsheaf Conservation Area. The Council's built heritage consultant concurs with the preceding conclusions in respect of proximate Conservation Areas (and, where relevant, the locally listed buildings within those proximate Conservation Areas).

154. It is acknowledged that the proposed development will form a new visual element, in that it would be viewed in conjunction with proximate Grade II Listed Christ Church, principally when approaching the site from the south-west along Church Path and in some east/north-easterly views (i.e., looking along Church Street East) from Jubilee Square. However, the overall height, siting, disposition and tonality of the brickwork (this being the principal external material which would be visible together with the church) of the southern element of the proposed development means that it would not diminish the focal prominence of Christ Church, nor the reciprocal relationships with the Woking War Memorial. Moreover, the above effects would be confined to a relatively small part of the setting. As such, overall, the proposed development would cause no harm to the significance of Christ Church, the Council's built heritage consultant concurs with this conclusion.
155. As with Christ Church impacts on the Grade II Listed Woking War Memorial will be only indirect, via change in part of its townscape setting. It is in looking north-east from Jubilee Square where the new visual relationship between the war memorial and the proposed development would be most evident. As would be the case with Christ Church the proposed development will form a new visual element in that it would be evident in some east/north-easterly views (i.e., looking along Church Street East) from Jubilee Square, although the proposed development would be offset from the memorial in these views, as well as set beyond the intervening built form of existing development enclosing Jubilee Square (i.e., Town Gate House, which contains Barclays), as well as that of Concord House. Furthermore, the overall height, siting, disposition and tonality of the brickwork (this being the principal external material which would be visible together with the war memorial) of the southern element of the proposed development means that it would not diminish the focal prominence of the war memorial in views from Jubilee Square and the reciprocal relationships with Christ Church. Moreover, the above effect would be confined to a relatively small part of the setting. Overall, the proposed development would cause no harm to the significance of Woking War Memorial, the Council's built heritage consultant concurs with this conclusion.

### Design

156. The NPPF (December 2023) states that *"The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities"* (paragraph 131).
157. The NPPF (December 2023) also states (at paragraph 135) that *"Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:*
- a) *will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
  - b) *are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*

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- c) *are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*
  - d) *establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*
  - e) *optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and*
  - f) *create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.”*
158. The NPPF (December 2023) states that *“Local planning authorities should ensure that they have access to, and make appropriate use of, tools and processes for assessing and improving the design of development. The primary means of doing so should be through the preparation and use of local design codes, in line with the National Model Design Code. For assessing proposals there is a range of tools including workshops to engage the local community, design advice and review arrangements, and assessment frameworks such as Building for a Healthy Life. These are of most benefit if used as early as possible in the evolution of schemes, and are particularly important for significant projects such as large scale housing and mixed use developments. In assessing applications, local planning authorities should have regard to the outcome from these processes, including any recommendations made by design review panels”* (paragraph 138).
159. Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) requires proposals for new development to, inter alia, *“Create buildings and places that are attractive with their own distinct identity; they should respect and make a positive contribution to the street scene and the character of the area in which they are situated, paying due regard to the scale, height, proportions, building lines, layout, materials and other characteristics of adjoining buildings and land. Tall Buildings could be supported in Woking Town Centre, if well designed and can be justified within the context”*.
160. Paragraph 5.248 of the Development Management Policies DPD (2016) states that *“Landscape character is a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another. Townscape character is the appearance and character of buildings and all other features of an urban area taken together to create a distinct visual impression.”*
161. Policy CS24 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) states that:
- “All development proposals will provide a positive benefit in terms of landscape and townscape character, and local distinctiveness and will have regard to landscape character areas.*
- To protect local landscape and townscape character, development will be expected to:*
- *conserve, and where possible enhance existing character, especially key landscapes such as heathlands, escarpments and the canal/river network and settlement characteristics; maintain locally valued features, and enhance or restore deteriorating features*

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- *respect the setting of, and relationship between, settlements and individual buildings in the landscape*
- *conserve, and where possible, enhance townscape character, including structure and land form, landscape features, views and landmarks, and appropriate building styles and materials*
- *support land management practices that have no adverse impact on characteristic landscape patterns and local biodiversity.*
- *Protect and encourage the planting of new trees where it is relevant to do so.”*

162. Policy DM17 of the DM Policies DPD (2016) relates to public realm and states:

*“Development should create or contribute to a safe, attractive, high quality, inclusive and legible public realm that contributes positively to local character and identity and encourages appropriate levels of activity and social interaction.*

*Proposals for new development which impact upon the public realm should pay regard to the principles set out in the Woking Design SPD, and:*

- *ensure schemes provide for or contribute towards an appropriate range of public realm features, including spill-out spaces for trade, events, relaxation and recreation; and*
- *enable easy, inclusive access into and through the public realm and to buildings that provides adequately for the mobility needs of all users having regard to age, gender and disability; and*
- *ensure that any car parking and provision for servicing are appropriate to the context and sensitively integrated so as not to dominate the public realm; and*
- *ensure schemes incorporate appropriate street furniture, clear signs, lighting and surface and landscape materials and planting of high quality, environmental performance and durability that enhance the quality, character and appearance of the public realm through their siting and design.”*

163. Policy DM19 of the DM Policies DPD (2016) relates to shopfronts and states:

*“Proposals for new and replacement shopfronts will be permitted where they pay regard to the guidance set out in the Woking Design SPD on Shopfronts in terms of character, proportion, materiality, lighting and security; and:*

- *they do not adversely affect pedestrian or highway safety;*
- *they would preserve or enhance heritage assets having regard to design and materials of the building and adjoining shops, including any traditional or original features that should be retained;*
- *they are designed to allow equal access for all users; and*
- *they do not detrimentally affect the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.*

*In Conservation Areas and on heritage assets, where traditional shopfronts are important, new shopfronts should be of a traditional format and reflect the character of the building and/or the area.”*

164. SPD Design (2015) provides design guidance and good practice to improve the quality of design in new development across the Borough. The SPD provides (at

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paragraph 4.4) the criteria against which proposals for tall buildings will be considered include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- *“Be of exceptional design quality and subject to a formalised design review process during the evolution of the scheme;*
- *Not adversely affect the site's surrounds in terms of micro-climate, wind, overshadowing, glare, aviation navigation and telecommunications interference;*
- *Contribute positively to the setting of identified heritage assets that might be affected by the proposal;*
- *Take account of key views both across the site and long views towards the building itself. Design proposals will need to take into account the need for the building to be designed so it is seen in the round; and*
- *Pay particular attention to the environment created at ground floor. Proposals must be appropriate to the streets and spaces they address and should exploit opportunities for improvement of existing and creation of new public spaces.”*

165. SPD Design (2015) also sets out that new high density mixed-use development should provide street trees where possible and that opportunities to enhance existing or create new public spaces should be optimised and providing places to sit is encouraged. The SPD also seeks that development coming forward addresses the deficiency of green spaces in Woking town centre.
166. The preceding criteria will inform the (wider) analysis undertaken within this report.
167. The applicant's Design and Access Statement (DAS) identifies that the buildings on both sides of Chobham Road are mostly Victorian terraces with shops on the ground floor and either offices or residential spaces above and that, generally, the existing buildings are around three storeys in height but that there is variation in height across the site. It identifies that the predominant facing material in Chobham Road is brick but with varying treatments, colours and styles and that, overall, Chobham Road has a consistency and balanced rhythm on both sides of the road. The DAS identifies that Christchurch Way features buildings of varying scale, height and materiality, with a mix of uses and service entrances for the shops on the Chobham Road side. It identifies that many of the buildings are set back from the road which breaks up the massing of the area and causes an irregular rhythm along the street and there is also a diverse range of building ages, with remnants of old Woking on the site, but with more modern buildings directly opposite (i.e., Griffin House and Concord House).
168. The DAS identifies that Church Street East is flanked on both sides by taller buildings at around four storeys, creating a large solid massing at the southern end of the site, and that, similar to Chobham Road, retail spaces dominate the base of the buildings, with a clear distinction between this and the upper floor office use. Opposite the site (to the south/south-east) is the Former BHS store, which is the subject of a pending planning application (ref: PLAN/2023/0911) for a residential-led mixed-use redevelopment of up to 26 storeys in height. The DAS identifies that the current materiality along Church Street East is consistently a dark red brick, sensitive to nearby listed Christ Church, but with more modern window patterns, roof tiles and brick features.
169. The DAS identifies that at the northern end of the site, Chobham Road turns into Christchurch Way, and that two modern offices sit opposite the site and are around six storeys in height (i.e., Victoria Gate and ONE, No.1 Christchurch Way). The DAS

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identifies that at the northern end of the site there is currently no clear building massing or scale pattern, with a single storey restaurant/hot food takeaway unit terminating the northern end. It identifies that there is a very obvious contrast in materiality with the modern office buildings featuring more industrial facades, metal cladding and a large amount of glazing, compared with the red and buff brick Victorian terraces along Chobham Road.

170. The DAS (most particularly sections 10 – 13 (incl.)) provides information about the evolution of the design and the factors taken into consideration when preparing the proposed development, including the design development process of key massing principles. The DAS also describes how the design has evolved, prior to submission of the planning application, in response to feedback received from Planning Officers, the Woking Design Review Panel (DRP) and other consultees. Some of the main design evolutions which should be noted are:

- The proposed building has been reduced in height by three storeys, from a maximum height of fourteen storeys (i.e., ground plus thirteen storeys) to the proposed eleven storeys (i.e., ground plus ten storeys);
- The proposed building has been redesigned to appear as three separate elements which sit on a plinth, with the plinth height responding to the Central Buildings, on the opposite side of Chobham Road;
- The ground floor plan has been comprehensively redesigned to increase the active frontages from around 55% to around 95% coverage (the ground floor plan now allows for a small retail offer, cafe, restaurant, independent office spaces and enhanced end of trip facilities for office occupiers);
- Building GIA has been reduced and typical floor plate GEA has been reduced;
- The south-west corner of the proposed building has been chamfered to maximise views to, and connection with, listed Christ Church;
- Brick has been incorporated as an external material and is now the principal facade material to respond to the existing townscape context, particularly to the southern component;
- The extent of glazing to the office levels has been reduced by around 40% to greatly reduce the solar gain and operational energy of the proposed building;
- The facade has been set back on the upper levels to provide increased outside space for the proposed building (i.e., on roof terraces);
- Once incorporated the brick facade grid has since been amended to ensure window proportions and elevation composition are appropriate, changing the windows from the initially proposed double height (i.e., a single window spanning two floors in height) to single order windows on the brick component of the proposed building to create a more domestic scale and more climate-responsive design.

171. The DAS also sets out that the historical diagonal route of Church Path has informed the principal building entrance location (which has been located to a natural point, parallel to the historic path, when approaching from the railway station) and the ground floor arrangement and that the south-west building corner is chamfered to frame views of listed Christ Church and provide a direct visual connection between the proposal, and this designated heritage asset. The DAS identifies that the proposed building is designed to appear as three separate, grounded elements, that the ground floor height is set to respond to the existing (opposite) buildings on Chobham Road and the central section (along Chobham Road) uses arches to frame

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the flexible Class E space along this elevation, taking influence from Woking's railway heritage and the existing buildings, both on the site and across Chobham Road. It also identifies that a single order facade grid is the primary unifying element of the building facade, across all three building components. On the southern component, brick is proposed, which takes its influence from Christ Church and the Central Buildings (along Chobham Road) and that, in contrast, a modern material palette is proposed to the northern component, which responds to the office buildings (i.e., Victoria Gate and ONE, No.1 Christchurch Way) which form the immediate context to this part of the site.

172. The DAS identifies that the approach to ground floor design serves to both maximise the potential of the site and providing the opportunity for high quality public realm around the site. The ground floor plan provides a range of flexible Class E space along the southern, eastern and western sides of the proposed building, creating active frontages on all sides of the building and allowing for varying uses (within Class E) within these spaces. To the north a large flexible Class E space is provided, with direct pedestrian access from the north. In addition, extensive end-of-trip facilities, including cycle storage, would be provided on the ground floor to encourage active and sustainable travel. The DAS also sets out that the flexible design of the ground floor and designation of both ground floor and first floors as flexible Class E provides the opportunity for movement between the two floors. For example, the most northerly ground floor unit could connect (via an internal staircase) to the first floor above, providing a two storey (Class E) offer for a potential operator.
173. As existing the site is devoid of any meaningful landscaping and thus makes a minimal contribution to the character of this part of Woking Town Centre, the spaces around the site are dominated by the roads of Church Street East, Chobham Road and Christchurch Way. Moreover, the existing site fails to enhance both visual and physical connectivity to the wider town centre despite its 'gateway' position on the approach into Woking Town Centre from the north.
174. The landscape report within the DAS (at section 16) identifies that landscaping will be key to transforming this area into a link between Church Street East/Commercial Way/Jubilee Square, Christ Church and the Basingstoke Canal. It sets out that public spaces proximate to the site tend to be dominated by hard surfaced areas with some basic function (i.e., seating, bike storage and bin provision) and that ground surface material selection varies across Woking Town Centre with some high quality materials used whilst in other areas they are poor or outdated. The landscape report sets out that the proposed landscaping approach is to achieve consistency in ground surfacing materials, provide clear legibility and way finding with clear demarcation of key entrance locations, introduce trees and planting and to create opportunities for outdoor seating and activation. It defines different landscape character areas within and around the site, at both ground floor and roof terrace levels, with objectives set for each area. Along Church Street East and part of Christchurch Way outdoor seating is proposed with new planting (including street tree planting), new planting is proposed to define the south and north entrances, with the landscape design allowing for servicing and drop off along Chobham Road.
175. The DAS identifies that the office floors of the proposed development have been designed to be flexible with a wide, uninterrupted floorplate, a centralised core would be provided to allow for the floor plates to be divisible and provide smaller offers of office space. It sets out that typical floors (1,481 sq.m NIA or 15,944 sq.ft) would be able to be divided into multiple units, such as x3 5,000 sq.ft offices (i.e., x3 465 sq.m offices).

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176. At levels 9 and 10 the proposed building sets back from the south and western edges so as to provide communal roof terraces at those levels. A communal lounge is also proposed on level 10 to create a space for office users and connects to the external terrace on that level.
177. The DAS identifies how the overall massing and elevational strategy has been designed to break down the appearance of the proposed building into sections and allow the proposed building to be viewed as several components. It identifies that older buildings in Woking Town Centre are predominantly of red brick, with a single order fenestration pattern, and that newer and refurbished office developments within Woking Town Centre (i.e., Victoria Gate (Chobham Road) Spaces (Albion House), Space (No.68 Chertsey Road)). take the form of predominantly glazed buildings. This has informed the proposed approach to external materials, with the use of red brick to the southern component and a more glazed facade to the northern component. Differing grids are used for the lower, middle and upper sections of the facade.
178. The materiality of the plinth would vary between a combination of red and dark brick (to the southern component), dark brick only (restricted to the central component on Chobham Road) and light grey PPC (Polyester Powder Coating) metal panels (to the north component). Where brick would be used to the plinth it would be recessed around the openings in a decorative manner, which would serve to add depth, texture and add visual interest to the elevation, and particularly to the plinth level. Where a combination of red and dark brick would be used to the plinth the dark brick would be used within the recessed elements, achieving an attractive 'framing' effect, and serving to emphasise the recess effect. Levels 9 and 10 of the southern component (i.e., those which would be stepped back from the building edges) would be finished in a combination of glazing with projecting mullions and light grey PPC metal panels, the balustrades around the roof terraces would be glass and a light grey PPC metal mesh panel would be used at the roof top. The central component of the Chobham Road elevation would be clad in a combination of opaque panels and light grey PPC metal panels with the glazing design to this element forming a strong grid. The northern component would be clad in a combination of glazing with projecting mullions and light grey PPC metal panels. Again, the glazing design to this element would form a strong grid.
179. The chamfered corner to the south-west would mark the corner opposite listed Christ Church (a designated heritage asset) and would serve to 'lighten' the appearance of this corner when it is viewed in combination with the church (most readily from Jubilee Square), this chamfer would also reflect the alignment of Church Path, a historic route through Woking Town Centre. The south-east corner would be more traditional and would achieve a strong corner. In combination the differentiation in external materials, and the plan form of the proposed building, would achieve the design intent of the proposed development appearing as three elements, thus breaking down the scale of the proposed building.
180. The second review Design Review Panel (DRP) report (dated 27 June 2023) sets out that the scheme appears as three separate buildings, and more (than the previous iteration) successfully breaks down the mass of the building, particularly on the southern corners and that (at paragraph 8.1) "*We support the approach taken to the use of different materials to address the different contexts to the north and south of the site, with brick introduced to the south, and the north maintaining a glazed and metallic finish*" and that "*The massing, form, and materiality of the building have improved in their response to the surrounding context, and we applaud the significant increase in active frontage.*"



181. Whilst the existing site is, in general, characterised by low scale, individual buildings, there are a number of larger properties in the immediate vicinity, including Crown House, Hollywood House and the multi-storey Victoria Way car park. As such, the immediate surroundings consist of a wide mix of building sizes and heights. Where the proposed development would front onto the more sensitive Church Street East end of the site it would be of a lower height, scale and massing. The tallest element would be situated away from the more sensitive end of the site, would be set in a context of larger buildings (such as Victoria Gate and ONE, No.1 Christchurch Way) and would be located in the least sensitive part of the site and where it is considered that 'height' can be accommodated without harm.
182. The Crown Place appeal decision (which granted planning permission for a residential-led mixed-use scheme, including towers rising to 22, 25 and 28 storeys fronting Church Street East) forms a very weighty material consideration in the determination of this planning application, due to the close proximity of the Crown Place site to the proposed development site (a distance of around 35 metres at its closest) and that the Crown Place site is also within the eastern part of Woking Town Centre. The Crown Place appeal decision states (at paragraph 13) that *"In the circumstances, I do not consider there is a policy impediment to a tall building of any particular height on the appeal site. It seems to me that such buildings, including towers, are now part of the character of the town centre overall. It is though recognised that to date those on regenerated sites within the eastern sector, such as 175 Church Street East and One Crown Square, are lower in height and not comparable with the scale of the Victoria Square towers or those permitted at Goldsworth Road. The 23, 25 and 28 storey towers proposed on the appeal site would undoubtedly represent a significant step change in terms of height within this location. However, the main question in terms of the development plan is whether this would be harmful in terms of its impact on existing character."*
183. At paragraph 15 the Crown Place appeal decision states that *"...the appeal site is in a gateway location when approaching the town centre from the east. At the present time this entrance to the town is relatively unremarkable with mid-rise developments in the foreground and the Victoria Square towers visible in the distance. The proposed towers would provide a landmark feature and a focal point to signal arrival at the town centre from the easterly approach. Indeed, the supporting text to policy CS1 refers to tall buildings in this very context."* A similar rationale is considered applicable to this site, the site is relatively central in the view when approaching Woking Town Centre from the north (i.e., across the Chobham Road Bridge from the northern side of the Basingstoke Canal) and sits close to the junction between Victoria Way and Chobham Road (where it crosses the Basingstoke Canal) at its northerly point, which is where the proposed development would be at its tallest. The tallest element would therefore provide something of a 'focal' point close to this key junction (this being the only crossing over the Basingstoke Canal in a northerly direction of the central part of Woking Town Centre) and would thus serve to 'signal' arrival at Woking Town Centre from the northerly approach, marking the beginning of the retail and commercial centre (together with emerging residential development) of Woking Town Centre.
184. Furthermore, in the Crown Place appeal decision the Inspector states (at paragraph 26) that *"There is no doubt that the towers would be highly visible and would not reflect their immediate surroundings in terms of height. However, that does not mean that the scheme would thus be unacceptable. The existing built environment within the eastern part of the town centre is generally uninspiring and has little to commend*

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*it. The proposal would introduce a development of high quality and distinction and a landmark at the easterly approach to the town centre.”*

185. In respect of height the second review Design Review Panel (DRP) report (dated 27 June 2023) states (at paragraph 7.1) that “*We welcome the reduction in height of the proposal. Whilst this still exceeds that proposed in the draft Masterplan for Woking Town Centre, we find it acceptable in relation to other developments that are due to come forward*” and that (at paragraph 7.2) “*Whilst we previously identified the northern part of the building as having the greatest opportunity for height on the site, this must be approached carefully in terms of its massing.*” Whilst the draft Masterplan for Woking Town Centre presently attracts no weight in planning decision-making the maximum height of the proposed building has been (further) reduced by one storey since that DRP took place (at that time the scheme was at 11 storeys plus ground floor).
186. The site is located in an area (i.e., Woking Town Centre) which is identified by the Development Plan to undergo significant change. The proposed redevelopment of the site would reinforce the legibility and townscape function of Woking Town Centre, particularly on approach from the north. The proposed development would represent an improvement to the character, appearance and function of the site and its relationship with surrounding existing and emerging development in Woking Town Centre. The massing and height of the proposed development has been developed in direct response to context, relating better with its surroundings than the existing disjointed and fragmentary buildings. It would also provide notable improvements to the proximate public realm, including urban greening.
187. The proposed building mass has been split into three distinct volumes, which informs different architectural treatments and is considered successful in breaking down the overall bulk. To the south, the volume is faced in brickwork, with two setback storeys at roof level that are recessive, stepping away from Church Street East and Grade II listed Christ Church. Given the principally residential nature of extant proximate development (including Crown Place) the proposed development will add to the mix and vitality of development in the area, also providing active ground floor frontages. Overall, the proposed development would remain consistent with the emerging context of development in the area and form part of its wider regeneration, in accordance with the aspirations of the Development Plan. At 11 storeys in maximum height, although tall, the proposed development would be subservient to the tallest existing and extant developments within Woking Town Centre, including Victoria Place, EcoWorld and Crown Place, thus ensuring a balance to the overall townscape of Woking Town Centre.

### Conclusion on Design

188. Overall, the proposed development is considered to have been designed to the highest standard with specific attention given to the edges of the building at ground level and with a well resolved elevational form overall, offering visual interest and with a clear hierarchy to the facades, being proposed. It is clear that each building element has been considered as both a singular element and a part of the whole. The ground floor edges are appropriate to the streets and spaces they would address. The building has been designed with its inherent visibility from all sides having been carefully considered, facade materials would have depth and definition, a richness in treatment and would achieve a high-quality appearance, also having regard to long-term maintenance considerations. The proposed development would play an

important role in creating an attractive town centre environment and would support the aspiration for a vibrant town centre with strongly defined, active streets.

**Archaeology (below-ground heritage)**

189. Section 16 of the NPPF (December 2023) places the conservation of archaeological interest as a material planning consideration. Paragraph 200 of the NPPF (December 2023) states that “*Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation*”. Policy CS20 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) states that “*On all development sites over 0.4 hectares an archaeological evaluation and investigation will be necessary if, in the opinion of the County Archaeologist, an archaeological assessment demonstrates that the site has archaeological potential.*”
190. The application has been submitted with an archaeological desk-based assessment (dated September 2023) which identifies that the proposed development will not impact on any designated archaeological assets, that the site is not located within a locally defined County Site of Archaeological Importance (CSAI) or an Area of High Archaeological Potential (AHAP) and that, at 0.22 hectares in area, the site falls below the 0.4 hectare threshold for archaeological evaluation which is set out by Policy CS20 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012).
191. The archaeological desk-based assessment concludes that the weight of evidence indicates that the site has a low archaeological potential for the survival of archaeological deposits for all periods of human activity (i.e., Prehistoric, Roman, Saxon, Medieval, Post Medieval and Modern), primarily because the four-storey Cleary Court building stands on the site, and it seems unlikely that archaeological remains could have survived this construction and a previous phase of construction that happened across the site during the early 20th century. As such, the archaeological desk-based assessment suggests that a reasonable and proportionate response would be that no further archaeological safeguards are required in respect of the proposed development, this is because: (i) the site is a very small area in plan, (ii) the site has seen extensive development pressure, with three phases of development, and (iii) the assessment has provided an evidence base that only low archaeological significance is identified on the site, which has formed acid heathland for most of the prehistoric and historic periods, before becoming subsumed by the industrial complexes and factories of this part of Woking.
192. The County Archaeological Officer (Surrey County Council) agrees with the findings of the archaeological desk-based assessment and is satisfied that there are no archaeological concerns regarding the proposed development.
193. In conclusion, the impact on archaeology is acceptable and there are no further requirements in relation to archaeological mitigation. The proposed development complies with Policy CS20 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2023), most notably paragraph 200, in respect of archaeology (below-ground heritage).

**Transport, highways, parking and servicing**

194. The Woking Core Strategy (2012) (at paragraph 3.3) sets out 13 objectives (in no particular priority order) which will deliver the spatial vision of the Core Strategy.

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These objectives include (most relevant to the proposed development) (emphasis added):

- “1) To enable a diverse range of development such as offices, housing, shops, leisure and cultural facilities in Woking Town Centre to enable its status as a centre of regional significance to be maintained. Development will be of high quality and high density to create an attractive environment for people to live, do business and visit
  - 5) To enable a buoyant local economy with good quality offices, business parks and industrial areas, which meet the needs of modern business. This will mainly be encouraged in Woking Town Centre, West Byfleet District Centre and the employment areas.
  - 10) To work in partnership with Surrey County Council and other stakeholders with an interest in transport provision to deliver a transport system that enables people to access key services, facilities and jobs by all relevant modes of travel. In particular, by encouraging the use of public transport and creating a safe environment for people to walk and cycle to the town, district and local centres.”
195. Policy CS2 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) sets out that “The Council will support the development of the town centre as the primary centre for economic development in the Borough and as a primary economic centre in the South East. The Town Centre is the preferred location for town centre uses”, which includes, inter alia, retail development and offices. The reasoned justification text to Policy CS2 states (at paragraph 4.7) that “In order to retain and attract businesses to Woking Town Centre and enhance its role as a business location, the majority of further office development required in the Borough over the plan period will be accommodated in the town centre and the Council will support the redevelopment of outmoded stock.”
196. Policy CS18 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) states that “The Council is committed to developing a well-integrated community connected by a sustainable transport system which connects people to jobs, services and community facilities, and minimises impacts on biodiversity and that this will be achieved by taking the following steps [inter alia] (emphasis added):
- “Locating most new development in the main urban areas, served by a range of sustainable transport modes, such as public transport, walking and cycling to minimise the need to travel and distance travelled.
  - Ensuring development proposals provide appropriate infrastructure measures to mitigate the adverse effects of development traffic and other environmental and safety impacts (direct or cumulative). Transport Assessments will be required for development proposals, where relevant, to fully assess the impacts of development and identify appropriate mitigation measures. Developer contributions will be secured to implement transport mitigation schemes.
  - Requiring development proposals that generate significant traffic or have significant impact on the Strategic Road Network to be accompanied by a travel plan, clearly setting out how the travel needs of occupiers and visitors will be managed in a sustainable manner.

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- *Implementing maximum car parking standards for all types of non-residential development, including consideration of zero parking in Woking Town Centre, providing it does not create new or exacerbate existing on-street car parking problems. Minimum standards will be set for residential development. However, in applying these standards, the Council will seek to ensure that this will not undermine the overall sustainability objectives of the Core Strategy, including the effects on highway safety. If necessary, the Council will consider managing the demand and supply of parking in order to control congestion and encourage use of sustainable transport.*

197. The reasoned justification text to Policy CS18 states (at paragraph 5.165) that:

*“The main urban centres offer a wide range of retail, employment and community services. It is in these areas where public transport interchanges and walking and cycling networks are readily available. By concentrating development in the main urban centres, the amount and length of journeys can be minimised, particularly by private car, as the needs of the population can be met by the services and facilities around them, and use of sustainable transport modes can be maximised. This will lead to a reduction in energy consumption, efficient use of public transport, lower transport carbon emissions and an overall improvement in the well being of the population due to the health benefits of walking and cycling and increased social inclusion.”*

198. The proposed development accords with this key aim by being located within the principal centre of the Borough (Woking Town Centre) and providing direct access to key bus and rail services.

199. Policy DM16 of the Development Management Policies DPD (2016) states that:

*“The Council will require servicing facilities to be well designed, built to accommodate the demands of new development and sensitively integrated into the development and the surrounding townscape and streetscape. In particular, servicing activities should not give rise to traffic congestion, conflict with pedestrians, or other road users, or be detrimental to residential amenity”.*

200. Section 9 of the NPPF (December 2023) (Promoting sustainable transport) states, at paragraph 108, that:

*“Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, so that:*

- *the potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed;*
- *opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure, and changing transport technology and usage, are realised – for example in relation to the scale, location or density of development that can be accommodated;*
- *opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued;*
- *the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified, assessed and taken into account – including appropriate opportunities for avoiding and mitigating any adverse effects, and for net environmental gains; and*

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- *patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes, and contribute to making high quality places.”*
201. Paragraph 109 states that *“The planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making”* (emphasis added).
202. Paragraph 110 of the NPPF (December 2023) states that *“Planning policies should [inter alia] support an appropriate mix of uses across an area, and within larger scale sites, to minimise the number and length of journeys needed for employment, shopping, leisure, education and other activities”*. At paragraph 111 the NPPF (December 2023) states that:
- “If setting local parking standards for residential and non-residential development, policies should take into account:*
- *the accessibility of the development;*
  - *the type, mix and use of development;*
  - *the availability of and opportunities for public transport;*
  - *local car ownership levels; and*
  - *the need to ensure an adequate provision of spaces for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.”*
203. Paragraph 114 states that *“In assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, or specific applications for development, it should be ensured that:*
- *appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be – or have been – taken up, given the type of development and its location;*
  - *safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users;*
  - *the design of streets, parking areas, other transport elements and the content of associated standards reflects current national guidance, including the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code; and*
  - *any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree.”*
204. Paragraph 115 of the NPPF (December 2023) states that *“Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.”*
205. Within the preceding context the NPPF (December 2023) states that all applications for developments should (paragraph 116):
- *“give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second – so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise*

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*the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use;*

- *address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport;*
- *create places that are safe, secure and attractive – which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards;*
- *allow for the efficient delivery of goods, and access by service and emergency vehicles; and*
- *be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.”*

206. The site is located within Woking Town Centre, and within the Primary Shopping Area and Secondary Shopping Frontage, as defined by the Council’s Proposals Map. The proposed development is only non-residential in nature. In respect of non-residential parking SPD Parking Standards (2018) states (at section 4.3) that (emphasis added):

*“As set out in the Core Strategy, maximum parking standards will be implemented for all types of non-residential parking standards, including consideration of zero parking in Woking town centre.... Woking town centre is highly accessible via many transport modes, suffers from congestion and has a huge demand for land. Therefore more stringent standards – 50% reduction – applies for Woking town centre (as defined on the Proposals Map), to balance all of these needs. This approach was undertaken in the previous Woking parking standards SPD and has been successful in increasing the use of sustainable transport modes of travel and in directing parking into public car parks, thereby gaining the benefits derived from unallocated shared parking.”*

207. In respect of Part A Use Classes (former Classes A1, A2 and A3 now fall within Class E) the SPD states (on p.19) “Zero parking in Woking town centre (as defined on the Proposals Map)”. In respect of Part B Use Classes the SPD (on p.20) sets out a maximum of 1 car space per 100 sq.m GFA in Woking Town Centre for B1 Business (now falling within Class E). Maximum car parking standards relevant to the land uses proposed are set out in the following table:

Use Class		Maximum per m <sup>2</sup> GFA	Maximum quantum	Proposed quantum On-Site
B1 Business <i>(now Class E(g))</i>	Offices, research & development, light industry appropriate in a residential area – threshold of 2500m <sup>2</sup>	1 car space per 100m <sup>2</sup> in Woking town centre	147	0
A1 Retail <i>(now Class E(a))</i>	Food or non-food retail eg: small parades of shops serving the local community (up to 500m <sup>2</sup> )	1 car space per 30m <sup>2</sup>	0*	0
	Food retail (500 m <sup>2</sup> to 1000m <sup>2</sup> )	1 car space per 25m <sup>2</sup>	0*	0
	Food retail (above	1 car space per	0*	0

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	1000m <sup>2</sup> )	14m <sup>2</sup>		
	Non-food retail (500m <sup>2</sup> or more)	1 car space per 25m <sup>2</sup>	0*	0
A2 Financial and professional services <i>(now Class E(c))</i>	Banks, building societies, estate agents and other agencies	1 car space per 30m <sup>2</sup>	0*	
A3 Food and drink <i>(now Class E(b))</i>	Restaurants, snack bars and café's. For sale & consumption on the premises	1 car space per 6m <sup>2</sup>	0*	0
<b>Total</b>			<b>147</b>	<b>0</b>
* Note: Zero parking in Woking town centre (as defined on the Proposals Map) for A Class Uses (which now fall within Class E).				

208. In respect of cycle parking the SPD identifies (at section 4.6) that “The provision of good quality cycle parking supports cycling as a means of transport and is therefore critical to increasing the use of cycles”, identifying minimum cycle parking as below:

Use Class	Minimum cycle parking	GFA / No. of seats	Minimum quantum required	Proposed quantum
<b>B1 Business</b> <i>(now Class E(g))</i>				
Offices	1 space per 125 sq.m (min. 2 spaces)	18,410 sq.m GFA	148	225
<b>A1 Retail</b> <i>(now Class E(a))</i>				
Food retail	1 space per 125 sq.m (town/local centre)	Unable to be calculated due to the flexible Class E use which is proposed at ground and first floor levels – floorspace within these ground and first floor areas could alternate between any of the uses now falling within the Class E (which would not be development for planning purposes) - SPD Parking Standards (2018) pre-dates substantive changes to the Use Classes Order which came into force on 1 September 2020.		
Non-food retail	1 space per 300m sq.m (town/local centre)			
All other retail uses	Individual assessment			
<b>A2 Financial/ professional services</b> <i>(now Class E(c))</i>	1 space per 125 sq.m			
<b>A3 Food and drink</b> <i>(now Class E(b))</i>				
Restaurants, snack bars and café's. For sale & consumption on the premises (if located beyond Town Centre locations).	1 space per 20 seats (min 2 spaces), town centre parking not necessarily required			

209. There are currently no known formal cycle parking facilities within the site.



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210. The final use of the flexible Class E units is unknown (as the intention is that they be flexible to respond quickly to future demands, as Government intended, particularly within town centre locations such as this, by bringing Class E into force). As such, the applicant has applied the most onerous cycle parking standards of the applicable land uses (food retail (town/local centre)), which require one cycle space per 125 sq.m, to this area. The proposed development would include the provision of x225 cycle parking spaces, which readily exceeds the minimum quantum required by SPD Parking Standards (2018), which requires x148 cycle parking spaces. A large 'cycle spa' will incorporate cycle parking, and cycle maintenance facilities, and will adjoin supporting facilities including showers, lockers and changing rooms. The 'cycle spa' would be located on the eastern side of the proposed development at ground floor level, with its own dedicated access point on Chobham Road, which forms part of a national cycle route, and the location of the cycle parking and supporting facilities would thus integrate with the existing cycle network. Cycle parking would be provided in the form of two-tier cycle parking stands. The quantum, location, and provision, of the cycle parking and supporting facilities would encourage future users of the proposed building to continue and/or to take up cycling as means of active travel.
211. In their initial consultation response Active Travel England (ATE) welcomes the cycle parking proposed, as well as the showers and lockers which are proposed as part of a 'cycle spa' that will also include maintenance facilities. ATE also set out that it is expected that some cycle parking will be provided for visitors to the development (for example, shoppers etc. visiting the flexible Class E units) as currently no convenient public cycle parking would appear to exist at this location. In response the applicant has added additional external cycle parking (x6 spaces) within the urban realm for the use of visitors to the site (particularly the flexible Class E units). The applicant also states that existing cycle parking, external to the site, which can be used by visitors, is available on Chobham Road / Crown Square, Mercia Walk and Commercial Way, all within a 200 metre walk of the site and that, during multiple site visits to Woking Town Centre it was observed that the demand for these cycle spaces is currently much lower than the capacity provided and therefore there is ample cycle parking provided within Woking Town Centre which could be used by visitors to the site without the addition of further spaces at the site.
212. SPD Climate Change (2023) sets out that spatial planning plays a key role in mitigating and adapting to climate change through decision-making on the location, scale, mix and character of development. In respect of sustainable transport for non-residential development the SPD identifies that:
- *“Designs should prioritise walking, cycling and public transport. Provide strong links to existing footpaths, cycle routes and public transport nodes.*
  - *Secure and covered cycle parking should be located close to a property, with appropriate provision provided based on occupancy.*
  - *Certain developments (major development or highly disruptive to transport) will be required to conduct Transport Assessments and provide Travel Plans to manage travel needs sustainably.*
  - *Provision of car parking should be consistent with cutting emissions, including through providing for EV charging infrastructure.*
  - *Meet the minimum requirements for the provision of EV charge points in accordance with the current Building Regulations Part S.”*
213. The application has been submitted with a Transport Assessment (TA), Travel Plan (TP) and Delivery and Servicing Management Plan (DSMP). In addition, during the application process, the applicant has submitted a response to initial comments made

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by statutory consultees including the County Highway Authority (CHA, Surrey County Council) and Active Travel England (ATE).

214. The site is located in Woking Town Centre and is bound by Chobham Road, Church Street East and Christchurch Way. In terms of connectivity, at the time of writing, Christchurch Way and Chobham Road are open to vehicle movements while pedestrianisation (i.e., the prohibition of vehicle movements) is in place on Church Street East between Chobham Road and Christchurch Way using temporary bollards. Authorised vehicles and emergency vehicles are allowed access; this is controlled by removable bollards located west of Chobham Road. Along the west side of the site (i.e., Christchurch Way) there are a number of private garages and an informal car parking area used by occupants of the existing buildings within the site, estimated at x25 spaces. The nearest public car park is the Victoria Way multi-storey car park (x922 spaces), which is around 80 metres away. Additionally, there is on-street parking adjacent to the site as follows:
- x7 Pay & Display parking spaces and x4 blue badge parking spaces on Chobham Road; and
  - x2 blue badge parking spaces on Christchurch Way.

### Walking and Cycling

215. The site is well connected to existing pedestrian facilities. Christchurch Way and Chobham Road feature well-lit pedestrian footways on both sides of the carriageway. The recent (albeit potentially temporary) pedestrianisation of Church Street East (between Chobham Road and Christchurch Way) has provided improved pedestrian facilities, by reducing vehicular traffic and there is pedestrianisation between Christchurch Way and Jubilee Square.
216. The pedestrian facilities surrounding the site are of good quality and feature tactile paving and dropped kerbs at crossing locations. On Church Street East and the south-eastern sections of Chobham Road and Christchurch Way, the existing pedestrian footway provisions are flush with the carriageway, allowing step free access from blue badge parking bays on Christchurch Way, Chobham Road and also from the Victoria Way car park.
217. The pedestrian footways connect the proposed development to surrounding amenities and Woking Railway Station. The footways also connect the site to the Victoria Way multi-storey car park (x922 spaces, around 80 metres away) and the Brewery Road car park (x146 spaces, around 230 metres away). In terms of public transport links, the site is located around 300 metres away from the Woking Railway Station bus stops (located on The Broadway, High Street and Locke Way), around 400 metres away from the High Street link road bus stops (i.e., those close to Victoria Arch) and around 230 metres away from the bus stop on Victoria Way (i.e., the Town Quay bus stop near to Brewery Road car park). The site is also around 300 metres away from the Brewery Road bus stops (i.e., those outside of Trinity Methodist Church and the WWF Living Planet Centre).
218. The site is also around 240 metres away from Woking Railway Station and is around 120 metres away from Victoria Place Shopping Centre, where numerous shopping, eating, leisure and market stall amenities are located. Overall, most of Woking Town Centre (as defined on the Proposals Map) falls within a 400 metre radius of the site (approx. 5-minute walk), with all of Woking Town Centre, and many of the adjoining residential areas, within an 800 metre radius (approx. 10-minute walk).

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219. Pedestrian footways are provided on all sides of the proposed building, facilitating pedestrian movements. Multiple pedestrian access points would be available around the proposed building, the main entrance to the office component of the proposed development is a prominent atrium-style entrance located on the western side. Step free access for pedestrians would be provided on all frontages of the proposed development and public realm improvements are also proposed.
220. The site is well served by existing cycling infrastructure including advisory cycle routes, the National Cycle Network, greenways, and shared use paths. Around the town of Woking a cycle network has been introduced known as the Planet Network. Traffic free cycle routes are located to the immediate north and south of the site. Located to the north of the site is the National Cycle Network Route 221, which connects West Byfleet to Brookwood along the Basingstoke Canal. The 'Planet Network' Route Saturn - Brookwood to New Haw via Woking Town Centre largely follows along this route. The route itself is of a high-quality, varying in width between around 1.5 metres and 4.0 metres in the vicinity of the site. This route has recently been further improved with the opening (in October 2020) of the Chobham Road pedestrian and cycle bridge located adjacent to (and underneath) the Chobham Road Bridge to the north of the site, which enables pedestrians and cyclists to cross the canal and avoid the need to cross Chobham Road. Overall, existing traffic free routes, cycle lanes and tracks are located in the vicinity of the site and would make travelling to and from the proposed development by bicycle an attractive option.
221. It should also be noted that Brompton Bike Hire, which has numerous bike hire locations nationwide, has installed a bike hire facility on the south side of Woking Railway Station, this is located around a 6 minute walk to the south of the site. Overall, the site is therefore highly accessible by bicycle.

### Public Transport

#### Bus

222. The location of the site within Woking Town Centre means that there is a high standard of public transport provision available, facilitating access between the site and major locations within the Borough, within Surrey and indeed further afield. The site is located around 300 metres away from the Woking Railway Station bus stops (located on The Broadway, High Street and Locke Way), around 400 metres away from the High Street link road bus stops (i.e., those close to Victoria Arch), around 230 metres away from the bus stop on Victoria Way (i.e., the Town Quay bus stop near to Brewery Road car park) and around 315 metres away from the Chertsey Road bus stop (which is identified as Board School Road bus stop) to the east/north-east of the site. The site is also around 300 metres away from the Brewery Road bus stops (i.e., those outside of Trinity Methodist Church and the WWF Living Planet Centre).
223. Bus stops within the area, particularly those at Woking Railway Station and the High Street Link Road, have shelters, seating, and timetables. There are a wide range of bus services operating from (and through) nearby bus stops to destinations within (i.e., Knaphill, St Johns, Brookwood, Goldsworth Park, Horsell, Sheerwater, Pyrford, West Byfleet and Byfleet) and outside of the Borough (i.e., Guildford, Staines, Addlestone, Brooklands, Weybridge, Chobham and Camberley). Table 3.1 of the TA provides a full list of the bus services which serve bus stops local to the site, although a selection of the most frequent services is shown on the following page:

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Bus Service	Bus Authority	Route	Frequency
456	Falcon Buses	Staines - Woking	Approximately every 60 minutes
446	White Bus Services	Staines - Woking	Approximately every 15 minutes Monday-Saturday & 30 Minutes Sunday
437	Falcon Buses	Woking - Brooklands	Approximately every 120 minutes
436	Falcon Buses	Woking - Weybridge	Approximately every 30 minutes
91	Stagecoach South	Woking Railway Station - Guildford Bus Station	Approximately every 15 minutes Monday-Saturday & 30 Minutes Sunday
35	Stagecoach South	Guildford Bus Station - Woking Railway Station	Approximately every 60 minutes
34	Stagecoach South	Guildford Bus Station - Camberley Pembroke Broadway	Approximately every 60 minutes
28	Falcon Buses	Woking - Guildford	Approximately every 60 minutes

*(Note: Information correct as of 15/08/2023)*

### Rail

224. The closest railway station to the site is Woking Railway Station, with the (High Street side) entrance of the station located approximately 240 metres to the south of the site. Woking Railway Station has circa x570 car parking spaces and circa x456 sheltered bike storage spaces including some located within a recent cycle hub which has 24-hour access, full CCTV coverage and maintenance tools. Cycle hire is also available from a Brompton Bicycles bike hire dock on the southern side of the railway lines. Woking Railway Station has step free access to all platforms and excellent transport links to surrounding areas, Heathrow Airport and, through connections, to locations throughout the national rail network. The TA provides (at Table 3.2) details of train services operating from (and through) Woking Railway Station as follows (the below is a partial extract of Table 3.2):

Direction	Frequency
Portsmouth and Haslemere - London Waterloo (Via Woking)	Approximately every 20 minutes Monday-Saturday and 30 Minutes Sunday
London Waterloo - Portsmouth and Haslemere (Via Woking)	Approximately every 25 minutes Monday-Saturday and 30 Minutes Sunday
Weybridge - London Waterloo (Via Woking)	Approximately every 30 minutes Monday-Saturday and 60 Minutes Sunday
London Waterloo - Weybridge (Via Woking)	Approximately every 30 minutes Monday-Saturday and 60 Minutes Sunday
Southampton and Winchester - London Waterloo (Via Woking)	Approximately every 45 minutes Monday-Saturday and 60 Minutes Sunday
London Waterloo - Southampton and Winchester (Via Woking)	Approximately every 30 minutes
Portsmouth and Fareham Via Eastleigh - London Waterloo (Via Woking)	Approximately every 30 minutes Monday-Friday and 60 Minutes Saturday, Sunday

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London Waterloo - Portsmouth and Fareham Via Eastleigh (Via Woking)	Approximately every 30 minutes Monday-Friday
Basingstoke, Alton and Aldershot - London Waterloo (Via Woking)	Approximately every 15 minutes
London Waterloo - Basingstoke, Alton, and Aldershot (Via Woking)	Approximately every 15 minutes

*(Note: Information correct as of 15/08/2023)*

### The Highway, Vehicles and Parking

225. The site is bound by Chobham Road, Church Street East and Christchurch Way. Chertsey Road and Victoria Way (A320) can be accessed from the site using Church Street East. Christchurch Way is located to the west of the site, it provides x2 on-street blue badge parking spaces. Chobham Road, located to the north and west of the site, also provides on-street parking in the form of x7 Pay & Display parking spaces and x4 blue badge parking spaces. Church Street East bounds the site to the south and is (at the time of writing) pedestrianised between Chobham Road and Jubilee Square. On-street parking is prevalent on Church Street East, most notably to the east. Victoria Way (A320) is located to the north of the site, which provides vehicular access between Guildford, Woking, Chertsey and Staines.
226. The TA sets out that occupancy levels of these on-street car parking spaces were observed during a visit to the site on a neutral weekday in September 2023 and that it was observed that the blue badge car parking spaces were approximately 70% occupied (i.e., x4 spaces out of x6 spaces were occupied) although it was noted that x2 of the x4 vehicles observed were not displaying blue badges.
227. The proposed development would include the relocation of x4 existing blue badge car parking bays on Chobham Road to a position approximately 15 metres from their current position, albeit still on Chobham Road (moved to the northern end of the layby), and the removal of x2 Pay & Display bays on Chobham Road to accommodate the provision of x1 loading bay to accommodate the delivery and servicing requirements of the proposed development. The applicant would re-provide the lost x2 Pay & Display spaces at a location within Woking Town Centre to be agreed with Surrey County Council (SCC, as the Highway Authority) (this alternate provision will be secured via a Section 278 Agreement - under the Highways Act 1980 - which the applicant will be required to enter into with Surrey County Council by the Section 106 Legal Agreement).
228. Whilst the existing (and proposed) on-street parking spaces are (and would remain) for general public use in the post-development scenario the close proximity of the relocated blue badge spaces would also benefit the proposed development by providing an opportunity for those accessing the site with blue badges to park on the immediate periphery and gain step free access to the proposed development.
229. Along the west side of the site (i.e., Christchurch Way) there are a number of private garages and an informal car parking area used by occupants of the existing buildings within the site, estimated at x25 spaces. As part of the proposed development, this informal car parking area and private garages would be removed and demolished respectively.

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230. The proposed development is proposed to be an ‘on-site car free’ development. In this respect the site is very well located in relation to existing Woking Town Centre public car parks, as follows:

<b>Car park</b>	<b>Walking distance to site (approximate) (metres)</b>	<b>Number of parking spaces</b>	<b>Number of electric charging bays</b>	<b>Number of disabled bays</b>	<b>Car park opening times</b>
Victoria Way	80	922	6	15	24 hrs
Brewery Road	230	146	4	8	24 hrs
Victoria Place (Yellow)	250	368	6	19	24 hrs
Victoria Place (Blue)	250	918	0	37	24 hrs
Victoria Place (Red)	250	1,228	45	40	24 hrs
Heathside	500	469	0	4	24 hrs
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4,051</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>-</b>

231. As can be seen from the table above, as existing, there are in excess of 4,000 parking spaces in public car parks (all of which operate on a 24 hour basis) within around 500 metres walking distance of the site, with the exception of Heathside car park, all these car parks being within around a 250 metre walking distance of the site. The above table also shows that, overall, there are 61 electric vehicle charging bays and 123 disabled bays in these nearby public car parks.

232. As part of the development proposals, the applicant has discussed, primarily with the Council’s Parking Services team, the potential for a number of season tickets for Woking Town Centre car parks to be purchased and allocated to prospective tenants of the proposed development. Whilst this negotiation is largely separate from the planning process it will need to be reflected in the Travel Plan (which will be secured through the Section 106 Legal Agreement).

233. The TA sets out that, based on the anticipated travel demands, the proposal is to secure x50 season tickets for Woking Town Centre car parks in the first instance with the potential to increase these, if demand warrants, up to a maximum of x150 season tickets (i.e., approximately 1 season ticket per 1000 sq.ft GFA). The TA sets out that the Council’s Parking Services team are content that sufficient capacity exists within Woking Town Centre car parks to accommodate this proposed arrangement and that agreement in principle exists with that team to do so. The TA also sets out that data (provided to the applicant by the Council’s Parking Services team) confirms that there is ample capacity, in both the Victoria Way and Victoria Place car parks, to accommodate this parking season ticket proposal. The data within the TA shows that the Victoria Way and Victoria Place car parks have an overall (combined) capacity of x3,576 spaces and that during the period 2nd May 2023 to 31st May 2023 the maximum percentage occupancy of these car parks rarely exceeded 40%, with only one instance observed during this period, namely Sunday 14th May at 15:15hrs, where this number was exceeded (to around 75% occupancy). Moreover, the TA sets out, observations illustrate that there is also residual blue badge space capacity.

234. This proposed approach ensures the viability of the proposed (principally office) development without requiring additional land within Woking Town Centre for private vehicle parking. The Travel Plan (a draft version of which has been submitted as part of the application) will make provisions for the continuous review of car parking space

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usage to align with the commitment of the proposed development to promote active travel modes among office workers.

235. It is also important to note that a season ticket for a public car park does not necessarily imply the daily use of a space within the car park as there will inevitably be absences (i.e., leave and sickness etc.) and working from home which impact the frequency of use of season tickets. To facilitate those with mobility impairments, the season ticket arrangement would also provide priority to those persons holding a valid blue badge.
236. Enterprise Car Club operate within Woking Town Centre, this service allows car club members access to a car on an occasional, 'pay-as-you-go' basis. At the time of writing Enterprise Car Club has x4 car club cars based within Woking Town Centre; x1 Nissan Leaf Auto EV based in the Victoria Place (Red) car park, x1 Toyota Yaris Hybrid based on-street outside No.32 Goldsworth Road and x1 Nissan Leaf Auto EV and x1 Kia Niro EV based on-street on Montgomery Road (i.e., outside of Quadrant Court). Enterprise Car Club offers corporate plans to businesses and therefore future tenants of the proposed development would be able to utilise this service (subject to membership etc.).
237. The TA sets out that collision data for 2018 to 2020 has been reviewed (based on open data source information), that a cluster of slight accidents at the A3046 / A320 (Chobham Road/Victoria Way) junction have been further investigated and that it was noted that no pedestrians were involved in any of these accidents. As such, the TA concludes that no mitigation is considered necessary to alleviate road safety concerns at the Chobham Road/Victoria Way junction and that no other accident clusters are observed within the local area which would cause concern in relation to the new trips associated with the proposed development.

### Deliveries and Servicing

238. The application has been submitted with a (draft) Delivery and Servicing Management Plan (DSMP) which sets out that deliveries for businesses within the existing site are currently undertaken from the on-street Pay & Display parking bays, from within the private car parking area within the site and from the existing loading facilities on Church Street East and that refuse collection is understood to currently be undertaken for each individual unit from the vehicular carriageways.
239. A bin store, shared by all uses within the proposed development, is proposed on the ground floor level on the eastern side of the building (i.e., fronting onto Chobham Road), while plant rooms are also located on the ground floor. Servicing requirements associated with the proposed development would primarily focus on the operational maintenance of plant and on recyclables / waste collection. Deliveries to the office component of the proposed development, and the flexible Class E use units (likely to accommodate retail, restaurant and café uses etc.), would also take place. Mixed dry recyclables, organic/food and residual wastes would be collected from the site by a commercial service provider (Joint Waste Solutions only undertake residential collection, the Council has no statutory duty to collect commercial recyclables/waste) likely on a twice-weekly basis, with on-demand collection for confidential wastes and large and/or bulky items etc.
240. To facilitate delivery and service vehicles associated with the proposed development the introduction of a new on-street loading bay is proposed on Chobham Road (i.e., adjacent to the proposed bin store). This loading bay would be incorporated within

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the existing layby and require the relocation of x4 existing blue badge car parking bays approximately 15 metres north of their current position and the removal of x2 Pay & Display bays (which will be replaced at a location to be agreed with Surrey County Council). The proposed loading bay would form the main delivery and servicing provision for the proposed development and would be suitable, as shown by a swept path analysis, for a large recyclables / waste collection vehicle (9.07m in length), large delivery vehicles, box vans and other smaller vehicles. However, it would be open to use by other local businesses for the same purpose (as it would be located within the public highway) although there are other existing loading bays on the public highway on Church Street East which are currently used by other businesses. The provision of the proposed loading bay would serve to minimise the impact of delivery and service vehicle parking and activity on the local road network (outside of designated areas) as well as providing a wider benefit to all business in the area, who would be able to use the bay. It is unlikely that vehicles larger than a large recyclables / waste collection vehicle (9.07m in length) would be used for delivery / servicing purposes within this Woking Town Centre location (outside of the construction period, which would be covered by the CTMP).

241. The (draft) DSMP estimates (through use of TRICS 7.10.2) that the proposed development would generate x20 servicing / delivery trips between 06:00 and 08:00 hrs (on weekdays), these trips taking place outside of the typical AM peak hour period (08:00-09:00), and that, for the majority of the day (i.e., between 08:00 and 20:00 hrs), an average of no more than x2 servicing / delivery trips are estimated to take place within a single hour period (on a typical weekday), with the vast majority of these delivery / servicing trips (91%) anticipated to be undertaken by Light Goods Vehicles (rather than Ordinary Goods Vehicles). As such, the (draft) DSMP concludes that the level of delivery / servicing trips generated by the proposed development is unlikely to have a substantial impact on the local road network in the vicinity of the site and that the proposed provision of a single loading bay is sufficient to accommodate the additional delivery / servicing requirements which would arise as a result of the proposed development.
242. Other than recyclables / waste collection it is not envisaged that other vehicles associated with deliveries would utilise the loading bay for more than a short period of time, typically 5 to 10 minutes. Moreover, in the event that x2 vehicles require use of the loading bay at the same time, an alternative unrestricted loading only bay is available directly across from the site on the southern side of Church Street East.
243. The (draft) DSMP identifies that a key target of the final DSMP would be to ensure that deliveries are organised by the site operator in as efficient a manner as possible and that the estimated x36 delivery / servicing trips per day is treated as a maximum target, with the intention to reduce this where possible. It also identifies that a further target should be to ensure that all procurement of delivery and servicing operators includes stipulations on the types of vehicle fleets used and that a proportion of 50% of delivery and servicing trips to the site should be made by low / no emission vehicles (which could be managed through the procurement process of third party delivery and servicing operators).
244. Condition 14 is recommended to secure a finalised Service and Deliveries Management Plan (SDMP).



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### Travel Demands

245. The TA considers the likely future travel demands to and from the proposed development by all travel modes (using the Trip Rate Information Computer System (TRICS) 7.10.2 database) for the existing and proposed land use types in Town Centre areas.
246. The site is currently occupied by a mix of retail and office units and a taxi firm, trip generations associated with these have been quantified within the TA. The ground floor of the proposed development would provide units of flexible Class E space (alongside office reception, plant and ancillary spaces). The TA sets out that, whilst it is envisaged that these ground floor units are likely incorporate a variety of specific use types within Class E (i.e., such as café, restaurant and retail), for the purposes of the travel demands assessment the most onerous land use at ground floor has been assumed, which was found to be retail and therefore, the travel demands assessment assumes that the ground floor flexible Class E units are exclusively occupied by the retail land use (as a 'worst case' scenario in travel demand terms). The TA sets out that whilst the first floor (i.e., level 1) is also proposed as flexible Class E space, it is envisaged that the most likely use at this level will be office space, with the travel demands assessment undertaken on that basis. Similarly, the travel demands assessment assumes that levels 2-10 (incl.) would be occupied by office land use.
247. The following table shows an estimate of the total AM and PM peak hour trip generation potential (on weekdays) associated with the site under its existing land uses (this is an extraction of Table 6-2 within the TA):

#### **Existing**

Land Use	Mode	AM Peak (08:00-09:00)			PM Peak (18:00-19:00)		
		In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total
2,523 sq.m Office	Vehicles	5	1	6	1	3	4
	Cyclists	4	0	4	0	3	3
	Pedestrians	8	3	11	0	4	4
	Public Transport	38	1	39	1	21	22
	Light Goods Vehicles	0	0	0	0	0	0
1,358 sq.m Retail	Ordinary Goods Vehicles	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Vehicles	14	9	23	14	19	33
	Cyclists	1	1	2	0	0	0
	Pedestrians	212	235	447	565	531	1096
	Public Transport	48	43	91	98	110	208
	Light Goods Vehicles	1	3	4	0	0	0
	Ordinary Goods Vehicles	1	1	2	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>Vehicles</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>37</b>
	<b>Cyclists</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
	<b>Pedestrians</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>458</b>	<b>565</b>	<b>535</b>	<b>1100</b>
	<b>Public Transport</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>230</b>
	<b>Light Goods Vehicles</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>Ordinary Goods Vehicles</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

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248. The preceding table shows that sustainable and active travel modes such as walking, cycling and public transport, account for x594 two-way trips in the AM peak and x1,333 two-way trips in the PM peak. During the AM peak, it is estimated that x29 two-way vehicular trips are generated, with x37 two-way trips in the PM peak.
249. The following table shows an estimate of the total AM and PM peak hour trip generation potential (on weekdays) associated with the site under its proposed land uses (this is an extraction of Table 6-3 within the TA, taking account of minor corrections which were made by way of a subsequent document prepared by the applicant's transport consultant):

### Proposed

Land Use	Mode	AM Peak (08:00-09:00)			PM Peak (18:00-19:00)		
		In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total
13,824 sq.m Office	Vehicles	29	6	35	4	16	20
	Cyclists	20	0	20	0	16	16
	Pedestrians	41	18	59	2	22	24
	Public Transport	206	6	212	4	116	120
	Light Goods Vehicles	1	0	1	0	0	0
	Ordinary Goods Vehicles	0	0	0	0	0	0
716 sq.m Retail	Vehicles	8	5	13	8	10	18
	Cyclists	1	1	2	0	0	0
	Pedestrians	112	124	236	298	280	578
	Public Transport	56	35	91	52	58	110
	Light Goods Vehicles	1	2	3	0	0	0
	Ordinary Goods Vehicles	1	1	2	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>Vehicles</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>38</b>
	<b>Cyclists</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>
	<b>Pedestrians</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>602</b>
	<b>Public Transport</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>245</b>
	<b>Light Goods Vehicles</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>Ordinary Goods Vehicles</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

250. The preceding table shows that sustainable and active travel modes such as walking, cycling and public transport, would account for the vast majority of trips, with x620 two-way trips in the AM peak and x863 two-way trips in the PM peak, equating to 92% and 96% of all trips respectively. During the AM peak, it is anticipated that x48 two-way vehicular trips would be generated by the proposed development, with x38 two-way vehicular trips in the PM peak.
251. The net difference in the estimated trips generated, during the AM and PM peaks (weekdays), between the existing and proposed land uses on the site are set out in the following table (this is an extraction of Table 6-4 within the TA) (on the following page):

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Mode	AM Peak (08:00-09:00)			PM Peak (18:00-19:00)		
	In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total
Vehicles	+18	+1	+19	-3	+4	+1
Cyclists	+16	0	+16	0	+13	+13
Pedestrians	-67	-96	-163	-265	-233	-498
Public Transport	+176	-3	+173	-38	+53	+15
Light Goods Vehicles	+1	-1	0	0	0	0
Ordinary Goods Vehicles	0	0	0	0	0	0

*Note: 0 equals no change compared to existing*

252. The preceding table shows that there is predicted to be a decrease of x163 and x498 two way pedestrian trips during the AM and PM peak hours respectively, which is largely due to the reduction in retail floor area between the existing and proposed land uses (retail uses generating more pedestrian trips). There is also predicted to be an increase in two-way cyclist trips during the AM and PM peak hours of x16 and x13 trips respectively.
253. There is predicted to be an increase in x173 two-way public transport trips to and from the site in the AM peak hour with an increase of x15 two-way public transport trips to and from the site in the PM peak hour. The TA sets out that public transport trips associated with a Grade A Office development, such as the proposed development, would generally be existing trips diverted from other office locations in the region rather than brand new trips, thus creating no measurable additional demand on the local public transport network.
254. It is predicted that there will be an increase of x19 and x1 two-way vehicular trips generated by the proposed development in the AM and PM peak hours respectively. Because no vehicular parking will be provided on-site, the majority of vehicular trips generated by the proposed development (excluding servicing trips) would occur to and from the nearby public car parks (the closest of which are Victoria Way, Brewery Road and Victoria Place (Yellow/Blue/Red)) and would thus have no impact on the road network immediately adjoining the site, nor any material impact upon the local road network. Moreover, because these car parks have existing extant capacity, the trips generated by occupiers of the site accessing these car parks would already be accounted for on the Woking Town Centre road network through planning permissions for those car parks. In addition, the TA uses TRICS data to establish that the cumulative total number of parked vehicles generated by the proposed development would be a maximum of x43. As such, the applicant intends to secure x50 season tickets for Woking Town Centre car parks to support the proposed development on the day of opening, up to a maximum provision of x150 (subject to separate agreement with WBC Parking Services). The number of two-way Light Goods Vehicles and Ordinary Goods Vehicles trips are predicted to be unchanged in both the AM and PM peak hours.
255. The TA notes that the majority of TRICS sites used as part of the TA assessment do not have Travel Plans in place and therefore it is anticipated that additional trips by sustainable and active modes of travel could be generated by the proposed development because it would be supported by a Travel Plan aimed at staff and visitors. Furthermore, the TA sets out that, in relation to AM and PM peak hour trip generation, the figures within the TA (at Table 6-3, which is replicated in this report) represent a robust case which accounts for no shared (or linked) trips to each land use and that, for example, it is unlikely that the proposed flexible Class E ground floor uses, if established as uses such as café, retail or restaurant, would generate

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exclusively new trips and that, instead, these would predominantly be shared (or linked) trips already occurring (i.e., staff in the office component buying a coffee in a café or shoppers within Woking Town Centre visiting a retail unit during a trip to Woking Town Centre).

256. In response to case officer comments the applicant has (during the application process) submitted further information which breaks down the estimated public transport trip generation during the AM and PM peak hours (weekdays) into modes (i.e., rail trips and bus trips):

Land Use	Mode	AM Peak (08:00-09:00)			PM Peak (18:00-19:00)		
		In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total
Total Development	All Public Transport Users	262	35	297	61	184	245
	Rail Trips	179	8	187	23	122	145
	Bus Trips	83	27	110	38	62	100

257. When distributed across bus services that run in the vicinity of the site during weekday AM and PM peak hours (around 30 services per hour) and across railway services running through Woking Railway Station during the weekday AM and PM peak hours (around 27 services) the net additional demand generated by the proposed development on the local bus and rail network, which would be lower than the total demand set out within the preceding table (because those numbers do not account for demand generated by existing land uses on the site) the increase in the number of passengers on each service would result in a negligible to low impact.
258. In their initial consultation response (dated 30 October 2023) Active Travel England (ATE) suggested that the proposed development could well accommodate around 1,500 employees, leading to in excess of 2,400 cycling and walking journeys to and from the site every day (in addition to journeys from public transport which will also start and finish with walking, wheeling or cycling) and therefore it is essential that the surrounding infrastructure provides them with attractive opportunities to walk, wheel or cycle to their workplace.
259. In response the applicant states that the proposed development allows for an improved pedestrian and cycle environment around the proposed development by providing a more cohesive urban realm and landscaping strategy aimed to naturally slow down traffic and give greater precedence to pedestrians and cyclists, that the office space proposed takes up a significantly smaller area than quoted by ATE - 12,639 sq.m, as opposed to 16,309 sq.m GFA, with the remaining area taken up by plant and other amenities (which would reduce the employment density suggested by ATE). Moreover, the applicant states that the calculation of number of employees undertaken by ATE is based on figures from the Employment Densities Guide (2010), that office space has changed significantly since 2010 with the introduction of aspects such as break out space and co-working areas plus more meeting rooms and desk sharing and, as a result, the stated 1,500 employees quoted by ATE is likely to be an over-estimate for the proposed development.
260. The applicant states that in their opinion the estimated number of walking, cycle and public transport trips provided in the submitted TA (x632 two-way trips in the AM peak hour and x886 two-way trips in the PM peak hour) is more reflective of the likely scenario upon opening of the proposed development and furthermore, that the estimated trip generation numbers described by ATE do not allow for the net change

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in trips which would be brought about by the demolition of existing uses on the site, which is fully considered in the submitted TA.

261. The applicant also states that, whilst they are in agreement that the proposed development brings about an opportunity to encourage more walking and cycling trips within Woking Town Centre, it is the belief of the applicant that this would be done naturally through the proposed urban realm and landscaping strategy and that, as described in the submitted TA, the receiving environment in Woking Town Centre is currently well equipped to support an increase in active travel trips to the levels associated with the proposed development.
262. In their initial consultation response (dated 30 October 2023) ATE also set out that to the north and south of Woking Town Centre there are significant residential populations, but also significant barriers - to the north, Victoria Way, and to the south, the railway and that presently, each of these barriers are served by underpasses, but these underpasses are neither fully accessible (due to stairs, some of which are uneven) nor attractive. As such, ATE state that a key opportunity therefore arises to help overcome these barriers via a contribution towards a solution (for example, the remodelling of the Victoria Way/Chobham Road junction referenced in the Draft Woking Town Centre Masterplan, which could negate the need for an underpass altogether) but also through modernisation such as better lighting or public art where this not possible (for example, where the railway is a barrier) in order to take full advantage of this excellent opportunity to bridge missing links to existing good infrastructure such as the Saturn trail.
263. In their response the applicant states that, as acknowledged by ATE, the National Cycle Route 223 (NCN223) passes the site on Chobham Road, and that to the north NCN223 continues over Victoria Way and leads to a significant residential catchment north of Woking Town Centre all within a reasonable cycling distance as detailed in the submitted TA. The applicant also states that a signalised Toucan crossing is provided for pedestrians and cyclists over Victoria Way, therefore providing a high level of accessibility to the north for active travel users and that thus there is no requirement to use an underpass at this location.
264. The applicant states that to the south of the site it is acknowledged that the railway line and Woking Railway Station do present a barrier. However, it is understood that some improvement works to the railway underpass have been undertaken in recent months and it is unclear if these are acknowledged in the ATE response and that, nonetheless, it is not considered likely that a feasible solution could be achieved to the south that would be commensurate to the level of development proposed - an alternative route is available to the south of the railway line on Victoria Way approximately 500 metres from the site (whilst this is also an underpass - i.e., footways beneath Victoria Arch - it is at grade, is equipped with a 2 metre wide footway and is well lit). The applicant also states that the Draft Woking Town Centre Masterplan referenced in the comment from ATE is not currently being progressed and therefore has no weight regarding contribution mechanisms for improvement works in Woking Town Centre.
265. In their updated consultation response (dated 21 December 2023) ATE welcome the clarification provided around the amount of office space proposed and note that more recent guidance around Employment Densities is available (2015) and considers this appropriate. ATE states that using the floorspace area provided in the applicant's response and the 2015 guidance, it remains likely that around x972 employees will use the building at full capacity and that while ATE accepts there have been recent

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changes in office space, these have not necessarily led to less densely-populated spaces (and once the development is permitted, planning permission will not be required to introduce more/smaller desks, for example) and therefore ATE comment that the proposed trip generation rates would still appear to be on the low side; however that they will defer to the LPA on this matter. In this respect the County Highway Authority (Surrey CC) have not raised any concerns in respect of the applicant's trip rate calculations and, following review of them, Officers have no reason to dispute them.

266. Within their updated consultation response (dated 21 December 2023) ATE state that they disagree (with the applicant) that the proposed urban realm and landscaping strategy is necessarily enough to deal with the potential barriers set out in the initial ATE consultation response and would encourage the LPA and applicants to consider this element further in order to ensure that the applicant is able to achieve the highly sustainable development described in the application documents. ATE state that for a development of this size it is considered unusual that it is unable to contribute significantly towards improvements to the wider area. In this respect Officers reiterate that the Draft Woking Town Centre Masterplan (which is referenced in both ATE consultation responses) presently attracts no weight in planning decision making, that there are no Development Plan policies which are considered to justify a financial contribution towards such works and that there are no identified schemes to: (i) improve the quality of the pedestrian crossing across Victoria Way, (ii) remodel the major junction between Victoria Way and Chobham Road or (iii) improve the quality of the connections between the Town Centre and the north of the town. In this context it is considered that requiring the applicant to contribute financially towards such potential schemes would not meet the requirements of paragraph 57 of the NPPF (December 2023) which states that "*Planning obligations must only be sought where they meet all of the following tests: a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms; b) directly related to the development; and c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development*".

### Framework Construction Traffic Management Plan

267. The TA contains (at section 7) a Framework Construction Traffic Management Plan (Framework CTMP), the purpose of which is to provide a framework from which a finalised CTMP can be developed if planning permission is granted (which would be secured via recommended condition 13). The Framework CTMP sets out that if planning permission is granted construction is anticipated to commence in mid-2024 (although any planning permission would have a 3 year lifespan) and is estimated to take approximately 24 months. The Framework CTMP sets out that it is not envisaged that road closures would be necessary to facilitate the construction of the proposed development although it may be necessary to close pedestrian footways, part of the carriageway or to suspend parking. These are all normal temporary measures for a Major development such as this and would require the (separate) consent of Surrey County Council (as the Highway Authority). Condition 13 is recommended to secure a finalised Construction Transport Management Plan (CTMP).

### Travel Plan

268. The application has been submitted with a (draft) Travel Plan which sets out a framework for the promotion of sustainable travel to and from the proposed development. The (draft) Travel Plan identifies that the overall travel management objectives for the proposed development are:

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- To deliver modal shift from single occupancy car journeys to alternative modes, including increased multi-occupancy vehicle trips for staff and visitors; and
  - Promoting walking, cycling and public transport to the site for staff and visitors.
269. There are a large number of benefits that could be derived from the successful implementation of a Travel Plan for the proposed development for all site users, including:
- improved health and fitness through increased levels of walking and cycling;
  - increased flexibility offered through wider travel choices;
  - the social aspects of sharing transport with others; and
  - a better, more amenable environment within the site and its immediate environs due to vehicular movements being minimised.
270. If planning permission is granted a full, detailed Travel Plan, together with a mechanism for monitoring at appropriate intervals once the proposed development is occupied, would be secured through the Section 106 Legal Agreement. It is noted that the County Highway Authority (CHA, Surrey County Council) have recommended a Travel Plan condition however it is considered more appropriate that Travel Plan provisions be secured through the Section 106 Legal Agreement.
271. In response to the initial comments received from ATE the applicant states that the mode share targets included in the submitted TP are described as initial mode share targets and whilst they are considered realistic and achievable in the professional experience of the applicant's transport consultant, the TP does acknowledge that these targets would need to be reassessed upon occupation of the proposed development and further agreements with Woking Borough Council and Surrey County Council would be required as part of the monitoring process. These provisions would be secured through the Section 106 Legal Agreement.

### Conclusion on Transport, highways and parking

272. The proposed development has been considered by the County Highway Authority (CHA, Surrey County Council) who, having assessed the application on safety, capacity and policy grounds, have raised no objection subject to recommended conditions which have been incorporated into this recommendation (conditions 11, 12, 13 and 14 refer), albeit with the exception of Travel Plan provisions, which are instead to be secured through the Section 106 Legal Agreement. The Section 106 Legal Agreement will also require that the applicant enters into a Section 278 Agreement (under the Highways Act 1980) with the County Highway Authority (CHA, Surrey County Council) to secure the implementation of highways alterations which are required to implement the proposed development, including public realm/landscaping, loading bay provision on Chobham Road, and changes to on-street parking (including the relocation of blue badge parking bays and the re-provision of x2 pay and display parking spaces elsewhere within Woking Town Centre).
273. Overall, the site is clearly excellently located and is well served by active travel and public transport infrastructure, with public transport in vicinity of the site providing excellent accessibility to numerous destinations, making travelling to and from the site by public transport an attractive and viable option for staff and visitors of the proposed development. Moreover, given the location of the site centrally within Woking Town Centre, and the non-residential nature of the proposed development,

the ‘on-site car-free’ nature of the proposed development can be accommodated, and is acceptable in planning terms, taking into account the high level of accessibility of the site by alternative modes of transport (to the private car) and the proximity of the site to existing significant public car parking capacity (i.e., in excess of 4,000 spaces within around a 500 metre radius). In these respects the proposed development strongly aligns with the planning objectives of promoting sustainable transport and reducing carbon and associated emissions which are associated with many forms of transportation.

**Impacts on neighbouring and nearby residential amenities**

274. Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) states that “*Proposals for new development should...Achieve a satisfactory relationship to adjoining properties, avoiding significant harmful impact in terms of loss of privacy, daylight or sunlight, or an overbearing effect due to bulk, proximity or outlook*”. More detailed guidance is provided within SPDs Outlook, Amenity, Privacy and Daylight (2022) and Design (2015).

Overbearing and privacy

275. The potential loss of enjoyment of a view is not a ground on which planning permission can potentially be refused although the impact of a development on outlook is a material planning consideration and stems on whether the development would give rise to an undue sense of enclosure or overbearing effect to neighbouring/nearby residential properties. There are no established guidelines for what is acceptable or unacceptable in this regard, with any assessment subjective as opposed to empirical, with key factors in this assessment being the existing local context and the existing and proposed arrangement of buildings and uses. However, paragraph 2.5 of SPD Outlook, Amenity, Privacy and Daylight (2022) states that “*Outlook from a principal window will generally become adversely affected when the height of any vertical facing structure exceeds the separation distance from the window. When a structure is placed too close to a window so that it completely dominates the outlook it will have an overbearing impact*”. It must also be noted that Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) refers to “*significant harmful impact*”, this is the threshold which must be reached to form any potentially robust, and defensible, reason for refusal and/or objection on neighbouring amenity grounds.
276. SPD Outlook, Amenity, Privacy and Daylight (2022) states (at paragraph 4.1) that “*New developments should be designed to protect the privacy of both new and existing dwellings*” and states (at paragraph 4.11) that “*For three storey of taller accommodation (including dwellings with second floor dormer windows), a separation distance of approximately 30m will be adequate to prevent overlooking of dwellings of a similar or lesser height*”. Appendix 1 of the SPD sets out recommended minimum separation distances for achieving privacy (as below) stating that “*Standards of amenity may be relaxed for housing in Woking Town Centre...*”.

Number of storeys	Measured Dimension	Distance (metres)
Three and over	Front to front elevation	15
	Rear to rear elevation	30
	Front or rear to boundary/flank	15
	Side to boundary	2

277. The relevant proximate existing, extant and proposed residential properties which need to be considered are:



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- Central Buildings, Chobham Road (ref: PLAN/2017/1118);
- Hollywood House, Church Street East (ref: PLAN/2021/0866, extant);
- The proposed development at Concord House and Griffin House (ref: PLAN/2018/0660) (which remains under LPA consideration);
- The proposed development at Former BHS, 81 Commercial Way (ref: PLAN/2023/0911) (which remains under LPA consideration).

### Central Buildings, Chobham Road

278. Central Buildings are located on the opposite side of Chobham Road to the east/north-east and contain x9 flats across first and second floor levels. First and second floor level windows face across Chobham Road, towards the site, all but x2 of which serve bedrooms and en-suites (en-suites being non-habitable rooms). It is understood that, at the present time, flats within Central Buildings are vacant (seemingly having been vacant for some time) and in the process of being refurbished and reconfigured in accordance with planning permission ref: PLAN/2017/2018. The approved plans for ref: PLAN/2017/2018 show the main living spaces being located towards the rear of the building (i.e., facing east/north-east), the exception to this being x1 living room (which is served by x2 windows) located at the southern end of the building.
279. The proposed development would face across Chobham Road at around 14.7m separation distance, with the level 2 roof terrace also being around 14.7m away from the facing (Chobham Road) elevation of Central Buildings. Due to the step in the elevation, so as to provide the level 2 roof terrace, above that level the central component of the proposed development would be around 18.1m away from the facing elevation of Central Buildings. In this central Woking Town Centre context the retained separation distances, of around 14.7m and 18.1m respectively, are considered sufficient to avoid a significant harmful loss of privacy to the facing first and second floor level windows which serve flats at Central Buildings.
280. However, where it would be located directly opposite these windows the proposed development would have heights Above Ground Level (hereafter referred to for brevity as AGL) varying between around 42.0m (to the south component), around 46.4m (to the central component, including the mesh panel at roof level) and around 44.9m to the north component. These building heights would all very substantially exceed the retained (around 14.7m) separation distance, at its closest point, and thus would result in an overbearing effect (due to bulk, proximity and loss of outlook) to the facing first and second floor level windows of Central Buildings flats, albeit this overbearing effect would be limited to those x20 facing windows which serve habitable rooms. Whilst the harm arising from this overbearing effect would be somewhat reduced by the fact that the relevant windows largely serve bedrooms, x2 of these windows serve a primary living area, in which the resulting overbearing effect would be the most pronounced, albeit it would also all be felt within the bedrooms. As such, Officers consider that the resulting overbearing effect to facing first and second floor level windows within Central Buildings flats would reach the threshold of 'significant' harmful impact, so as to conflict with Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012). This harm must be weighed against the benefits of the proposed development in the planning balance.

Hollywood House, Church Street East

281. Hollywood House is located on the opposite side of Chobham Road to the east/north-east and is located largely beyond intervening Central Buildings, although part of the Hollywood House building (where subject to extant prior approval for residential conversion) does present to Chobham Road albeit only in the 'turret' feature close to the junction of Chobham Road and Church Street East. Hollywood House is presently largely an office building, albeit benefits from extant prior approval (ref: PLAN/2021/0866) for change of use from office to residential to provide x49 flats between first and fifth floors (inclusive). It is understood that this prior approval is in the process of being implemented albeit it remains extant until 22.09.2024 in any case. A (separate) prior approval application (ref: PLAN/2023/0667) also recently proposed (additional) flats within two additional storeys (i.e., at sixth and seventh floors) albeit was subsequently refused on 25.09.2023 (although the applicant has a right of appeal which they may yet exercise). A planning application (ref: PLAN/2023/0650) was also recently submitted, also for two additional storeys (i.e., at sixth and seventh floors), to provide x20 (additional) flats albeit it was refused on 15.12.2023 (although the applicant has a right of appeal which they may yet exercise). In any case, the development proposed under those recent planning and prior approval applications would take place at sixth and seventh floor levels and thus the overbearing and privacy effects of the proposed development upon any future development at those floor levels would clearly be less pronounced than those on (extant residential) lower floor levels.
282. The extant prior approval at Hollywood House is for change of use to residential between first and fifth floors (inclusive). The proposed development would face across Chobham Road (and, in part, across intervening Central Buildings) at around 34.0m separation distance from the 'main' element of Hollywood House (i.e., excluding the 'turret' element close to the junction of Chobham Road and Church Street East). Due to the step in the elevation, so as to provide the level 2 roof terrace, above that level the central component of the proposed development would be around 37.4m away from the 'main' facing elevation of Hollywood House. In this central Woking Town Centre context the retained separation distances, of around 34.0m and 37.4m respectively, are considered more than sufficient to avoid a significant harmful loss of privacy to the facing first floor level and above windows within the 'main' facing elevation of Hollywood House.
283. In respect of the prior approval residential accommodation which would be provided within the 'main' element of Hollywood House the retained separation distances would be around 34.0m and 37.4m respectively. Where opposite these windows the proposed development would have heights varying between around 42.0m AGL (to the south component), around 46.4m (to the central component, including the mesh panel at roof level) and around 44.9m to the north component. Given that the sill heights of the (lowest) first floor level windows serving the prior approval flats within the 'main' element of Hollywood House are around 4.0m AGL the perceived height of the proposed development would be reduced by around 4.0m, thus would be perceived as around 38.0m (to the south component), around 42.4m (to the central component, including the mesh panel at roof level) and around 40.9m to the north component.
284. Given that at least 34.0m separation would be retained, with more being retained 'behind' the level 2 terrace, the proposed development would not cause significant harmful overbearing effect (due to bulk, proximity or loss of outlook), to the prior approval residential accommodation which would be provided within the 'main'

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element of Hollywood House, particularly given the central Woking Town Centre location.

285. In respect of the prior approval residential accommodation which would be provided within the 'turret' feature of Hollywood House (i.e., close to the junction of Chobham Road and Church Street East) the proposed development would face across Chobham Road at around 14.7m separation distance. In this central Woking Town Centre context the retained separation distance of around 14.7m is considered sufficient to avoid a significant harmful loss of privacy to the facing first and second floor level windows within the 'turret' feature of Hollywood House. Moreover, the flat which would be present within this 'turret' feature would be dual-aspect (i.e., it would have windows facing across both Chobham Road and Church Street East). As such, whilst the flat within the 'turret' feature would clearly experience an overbearing effect to its Chobham Road windows, which it is considered would reach the threshold of 'significant' harm (for the same reasoning described previously in respect of Central Buildings), given the dual-aspect nature of this flat, and that outlook from the Church Street East facing windows would remain unaffected by the proposed development, the overbearing effect on this flat overall is not considered to reach the threshold of 'significant' harm and thus does not conflict with Policy CS21. It is also a weighty material consideration that the flats forming the prior approval conversion of Hollywood House do not presently exist (i.e., are not capable of habitation), are clearly, therefore, not presently occupied and that they are unlikely to become capable of occupation until after the determination of this planning application, whereby potential future occupiers of those flats would be capable of being aware of the planning permission for proximate development.

*The proposed development at Concord House and Griffin House (ref: PLAN/2018/0660) (which remains under consideration)*

286. Planning application ref: PLAN/2018/0660 (at Concord and Griffin House) to the west/south-west was submitted to the LPA in Summer 2018. The applicant is ThamesWey Group, and the application proposes "*Demolition of existing buildings and erection of a mixed-use development comprising two buildings; a 34x storey residential building comprising 174x self-contained flats (46x one bed, 112x two bed and 16x three bed) (C3 use) and a 5x storey office building (2,324 sqm GEA B1 floorspace), basement car parking comprising 57x parking spaces, cycle parking, bin storage and landscaping*". The application remains undecided due to Officer concerns which the applicant has not resolved (despite a notable period of time having elapsed since Officer concerns were relayed to the applicant). Moreover, since the application was submitted (in Summer 2018) the Council has adopted the Site Allocations DPD (2021), which allocates both sites (Griffin House and Concord House, under Policies UA17 and UA18) for office development (i.e., neither are allocated for any residential development).
287. Notwithstanding that it remains a pending application on the LPA planning register there is nonetheless very significant uncertainty as to whether planning application ref: PLAN/2018/0660 (at Concord and Griffin House) is likely to; (i) achieve planning permission and (ii) be subsequently constructed. This very significant uncertainty arises due to unresolved planning objections, including the height of the proposed 34 storey tower and its impact on the setting of proximate Grade II listed Christ Church, the passage of time since the application was submitted (5+ years) and implications arising from the Council's current financial position (having regard to the fact that the applicant, ThamesWey Group, is wholly owned by the Council).

288. Notwithstanding the preceding the proposed development would maintain a separation distance of around 13.0m from the 34 storey residential building which is proposed under that pending planning application. As is typical in a town centre location the residential accommodation with that building is proposed at first floor level and above (with other uses/facilities at ground floor level). Whilst the height of the building proposed under this application, where it would be located opposite the residential building proposed under ref: PLAN/2018/0660, would (at around 46.4m AGL approx., including the mesh plant screens at roof level) notably exceed the retained separation distance it is nonetheless considered, in the seemingly very unlikely event that application ref: PLAN/2018/0660 was to be subsequently granted planning permission and built out, that significant harmful overbearing effect would be avoided. It is also a weighty material consideration that potential future occupiers of the development proposed under ref: PLAN/2018/0660 would be aware of any grant of planning permission for, and (if constructed, or under construction, by that point in time) the presence of the present development. In the event that application ref: PLAN/2018/0660 was not to be granted planning permission and built out (which seems the most likely scenario at the present time) Concord and Griffin House presently perform as office accommodation and the Site Allocations DPD (2021) allocates those sites for (additional) office accommodation such that the proposed development would not undermine ongoing uses on, and/or, future development of that site in general accordance with the Site Allocations DPD (2021).

*The proposed development at Former BHS, 81 Commercial Way (ref: PLAN/2023/0911) (which remains under consideration)*

289. Planning application ref: PLAN/2023/0911 (at Former BHS, 81 Commercial Way) to the south/south-east was submitted to the LPA on 3 November 2023 (subsequent to the present application which was submitted to the LPA on 4 October 2023). That application proposes *“Demolition of existing building and redevelopment of the site to create a residential-led development comprising up to 272 apartments (Use Class C3) and up to 550 sq.m. of retail and commercial floorspace (Use Class E) at ground level, shared residential amenity spaces, building management facilities, plant space, refuse and cycle stores, in a building which ranges in height from a single storey ground floor (with mezzanine in the central block) to a ground floor with a maximum of 25 storeys above. Works to create new public realm within and highway works to Church Path, Church Street East, Chobham Road and Commercial Way, including alterations to and provision of new parking, servicing and delivery bays”*. Application ref: PLAN/2023/0911 remains under Officer consideration, and it is currently anticipated that it will be reported to the Planning Committee in either February or March 2024.

290. The development proposed under ref: PLAN/2023/0911 would be located on the opposite (south/south-east) side of Church Street East and, where facing towards the site (i.e., along its Church Street East elevation), would contain residential accommodation at first floor level and above, with some projecting balconies along this elevation. An elevation-to-elevation separation distance of around 15.0m would be maintained between the two proposed developments. Whilst the projecting balconies of the ref: PLAN/2023/0911 development would reduce this separation distance to around 12.4m (i.e., measured from balcony-to-elevation) clearly, in a central Woking Town Centre location such as this, it would be unreasonable for future occupiers of the ref: PLAN/2023/0911 scheme (if granted planning permission and subsequently constructed) to have an expectation of high levels of privacy when using projecting balconies for sitting out etc. As such, it is considered that the resulting separation distances would be sufficient to avoid significant harmful loss of

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privacy to future residential occupiers of the ref: PLAN/2023/0911 scheme in the event that it is (together with the present application) granted planning permission and subsequently constructed. Clearly, future (Class E) occupiers of the present scheme would be non-residential in nature and as such would not have an expectation of high levels of privacy, albeit the separation distance retained to the ref: PLAN/2023/0911 scheme is nonetheless considered acceptable in this central Woking Town Centre context. In the event that the ref: PLAN/2023/0911 scheme is not granted planning permission and/or not subsequently constructed there is no existing (nor extant) residential use on the Former BHS site.

291. Where it would be located directly opposite (i.e., across Church Street East) the ref: PLAN/2023/0911 scheme the southern component of the proposed development would have a height of around 37.7m AGL. Where facing towards the site the lowest residential floor of the ref: PLAN/2023/0911 scheme would have a finished floor level of around 4.5m AGL, thus the height of the proposed development would be perceived (from that lowest residential level) as around 33.2m AGL, and from higher residential floor levels (i.e., from second floor level and above) would be clearly perceived as less than this, above around seventh floor level the proposed development would have no material impact on outlook of the ref: PLAN/2023/0911 scheme. The proposed development would step up in height towards the north although this increased height would occur in a form which would step away from the ref: PLAN/2023/0911 scheme (and from Church Street East) and thus would have a reduced impact on the ref: PLAN/2023/0911 scheme than the (closest) southern component, which is discussed above.
292. As such, it is considered, in the event that application ref: PLAN/2023/0911 was to be subsequently granted planning permission and built out, that significant harmful overbearing effect to future residential occupiers of the ref: PLAN/2023/0911 scheme would be avoided, given the central Woking Town Centre location of both sites. It is also a weighty material consideration that potential future occupiers of the development proposed under ref: PLAN/2023/0911 would be aware of any grant of planning permission for, and (if constructed, or under construction, by that point in time) the presence of the present development. In the event that application ref: PLAN/2023/0911 was not to be granted planning permission and/or not constructed the Former BHS site presently performs as Class E (Commercial, Business and Service).

### Nos.13-37 Century Court and properties north of the Basingstoke Canal

293. Nos.13-37 Century Court is a flatted building located on the northern side of Victoria Way, it presents a frontage to Victoria Way which also extends along part of Chobham Road (i.e., just south of the Chobham Road bridge). The proposed development would clearly be visible to occupiers of Nos.13-37 Century Court however its positioning would be offset from this flatted building (i.e., it would not be directly opposite it) and with the carriageway of Victoria Way (and in places also the existing Victoria Gate building) intervening. The proposed development would remain around 70.0m away from Nos.13-37 Century Court (at its closest point), a retained separation distance which readily exceeds the maximum height of the proposed development, which would reach around 45.0m AGL (excluding roof mesh screen and lift overruns). For these combined reasons, the proposed development would avoid significant harmful loss of privacy, avoid significant harmful loss of daylight and sunlight, and would also avoid significant harmful overbearing effect, to Nos.13-37 Century Court.

294. In respect of residential properties to the north of the Basingstoke Canal the closest of these to the site are the flatted building of Bridge House (located just north-east of the Chobham Road bridge) and dwellings at Kingswood Court (which is on the opposite side of the Canal to The Lightbox). The proposed development would remain around 110.0m away from Bridge House and Kingswood Court (and further distant from properties north of these), a retained separation distance which is greater than double the maximum height of the proposed development, which would reach around 45.0m AGL (excluding roof mesh screen and lift overruns). For these combined reasons, the proposed development would avoid significant harmful loss of privacy, avoid significant harmful loss of daylight and sunlight, and would also avoid significant harmful overbearing effect, to properties located north of the Basingstoke Canal.

Daylight and sunlight

295. Policy CS21 of the Woking Core strategy (2012) states that proposals for new development should “Achieve a satisfactory relationship to adjoining properties avoiding significant harmful impact in terms of loss of [inter alia] daylight or sunlight.” SPD Outlook, Amenity, Privacy and Daylight (2022) states, in respect of daylight and sunlight, (at paragraph 5.1) that “The BRE makes a number of recommendations in its report ‘Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight: A guide to good practice (2011)’”. The BRE Site layout planning for daylight and sunlight: A guide to good practice (Third edition, 2022) has since superseded the second edition (2011), which is referred to within SPD Outlook, Amenity, Privacy and Daylight (2022). Hence the more recent third edition (2022) will be referred to, hereafter as the BRE Guide.
296. The impact of the proposed development upon proximate existing, proposed and extant residential properties has been assessed by the applicant within a Daylight, Sunlight & Solar Glare report, dated September 2023, in compliance with the methodology outlined within the BRE Site layout planning for daylight and sunlight: A guide to good practice (Third edition, 2022), a recognised industry tool for assessing these effects.
297. Where the BRE guidelines are exceeded then daylighting and/or sunlighting may be adversely affected. The BRE Guide provides numerical guidelines although emphasizes that the advice given is not mandatory and the BRE Guide should not be seen as an instrument of planning policy; the (numerical guidelines) are to be interpreted flexibly since natural lighting is only one of many factors in site layout and design. The BRE Guide also sets out that in special circumstances the developer or Local Planning Authority may wish to use different target values. For example, in a historic city centre, or in an area with modern high rise buildings, a higher degree of obstruction may be unavoidable if new developments are to match the height and proportions of existing buildings.
298. It is also a material consideration that paragraph 129c) of the NPPF (December 2023) states that “local planning authorities should refuse applications which they consider fail to make efficient use of land, taking into account the policies in this Framework. In this context, when considering applications for housing, authorities should take a flexible approach in applying policies or guidance relating to daylight and sunlight, where they would otherwise inhibit making efficient use of a site (as long as the resulting scheme would provide acceptable living standards).”
299. The BRE Guide states (at paragraph 2.2.2) that the guidelines “are intended for use for rooms in adjoining dwellings where daylight is required, including living rooms,

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*kitchens, and bedrooms. Windows to bathrooms, toilets, storerooms, circulation areas, and garages need not be analysed.*” Vertical Sky Component (VSC) and No Sky Line Contour (NSL) are the primary tests used to assess the impact of new development upon the daylighting of existing buildings.

300. Commercial properties are generally not treated as having a reasonable expectation of daylight or sunlight because they are usually designed to rely on electric lighting to provide sufficient light by which to work rather than natural daylight or sunlight.
301. The Daylight, Sunlight & Solar Glare report assesses the impact of the proposed development on the daylighting of the following existing and extant surrounding residential properties/developments:
  - Central Buildings, Chobham Road – existing x9 flats at first and second floor levels (i.e., above Class E uses at ground floor) (on the basis of planning permission ref: PLAN/2017/1118 having been commenced and/or the permission fully implemented).
  - Hollywood House, Church Street East – on the basis of prior approval ref: PLAN/2021/0866, for change of use from office to residential to provide x49 flats between first and fifth floors (inclusive), having been commenced and/or the prior approval fully implemented (it remains extant until 22.09.2024). An assessment has also been made of (additional) flats within the two additional storeys (i.e., at sixth and seventh floors) which were proposed under prior approval application ref: PLAN/2023/0667, which was subsequently refused on 25.09.2023 (although the applicant has a right of appeal which they may yet exercise). A planning application (ref: PLAN/2023/0650) for two additional storeys (i.e., at sixth and seventh floors) to provide x20 (additional) flats was refused on 15.12.2023 (although, again, the applicant has a right of appeal which they may yet exercise). The proposed development would have very similar daylight and sunlight impacts on the development proposed under (refused) planning application ref: PLAN/2023/0650 as would have been the case with (refused) prior approval application ref: PLAN/2023/0667, which is fully considered within the Daylight, Sunlight and Solar Glare report. Moreover, planning application ref: PLAN/2023/0650 was refused on 15.12.2023.

### *Vertical Sky Component (VSC)*

302. Vertical Sky Component (VSC) quantifies the amount of skylight falling on a vertical wall or window, measured on the outer pane of the window. According to the BRE Guide if the VSC, with the new development in place, is greater than 27% then enough daylight should still be reaching the window of the existing building. If the VSC, with the new development in place, is both less than 27% and less than 0.8 times (i.e., a greater than 20% reduction in existing VSC is sustained as a result of the new development) of its former (pre-development) value, occupants of the existing building will notice the reduction in the amount of skylight; for the purposes of this report changes below this threshold will be identified as meeting the BRE Guide or having a negligible effect. It should be noted that ‘noticeable’, as per the BRE Guide, is a different test than that set out within Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), which refers to ‘significant’ harm. As such, a ‘noticeable’ loss of daylight does not automatically equate to a finding of ‘significant’ harm contrary to Policy CS21.

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303. The BRE Guide acknowledges there may be certain instances where windows are more sensitive to larger relative changes. For example, in paragraph 2.2.13, it states that *“Existing windows with balconies above them typically receive less daylight. Because the balcony cuts out light from the top part of the sky, even a modest obstruction opposite may result in a large relative impact on the VSC, and on the area receiving direct skylight”*. Furthermore, paragraph 2.2.14 states that *“A larger relative reduction in VSC may also be unavoidable if the existing window has projecting wings on one or both sides of it or is recessed into the building so that it is obstructed on both sides as well as above”*. There are numerous windows surrounding the site that are either overhung or obstructed by projecting wings.
304. There are also properties surrounding the site that are served by bay windows. Paragraph 2.2.6 of the BRE Guide states that *“For a bay window, the centre window facing directly outwards can be taken as the main window. If a room has two or more windows of equal size, the mean of their VSCs may be taken”*.
305. If there would be a significant loss of light to the main window but the room served also has one or more smaller windows, an overall VSC may be derived by weighting each VSC element in accordance with the proportion of the total glazing area represented by its window. Where there will be a ‘noticeable’ change, the results have been summarised dependant on how far beyond the suggested targets the reductions are from existing levels. For VSC, Officers consider it appropriate to categorise the reductions as follows:
- 20% reduction or less (Typically >0.80 times former value) (Negligible) (i.e., BRE Guide compliant) (occupants of the existing building are unlikely to notice the reduction in the amount of skylight);
  - 20-29.9% reduction (0.70-0.79 times former value) (Low);
  - 30-39.9% reduction (0.60-0.69 times former value) (Medium); and
  - 40%+ reduction (<0.60 times former value) (High).
306. The following table summarises the Vertical Sky Component (VSC) results, on the basis of existing surrounding residential properties, as well as the recently refused two storey extension at Hollywood House, using the categorisation which is considered to be appropriate by Officers:

Surrounding Properties	Total Number of Windows	Total that meet the BRE Guidelines (i.e., 20% reduction or less)	Below BRE Guidelines			Total BRE Fails
			20-29.9% reduction - Low	30-39.9% reduction - Medium	40%+ reduction - High	
Central Buildings, Chobham Road	20	0	0	0	20	20
Hollywood House, Church Street East	55	9	2	30	14	46
<i>(Scenario with - refused - two additional storeys in brackets)</i>	<i>(79)</i>	<i>(13)</i>	<i>(6)</i>	<i>(39)</i>	<i>(21)</i>	<i>(66)</i>



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<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>(Scenario with - refused - two additional storeys at Hollywood House in brackets)</b>	<b>(99)</b>	<b>(13)</b>	<b>(6)</b>	<b>(39)</b>	<b>(41)</b>	<b>(86)</b>

307. The VSC results confirm that a total of 9 of the 75 (12%) of the existing/extant habitable room windows tested would meet the BRE Guidelines in the post-development situation. As such, these 9 windows would experience a negligible loss of skylight such that occupiers are unlikely to notice the reduction in the amount of skylight. 2 of the remaining windows would experience a low reduction (i.e., between 20-29.9% reduction), 30 of the remaining windows would experience a medium reduction (i.e., between 30%-39.9%) and 34 windows would experience a high reduction (i.e., 40%+).

*No Sky Line Contour (NSL)*

308. The BRE Guide sets out (at paragraph 2.2.10) that *“Where room layouts are known (for example if they are available on the local authority’s planning portal), the impact on the daylighting distribution in the existing building should be found by plotting the no sky line in each of the main rooms. For houses this would include living rooms, dining rooms, and kitchens; bedrooms should also be analysed although they are less important.”*

309. The no sky line (NSL) divides points on the working plane (in housing assumed to be horizontal and set at 850mm above the floor) which can and cannot see the sky. The BRE Guide states (at paragraph 2.2.11) that *“If, following construction of a new development, the no sky line moves so that the area of the existing room, which does receive direct skylight, is reduced to less than 0.80 times its former value [i.e., a greater than 20% reduction] this will be noticeable to the occupants, and more of the room will appear poorly lit.”* For the purposes of this report changes below this threshold will be identified as a BRE Compliant or negligible effect. Again, it should be noted that ‘noticeable’, as per the BRE Guide, is a different test than that set out within Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), which refers to ‘significant’ harm. As such, a ‘noticeable’ reduction in daylighting distribution does not automatically equate to a finding of ‘significant harm’ contrary to Policy CS21.

310. In respect of NSL Appendix F of the BRE Guide states (at F7) that *“In assessing the loss of light to an existing building, the VSC is generally recommended as the appropriate parameter to use. This is because the VSC depends only on obstruction and is therefore a measure of the daylit environment as a whole”.*

311. Where there will be a ‘noticeable’ change, the results have been summarised dependant on how far beyond the suggested targets the reductions are from existing levels. For NSL, Officers consider it appropriate to categorise the reductions as follows:

- 20% reduction or less (Typically >0.80 times former value) (Negligible) (i.e., BRE Guide compliant)
- 20-29.9% reduction (0.70-0.79 times former value) (Low);

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- 30-39.9% reduction (0.60-0.69 times former value (Medium); and
- 40%+ reduction (<0.60 times former value) (High).

312. The BRE Guide also states (at paragraph 2.2.12) that “*The guidelines above need to be applied sensibly and flexibly...If an existing building contains rooms lit from one side only and greater than 5m deep, then a greater movement of the no sky line may be unavoidable.*”

313. The following table summarises the No Sky Line Contour (NSL) results, on the basis of existing and extant surrounding residential properties/developments, using the categorisation which is considered to be appropriate by Officers:

Surrounding Properties	Total Number of Rooms	Total that meet the BRE Guidelines (i.e., 20% reduction or less)	Below BRE Guidelines			Total BRE Fails
			20-29.9% reduction - Low	30-39.9% reduction - Medium	40%+ reduction - High	
Central Buildings, Chobham Road	16	0	0	0	16	16
Hollywood House, Church Street East	43	5	0	3	35	38
<i>(Scenario with - refused - two additional storeys in brackets)</i>	<i>(63)</i>	<i>(7)</i>	<i>(0)</i>	<i>(3)</i>	<i>(53)</i>	<i>(56)</i>
<b>Total</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>54</b>
<b><i>(Scenario with - refused - two additional storeys at Hollywood House in brackets)</i></b>	<b><i>(79)</i></b>	<b><i>(7)</i></b>	<b><i>(0)</i></b>	<b><i>(3)</i></b>	<b><i>(69)</i></b>	<b><i>(72)</i></b>

314. The NSL results confirm that a total of 5 of 59 (8.5%) of the existing/extant habitable rooms tested meet the BRE Guidelines. As such, these 5 rooms would experience a negligible loss of daylight distribution such that this is unlikely to be noticeable to occupiers. 0 of the remaining rooms would experience a low reduction (i.e., between 20-29.9%), 3 rooms would experience a medium reduction (i.e., between 30-39.9%) and 51 rooms would experience a high level of reduction (i.e., 40%+).

*Climate Based Daylight Modelling Assessment (CBDM)*

315. The assessment within this report also refers to Climate Based Daylight Modelling Assessment (CBDM), this is based on the British Standard 'Daylight in Buildings' (BS EN17037) which contains advice and guidance on interior daylighting for all buildings across Europe but also has a UK National Annex which provides suggested targets for dwellings in the UK (BS EN17037 supersedes BS 8206 Part 2 which was based on Average Daylight Factor).
316. The CBDM methodology is based on target illuminances from daylight. This is the Daylight Illuminance (DI) to be achieved over half the area of the room (measured on a reference plane at tabletop level) for at least half of the daylight hours in a typical year. The calculations are based on weather data files which cover different regions of the UK and are undertaken for each hour of the day for every day of the year. There are 8,760 hours in the year, of which 4,380 are daylight hours, and therefore the targets should be achieved for 2,190 hours in the year. The methodology uses a more accurate sky model which simulates the movement of the sun throughout the day and accounts for the weather conditions at the time. As a result, CBDM accounts for the presence of sunlight and therefore the orientation of the rooms/windows is accounted for. A south facing room is likely to have access to higher levels of natural light than a north facing room.
317. The UK National Annex gives illuminance recommendations of 100 Lux in bedrooms, 150 Lux in living rooms and 200 Lux in kitchens. These are median illuminances to be achieved over 50% of the assessment grid for at least half (50%) of the daylight hours. Where a room has a shared use, the highest target should apply. However, it also says that Local Authorities could use discretion here and that a living room target of 150 Lux could be used for combined living/kitchen/dining room if the kitchens are not treated as habitable spaces, as it may avoid small separate kitchens in the design.

Sunlight (to windows)

318. Unlike daylight, which is non-directional and assumes that light from the sky is uniform, the availability of sunlight is dependent on the orientation of the window, or area of ground, being assessed relative to the position of due south. The BRE Guide states that obstruction to sunlight may become an issue if some part of a new development is situated within 90° of due south of a main window wall of an existing building.
319. The BRE Guide states (at paragraph 3.2.3) that *"To assess loss of sunlight to an existing building, it is suggested that all main living rooms of dwellings, and conservatories, should be checked if they have a window facing within 90° of due south. Kitchens and bedrooms are less important, although care should be taken not to block too much sun. Normally loss of sunlight need not be analysed to kitchens and bedrooms, except for bedrooms that also comprise a living space"*. The BRE Guide continues (at paragraph 3.2.4) stating that *"To calculate the loss of sunlight over the year, a different metric, the annual probable sunlight hours (APSH), is used. Here 'probable sunlight hours' means the total number of hours in the year that the sun is expected to shine on unobstructed ground, allowing for average levels of cloudiness for the location in question (based on sunshine probability data). The sunlight reaching a window is quantified as a percentage of this unobstructed annual total"* and (at paragraph 3.2.5) that *"If the main living room to a dwelling has a main*

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*window facing within 90° of due north, but a secondary window facing within 90° of due south, sunlight to the secondary window should be checked.”*

320. The BRE Guide states (at paragraph 3.2.6) that “*If a room can receive more than one quarter of annual probable sunlight hours (APSH), including at least 5% of APSH in the winter months between 21 September and 21 March, then it should still receive enough sunlight. Also, if the overall annual loss of APSH is 4% or less, the loss of sunlight is small.*”
321. The BRE Guide goes on to state that if these guidelines are not met, and a window receives less than 0.80 times its former value of total APSH or winter APSH, and if that window has a reduction in total APSH of more than 4% “*then the occupants of the existing building will notice the loss of sunlight*”.
322. More detailed consideration of daylight and sunlight effects will now be given to particular proximate buildings/sites:

### Central Buildings, Chobham Road

323. Central Buildings are located on the opposite side of Chobham Road to the east/north-east and contain x9 flats across first and second floor levels. First and second floor level windows face across Chobham Road, towards the site, all but x2 of which serve bedrooms and en-suites (en-suites being non-habitable rooms). It is understood that, at the present time, flats within Central Buildings are vacant (seemingly having been vacant for some time) and in the process of being refurbished and reconfigured in accordance with planning permission ref: PLAN/2017/2018. The approved plans for ref: PLAN/2017/2018 show the main living spaces being located towards the rear of the building (i.e., facing east/north-east), the exception to this being x1 living room (which is served by x2 windows) located at the southern end of the building.

### Daylight

324. The Daylight, Sunlight & Solar Glare report demonstrates that the proposed development will give rise to high levels of reduction in daylight, with all x20 windows tested for VSC experiencing relative reductions significantly in excess of the BRE Guide recommendations (reductions range from 73.41% and 82.03%, in comparison to the BRE Guide of 20.0%). The Daylight, Sunlight & Solar Glare report demonstrates that, in terms of the retained level of VSC recorded at the site-facing windows, the overwhelming majority of which serve bedrooms (x18 out of x20 windows), the retained VSC levels range from 5.62% to 7.62%.
325. The applicant advances that, whilst the resulting VSC and NSL levels are below BRE Guide recommendations, they are similar to what has previously been considered acceptable within Woking Town Centre, stating that the Goldsworth Road planning application by EcoWorld (ref: PLAN/2020/0568), which was granted planning permission on appeal in January 2022 (Appeal ref: APP/A3655/W/21/3276474) gave rise to some significant daylight effects upon neighbouring residential amenity, with retained VSC levels as low as 5.9% at Nankeville Court, 8.0% at Victoria Square, 6.8% at Nos.11-13 Goldsworth Road and 8.9% at Victoria House.
326. The applicant also advances that, in the case of the EcoWorld scheme, relative reductions in VSC were also notable, with up to 100% reductions at Birchwood Court, 57% at Victoria Square, 50% at Nankeville Court, 69% at Victoria House and up to

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74% within Nos.11-13 Goldsworth Road and that despite these effects, the Inspector concluded (at paragraph 47 of the appeal decision) that *“The Proposed Development would not harm the character and appearance of the area, would not result in unacceptable daylight levels in nearby residential properties, would not compromise the privacy of local residents and accords with the up-to-date development plan”* (applicant’s emphasis added).

327. The applicant further advances that the Inspector in the EcoWorld appeal decision stated (at paragraph 37) that *“assessing the extent to which a proposed development would have on daylight...by applying the BRE guidance, is only the first stage in a necessary two stage-test; the second stage being consideration of context, including planning policy and wider amenity issues. There are many contextual matters to take into account”* and (at paragraph 38) that *“the need to make efficient use of land remains, and is enshrined in planning policy, both local and national”*. The applicant states that *“Redevelopment of the Site represents a significant opportunity to deliver a Grade A commercial office building in the heart of the town centre, making efficient use of land in an area designated to regeneration. A sensible and pragmatic view is therefore required when considering daylight and sunlight ‘effects’, particularly when it concerns buildings that are primarily available for rent and presently unoccupied.”*
328. For NSL Daylight distribution, the Daylight, Sunlight & Solar Glare report demonstrates that that all x16 habitable rooms (of which x15 are bedrooms) will experience relative reductions beyond the BRE Guide recommendations and the applicant advances again that the EcoWorld scheme at Goldsworth Road *“indicated a large number of NSL reductions beyond the BRE guidelines, with multiple examples of relative reductions in excess of 50% noted. For example, there were NSL reductions of up to 75% at 1-9 Goldsworth Road and up to 50% at Birchwood Court. Despite this, the Planning Inspector considered overall, on balance, that there was no harm”* and that *“In respect of the 9 principal living areas within Central Building, it is worth noting that 8 of them will experience no effect upon their daylight or sunlight as a result of the Proposed Development”*.
329. Finally, in respect of the daylight reductions which would be sustained to flats at Central Buildings, the applicant states that *“these flats are currently unoccupied and therefore it is likely that any future occupiers will either never experience the current levels of daylight being received, or if they do occupy the flats prior to the implementation of the Proposed Development then any effects are only likely to be short term and temporary in nature”*.
330. At the request of the case officer the applicant has (during the application process) undertaken a supplementary assessment of the retained daylight levels in flats at Central Buildings using the CBDM method of assessment. This is because these flats are presently understood to be vacant and to supplement the VSC and NSL assessments which have been undertaken by the applicant. In respect of Central Buildings the CBDM results indicate that there would be a degree of daylight penetration of up to 100 Lux close to the window within each of the site facing rooms. The applicant states that *“Whilst the rooms as a whole do not meet the BRE target median illuminance levels, this is not uncommon in built-up urban locations where daylight penetration levels are naturally lower given the building-to-building relationships...[and that these flats are generally] arranged such that the site-facing rooms are predominantly bedrooms which the BRE fully acknowledges are less important than main living rooms”*.

331. The applicant also states that *“When viewing the studios, it is interesting to note that despite their dual aspect layout, the new design [i.e., as granted planning permission under ref: PLAN/2017/2018] includes a rear deck access on the building’s eastern elevation such that no light is received via the rear facing portion of the room, directly looking towards Hollywood House. This inherent design means that the spaces rely on the light coming from across the development site, unfairly placing a burden on the development potential of the site if the BRE guidelines are to be rigidly applied”*.

*Sunlight*

332. In respect of sunlight impacts to flats at Central Buildings, the APSH results within the Daylight, Sunlight & Solar Glare report demonstrate that, whilst there will be reductions beyond the BRE Guide recommendations, the only room relevant for analysis is the x1 living room at first floor level (served by x2 windows), which will continue to retain a reasonable level of sunlight annually for a town centre location (21% APSH), compared to the BRE Guide 25% APSH target and that, for winter sun, the room will meet BRE Guide recommendations, retaining 9% APSH, this being in excess of the BRE 5% target.
333. Whilst the BRE Guide states that bedrooms need not be analysed, the Daylight, Sunlight & Solar Glare report demonstrates that, notwithstanding their westerly orientation (i.e., limiting them to sunlight for half of the day), the majority would meet the BRE Guide winter sunlight target, and the x4 instances where this is not the case, they would retain 4% APSH, just 1% short of the BRE Guide target. In respect of annual sun, the results demonstrate that the bedrooms would retain reasonable levels of APSH for a town centre location such as this (12%-19%). In this respect the applicant advances that *“Contextually, this is a comparable level of retained sunlight to other accepted developments within the town centre, such as the aforementioned Goldsworth Road scheme [i.e., EcoWorld] where retained Annual APSH levels were as a low as 3-6% (representative of 70-85% relative reductions) at 11-13 Goldsworth Road, and around 13% APSH within New Central Buildings which are located on the opposite side of the railway tracks”*.

*Hollywood House, Church Street East*

334. Hollywood House is located on the opposite side of Chobham Road to the east/north-east and is located largely beyond intervening Central Buildings, although part of the Hollywood House building (where subject to extant prior approval for residential conversion) does present to Chobham Road albeit only in the ‘turret’ feature close to the junction of Chobham Road and Church Street East. Hollywood House is presently largely an office building, albeit benefits from extant prior approval (ref: PLAN/2021/0866) for change of use from office to residential to provide x49 flats between first and fifth floors (inclusive). It is understood that this prior approval is in the process of being implemented albeit it remains extant until 22.09.2024 in any case. A (separate) prior approval application (ref: PLAN/2023/0667) also recently proposed (additional) flats within two additional storeys (i.e., at sixth and seventh floors) albeit was subsequently refused on 25.09.2023 (although the applicant has a right of appeal which they may yet exercise). A planning application (ref: PLAN/2023/0650) was also recently submitted, also for two additional storeys (i.e., at sixth and seventh floors), to provide x20 (additional) flats albeit it was refused on 15.12.2023 (although the applicant has a right of appeal which they may yet exercise).

*Daylight*

335. The Daylight, Sunlight & Solar Glare report demonstrates that, in terms of the VSC form of assessment, x9 of the x55 habitable windows tested will meet the BRE Guide recommendations. The remaining x46 windows would experience reductions in VSC that exceed the BRE Guide recommendations, albeit the applicant maintains that it is also important to consider the retained levels of daylight that would be maintained following the construction of the proposed development. Officers note that where beyond 30% VSC reduction (which is itself beyond the BRE Guide recommendation of 20% VSC reduction) the VSC reductions would range between 30.50% and 88.38%.
336. In this regard, the Daylight, Sunlight & Solar Glare report demonstrates that x34 of the unencumbered windows at first to fourth floor levels (incl.) will retain between 12% and 19% VSC (averaging 15% VSC) which the applicant advances "*is arguably a reasonable level of daylight for dense town centre location*". The other x12 windows are either located at fifth floor level, whereby they are smaller windows and self-obstructed by the overhanging roof eaves of Hollywood House itself (making them more susceptible to changes), or they have a restricted outlook, as a result of the massing and form of the existing Hollywood House building, thus self-obstructing in respect of daylight.
337. In respect of NSL the Daylight, Sunlight & Solar Glare report demonstrates that x5 of the x43 habitable rooms tested will meet the BRE Guide recommendations, with the remaining x38 rooms experiencing a relative reduction in daylight distribution of between 36% and 92%. In this respect the applicant advances that "*Contextually, whilst these exceed the BRE guidelines, this scale of reduction is not uncommon for dense, town centre locations, and as referred in Section 5 [of the Daylight, Sunlight & Solar Glare report], is comparable to other approved developments within Woking town centre*". The applicant also states that "*Furthermore, despite these reductions, 18 of the rooms tested will retain a daylight area in excess of 50% of the working plane, which remains a reasonable amount of daylight penetration for a location such as this*".
338. At the request of the case officer the applicant has (during the application process) undertaken a supplementary assessment of the retained daylight levels in extant (prior approval conversion) flats at Hollywood House using the CBDM method of assessment. This is because these flats clearly do not yet exist (i.e., none are presently capable of habitation), although they are extant, and to supplement the VSC and NSL assessments which have been undertaken by the applicant.
339. In respect of Hollywood House, the CBDM results illustrate some good levels of daylight penetration with a total of x19 of the x42 (relevant) habitable rooms meeting or exceeding the BRE target illuminance levels, including x15 bedrooms and x4 LKDs. The CBDM assessment also shows that there would remain, in the post-development scenario, a reasonable level of daylight penetration within the (relevant) rooms, and whilst the deeper studios/LKDs naturally would have reduced daylight levels at the rear of the working plane, this is not uncommon in office to residential conversion schemes, such as this, where the previous commercial footprints are often deep and there is a general restriction on the scope to alter/amend the window sizes (without separate planning permission). As with the VSC and NSL results it must also be noted that, in the case of the 5th floor of Hollywood House, there would be lower levels of Daylight Illuminance in comparison to the 4th floor below. This is due to the inherent design feature of the Hollywood House building (i.e., in having a

prominent overhanging roof detail) that restricts access to light rather than being entirely a consequence of the proposed development. Overall, at Hollywood House the CBDM assessment demonstrates that there would remain some reasonable levels of internal daylight illuminance, particularly for an office-to-residential conversion within a central town centre environment such as this.

*Sunlight*

340. The Daylight, Sunlight & Solar Glare report demonstrates that, in terms of the APSH sunlight analysis, despite their predominantly westerly orientation (i.e., limiting them to sunlight for half of the day), x11 of the x43 rooms tested will meet the BRE sunlight targets for annual APSH. In respect of the remaining x32 rooms, x20 of these are bedrooms, which need not be analysed (in accordance with the BRE Guide), and the other x12 are either LKDs or studios and in all but x1 instance will retain between 5% and 25% APSH annually. The applicant states that *“To contextualise these levels, as referred to at Paragraph 5.27 earlier [within the Daylight, Sunlight & Solar Glare report], these levels are comparable and any some instances better than retained annual sunlight levels that have been considered acceptable elsewhere in the town centre (e.g. Goldsworth Road where retained APSH levels were as low as 3-6% to main habitable rooms at first floor level)”*.

*Refused two storey extension proposals at Hollywood House*

341. The Daylight, Sunlight & Solar Glare report also considers the effect of the proposed development upon the (now refused) prior approval application for a two storey extension (at 6th and 7th floor levels) at Hollywood House (ref: PLAN/2023/0667). The results of that assessment demonstrate the following:
- Windows at the new 6th floor level would generally retain reasonable levels of VSC for a town centre location (average 20% VSC) despite some relative reductions in excess of the BRE Guide recommendations;
  - Windows at the new 7th floor level would be heavily overhung by the new roof eaves, meaning that their existing VSC levels are already much lower than those at 6th floor level (ranging from 5% to 26%). Therefore, even relatively small changes result in disproportionately larger percentage alterations in the order of 35-45%. The actual reductions in VSC are relatively minor (between 3.9% and 7.1%);
  - In respect of NSL daylight distribution, the results indicate that the majority of rooms tested (x2 of the x20 tested) would experience relative alterations beyond BRE Guide recommendations;
  - In terms of APSH sunlight, for the x8 LKDs assessed at 6th and 7th floor level, the retained annual APSH levels are reasonably good for a town centre location, with x2 LKDs meeting BRE Guidelines (30% and 35% APSH) and the remaining x6 retaining between 8% and 21%.
342. The Daylight, Sunlight & Solar Glare report states that whilst no further detailed testing has been undertaken in relation to more recent planning application ref: PLAN/2023/0650 at Hollywood House (which has been refused on 15.12.2023) that the key differences between that scheme and the prior approval scheme (ref: PLAN/2023/0667), which was fully assessed, are *“the removal of the pitched roof (which has no bearing on the daylight/sunlight position) and also some amendments to glazing sizes, with some apertures now proposed to be full height. This should have the effect of allowing more light into the proposed dwellings by comparison to*



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*the analysed scheme...and therefore the analysis undertaken should reflect somewhat of a worst case”.*

343. The Daylight, Sunlight & Solar Glare report also states that *“The only other key design change of note is the introduction of projecting amenity balconies at 3rd to 7th floor level on the south west elevation facing towards the Application Site. The BRE acknowledges at paragraph 2.2.13 that “windows with balconies above them typically receive less daylight. Because the balcony cuts out the light from the top part of the sky, even a modest obstruction opposite may result in a large relative impact on the VSC, and the area receiving skylight”.* It also states that *“In such instances, the BRE suggest undertaking an assessment without the balconies in place to show the relative change in VSC (and APSh) with the effect of the balcony removed. This effectively demonstrates whether it is the Proposed Development or the effect of the balcony that is the critical factor in the loss of skylight. The introduction of balconies in this case would serve to reduce the skylight availability to the windows by comparison to the previously submitted [i.e., prior approval application ref: PLAN/2023/0667] design [as tested within the Daylight, Sunlight & Solar Glare report] and therefore, were we to analyse the most recent submitted design on a with and without balconies basis, as recommended in the BRE, it would show very comparable results”* to those already reported within the Daylight, Sunlight & Solar Glare report. As such, the Daylight, Sunlight & Solar Glare report concludes that *“Therefore, it has not been considered necessary to undertake a further technical assessment of the latest planning submission scheme for Hollywood House”.* Clearly, as previously set out, planning application ref: PLAN/2023/0650 at Hollywood House was refused on 15.12.2023 (although the applicant maintains a right of appeal against refusal for 6 months thereafter).
344. The Daylight, Sunlight & Solar Glare report also states that *“It is therefore inevitable that any meaningful form of development on this prime, town centre brownfield site would give rise to daylight and sunlight effects [to Hollywood House] that would exceed BRE guideline recommendations. That does not, however, mean that those residual levels of daylight and sunlight would not be acceptable within the context of a town centre undergoing significant regeneration”.*
345. Whilst regard has been afforded to the submissions of the applicant Officers nonetheless consider that the, in some cases, very significant, loss of daylight which would arise to extant flats within the office-to-residential conversion of Hollywood House (ref: PLAN/2021/0866), combined with the, in some instances, low levels of daylight which would be retained, as a consequence of the proposed development, would constitute a significant harmful impact contrary to Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012). This matter will be considered further within this report. The sunlighting impacts of the proposed development upon extant flats within the office-to-residential conversion of Hollywood House (ref: PLAN/2021/0866) are considered, on balance and having regard to this central Woking Town Centre location, to not constitute significant harmful impact.

*Conclusion on daylight and sunlight impacts to Central Buildings and Hollywood House*

346. In respect of the harmful daylight and sunlight impacts of the proposed development on the flats at Central Buildings and on the extant prior approval for residential conversion (to flats) at Hollywood House the justification advanced by the applicant places a notable reliance on the EcoWorld appeal decision (WBC ref: PLAN/2020/0568, Appeal Ref: APP/A3655/W/21/3276474). However, Officers do not

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consider that the circumstances of the proposed development are directly, or readily, comparable to those at EcoWorld, which was: (i) allocated for development in the Development Plan, i.e., within the Site Allocations DPD (2021), (ii) had received a previous resolution to grant planning permission for a development that would have had the same daylight effects, (iii) some of the most significant adverse daylight impacts of the EcoWorld scheme occurred to surrounding buildings which were on other allocated sites, hence were likely to be demolished and (iv) the EcoWorld scheme provided x929 dwellings, including affordable housing, as well as securing the future of the Woking Railway Athletic Club (WRAC) facility and providing a purpose built facility for the York Road Project (YRP) (i.e., it provided a materially different package of benefits to the presently proposed development).

347. However, it is nonetheless acknowledged by Officers, and is reflected in numerous planning appeal decisions across England (including that at EcoWorld), that retaining a VSC level of 27% in neighbouring properties in a town centre location such as this is unrealistic (because this VSC level is generally based on a suburban location) and that retaining a VSC level of 20% is considered, generally, to be reasonably good, and that, in a town centre location such as this, retaining a VSC level of around 15%-16% can be considered to be acceptable (i.e., not be considered to give rise to significant harm contrary to Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012)). However, in this instance, there are a very notable number of windows at both Central Buildings and Hollywood House that would sustain significant VSC reductions, and which would retain VSC levels of less than 15%-16% (with adverse NSL impacts to the rooms served by these windows as well).
348. In respect of the flats within Central Buildings the daylight harm which would arise is somewhat mitigated by the fact that flats within this building appear to be currently vacant (having been so for time) and in the process of being refurbished and reconfigured following planning permission ref: PLAN/2017/2018 and that, importantly, the approved floor plans show that all but x2 windows (which both serve x1 living area) facing towards the site would serve bedrooms (or en-suites, these being non-habitable rooms), for which the BRE Guide acknowledges daylight is less important. Furthermore, all but x1 of the main living areas are shown to be located to the rear of the building and will therefore be unaffected by the proposed development. It is also recognised that the current first and second floor windows overlooking the existing site have good daylight and sunlight levels for a town centre location due to the limited on-site obstructions and therefore that any meaningful development on the site will inevitably give rise to reductions beyond BRE Guide recommendations. The applicant advances that the proposed development *“represents a significant redevelopment opportunity for a Grade A commercial office building for the town centre [and that] rigidly applying the BRE guidelines for a series of bedrooms within a small number of flats would result in an unviable form of massing on the Site.”*
349. Overall, whilst regard has been afforded to the submissions of the applicant, Officers nonetheless consider the, very significant, loss of daylight which would arise to the x9 flats at Central Buildings, combined with the very poor levels of daylight which would be retained as a consequence of the proposed development, would constitute a significant harmful impact contrary to Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012). This matter will be considered further in the conclusion and planning balance. The sunlighting impacts of the proposed development on flats at Central Buildings are considered to be acceptable, in this central Woking Town Centre location, and do not constitute significant harmful impact.

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350. Similarly, whilst regard has been afforded to the submissions of the applicant, Officers nonetheless consider that the, in some cases, very significant, loss of daylight which would arise to extant flats within the office-to-residential conversion of Hollywood House (ref: PLAN/2021/0866), combined with the, in some instances, low levels of daylight which would be retained as a consequence of the proposed development, would constitute a significant harmful impact contrary to Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012). Again, this matter will be considered further in the conclusion and planning balance. The sunlighting impacts of the proposed development upon extant flats within the office-to-residential conversion of Hollywood House (ref: PLAN/2021/0866) are considered, on balance and having regard to this central Woking Town Centre location, to not constitute significant harmful impact.

*The proposed development at Concord House and Griffin House (ref: PLAN/2018/0660) (which remains under consideration)*

351. Planning application ref: PLAN/2018/0660 (at Concord and Griffin House) to the west/south-west was submitted to the LPA in Summer 2018. The applicant is ThamesWey Group, and the application proposes “*Demolition of existing buildings and erection of a mixed-use development comprising two buildings; a 34x storey residential building comprising 174x self-contained flats (46x one bed, 112x two bed and 16x three bed) (C3 use) and a 5x storey office building (2,324 sqm GEA B1 floorspace), basement car parking comprising 57x parking spaces, cycle parking, bin storage and landscaping*”. The application remains undecided due to Officer concerns which the applicant has not resolved (despite a notable period of time having elapsed since Officer concerns were relayed to the applicant). Moreover, since the application was submitted (in Summer 2018) the Council has adopted the Site Allocations DPD (2021), which allocates both sites (Griffin House and Concord House, under Policies UA17 and UA18) for office development (i.e., neither are allocated for any residential development).
352. Notwithstanding that it remains a pending application on the LPA planning register there is nonetheless very significant uncertainty as to whether planning application ref: PLAN/2018/0660 (at Concord and Griffin House) is likely to; (i) achieve planning permission and (ii) be subsequently constructed. This very significant uncertainty arises due to unresolved planning objections, including the height of the proposed 34 storey tower and its impact on the setting of proximate Grade II listed Christ Church, the passage of time since the application was submitted (5+ years) and implications arising from the Council’s current financial position (having regard to the fact that the applicant, ThamesWey Group, is wholly owned by the Council).
353. Notwithstanding the preceding points the Daylight, Sunlight & Solar Glare report considers the daylight and sunlight availability which would remain available, with the proposed development in place, to the development proposed under application ref: PLAN/2018/0660. This assessment has been undertaken by way of VSC and APSH facade assessments which consider the potential for daylight and sunlight in both the existing and proposed site conditions. It is important to note that, in the event that this planning application (ref: PLAN/2023/0835) was to be granted it is very likely that it would be constructed (or under construction at least) before any future occupiers of the Concord and Griffin House scheme were in place and therefore the ‘existing’ daylight and sunlight availability is unlikely to be experienced by future residential occupiers of that scheme.
354. The VSC facade analysis shows that the theoretical availability of daylight on the facades of the adjoining proposals would be good in the existing site condition, due to

the limited on-site obstructions at present, with the majority of the facade having access to daylight levels in excess of the BRE Guide 27% VSC recommendations. The facade assessment demonstrates that retained daylight availability, following construction of the proposed development, would inevitably be lower, however that the north-east facing elevation would generally retain VSC availability on the facade at a level that would arguably, in the applicant's view, not be unreasonable for a town centre location such as this (15% VSC and above). Whilst there would be some lower VSC levels at the lowest x8 residential floors on the south-east facade (ranging from 5.8%-13.1% VSC), this would only represent a small proportion of the overall number of flats which are proposed within that scheme, and that the remainder of the (proposed) residential building would continue to receive virtually unchanged daylight levels compared to the existing site condition. The Daylight, Sunlight & Solar Glare report states that "*Furthermore, these effects at the lowest levels would be inevitable with any meaningful form of redevelopment on the Site*".

355. An APSH facade analysis has been undertaken of the elevations of the proposed development at Concord and Griffin House which would face towards the site, albeit it must be noted that one of these elevations would be north-east facing, and therefore would have limited access to direct sunlight, and that the other elevation would be predominantly south-east facing, so would receive direct sunlight only during the earlier part of the day. The results illustrate that there would inevitably be some reductions in sunlight availability, however the south-east elevation, which has a reasonable expectation of morning sunlight, will continue to retain reasonably good levels of sunlight availability for a town centre location such as this (in excess of 18% at lowest level). It is not anticipated that there would be significant impact on sunlight availability to the southerly orientated flats within the proposed development at Concord and Griffin House following the construction of the proposed development.

*The proposed development at Former BHS, 81 Commercial Way (ref: PLAN/2023/0911) (which remains under consideration)*

356. Planning application ref: PLAN/2023/0911 (at Former BHS, 81 Commercial Way) to the south/south-east was submitted to the LPA on 3 November 2023 (subsequent to the present application which was submitted to the LPA on 4 October 2023). That application proposes "*Demolition of existing building and redevelopment of the site to create a residential-led development comprising up to 272 apartments (Use Class C3) and up to 550 sq.m. of retail and commercial floorspace (Use Class E) at ground level, shared residential amenity spaces, building management facilities, plant space, refuse and cycle stores, in a building which ranges in height from a single storey ground floor (with mezzanine in the central block) to a ground floor with a maximum of 25 storeys above. Works to create new public realm within and highway works to Church Path, Church Street East, Chobham Road and Commercial Way, including alterations to and provision of new parking, servicing and delivery bays*". Application ref: PLAN/2023/0911 remains under Officer consideration, and it is currently anticipated that it will be reported to the Planning Committee in either February or March 2024.
357. Whilst application ref: PLAN/2023/0911 remains under Officer consideration that application has been submitted with an Internal Daylight Assessment report. The assessments within that Internal Daylight Assessment report have been carried out in accordance with the BRE Guide Climate Based Daylight Modelling (CBDMM) form of internal daylight test, as well as the Sunlight Exposure assessment (which are standard tests where new residential accommodation is proposed, particularly within a town centre location such as this). The Internal Daylight Assessment report

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submitted with application ref: PLAN/2023/0911 has also been undertaken with the proposed development (ref: PLAN/2023/0835) in place within the baseline, such that the 'retained' internal daylight and sunlight levels within the northerly orientated proposed dwellings within the ref: PLAN/2023/0911 scheme have been presented assuming that both proposed and submitted developments are granted planning permission and subsequently constructed. As such, that report therefore presents a 'worst-case' scenario (in daylight/sunlight terms) and provides an indication of the quality of light within the ref: PLAN/2023/0911 proposed dwellings with the proposed development in place.

358. Although it remains under Officer consideration the Internal Daylight Assessment report submitted with application ref: PLAN/2023/0911 confirms an overall internal daylight compliance rate of 75.7% for that proposed development, which is a very good rate of compliance against the BRE National Annex target illuminance levels in a central town centre location such as this. That report demonstrates that there would, clearly, be some lower levels of internal daylight within proposed flats located along the northern elevation (i.e., Church Street East elevation) of that scheme, which is, in part, due to the presence of the proposed development (ref: PLAN/2023/0835), but also the northerly orientation does generally yield lower median illuminance levels as there is no direct sunlight contributing to the internal luminance. The Internal Daylight Assessment report submitted with application ref: PLAN/2023/0911 confirms that these lower levels of internal daylight only relate to the 1st – 6th floor levels (incl.), with proposed flats at 7th floor level and above retaining levels in excess of BRE Guide recommendations.
359. In respect of sunlight availability, the Internal Daylight Assessment report submitted with application ref: PLAN/2023/0911 confirms an overall (relevant) compliance rate of 98.9%, which is an excellent rate of compliance for a central town centre location such as this. Moreover, it must be noted that the proposed development (ref: PLAN/2023/0835) is located to the north of the development proposed under (pending) application ref: PLAN/2023/0911 and therefore that it would have little impact on sunlight availability to the dwellings proposed within application ref: PLAN/2023/0911.

*Conclusion on daylight and sunlight impacts on the proposed developments at Concord House and Griffin House (ref: PLAN/2018/0660) and at the Former BHS, 81 Commercial Way (ref: PLAN/2023/0911) (both of which remain under consideration)*

360. In respect of the proposed development at Concord House and Griffin House (ref: PLAN/2018/0660) (which remains under consideration) and the proposed development at the Former BHS, 81 Commercial Way (ref: PLAN/2023/0911) (which remains under consideration) the applicant's submissions, together with the Internal Daylight Assessment report submitted with application ref: PLAN/2023/0911 (at the Former BHS), demonstrate that whilst there would naturally be a reduction in daylight and sunlight availability if each of those developments were granted planning permission and subsequently built out in conjunction with the proposed development, the resultant overall daylight and sunlight levels for flats within those adjoining schemes would not be uncommon within a highly accessible town centre location, particularly one that has been designated as a centre to undergo significant change within the Development Plan.
361. Overall, and notwithstanding the very significant uncertainty around planning application ref: PLAN/2018/0660 (at Concord and Griffin House), Officers are satisfied that the proposed development would not cause a significant harmful

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impact, having regard to the central Woking Town Centre location, on the overall daylighting and sunlighting amenity of future residential occupants of the development proposed at the Concord and Griffin House site to the west/south-west (ref: PLAN/2018/0660, which remains under consideration) in the event that both schemes were to be granted planning permission and subsequently constructed.

362. Overall, Officers are satisfied that the proposed development would not cause a significant harmful impact, having regard to the central Woking Town Centre location, on the overall daylighting and sunlighting amenity of future residential occupants of the development proposed at the Former BHS site to the south/south-east (ref: PLAN/2023/0911, which remains under Officer consideration) in the event that both schemes were to be granted planning permission and subsequently constructed.

### Conclusion on neighbouring residential amenities

363. In conclusion, Officers consider that the resulting overbearing effect to facing first and second floor level windows within Central Buildings flats would reach the threshold of 'significant' harmful impact, so as to conflict with Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012). Whilst regard has been afforded to the submissions of the applicant Officers nonetheless consider the, very significant, loss of daylight which would arise to the x9 flats at Central Buildings, combined with the very poor levels of daylight which would be retained to relevant rooms within those flats as a consequence of the proposed development, would also constitute a significant harmful impact contrary to Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012).
364. Whilst, again, regard has been afforded to the submissions of the applicant Officers nonetheless consider that the, in some cases, very significant, loss of daylight which would arise to extant flats within the office-to-residential conversion of Hollywood House (ref: PLAN/2021/0866), combined with the, in some instances, low levels of daylight which would be retained to some of those flats as a consequence of the proposed development, would constitute a significant harmful impact contrary to Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012).
365. The preceding identified neighbouring amenity harms conflict with Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), SPDs Outlook, Amenity, Privacy and Daylight (2022) and Design (2015) and relevant provisions within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2023) although will be weighed against the benefits of the proposed development in the planning balance at the conclusion of this report.
366. For the reasoning set out within this report section in all other respects (i.e., other than as summarised within the three paragraphs immediately above) Officers consider that the proposed development would avoid significant harmful neighbouring amenity impacts to relevant proximate existing, extant and proposed residential properties. In those respects Officers consider the proposed development, in neighbouring amenity terms, to comply with Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), SPDs Outlook, Amenity, Privacy and Daylight (2022) and Design (2015) and relevant provisions within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2023).

### Wind microclimate

367. The tall buildings strategy within SPD Design (2015) requires proposals for tall buildings to not adversely affect the site's surrounds in terms of, inter alia, wind. A wind microclimate report has been submitted with the application which identifies that

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a combination of Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD) and model-scale boundary layer wind tunnel testing-based analysis has been undertaken to provide an assessment of potential wind impacts on the public realm, in key areas of sensitive pedestrian uses within the proposed development and the surrounding areas for the proposed site conditions and benchmarks these to the existing site conditions. In particular, the assessment considers potential cumulative wind impacts with known future developments that are either consented or at an advanced stage of the planning process. The buildings within the surrounding area that have been considered in the wind microclimate assessment extend up to 650 metres distance from the nominal centre of the site.

368. The wind microclimate report identifies that public realm within the site incorporates pedestrian thoroughfares, building entrances, outdoor seating areas at ground level and amenity terraces at Level 2, Level 9 and Level 10. The wind assessment has incorporated the proposed trees at terrace Level 9 and Level 10 as well as 1.5 metre high solid balustrades and a 1.0 metre wide 50% porous corner screen at Level 9.
369. The extant and emerging future developments that have been considered in the assessment of the cumulative impact scenario are:

<b>LPA Ref:</b>	<b>Site Address:</b>	<b>Development Type:</b>	<b>Status:</b>
PLAN/2021/0866	Hollywood House, Church Street East	Change of use of from office to residential.	Extant (until 22.09.2024)
PLAN/2017/0802	46 Chertsey Road (Former Rat & Parrot PH)	12 storey residential building.	Granted on 11.04.2018, present status unknown
PLAN/2019/0904	Nos.12-16, 25-31 Portugal Road & Lok N Store, Marlborough Road	Three 3-4 storey residential buildings.	Granted on 07.04.2020, understood to be under construction
PLAN/2019/1141	Crown Place, Chertsey Road	Maximum height of 28 storeys, residential-led mixed-use scheme.	Extant (until 03.11.2025)
PLAN/2023/0911 (referred to as Donard scheme in report)	Former BHS, 81 Commercial Way	Maximum height of 26 storeys, residential-led mixed-use scheme.	Submitted to the LPA on 02.11.2023 – Pending consideration
PLAN/2019/0352	Christ Church, Jubilee Square	Extensions and alterations to Church.	Extant (until 29.01.2025)
PLAN/2023/0645	3 - 12 High Street, Woking	Maximum height of 17 storeys, residential-led mixed-use scheme.	Planning Committee resolved to grant on 07.11.2023 – S106 agreement in process.

370. The wind microclimate report sets out that the assessment undertaken is based on the UK industry standard accepted London Docklands Development Corporation (LDDC) formulation of the so-called Lawson criteria and that the comfort criteria are based on a 5% of the time exceedance of the threshold wind speeds, that relate to tolerable wind conditions for categorised types of pedestrian activity. It states that the comfort criteria applied are a formulation of the LDDC variant that in turn are based on the City of London 2019 Tall Building Guidelines ('Wind Microclimate Guidelines for Developments in the City of London', dated August 2019) and that these criteria

are arguably the most onerous application of the LDDC criteria in the UK meaning that the undertaken assessment is conservative.

371. The LDDC comfort criteria seek to define the reaction of an average pedestrian to the wind, clearly less active pursuits require more benign wind conditions. It is conventional to apply the comfort criteria on a seasonal basis considering summer and worst-case seasonal comfort ratings. The comfort criteria are:

Mean and GEM wind speed (5% exceedance)	Category	Description
2.5 m/s	Frequent Sitting	Acceptable for frequent outdoor sitting use, e.g. restaurant, café
4 m/s	Occasional Sitting	Acceptable for occasional outdoor seating, e.g. general public outdoor spaces, balconies/terraces intended for occasional use, etc.
6 m/s	Standing	Acceptable for entrances, bus stops, covered walkways or passageways beneath buildings
8 m/s	Walking	Acceptable for external pavements, walkways
> 8 m/s	Uncomfortable	Not comfortable for regular pedestrian access

372. The LDDC criteria also requires an assessment of pedestrian safety with respect to wind force. The safety criteria are based on a 0.022% (once per annum) seasonal exceedance of the threshold wind speed of 15 m/s. The criteria are shown below.

Mean and GEM wind speed (0.022% exceedance)	Category	Description
< 15 m/s	Safe	Safe for all users
> 15 m/s	Unsafe	Presents a safety risk, especially to vulnerable members of the public and cyclists

373. The wind microclimate report identifies that prevailing wind sectors at the site across all seasons are south west (SW), west south west (WSW) and west (W). In spring and winter the north easterly (NE) wind sector emerges as a second dominant wind sector, though winds originating from this wind sector are weaker than the prevailing south westerly winds.

374. The assessment scenarios within the wind microclimate report are (table on the following page):

Assessment Scenario No.	Description
1	<b>Existing</b> site conditions with <b>Existing</b> surrounding buildings
2	<b>Proposed</b> site conditions with <b>Existing</b> surrounding buildings
3	<b>Proposed</b> site conditions with <b>Existing</b> surrounding Buildings + <b>Future Developments</b>

375. The wind microclimate report identifies that in the existing site conditions wind conditions in the public realm at ground level are unconditionally safe for all users, that in Chobham Road, Christchurch Way and the southern stretch of Church Street East the wind conditions are rated as comfortable for frequent sitting in the worst season and in summer and that the windiest conditions occur in the pedestrian zone to the north of Chobham Road and at the intersection between Chobham Road and



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Church Street East, where the wind conditions in the existing site remain, at worst, suitable for sitting.

376. The wind microclimate report identifies that in the proposed site conditions with existing surrounds (i.e., assessment scenario 2) wind conditions would remain unconditionally safe for all users at ground level as well as safe for all users on the Level 9 and Level 10 amenity terraces (within the proposed development). The report identifies that the proposed development would introduce a slight deterioration in ground level comfort, from being comfortable for frequent sitting to comfortable for occasional sitting, in the pedestrian zone to the north of Chobham Road, Christchurch Way and along the southern stretch of Church Street East. Wind conditions comfort at the Level 9 and Level 10 terraces (within the proposed development) would generally be rated for the frequent sitting category in summer at all locations in which seating areas are proposed. In the worst season there would be a slight deterioration in the local comfort level to being suitable for occasional sitting. The wind comfort rating for the Level 2 amenity terrace (within the proposed development) in the worst case season (winter), and in summer, would be comfortable for frequent sitting.
377. The wind microclimate report identifies that with the proposed development and future surrounding buildings in place (i.e., assessment scenario 3) wind conditions would remain safe within the public realm at ground level as well as on the elevated level amenity terraces (within the proposed development). At ground level the assessment shows that wind comfort ratings are not materially affected by the cumulative impacts of the proposed development and future developments although the exception to this is sensitive receptors G120 and G121 in the public thoroughfare to the south of the intersection between Chobham Road and Church Street East, where the wind conditions drop to being rated as comfortable for standing. At elevated level cumulative future developments introduce a local drop in comfort rating to occasional sitting on the Level 10 terrace at two sensitive receptors albeit the wind comfort at the Level 2 amenity terrace is not materially affected by cumulative future developments and remains comfortable for frequent sitting.
378. Overall, the wind microclimate report demonstrates that wind microclimate comfort and safety would be suitable for the planned uses throughout the public realm at ground level and at elevated levels (i.e., on the amenity terraces at Level 2, Level 9 and Level 10 within the proposed development) in both assessment scenarios 2 and 3 (i.e., Proposed site conditions with Existing surrounding buildings and Proposed site conditions with Existing surrounding Buildings + Future Developments). As such, no further wind microclimate mitigation measures are required beyond those imbedded within the design of the proposed development (i.e., the proposed trees at terrace Level 9 and Level 10 as well as 1.5 metre high solid balustrades and a 1.0 metre wide 50% porous corner screen at Level 9). The implementation, and permanent retention, of these embedded wind mitigation measures can be secured through condition (recommended condition 09 refers).
379. Overall, subject to recommended condition 09, the wind microclimate report demonstrates that the proposed development would not adversely affect the site's surrounds in terms of wind and therefore the wind microclimate effects of the proposed development are considered to be acceptable.

**Solar glare**

380. The tall buildings strategy within SPD Design (2015) requires proposals for tall buildings to not adversely affect the site's surrounds in terms of, inter alia, glare. The application has been submitted with a Daylight, Sunlight and Solar glare report, dated September 2023. Daylight and sunlight impacts are considered separately within this report (under the sub-heading 'Impacts on neighbouring residential amenities'), this report section deals only with solar glare.
381. The BRE Site layout planning for daylight and sunlight: A guide to good practice (Third edition, 2022) (hereafter referred to as the BRE Guide) states (at paragraph 5.8.1) that *"Glare or dazzle can occur when sunlight is reflected from a glazed facade or area of metal cladding. There are two types of reflected glare problem that can occur. Discomfort glare causes visual discomfort without necessarily affecting the ability to see. Disability glare happens when a bright source of light (such as the reflected sun) impairs the vision of other objects. The bright light is scattered in the eye, making it harder to see everything else. Outdoors, disability glare is easily the more serious problem, as it can affect motorists' and train drivers' ability to drive safely."*
382. The BRE Guide continues (at paragraph 5.8.2) stating that *"The problem can occur either when there are large areas of reflective glass or cladding on the facade, or when there are areas of glass or cladding that slope back so that high altitude sunlight can be reflected along the ground. Thus solar dazzle is only a long-term problem for some heavily glazed (or mirror clad) buildings. Photovoltaic panels generally tend to cause less dazzle because they are designed to absorb light."*
383. The BRE Guide outlines a brief methodology for evaluation of the scale of a solar glare issue, stating (at paragraph 5.8.3) that *"If it is likely that a building may cause solar dazzle the exact scale of the problem should be evaluated. This is done by identifying key locations such as road junctions and railway signals, and working out the number of hours of the year that sunlight can be reflected to these points."*
384. Assessment of solar glare is carried out using specialist software applied to a 3D AutoCAD model of the proposed development and its surrounding context. An Annual Sequence Analysis simulates the path of the sun for the entire year around the proposed development in order to identify where and when instances of solar reflections may affect sensitive viewpoints, with a particular focus on road users and/or railways. The screening exercise creates conditions for optimal reflectance (i.e., a perfect reflective (specular) material and adopts an entirely clear sky) with the objective being to identify all possible times and dates where solar glare could occur, however brief, under optimal conditions. As such, it therefore overstates any potential instances of glare.
385. It is also important to note that direct solar glare is a naturally occurring phenomenon and that at certain times, usually around sunrise or sunset, there can be certain locations where the rising or setting sun would be directly in the desired line of sight. It is also important to bear in mind that solar reflections from windows are part of the normal pattern of sunlight in urban areas, including Woking Town Centre. The assessment sets out that the specification of glazing is not known at this stage of the design and that whilst the reflectance characteristics of plain glass is 8% at normal incidence, coated glass is frequently used to reduce solar gain within new buildings, resulting in the use of glass with a higher reflectance figure. As such, the solar glare

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assessment adopts a (higher) reflectance figure of 14% for glazing within the proposed development, which is considered to be appropriate and robust.

386. Whether any solar glare is actually caused on any occasion is dependent upon the time of day and the weather at the time that the instance occurs. There are no quantitative criteria within the BRE Guide regarding acceptable levels of solar glare. There is, however, research which suggests that the significance of a glare occurrence is largely dependent upon its angle from the receptors' line of sight, the strength of the glare and the relevance of this with respect to the human field of vision.
387. Glare occurrences that could encroach on the foveal view ( $3^{\circ}$  from the visual axis) are likely to cause significant visual impairment or distraction. It is also likely that the viewer's line of sight would vary from the chosen view direction at each viewpoint. To account for this, along with the likely range of movement of the eye, it is considered that lengthy occurrences within approximately  $10^{\circ}$  of the centre of the visual axis are potentially hazardous. In this scenario, the adverse effect would, dependent upon the duration and veiling luminance of the instance, be considered major (i.e., significant) and mitigation may be required.
388. Between  $10^{\circ}$  and  $30^{\circ}$  corresponds to Near Periphery field of view and therefore where glare occurs between these angles, the adverse effect would be considered minor (i.e., not significant) or moderate (i.e., significant) depending upon the location and use of the adjacent sensitive receptor and the period of time the glare occurs for.
389. An angle of greater than  $30^{\circ}$  from the view direction corresponds to the Far Periphery field of view and, therefore, the risk of the reflection causing a hazard is reduced. As such, the adverse effect would be considered to be minor or negligible (i.e., not significant).
390. The Daylight, Sunlight and Solar glare report identifies that a detailed review of any potential solar glare effects arising from the proposed development has been carried out in respect of any key road junctions in and around the site from the point of view of road users (i.e., motorists) and that the key sensitive receptor locations for the purposes of the solar glare assessment have consequently been identified as:
  - Church Street East (approaching the site from the west) (i.e., south of Concord House)
  - Church Street East / Church Path (approaching the site from the south)
  - Chobham Road (approaching the site from the south) (i.e., west of O'Neills PH)
  - Church Street East (approaching the site from the east) (i.e., south of Hollywood House)
391. The report then sets out that the Annual Sequence Analysis has identified potential incidents of solar glare across the calendar year on five occasions whereby it is considered that the glare at the key sensitive receptors/locations (i.e., road users) requires closer examination. The five instances identified are as follows:
  - January 21st at 10:33am (Location 1)
  - April 14th at 5:41pm (Location 1)
  - July 21st at 7:28pm (Location 2)
  - December 21st at 12:11pm (Location 2)
  - February 6th at 10:18am (Location 3)

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392. The Daylight, Sunlight and Solar glare report sets out that it is evident that there appear to be no potential glare effects at sensitive receptor location 4 (western approach to the site along Church Street East) and that, in respect of the three other identified sensitive receptor locations, the Annual Temporal Disability Glare Analysis calendar graphs show that instances of glare would be relatively few and far between, particularly at sensitive receptor location 3 (southern approach to the site along Chobham Road) and that any instances of glare would be greater than 10° from the motorist's field of vision and in most instances greater than 30°, such that they would have low or no impact.

393. In respect of critical dates where incidents of glare are identified at the various sensitive receptor locations, viewpoint drawings (within Appendix 3 of the Daylight, Sunlight and Solar glare report) show the precise location of the glare within a motorist's field of vision as they approach the proposed development.

*Viewpoint 1. - Church Street East (approaching the site from the west) (i.e., south of Concord House)*

394. On January 21st at 10.33am, the instance of glare is at 20° from the centre of the motorist's field of vision, which is not in the direct line of sight of the road or any clear road signals. It is therefore unlikely to be any greater than a minor adverse effect and thus not significant. On April 14th at 5:41pm, the instance of glare is off to the left of the motorist's field of vision at closer to 30°, such that again the effect is likely to be negligible to minor adverse and thus not significant.

*Viewpoint 2. - Church Street East / Church Path (approaching the site from the south)*

395. The glare effects on July 21st at 07:28pm occur at around 20° from the centre of the motorist's field of vision, which is not in the direct line of sight of the road or any clear road signals. It is therefore unlikely to be any greater than a minor adverse effect and thus not significant. On December 21st at 12:11pm, the instance of glare is to the right of the motorist's field of vision at closer to 30°, such that again the effect is likely to be negligible to minor adverse and thus not significant.

*Viewpoint 3. - Chobham Road (approaching the site from the south) (i.e., west of O'Neills PH)*

396. As motorists approach the proposed development from the south, there is only a minor instance of glare from the upper part of the proposed development on February 6th at 10:18am, within around 25° of the motorist's field of vision. Given the distance from the site at this point, and the mitigation measure of applying the (in vehicle) visor, together with the fleeting movement of the vehicle around the westward bend in the Chobham Road carriageway in this location (i.e., as it bends left into Commercial Way), it is unlikely that the glare will cause any significant degree of disability to road users and is therefore considered not significant.

397. Overall, the solar glare assessment detailed within the Daylight, Sunlight and Solar glare report demonstrates that it is not anticipated that there will be any significant disability glare effects upon motorists and other road users (i.e., sensitive receptors) as a result of the proposed development. Again it must also be noted that the solar glare assessment creates optimal conditions for glare (i.e., a perfect reflective (specular) material and an entirely clear sky) and therefore overstates any potential glare. As such, the 'real life' impacts are highly likely to be less than those set out

previously. The solar glare implications of the proposed development are considered to be acceptable and do not necessitate mitigation measures.

**Air quality**

398. Paragraph 180 of the NPPF (December 2023) states that *“Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by [inter alia] e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality”*.
399. Paragraph 192 of the NPPF (December 2023) sets out that planning decisions should sustain and contribute towards compliance with relevant limit values or national objectives for pollutants, taking into account the presence of Air Quality Management Areas and Clean Air Zones, and the cumulative impacts from individual sites in local areas and that opportunities to improve air quality or mitigate impacts should be identified, such as through traffic and travel management, and green infrastructure provision and enhancement. Paragraph 192 of the NPPF (December 2023) also sets out that planning decisions should ensure that any new development in Air Quality Management Areas and Clean Air Zones is consistent with the local air quality action plan. Paragraph 194 of the NPPF (December 2023) states that *“The focus of planning policies and decisions should be on whether proposed development is an acceptable use of land, rather than the control of processes or emissions (where these are subject to separate pollution control regimes). Planning decisions should assume that these regimes will operate effectively”*.
400. Policy DM5 of the DM Policies DPD (2016) states that *“When assessed individually or cumulatively, development proposals should ensure that there will be no unacceptable impacts on [inter alia] air quality.”* Policy DM6 of the DM Policies DPD (2016) states that *“Development that has the potential, either individually or cumulatively, for significant emissions to the detriment of air quality, particularly in designated Air Quality Management Areas or in areas at risk of becoming an Air Quality Management Area, should include an appropriate scheme of mitigation which may take the form of on-site measures or, where appropriate, a financial contribution to off-site measures. An Air Quality Assessment will be required for schemes that meet the thresholds set out in paragraph 4.15”*. This threshold is, inter alia, development in excess of 100 dwellings or 10,000 sq.m other floorspace (or equivalent combination) anywhere in the Borough.
401. The application has been submitted with an Air Quality Assessment (dated September 2023) (hereafter referred to as the AQA) which identifies that the Council has an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) declared for exceedances of the annual mean NO<sub>2</sub> (Nitrogen Dioxide) Air Quality Strategy (AQS) objective and that this AQMA is located approximately 1.5km (i.e., 1,500 metres, or 0.9 miles) to the south-west of the site and incorporates a small section of Guildford Road (to the south of Constitution Hill junction and to the north of the Junction with Ashdown Close).
402. The AQA sets out that, based on local monitoring data and data set out within the DEFRA background maps, air quality in the vicinity of the site is expected to be meeting the relevant air quality objective limits and is therefore considered to be suitable for development for Class E (Commercial, Business and Service) uses.

403. During the construction phase the AQA estimates that there would be 10-15 additional Heavy-Duty Vehicles (HDV) generated on the local road network on any given day. The Environmental Protection UK & Institute of Air Quality Management (2017), 'Land-Use Planning & Development Control: Planning for Air Quality' (hereafter referred to as the EPUK & IAQM air quality guidance) guidance assessment criteria indicate that significant impacts on air quality are unlikely to occur where a development results in less than 25 HDV movements per day in locations within or adjacent to an AQMA and less than 100 HDV outside of an AQMA. As such, construction traffic generated by the proposed development would result in a negligible impact on local NO<sub>2</sub> (Nitrogen Dioxide) and PM<sub>10</sub> (Particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter of less than 10 micrometres) concentrations.
404. The main likely effects on local air quality during construction relates to nuisance dust. Activities associated with the demolition and construction of the development will give rise to a risk of dust impacts at existing sensitive receptors during demolition, earthworks and construction, as well as from trackout of dust and dirt by vehicles onto the public highway. The assessment of effects from dust during demolition and construction has been undertaken in accordance with Institute of Air Quality Management, 2014, 'Guidance on the Assessment of dust from demolition and construction'; the proposed development has been identified as a 'medium' risk for dust soiling effects during demolition, earthworks, construction and trackout. For human health, the site has been identified as a low risk site. The control of dust emissions from construction site activities relies upon management provisions and mitigation techniques to reduce emissions of dust and limit dispersion. Following implementation of appropriate dust and pollution control measures which are recommended for inclusion within the Dust Management Plan (DMP) (recommended condition 10 refers, within the CEMP) the impact of emissions during construction of the proposed development would be negligible.
405. In respect of the operational phase of the development, the EPUK & IAQM air quality guidance sets out criteria for when an air quality assessment is required to accompany a planning application. The guidance states that an air quality assessment is required if there is (post-development) a change of:
- more than 100 Light Duty Vehicles (LDV's) flows in Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) within or adjacent to an AQMA or more than 500 AADT elsewhere; or
  - more than 25 Heavy Duty Vehicles (HDV) flows AADT within or adjacent to an AQMA or more than 100 AADT elsewhere; or
  - combustion plant where the single or combined NO<sub>x</sub> emission rate exceeds 5 mg/sec.
406. The proposed development does not include any on-site parking, it would therefore be car free (within the site boundary at least) and would not generate a significant number of additional trips on the adjacent road network, particularly as the existing parking provision (25-30 informal spaces) on the site would be removed.
407. The applicant is intending to secure a number of permits for Woking Town Centre car parks for the use of future occupiers of the site. The Transport Assessment submitted with the application has been compiled on the basis of securing a minimum of 50 permits for use in existing public car parks and up to a maximum of between 128 and 155 permits. Based on the existing parking provision (30 spaces) and the proposed parking permits (50), and assuming one parking space resulted in one car visit per day (i.e., x1 two-way trip per day – two movements), as a worst-case this would equate to 40 additional daily vehicle movements (30x2 = 60 under existing and 50x2

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= 100 under proposed) on the local road network per day associated with the operational development. If the upper limit of 155 permits is considered this would equate to an additional 250 movements across the local road network per day, as a 'worst-case' scenario.

408. The site is not within or adjacent to an AQMA and therefore the higher screening criteria of 500 vehicles per day set out in the EPUK & IAQM air quality guidance applies. The additional vehicle movements on the local road network calculated above, based on the proposed 50 parking permits (100 movements) and the maximum 155 parking permits (250 movements), fall well below the 500 vehicles screening criteria and therefore the impact of the operational traffic on local air quality will be negligible and therefore would not give rise to adverse air quality impacts. Moreover, emissions arising from vehicle movements to and from existing Woking Town Centre car parks (through the use of parking permit spaces) would not increase as a result of the proposed development because those parking spaces already exist and therefore the air quality impacts of vehicle movements to and from those spaces already take place.
409. The proposed development will provide all heating and hot water from electric sources through the provision of Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHPs). The proposed development will also allow for potential future connection to the local district heat network (DHN) (should connection become a viable option for the applicant). As such, in the operational phase, the proposed development will not generate any significant on-site emissions and impacts on local air quality from energy provision will be negligible and therefore would not give rise to adverse air quality impacts.
410. In respect of air quality the Council's Environmental Health service states that "*there are no adverse comments to submit, particularly in relation to the Acoustic assessment report and Air Quality report, subject to there being no change in the proposed plant and all recommendations and mitigation works being carried out in full...It is noted that a detailed Construction Environmental Management Plan will be provided which is usually a Planning requirement.*"
411. Overall, subject to recommended conditions (conditions 10 and 15 refer), there will be no significant impacts to existing or proposed sensitive receptors during the construction or operational phases of the proposed development. The proposed development therefore complies with Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), Policies DM5 and DM6 of the Development Management Policies DPD (2016), and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2023), in respect of air quality.

### **Contamination**

412. Paragraph 180 of the NPPF (December 2023) states that "*planning...decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by [inter alia] f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate*". Paragraph 189 of the NPPF (December 2023) states that "*planning...decisions should ensure that: a) a site is suitable for its proposed use taking account of ground conditions and any risks arising from land instability and contamination...[that] b) after remediation, as a minimum, land should not be capable of being determined as contaminated land under Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990; and [that]...c) adequate site investigation information, prepared by a competent person, is available to inform these assessments.*" Paragraph 190 of the NPPF (December 2023) states that "*Where a site is affected by contamination or*

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*land stability issues, responsibility for securing a safe development rests with the developer and/or landowner”.*

413. Policy DM8 of the Development Management Policies DPD (2016) states, inter alia, that *“Adequate site investigation information should be provided with development proposals, including the site’s history, potential contamination sources, pathways and receptors, and where appropriate, physical investigation, chemical testing, and a risk assessment to cover ground gas and groundwater.”*
414. The application has been submitted with a Ground condition desk top study report (dated September 2023). A number of potential sources of ground contamination have been identified for the site, including the potential for: (i) asbestos to be present beneath the existing buildings from demolished former on-site building structures and within in-ground pipework ducts, (ii) fuel hydrocarbon contamination from the possible historical fuel storage tanks and former boiler rooms located across the site as part of the former uses of the site and (iii) ground gas generation from Made Ground deposits associated with the (previous) phases of redevelopment on the site. The report assesses the risks to the health of site users and environmental receptors from contamination to be very low to low. Moreover, the completed site will be covered either by buildings or hardstanding. An intrusive site investigation is recommended by the report in order to confirm the potential risks to receptors. There is potential for the implementation of remediation measures, during the construction phase, to ensure that the proposed development is suitable for use.
415. The Council’s Contaminated Land Officer has recommended conditions 34 (Asbestos - demolition), 35 (investigation and risk assessment), 36 (remediation method Statement), and 37 (remediation validation report). Subject to recommended conditions, and the implementation of any required remediation measures, the proposed development would comply with Policy DM8 of the DM Policies DPD (2016), and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2023), in terms of contamination.

### **Flooding and water management**

416. Policy CS9 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) states that *“The Council will determine planning applications in accordance with the guidance contained within the NPPF. The SFRA will inform the application of the Sequential and Exceptional Test set out in the NPPF”*. Policy CS9 also states that *“The Council expects development to be in Flood Zone 1 as defined in the SFRA...The Council will require all significant forms of development to incorporate sustainable drainage systems (SUDS) as part of any development proposals...To further reduce the risk from surface water flooding, all new development should work towards mimicking greenfield run-off situations”*.
417. Paragraphs 165-175 (inclusive) of the NPPF (December 2023) relate to planning and flood risk, paragraph 175 states that *“Major developments should incorporate sustainable drainage systems unless there is clear evidence that this would be inappropriate”*.
418. The application has been submitted with a flood risk assessment and drainage strategy (hereafter referred to for brevity as the FRA) (which has been revised during the application process to address initial comments received from the LLFA) which identifies that the site gently slopes from the south-east to the north-west, falling from approximately 33.96m AOD to 32.20m AOD. The FRA identifies that the site is located entirely within fluvial Flood Zone 1 (low risk), and significant distances away



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from fluvial Flood Zones 2 and 3 (medium and high risk), and that fluvial flooding is not expected to become a significant issue when the impact of climate change is taken into account (albeit the attenuation requirements for the proposed drainage strategy have been designed to accommodate surface water runoff during all events up to and including the 1 in 100 year + 45% climate change allowance). In accordance with Policy CS9 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) and the NPPF (December 2023) all forms of development are suitable in Flood Zone 1.

419. The Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) (November 2015) identifies some areas of surface water flood risk along sections of the Christchurch Way and Chobham Road carriageways however the proposed building footprint would not be located on any of these areas and, whilst these areas would (in part) be subject to some highways and public realm works, they would remain carriageways post-development. As such, there is no requirement for a flood risk sequential test (due to surface water floor risk) to be undertaken in this instance.
420. In respect of potential flooding from reservoirs and other artificial sources the FRA identifies this risk to be negligible, it also identifies that much of Woking Borough has a very low susceptibility to groundwater flooding (due to the predominantly sandstone bedrock, which is generally impermeable), and therefore assesses the probability of groundwater flooding impacting the site to also be negligible. The FRA also assesses the probability of sewer flooding impacting the site to be negligible. It must also be noted that the Council's SFRA does not identify the site to be at risk of flooding from the nearby Basingstoke Canal (i.e., in the event of a potential breach to the canal).
421. The FRA identifies that the existing site is, with the exception of a c.8 sq.m permeable area (i.e., a planting bed), laid totally to building footprints or hardstanding and that, based on the available information, it is assumed that the surface water run-off from the existing site discharges unattenuated to the public sewer.
422. In respect of the proposed surface water drainage strategy the FRA identifies that the proposed surface water drainage network has been designed to restrict runoff rates as close as practicable to the Greenfield run-off rates whilst still maintaining a gravity led surface water drainage network (this is because during storm events pumped systems are prone to electrical and/or mechanical failure).
423. The FRA sets out that the proposed drainage strategy includes three 100mm deep blue roofs (these comprise a multi-layered system that covers the roof of a building or podium structures with a deep layer of attenuation along with various layers of insulation, waterproofing, and roofing material) which are proposed on the roof level, and at terrace levels 9 and 10, and that these blue roofs will attenuate the surface water before discharging it to the below ground surface water drainage network. The FRA sets out that in order to reduce surface water and deal with ground level surface runoff a (below ground) attenuation tank (of 80 sq.m area and with a 400mm deep crate system) will be required below the proposed building to provide additional attenuation, this is because external space outside the proposed building footprint is limited due to sewer/existing utility constraints that exist, and therefore that an attenuation tank located below the proposed building is the only viable option. It must be noted that the attenuation tank would be located below a ground floor plant room, and that access for maintenance purposes will therefore be possible. Surface water discharging from the site will be limited via a flow control device to a surface water discharge rate from the site as a whole to 1.7 l/s (litres per second). Surface water is proposed to discharge to the existing Thames Water surface water sewer running beneath Christchurch Way.

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424. The FRA also sets out that it is proposed, where possible, to use external landscaping tree pits for additional surface water attenuation on site, and that the exact design of these within the overall strategy will be determined subsequent to planning permission being granted (details can be secured through recommended condition 09). The FRA sets out that due to the surface finish needing to tie in with the wider Section 278 (Highways Act 1980) and public realm works, permeable paving has not been considered an appropriate solution and that because all rainwater pipes for the proposed building will be internal, rain gardens and downpipe planters are not feasible. The FRA demonstrates that, due to the proposed SuDS scheme, there will be a significant reduction in the existing surface water discharge rates from the site, the estimated existing maximum (surface water) discharge rate of 32.4 litres per second (l/s) being very significantly reduced to 1.7 l/s.
425. The FRA sets out that the potential for infiltration drainage will be explored once planning permission has been granted (it is not possible for a full site investigation to be undertaken at this stage because the site is currently occupied and predominately laid to building footprints. Therefore, infiltration testing will be undertaken once planning permission has been granted and the site demolished) and that, if determined viable, the surface water drainage strategy will be adapted to suit infiltration (this can be addressed through recommended condition 31). However, there is considered to be limited potential for incorporation of infiltration because such features have to be at least 5 metres away from building foundations.
426. Thames Water have commented (via response dated 16 November 2023) that with regard to surface water network infrastructure capacity, they do not have any objection, based on the information provided. Thames Water have identified that the proposed development is located within 15 metres of a strategic sewer (which is not unusual in a town centre context such as this) and have therefore requested a piling method statement condition be attached to any grant of planning permission. This is considered necessary to prevent and minimise the potential for damage to subsurface sewerage infrastructure (recommended condition 33 refers).
427. The proposed development would lead to an increase in foul water flows from the site, it is proposed that foul water is directed to an existing Thames Water manhole on Christchurch Way. Thames Water have commented (via response dated 16 November 2023) that with regard to foul water sewerage network infrastructure capacity, they do not have any objection, based on the information provided.
428. The proposed development would also lead to an increase in potable water demand. The relevant potable water supplier, Affinity Water, have stated (via response dated 20 November 2023) that they have no comments to make regarding this planning application. As such, there is no evidence to suggest that the increased potable water demand would not be able to be met.
429. The statutory consultee (in respect of surface water drainage) of the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) (Surrey County Council), has advised (via response dated 27 November 2023) that, following a review of the (revised) Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy, and of the applicant response to the initial comments of the LLFA, the LLFA is satisfied that the proposed drainage scheme meets the requirements set out in Policy CS9 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), the NPPF, its accompanying PPG and the Non-Statutory Technical Standards for sustainable drainage systems, and are content with the development proposed (in respect of surface water). The LLFA advise that, should planning permission be granted, suitably worded conditions should be applied to ensure that the SuDS Scheme is properly implemented and

maintained throughout the lifetime of the development (recommended conditions 31 and 32 refer). The Environment Agency (EA) have (as of writing) submitted no comments on the application (although the site does not fall within, nor adjacent to, any fluvial flood zone).

430. Overall, subject to recommended conditions, the proposed development complies with Policy CS9 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2023), its accompanying PPG and the Non-Statutory Technical Standards for sustainable drainage systems, in respect of flooding and water management.

### **Noise**

431. Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) states that proposals for new development should, inter alia, *“Be designed to avoid significant harm to the environment and general amenity, resulting from noise, dust, vibrations, light or other releases”*.
432. Policy DM7 of the DM Policies DPD (2016) states that *“The Council will require noise generating forms of development or proposals that would affect noise-sensitive uses to be accompanied by a statement detailing potential noise generation levels and any mitigation measures proposed to ensure that all noise is reduced to an acceptable level”* and that *“Development will only be permitted where mitigation can be provided to an appropriate standard with an acceptable design, particularly in proximity to sensitive existing uses or sites”*.
433. The reasoned justification text to Policy DM7 states that *“In assessing development proposals against this policy, reference will be made to both BS 8233: 1999 ‘Sound Insulation and Noise Reduction for Buildings - Code of Practice’, and BS 4142:1997 ‘Method for rating industrial noise affecting mixed residential and industrial areas’, as well as the guideline values for community noise published by the World Health Organisation”* (paragraph 4.25). Whilst reference is made (in paragraph 4.25) to the 1997 version of BS 4142 this has now been withdrawn, being replaced by BS 4142:2014 ‘Methods for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound’ (+A1:2019). Likewise, the 1999 version of BS 8233 has also been withdrawn, being replaced by BS 8233:2014 ‘Guidance on sound insulation and noise reduction for buildings’.
434. Paragraph 180e) of the NPPF (December 2023) states that *“Planning...decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by...preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of [inter alia] noise pollution”*. Paragraph 191 states that *“Planning...decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. In doing so they should: a) mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impacts resulting from noise from new development – and avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life”*.
435. The application has been submitted with an acoustic assessment report which identifies that the main noise sources affecting the site are road traffic on Chobham Road and Christchurch Way, aircraft noise from overhead flight routes and

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pedestrians walking around the site, with road traffic from Victoria Way (to the north) also occasionally affecting the site. The report identifies that, to the east of the site are existing dwellings at Central Buildings, and that, to the west of the site, a planning application for a residential led mixed-use development at Concord House and Griffin House (ref: PLAN/2018/0660) remains pending consideration and that a further planning application for a residential led mixed-use development is also expected to be submitted to the south of the site (this application has since been submitted at the Former BHS, ref: PLAN/2023/0911) and that proposed dwellings at these neighbouring sites are considered to be the nearest noise sensitive receptors to the proposed development. Whilst two of the preceding sites relate to planning applications which remain under consideration this approach adopted within the acoustic assessment report is considered particularly robust as it assumes a scenario whereby both nearby planning applications are granted planning permission and subsequently implemented (as well as the existence of existing dwellings at Central Buildings). In the event that either or both are refused and/or not subsequently implemented there would clearly be less noise sensitive receptors to the proposed development than are taken into account in the acoustic assessment report.

436. The acoustic assessment has been undertaken on the basis that the proposed plant units (i.e., Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHPs) and Air Handling Units (AHUs)) to be installed at the rooftop (i.e., level 11) will mainly operate between 07:00 - 17:30 hours on weekdays, with reduced operations after normal office hours (17:30 - 23:00 hrs) and weekends and that, because specific details of plant that will operate during the evening, night-time and at weekends are not presently available (because building design work has not yet reached that stage), the assessment is based on the 'worst case' scenario.
437. The report identifies that because the change in traffic arising as a consequence of the proposed development would be negligible compared to the existing flows on the surrounding road network (due to being car free on site) no quantitative assessment of changes in road traffic noise is considered necessary.
438. Because the location and type of the proposed plant units are known, the acoustic assessment report undertakes a desktop assessment to determine whether the selected plant units are suitable to be installed in the area and assumes all proposed plant units operating at the same time (this is a 'worst case' scenario). This assessment identifies that with the implementation of mitigation measures including: (i) a double bank acoustic louvre installed around the edge of the 11th floor (i.e., rooftop level) of the proposed development, (ii) 1500mm attenuators for the atmosphere inlet and exhaust of each proposed air handling unit, and (iii) an acoustic package to be installed to the intake and the exhaust elements of the proposed air source heat pumps (ASHPs) the proposed plant units are predicted to have no impacts in all but one instance. The remaining one instance is that there would be a low impact (as opposed to no impact) at the (potential future) residential, and therefore noise-sensitive, receptor to the west of the proposed development (ref: PLAN/2018/0660 at Concord House and Griffin House). However, the assessment demonstrates that (with mitigation measures) the noise rating level at this (potential future) residential receptor would be reduced to 1dBA below the background noise level during night-time (i.e., 23:00 - 07:00 hrs), notwithstanding that the proposed plant units are anticipated to operate mainly between 07:00 - 17:30 hours on weekdays. Condition 16 is recommended to ensure implementation and maintenance of these acoustic mitigation measures for the proposed plant units.

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439. Noise and Vibration during demolition and construction can be mitigated, as far as is practicable, through a Construction Environmental management Plan, CEMP); recommended condition 10 refers.
440. The Council's Environmental Health service comment that *"there are no adverse comments to submit, particularly in relation to the Acoustic assessment report and Air Quality report, subject to there being no change in the proposed plant and all recommendations and mitigation works being carried out in full, including a further acoustic assessment report to ensure compliance with the criteria outlined (page 18, para 5.17). It is noted that a detailed Construction Environmental Management Plan will be provided which is usually a Planning requirement. No delivery hours have been proposed as these should be line with those for existing town centre businesses which have residential use close by"*. The Environmental Health service also recommend that a condition is attached in respect of external lighting (recommended condition 23 refers) and an informative in respect of any new food premises (recommended informative 19 refers).
441. Conditions 20 and 21 are recommended to restrict hours of use of both the office (Class E(g)) floorspace at levels 2 and above (including the associated roof terraces), and the flexible Class E floorspace at ground and first floor levels, to only between:
- 07:00 and 23:00 hours on Mondays to Saturdays (inclusive) (excluding Bank/Public Holidays); and
  - 08:00 and 22:00 hours on Sundays, Bank and Public Holidays.
442. Given the central Woking Town Centre location of the site these hours of use are considered to be appropriate (and represent maximum potential hours of use). A condition is not recommended in respect of hours of delivery etc. to/from the site because the site would be served by a loading bay which would be provided within the public highway (on Chobham Road), which is to be delivered via an agreement between the applicant and the County Highway Authority (Surrey County Council) under Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980 (which the Section 106 Legal Agreement will require the applicant to enter into). Given the location of the loading bay within the public highway hours of use of this loading bay would not be enforceable by the Local Planning Authority (although the County Highway Authority may stipulate hours of use of the loading bay under their (different) powers. Moreover, the finalised Delivery and Servicing Management Plan (DSMP) (recommended condition 14 refers) would, as far as practicable, incorporate measures to minimise noise disturbance arising from deliveries to/from the site.
443. Overall, subject to recommended conditions, the proposed development would comply with Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), Policy DM7 of the Development Management Policies DPD (2016), and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2023) in respect of noise.

### **Ecology and biodiversity**

444. Policy CS7 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) states that *"The Council is committed to conserving and protecting existing biodiversity assets within the Borough. It will require development proposals to contribute to the enhancement of existing biodiversity and geodiversity features and also explore opportunities to create and manage new ones where it is appropriate."* The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2023) states that *"planning...decisions should contribute to and*

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*enhance the natural and local environment by... minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity” (paragraph 180d).*

445. Circular 06/05 - Biodiversity and Geological Conservation provides further guidance in respect of statutory obligations for biodiversity and geological conservation and their impact within the planning system and requires the impact of a development on protected species to be established before planning permission is granted. Paragraph 186 of the NPPF (December 2023) sets out the principles that local planning authorities should apply, in relation to biodiversity, when determining planning applications, including (at d)) that *“opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.”*
446. In respect of ecology and biodiversity the application has been submitted with:
- Planning Statement, prepared by Carter Jonas, dated September 2023;
  - Cover Letter, prepared by Carter Jonas, dated September 2023;
  - Planting Plan, Drawing Number 2335-EXA-00-00-M2-L-00200, Rev P06;
  - Ecological Appraisal, prepared by Greengage, dated September 2023; (including Bat Survey Report and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment);
  - Construction Environmental Management Plan, prepared by Greengage, dated September 2023; and
  - Design and Access Statement, prepared by Darling Associates Architects, dated September 2023.
447. The Ecological Appraisal identifies that a series of connected buildings covers approximately 0.16ha of the site, that a four-storey office building in the south of the site (i.e., Cleary Court) of brick construction (and a flat roof) is connected to the predominantly early 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings (many of which have been altered and/or extended) that have a series of pitched roofs. The remainder of the site comprises paving, roads and asphalt surrounding the connected buildings on the site. As such, the site is of limited existing ecological value.

### Bats

448. In respect of bats the Ecological Appraisal identifies that the site is situated centrally within Woking Town Centre, thus being surrounded by roads, hardstanding and buildings, with limited vegetation, and high levels of artificial lighting (which disturbs bats), present in the wider area. The site is situated around 190 metres away from the nearest woodland and around 90 metres away from the nearest watercourse, the Basingstoke Canal, which is separated from the site by roads (i.e., Victoria Way) and buildings.
449. The Ecological Appraisal identifies that there are two stands of vegetation on site and therefore the site has negligible potential to support foraging bats albeit that bats are present in the wider area and therefore measures should be taken to mitigate impacts on commuting and foraging bats from the construction and operational phases of the development, including a sympathetic lighting scheme.
450. The Ecological Appraisal identifies that a detailed systematic daytime external inspection assessed existing buildings on the site as having low potential to support roosting bats, particularly given the location of the site within a highly urban area. However, it identifies a requirement for a single emergence survey in order to

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establish the relative importance of the site for local bat populations, and to identify the presence/ likely absence of bats.

451. As such, a Bat Survey report is appended to the Ecological Appraisal, detailing the findings of an emergence survey which was undertaken on 8th August 2023. The Bat Survey Report identifies that no evidence of roosting bats was observed during the emergence survey and that roosting bats can therefore be confirmed as likely-absent from the site. It also identifies that during the emergence survey, low levels of commuting were recorded from common and soprano pipistrelle species.
452. Surrey Wildlife Trust Ecology Planning Advice Service (SWT) (the ecological advisor to the Local Planning Authority) comment that the submitted bat survey report appears appropriate in scope and methodology and has identified the likely absence of active bat roosts within the development site. However, SWT advise that bats are highly mobile and move roost sites frequently and therefore that unidentified bat roosts may still be present. As such, a precautionary approach to works should therefore be implemented (recommended condition 27 refers).

### Nesting Birds

453. Nesting birds, eggs and their nests are protected from any intentional damage under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). The Ecological Appraisal identifies that no dense vegetation is present on site suitable for nesting birds although that a pair of swift were observed nesting in one location on site during the bat survey and therefore that the site has a confirmed presence of nesting birds. The Ecological Appraisal also identifies that nesting peregrine falcon would appear to be present in a nearby tall building (assumed to be Export House), although the site itself is not suitable for nesting for this species.
454. To ensure impacts upon nesting birds is fully avoided (in accordance with the above 1981 Act), demolition of existing buildings and clearance of the site should take place outside of the nesting bird season (March to August incl.). If this is not possible, an inspection of buildings within 48 hours prior to clearance should be undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologist to confirm the absence of any nesting birds. If an active nest is discovered, then an appropriate species dependant buffer system should be enacted, whereby all works should be prevented until the young have fledged and the nest becomes inactive. This can be secured via recommended condition 26.
455. SWT advise that if granted, an Ecological Management Plan (EMP), which should include a Swift Mitigation and Compensation Strategy, should be secured through a prior to commencement planning condition. The Ecological Appraisal identifies that works should be timed so that demolition of the building within which nesting swifts were recorded is undertaken outside of the nesting season. Recommended condition 26 will allow demolition of that building to take place within the bird nesting season provided only that an inspection is first undertaken to confirm the absence of nesting birds. Whilst the EMP will require suitable nesting boxes for swifts to be provided within the proposed development (in line with the Ecological Appraisal), in light of the provisions of recommended condition 26 (which would ensure that any nesting birds, including swifts, are not displaced during demolition and clearance works), it is not considered necessary or reasonable for the EMP condition to have a pre-commencement trigger point.
456. SWT also note that peregrine falcon was recorded as being present in an adjacent building, although the application site has been assessed as being unsuitable for this

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species and therefore advise that the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) is followed throughout the works to avoid disturbance to a potential nesting site during the construction phase of the project (recommended condition 10 refers).

### Invasive/Non-native Species

457. The Ecological Appraisal identifies that a stand of buddleia is confirmed present on the site, this being a non-native species, and that, in accordance with good practice, the buddleia should be cut, and the roots treated, with any arisings appropriately disposed of. Recommended informative 15 refers.

### Other Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) priority species and all other notable and protected species

458. The Ecological Appraisal identifies that, with the exception of those discussed previously, the site is unsuitable to support any other Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species and has negligible potential for all other protected and notable species.

### Designated Sites - Statutory and Non-Statutory (including Thames Basin Heaths SPA) and Priority Habitats

459. In terms of statutory designated sites the Ecological Appraisal identifies that Basingstoke Canal SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) is around 1.2km (0.7 miles, or 1,200 metres) to the north-east of the site. Only the stretches of the canal east of the Monument Road bridge, and west of the Hermitage Road bridge, are designated as SSSI. White Rose Lane LNR (Local Nature Reserve) is around 1.34km (0.8 miles, or 1,340 metres) south-east of the site. The Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (TBH SPA) / Horsell Common SSSI (these two designations overlap) are around 1.38km north of the site (0.8 miles, or 1,380 metres).
460. In terms of non-statutory designations the Ecological Appraisal identifies that Basingstoke Canal SNCI (Site of Nature Conservation Importance) is around 0.10km north of the site (0.06 miles, or 100 metres) (on the opposite side of Victoria Way). The stretch of the canal between Hermitage Road bridge in the west and Monument Road bridge in the east is designated as a SNCI (the remaining stretches being a SSSI, a statutory designation). Woodham Common SNCI is the next closest, being around 0.37km (0.22 miles, or 370 metres) north-east of the site. Other SNCIs are at minimum of around 1.1km distant from the site (0.7 miles, or 1,100 metres).
461. The Ecological Appraisal identifies that because the proposed development contains no residential use it is unlikely to adversely impact on the TBH SPA as it will not create additional recreational pressure, is situated within an Urban Area on previously developed land and is unlikely to cause additional air pollution (air quality is considered separately within this report). It identifies that due to the distance of the TBH SPA from the site (around 1.38km north), indirect pollution impacts, including dust pollution from demolition and construction phases, are unlikely to adversely impact on the qualifying features the TBH SPA (and Horsell Common SSSI, these two designations overlap) are designated for and that, for the same reasons, the proposed development is unlikely to adversely impact on the Basingstoke Canal SSSI (which is around 1.2km north-east of the site). As such, the Ecological Appraisal identifies that no mitigation is required in these respects.
462. SWT comment that an adverse impact upon the Thames Basin Heaths SPA and Horsell Common SSSI has been scoped out within the submitted Ecological



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Appraisal, that this conclusion appears to be suitable and that the application does not appear to include residential accommodation. However, SWT advise that the LPA review whether contribution is required due to the presence of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA within 1.4km. To confirm, Officers are satisfied that given the distance between the site and Thames Basin Heaths SPA, together with the entirely non-residential nature of the proposed development (which includes no residential accommodation and/or dwellings), the proposed development is not required to make any financial contribution towards the Thames Basin Heaths SPA Avoidance Strategy.

463. The Ecological Appraisal identifies that the Basingstoke Canal SNCI (around 0.10km north of the site) may be impacted by pollution, including dust pollution from demolition and construction phases, and as such recommends that a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) should be produced to detail mitigation measures to avoid any pollution, or by-product of pollution, including to the Basingstoke Canal SNCI, during demolition and construction phases. SWT comment that a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) has been submitted with the application and appears to be suitable and therefore advise, if planning permission is granted, that this should be implemented in full. SWT also comment that if works do not commence for 18 months or more, then an update to the CEMP may be required as site conditions may have changed. Recommended condition 10 refers as the CEMP requires finalising (following the appointment of demolition/construction contractors) before development can commence (should planning permission be granted).
464. The Ecological Appraisal also identifies that, due to the distance of other SNCIs from the site (a minimum of 0.37km, i.e., Woodham Common SNCI), they are unlikely to be adversely impacted by the proposed development, including during demolition and construction phases, and therefore no mitigation is required in these respects. The Ecological Appraisal identifies that the closest parcel of priority habitat is deciduous woodland and wood-pasture and parkland situated around 0.19km north of the site and that, due to distance, these habitats are unlikely to be adversely impacted by the proposed development, including during demolition and construction phases, and therefore no mitigation is required in this respect.

### Biodiversity Enhancements / Biodiversity Net Gain

465. The Ecological Appraisal identifies that in accordance with the NPPF, Policy CS7 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) and The Environment Act 2021, development proposals should seek to provide measurable net gains in biodiversity.
466. It must be noted that there is, as yet, no legal requirement for 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). The relevant provisions in The Environment Act 2021 have yet to come into force and, when they do (on an, as of writing, unconfirmed date currently in January 2024, for Major development such as this), the requirement will only apply to new planning applications submitted on or after the relevant date (on which they do come into force). Whilst paragraph 186 of the NPPF (December 2023) states (at d)) that “*opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity*”, and paragraph 180d) of the NPPF (December 2023) states that “*planning...decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by...d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity*” these provisions only require that such biodiversity gains and/ or enhancements should be positive (i.e., above zero). Similarly, whilst Policy CS7 of the Woking Core

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Strategy (2012) requires “*development proposals to contribute to the enhancement of existing biodiversity and geodiversity features and also explore opportunities to create and manage new ones where it is appropriate*” this only requires that such biodiversity gains and/ or enhancements should be positive (i.e., above zero).

467. The following biodiversity enhancement measures are proposed:

- External landscaping to consist of wildlife friendly trees/shrubs and herbaceous planting selected from the RHS plants for pollinators guide. Night scented planting can also be incorporated to enhance the site for bats;
- Bird nest boxes incorporated into the building, including a mix of boxes which are suitable for multiple species including house sparrow and swift;
- Bat boxes incorporated into the building, positioned at least 3 metres above ground level; and
- Invertebrate features such as bee bricks, bee posts and habitat panels to be located on suitable external landscaping areas.

468. The Ecological Appraisal identifies that further details of the proposed biodiversity enhancements should be provided in an Ecological Management Plan (EMP). Recommended condition 30 refers.

469. A Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment has been completed for the site which identifies that the baseline biodiversity value of the site is calculated to be 0.00 biodiversity units and that, post-development, the biodiversity value of the site is calculated to be 0.11 biodiversity units. This is due to the inclusion within the proposed development of wildlife value shrub and herbaceous planting, in addition to tree planting. Whilst a percentage change cannot be calculated owing to the zero (0.00) baseline value of the site (although the Metric equates any gain over a zero baseline to a 100% net gain) the proposed development will nonetheless deliver measurable improvements to the biodiversity value of the site, and thus will meet the requirements of Policy CS7 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2023) (most notably of paragraphs 180d and 186).

470. SWT comment that, if planning permission is granted, a condition should be added to secure all measures and designs to provide the biodiversity net gain that is reported to be feasible in the biodiversity net gain assessment (recommended condition 25 refers).

471. Overall, subject to recommended conditions, the approach to ecology and biodiversity is acceptable, with the proposed development avoiding adverse impact upon biodiversity and protected species and providing a net gain of 0.11 biodiversity units associated with area-based habitats from pre-development levels, corresponding to a total net increase of 100% in ecological value. As such, the proposed development complies with Policy CS7 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (most notably of paragraphs 180d and 186) and Circular 06/05 - Biodiversity and Geological Conservation in respect of ecology and biodiversity.

### **Energy and water consumption**

472. Paragraph 157 of the NPPF (December 2023) states that “*The planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate...It should*

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*help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure". Paragraph 159 states that "New development should be planned for in ways that...b) can help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as through its location, orientation and design. Any local requirements for the sustainability of buildings should reflect the Government's policy for national technical standards."*

473. Paragraph 162 of the NPPF (December 2023) states that *"In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should expect new development to: a) comply with any development plan policies on local requirements for decentralised energy supply unless it can be demonstrated by the applicant, having regard to the type of development involved and its design, that this is not feasible or viable; and b) take account of landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise energy consumption."*
474. Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) requires proposals for new development to, inter alia, *"Incorporate measures to minimise energy consumption, conserve water resources, use the principles of sustainable construction and provide for renewable energy generation in accordance with policy CS22 Sustainable Construction and CS23 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Generation."*
475. The Council has adopted BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) standards in Policy CS22 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) in order to deliver more sustainable non-residential development across the Borough:
- "New non-residential development of over 1,000 sq,m or more (gross) floorspace is required to comply with the BREEAM very good standards (or any future national equivalent)."*
476. To encourage renewable and low carbon energy generation in the Borough, Policy CS23 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) sets out the following:
- "Applicants should take appropriate steps to mitigate any adverse impacts of proposed development through careful consideration of location, scale, design and other measures. All reasonable steps to minimise noise impacts should be taken".*
- "Applicants should provide sound evidence of the availability of the resource which will be harnessed or the fuel to be used, including details of the adequacy of transport networks where applicable and detailed studies to assess potential impacts such as noise nuisance, flood risk, shadow flicker and interference with telecommunications".*
477. Policy CS22 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) also states that *"All new development should consider the integration of Combined Heat and Power (CHP) or other forms of low carbon district heating in the development. All new development in proximity of an existing or proposed CHP station or district heating network will be required to be connected to it unless it can be demonstrated that a better alternative for reducing carbon emissions from the development can be achieved. Details of the zones where connection will be required will be set out in an SPD and will be determined by factors such as the capacity of the existing CHP network, distance from it and physical constraints" (emphasis added). Policy CS22 also states that "The*

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*evidence base sets out the locations in the Borough which have significant potential for CHP or other forms of low carbon district heating networks. Subject to technical feasibility and financial viability, all development within these zones will be required to be designed and constructed to enable connection to the future network.”*

478. Part L of the Building Regulations in England is the key mechanism that prescribes standards for the energy performance of new and the refurbishment of existing buildings in the UK, based on metrics such as the estimated level of primary energy demand and carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions. Approved Documents (AD) set out the measures required to comply with Building Regulations. As of June 15<sup>th</sup> 2022, Part L 2021, the Government’s update to Building Regulations, came into effect and is the new set of Building Regulations with which development must comply.

479. At the Council meeting on 30th November 2023 SPD Climate Change (2023) was adopted with immediate effect, thus superseding the previous version of this SPD, which dated to 2013. With regards to carbon and sustainable energy for non-residential development the SPD sets out (on p.6) the following:

- *“Apply the energy hierarchy to any new development, adopting a ‘fabric first’ approach.*
- *Developments are encouraged to exceed minimum local planning policy and Building Regulations Part L requirements. For developments with high energy consumption – include three credits from BREEAM Ene04*
- *Sources of renewable / LZC power should be considered. Early-stage review design issues and planning requirements associated with these technologies.*
- *Consider opportunities and constraints associated with stand-alone sustainable energy generation.*
- *All new buildings should utilise low carbon heat for heating and hot water.*
- *Connect to Woking Town Centre DEN [Decentralised Energy Network] if within proximity.”*

480. The application has been submitted with an Energy Strategy report which sets out the proposed measures for reducing the operational energy use of the proposed development and utilising low carbon and renewable energy sources. The Energy Strategy has been prepared in accordance with the ‘Energy Hierarchy’ which is set out at table 4.1 of SPD Climate Change (2023):

Stage	Description	Sustainability
Reduce the need for energy (LEAN)	<p>The following passive design measures are proposed to reduce the need for energy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While there are a small number of step-ins for external amenity space, the building form is simple, reducing the floor area to building envelope ratio and therefore reducing the heating demand.</li> <li>• The glazing design maximises natural daylight within the office space to minimise the use of energy-intensive lighting systems.</li> <li>• Deep window reveals on the south-east and south-west facades provide shading from the high summer sun while allowing solar gains during winter months, reducing heating demand.</li> </ul>	Best
Use energy efficiently (LEAN)	<p>Consideration has been given to passive design, fabric, and services of the building, including the following key measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High-performance U-values for the building fabric.</li> </ul>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High levels of air tightness.</li> <li>• High efficiency lighting (including occupancy control lighting within the office areas &amp; daylight dimming to office perimeter zones) and ventilations systems including heat recovery.</li> </ul>	Worst
Supply energy efficiently (CLEAN)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While the site is within close proximity to the Woking Town Centre DEN, the feasibility has been considered and has been found to be unfeasible when considering technical and financial aspects.</li> </ul>	
Use renewable energy (GREEN)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Centralised air source heat pumps (ASHPs) are proposed which will deliver low carbon heat with minimal impact to local air quality.</li> <li>• On-site renewable energy generation will be maximised by utilising the available flat roof space to incorporate solar photovoltaic (PV) panels into the design.</li> </ul>	

481. The Energy Strategy report identifies that through the measures outlined in the Energy Strategy, it is anticipated that a total of 8% reduction in carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions could be achieved beyond Building Regulations Part L 2021, 4% of which could be achieved through fabric energy efficiency 'Lean' measures alone, compliance with Part L 2021 metrics Building Emission Rate and Primary Energy Rate is also anticipated.

482. Under the 'Supply energy efficiently (CLEAN)' stage the Energy Strategy identifies that the site is within close proximity to the Woking Town Centre Decentralised Energy Network (DEN) and therefore that investigations have taken place to assess the technical feasibility to connect the proposed development to the DEN. It sets out (under 7.1) that *"Meetings took place with ThamesWey to understand the current and future network plans. ThamesWey provided information with the carbon factors and primary energy factors for the network to enable feasibility energy modelling. Two options were provided: network average and sleeved options. These predicted figures for 2026 are shown below"* [the below is the same as Table 8 within the Energy Strategy report]:

	<b>Network average</b>	<b>Sleeved</b>
Carbon Factor (kgCO2e/kWh)	0.158	0.045
Primary Energy Factor (kWh/kWh)	0.972	0.475

483. The Energy Strategy report states that *"These figures were entered into the energy model and the outcome was that the network average figures for 2026 didn't provide a Part L Building Regulations or mandatory BREEAM ENE 01 compliant solution. The required factors to enable compliance were 0.06 kgCO2e/kWh and 0.70 kWh/kWh. These were close to the 2030 figures, but ThamesWey confirmed that the second ASHP couldn't be brought forward before 2030 unless the demand increases. This meant that the network average solution was not technically feasible."*

484. The Energy Strategy report identifies that *"The sleeved figures did enable compliance and so this option was then assessed for financial feasibility. Gardiner & Theobald made contact with ThamesWey to obtain budget costs for the network average and sleeved options (note: Thameswey had previously provided a verbal statement that they could match grid costs but had not substantiated this in writing). At the time of writing, ThamesWey have not responded to our request for budget costs and so the sleeved option is also unable to be delivered at this point. Therefore, the most suitable and compliant option is air-source heat pumps (ASHPs). No further carbon reductions are envisaged for the 'Clean' stage of the energy hierarchy."*

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485. ThamesWey Energy Ltd object to the application, stating that, in summary, *“ThamesWey does not believe the applicant can robustly conclude that a connection is unfeasible on technical or financial grounds”, that “to state that connecting is technically unfeasible is factually incorrect” and that “ThamesWey also believes that the application does not adequately demonstrate a connection is unfeasible on financial grounds. The absence of cost information is not sufficient to conclude a connection is unviable. Without further discussion with ThamesWey regarding the fixed and variable costs for heat and power, or the proposed terms of a supply agreement, the applicant cannot demonstrate a connection is unfeasible and its grounds for choosing an ASHP based energy system are unsubstantiated. In contrast, our experience and familiarity of the area clearly demonstrates a connection will be cost-effective.”*

486. In response to the objection of ThamesWey Energy Ltd the applicant has submitted a memo (dated 21 December 2023) titled District Energy Network Connection (including revised Energy Modelling). This memo sets out that, since the planning application was submitted, the applicant and their design team has met with ThamesWey Energy Ltd again (on 9th November 2023) and that, following this meeting, the applicant and their design team has several ongoing concerns as outlined below and conversations with ThamesWey continue to progress to provide the applicant with information to enable full and informed understanding of the DEN:

- *“Proposed extensions to their [ThamesWey’s] network and timings, including sleeved option [i.e., decarbonisation of the DEN] and delivering associated Carbon and Primary Energy Factors.*
- *Funding streams to allow further expansion and relevant timings.*
- *Resilience of system.*
- *Response times in the event of an outage.*
- *Connection costs including civils to the site.*
- *Ongoing supply rates.*
- *Proposed Terms and Conditions.”*

487. The memo states that given the uncertainty surrounding the sleeved [DEN] option the energy modelling has been updated to reflect the following carbon and primary energy factors for the current and projected non-sleeved options (figures provided by ThamesWey to the applicant):

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2026</b>
Carbon Factor (kgCO <sub>2</sub> e/kWh)	0.264	0.158
Primary Energy Factor (kWh/kWh)	1.427	0.972

488. The updated modelling results are shown below and demonstrate that both DEN connection options (i.e., sleeved and non-sleeved) will result in lower carbon savings than the development’s proposed on-site air source heat pump (ASHP) solution, as per the submitted Energy Strategy (the BER and TER are the Building CO<sub>2</sub> Emission Rate and Target CO<sub>2</sub> Emission Rate, while the BPER and TPER represent the Building Primary Energy Rate and Target Primary Energy Rate respectively) (on following page):

<b>Option Name</b>	<b>Centralised ASHP</b>	<b>DEN 2023 Figures</b>	<b>DEN 2026 Figures</b>
BER/TER % Reduction	8.36%	-10.24%	-13.97%
BPER/TPER % Reduction	8.37%	-6.63%	-9.10%

489. As such, the memo concludes that *“In accordance with Policy CS22, the development’s proposed on-site ASHP energy solution will provide a better alternative for reducing carbon emissions from the development than the non-sleeved ThamesWey DEN connection”* and that *“The development will continue to ensure the ability to connect to the DHN in the future with space plant space allocated...The applicant will continue to engage with ThamesWey, however at this point in time the on-site ASHP Energy Strategy provides the greatest reduction in Carbon Emissions and considered the most appropriate to be progressed at this stage.”*
490. In respect of low carbon heat and decentralised energy networks SPD Climate Change (2023) states (at paragraph 4.5.2) that *“There is a well-established low carbon DEN in Woking Town Centre, with high feasibility for new and redeveloped buildings to connect. ThamesWey Ltd (energy services company for Woking) provide an interactive map of the Woking Energy Network. New developments should look to secure an efficient supply of heat, cooling, and power, including through connection to the existing Town Centre DEN”* and that (at paragraph 4.5.3) that *“All new development within proximity (typically 500m or less) including refurbishments and conversions where planning permission is required, will be required to connect to the existing Town Centre DEN”*.
491. Whilst paragraph 4.5.3 of the SPD uses the words *“will be required to connect”* the SPD does not form part of the Development Plan itself, but rather informs the application of relevant Development Plan policies, in this case the application of Policy CS22 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012). It is of significant importance to note that Policy CS22 does not stipulate that all new development must connect to the Woking Town Centre DEN, rather it states that *“...All new development in proximity of an existing or proposed CHP station or district heating network will be required to be connected to it unless it can be demonstrated that a better alternative for reducing carbon emissions from the development can be achieved”* (emphasis added).
492. On the basis of the Energy Strategy report, and the subsequent memo (dated 21 December 2023) titled District Energy Network Connection (including revised Energy Modelling), it is considered that the applicant has demonstrated that a better alternative for reducing carbon emissions from the proposed development can be achieved in lieu of connecting to the Woking Town Centre Decentralised Energy Network (DEN), particularly given present uncertainty regarding timescales for decarbonisation of the DEN, and therefore it is considered that this element of Policy CS22 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), and SPD Climate Change (2023), have been sufficiently addressed.
493. Under the ‘Use Renewable Energy (Green)’ stage the Energy Strategy considers the following options for delivering low and zero carbon (LZC) technologies on the site:
- Heat Pumps
  - Biomass
  - Photovoltaics (PV)
  - Solar Water Heating
  - Wind Turbines
494. Three types of heat pumps have been considered, water-source heat pumps (WSHP), ground-source heat pumps (GSHP), and air-source heat pumps (ASHP), with justification detailed below:
- WSHP – although the proposed development is near the Basingstoke Canal, one of the main challenges of the WSHP is securing the permissions

from the Environment Agency and local bodies, such as the Basingstoke Canal Authority. Therefore, the WSHP option is not currently preferred. Officers also note that Victoria Way poses a not insignificant obstacle between the site and the Basingstoke Canal, and that the relevant section of the Basingstoke Canal is designated a Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) because of its importance for aquatic plants and invertebrates and because it supports nationally scarce and regionally rare species. As such, Officers do not consider that a WSHP would be appropriate in any event.

- GSHP – although potentially offering greater efficiency, capital costs are significant, and more work is required to install the GSHPs. As such, GSHPs are not proposed.
- ASHP – the benefit of ASHPs are lower capital costs and greater flexibility with installation. On this basis, ASHPs are considered appropriate for the proposed development.

495. Biomass heat relies on the combustion of organic material resulting in high levels of emissions containing particulate matter (PM), nitrogen oxides (NOx), carbon monoxide (CO), sulphur dioxide (SO2), and other hazardous air pollutants (HAPs). As such, biomass has been discounted in this instance. Photovoltaic (PV) panels are considered feasible for the proposed development and have been incorporated into the energy strategy. Solar thermal would not be able to meet the full hot water and heating demand of the proposed development and therefore another system such as a gas boiler would be required. Additionally, the preferred utilisation for the available roof space is solar PV as the ASHPs would be capable of meeting the heating and hot water demand. On this basis, solar thermal panels are not proposed. Based on the impact of wind energy generation to residents in the surrounding area and the relatively low and disrupted wind speeds typically found in built-up areas, wind power has been discounted in this instance.

496. Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP) technology is currently proposed to provide space heating and domestic hot water for the proposed development, the proposal is to utilise renewable heat with electric ASHPs centrally feeding a building-wide low temperature hot water loop. The proposed development will incorporate (around 35 sq.m of) roof mounted photovoltaics (PVs), the PVs would have an estimated annual generation of 5,899 kWh.

497. Overall, the Energy Strategy report shows an estimated reduction in carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions of 2.8 tCO2/year over the ‘Lean’ stage, equating to an additional 4% ‘Green’ saving and a total CO2 emissions reduction of 5.6 tCO2/year, equating to 8% CO2 emissions saving beyond Part L 2021, thus demonstrating compliance with the Part L 2021 Building Emission metric. The energy modelling also demonstrates compliance with the Part L 2021 Primary Energy metric as shown in the following table:

	<b>Building Primary Energy Rate [kWh/m2/year]</b>	<b>Target Primary Energy Rate [kWh/m2/year]</b>	<b>% Improvement</b>
Proposed Development	38.75	42.29	8%

498. A Sustainability Statement has also been submitted with the application which identifies that a BREEAM UK New Construction v6.1 Pre-assessment strategy has been undertaken for the proposed development (which is included at Appendix C of



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the Sustainability Statement). The BREEAM Pre-assessment report identifies that the proposed development includes the construction of a new mixed-use development including multiple speculative retail areas and corresponding office spaces, including green terraces, and that the proposed development is to be assessed under the BREEAM UK New Construction v6.1 Scheme as a Shell & Core and Shell only assessment. This means the Developer will be constructing the building envelope as well as designing and specifying core building services for the Office spaces from first floor upwards, as well as core and reception areas on the ground floor. Capped building services will be provided for the BREEAM Shell Only areas (Retail and Co-working office space on the ground floor) in order for future tenant(s) to connect into and fit-out their space(s) accordingly.

499. The BREEAM Pre-assessment report identifies that, in line with the aspirations of the Applicant, the following Pre-assessment scores have been concluded based on the available information to date:

- BREEAM New Construction v6.1 CAT A Office (Shell & Core) - Excellent (73.70%).
- BREEAM New Construction v6.1 Retail and / or Office (shell only) - Very Good (69.67%).

500. For reference the BREEAM v6.1 Ratings are:

BREEAM Rating	% Pass Score
Pass	>30%
Good	>45%
Very Good	>55%
Excellent	>70%
Outstanding	>85%

501. The BREEAM Pre-assessment report includes Scoresheets for both assessment types as well as the corresponding Pre-assessments.

502. The Sustainability Statement also identifies (at 2.5) that *“In line with the BREEAM strategy for the scheme. the development is targeting to achieve a 40 per cent improvement over baseline building water consumption levels. In order to achieve this target, the team will have to reduce the consumption of potable water for sanitary use in the new building through use of water efficient components. The value in this will improve water efficiency as well as reduce water consumption in use, reduce potable water use helping to conserve water, and finally reduce GHG emissions, pollution impacts and associated costs on a national level.”* This is reflected within the BREEAM Pre-assessment report.

503. Whilst the stated BREEAM targets of 73.70% (Excellent) for the CAT A Office (Shell & Core) and of 69.67% (Very Good) for the Retail and / or Office (shell only) are provisional at this design stage, the evidence suggests that there is absolutely no reason that at least a (lower) BREEAM score/rating of 55% for both of these spaces should not be achieved once construction is completed (if planning permission is granted) which would result in a BREEAM ‘Very Good’ score/rating, in line with the requirement of Policy CS22 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012). Moreover, the aspiration of the Applicant to achieve BREEAM ‘Excellent’ for the CAT A Office (Shell & Core) is very much welcomed, this being beyond the requirements of Policy CS22. It must also be noted that, although provisionally targeted at 69.67% (‘Very Good’) for the Retail and / or Office (shell only) spaces this is only 00.33% short of also achieving BREEAM ‘Excellent’ (>70%) for these spaces, which again is very much

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welcomed, whether or not the 'Excellent' threshold is reached for these spaces. Recommended conditions 39, 40 and 41 refer.

504. Overall, the submitted Energy Strategy report and Sustainability Statement (with appended BREEAM Pre-assessment report) are considered to demonstrate compliance with the relevant requirements of Policies CS22 and CS23 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), SPD Climate Change (2023) and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2023). Recommended conditions 39, 40 and 41 can secure the requisite provisions.

### **Fire safety**

505. The application has been submitted with a Planning Fire Statement. However, although the proposed development would exceed 18 metres in height, and clearly would contain 7 or more storeys, because it would be wholly commercial in use (i.e., it would provide only for uses falling within Use Class E) and would not contain any residential dwellings and/or residential occupancies, it does not fall within the definition of a 'relevant building' and therefore a Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Gateway 1 planning document is not required for the proposed development. Therefore, there is no statutory requirement for the Planning Fire Statement to be submitted with the application and the proposed development does not meet the criteria for consultation (as part of the planning application process) with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). As such, the Planning Fire Statement has been submitted only to supplement the wider planning application submission and to provide an overview of the fire safety principles. Fire safety matters are not relevant to the determination of this planning application (although they would be for a building of the height proposed which was to contain residential dwellings and/or occupancies).
506. Surrey Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) have been consulted on the application (albeit for planning application purposes such consultations with SFRS are considered to be informal) and comment that the application (including any schedule) has been examined by a Fire Safety Inspecting Officer and it appears that it will meet with the access requirements of Approved Document B Section B5 of the Building Regulations when the initial notice is submitted.

### **Aviation**

507. Building developments have the potential to affect aviation operations in numerous ways. The most common impacts relate to building developments as physical obstructions both to aircraft and wireless signals used for radar and radio systems.
508. The application has been submitted with an Aviation Risk Assessment report, the initial assessment undertaken within that report identifies two key aviation related risks requiring further detailed assessment, these are:
- The SSR (Secondary Surveillance Radar) at London Heathrow Airport; and
  - The Fair Oaks Airport Obstacle Limitation Surface (OLS).
509. The Aviation Risk Assessment report subsequently sets out that although the proposed development may have a small impact upon the SSR at London Heathrow Airport that this small impact could be operationally accommodated and that there are relevant factors that reduce the potential impact upon the SSR, including the distance (17.57km, or around 10.9 miles) between the SSR and the site and that the effects of

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the proposed development on the SSR would be comparable to those of other existing adjacent buildings which are within line of sight of the SSR. London Heathrow Airport have been consulted on the application albeit have provided no comments. However, National Air Traffic Services (NATS) are understood to safeguard London Heathrow Airport's radar. NATS have been consulted on the application and have confirmed that they have no safeguarding objection to the proposed development. As such, it can reasonably be concluded that there are no concerns in respect of potential impacts on the SSR at London Heathrow Airport.

510. The Aviation Risk Assessment report also subsequently sets out that the proposed development lies beneath the Conical Surface for Fairoaks Airport, being vertically clear of the Conical Surface by a minimum margin of 10.76 metres, and therefore that no physical safeguarding concerns are predicted with respect to the Obstacle Limitation Surfaces (OLS) from the proposed new building itself. Moreover, Fairoaks Airport have been consulted on the application and have confirmed that they have assessed the application against safeguarding criteria and have no safeguarding objections to the proposed development. The Aviation Risk Assessment report identifies that, during construction, cranes may breach the Fairoaks Airport OLS and therefore that a crane operation scheme and steady red medium intensity aviation lighting for cranes may need to be agreed with Fairoaks Airport (recommended informative 20 refers).
511. Farnborough Airport has confirmed that they have no objection to the proposed development (albeit request early engagement on the use of cranes, recommended informative 18 refers). Overall, for the preceding reasoning, it is concluded there are no adverse aviation implications which would arise from the proposed development.

### **LOCAL FINANCE CONSIDERATIONS**

512. Whilst the proposed flexible Class E (Commercial, Business and Service) floorspace at ground and first floor levels would be Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) chargeable, because it would be capable of being used for retail - i.e., former Class A1 - purposes, which is CIL chargeable as per the Council's CIL Charging Schedule (2014), the CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended) enable the existing floorspace to be demolished to be taken into account (providing the building, or part of the building, has been occupied for its lawful use for 6 continuous months of the previous 36 months, excluding temporary permissions). Because the existing Class E floorspace on the site is greater than the flexible Class E floorspace which would be provided (at ground and first floor levels) within the proposed development the CIL liability for the proposed flexible Class E floorspace would be Nil.
513. Recommended condition 07 restricts use of the proposed floorspace at levels 2 and above to purposes only falling within Class E(g)(i) (i.e., an office to carry out any operational or administrative functions, this being formerly Class B1(a) purposes), which are not CIL liable as per the Council's CIL Charging Schedule (2014). As such, the proposed office floorspace would not be CIL liable. Therefore, overall the proposed development would have a Nil CIL liability.

### **CONCLUSION AND PLANNING BALANCE**

514. Overall, the proposed development would result in a high quality Commercial, Business and Service development which is located centrally within Woking Town Centre (the principal centre of the Borough), this being the preferred location for town centre uses, which include the uses proposed, such as retail development and

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offices. Woking Town Centre is the most sustainable centre of the Borough and one which the Development Plan identifies to undergo significant change.

515. The proposed development would provide for active ground (and first) floor uses and closely aligns with national and local planning policy which seek to make the best use of urban land in the most sustainable locations such as this, thus promoting travel by active means and by public transport (and linked-trips), helping to reduce the use of private cars and to create sustainable communities. The proposed development would deliver a high quality, well designed building, the result of an iterative design-led process, which has had particular regard to the relevant built heritage considerations and to the existing and emerging townscape of Woking Town Centre. The proposed development would contribute significantly to the prosperity and functionality of Woking Town Centre, adding to its attractiveness and competitiveness, with the resulting additional employment generation (and the retention of employment which might relocate to other towns in the absence of the proposed development) in particular adding to the vitality, and social, community and economic vibrancy, of this principal centre of the Borough and important centre in the wider region.
516. The (Class E) uses proposed are wholly appropriate in this Woking Town Centre location with modern Grade A office accommodation making a significant contribution to the office market within Woking Town Centre (with this also having benefits for other areas of the Borough). The proposed development is entirely consistent with the thrust of the Development Plan, and the NPPF, which promotes a strong economy within sustainable locations.
517. It has been identified that the resulting overbearing effect to facing first and second floor level windows within Central Buildings flats would reach the threshold of 'significant' harmful impact, so as to conflict with Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012). Furthermore, whilst regard has been afforded to the submissions of the applicant, Officers nonetheless consider the, very significant, loss of daylight which would arise to the x9 flats at Central Buildings, combined with the very poor levels of daylight which would be retained to relevant rooms within those flats as a consequence of the proposed development, would also constitute a significant harmful impact contrary to Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012).
518. Whilst, again, regard has been afforded to the submissions of the applicant Officers nonetheless consider that the, in some cases, very significant, loss of daylight which would arise to extant flats within the office-to-residential conversion of Hollywood House (ref: PLAN/2021/0866), combined with the, in some instances, low levels of daylight which would be retained to some of those flats as a consequence of the proposed development, would constitute a significant harmful impact contrary to Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012).
519. The PPG states that "*Public benefits may follow from many developments and could be anything that delivers economic, social or environmental objectives as described in the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 8). 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 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, for example, works to a listed private dwelling which secure its future as a designated heritage asset could be a public benefit.*" (Paragraph: 020 Reference ID: 18a-020-20190723, Revision date: 23 07 2019). (Officer Note: The above revision

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*date remains correct at the time of writing, notwithstanding the 20 December 2023 revised version of the NPPF)*

520. In this instance the public benefits that would flow from the proposed development would be considerable, should be taken into account in the planning balance and can be summarised as follows:

### Economic

- Providing a new flexible commercial development, including a significant quantum of Grade A office floorspace, of high quality design that contributes to the economy and reinforces Woking's status as a principal economic hub in the region;
- Creating 144 estimated annual average on-site full time equivalent (FTE) jobs during the construction phase;
- Creating 1,022 estimated permanent on-site FTE jobs, a significant increase on the circa 100 estimated on-site FTE jobs as existing;
- Adding £66 million per annum net additional Gross Value Added upon (targeted) completion in 2026 to the economy (GVA associated with the number of jobs);
- Generating £940k estimated in annual local spend on work lunches by the new on-site workforce with a significant boost to the day and night time economy through linked trips to local shops, bars, restaurants, theatre and cinema.

### Social

- Creating a vibrant, mixed use scheme that is an inviting, attractive and high quality addition to Woking Town Centre;
- Reinforcing the site as a gateway to Woking Town Centre (from the north) with distinctive and exemplary architectural solutions that balances the contemporary with the historic;
- Creating the space for improved public realm to diversify the offering in Woking Town Centre as an extension to Jubilee Square;
- Reinstating the street frontage to Chobham Road and Christchurch Way with active frontages and reinstating the importance of Church Path;
- Encouraging safe spaces and places with active and passive surveillance on all sides of the site;
- Encouraging sustainable travel with an on-site car free development and high quality cycle facilities;
- Providing internal and external amenity areas for office workers to meet, socialise and relax; and
- Promoting health and wellbeing for occupants and users.

### Environmental

- Making best use of urban land within the principal centre of the Borough;
- Delivering an energy and water efficient building that targets an 'Excellent' BREEAM rating (this being above and beyond the relevant Development Plan requirement of BREEAM 'Very Good');
- Providing a carbon efficient building through the adoption of Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHPs) and Photovoltaic Panels (PV);

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- Encouraging sustainable and active travel to and from the site (and therefore to and from Woking Town Centre) with x225 cycle parking spaces (in excess of the minimum standard required by SPD Parking Standards (2018)), with the support of high-quality end of journey facilities, including showers and changing facilities;
- Due to the proposed Sustainable Urban Drainage (SuDS) scheme, there will be a significant reduction in the existing surface water discharge rates from the site, the estimated existing maximum (surface water) discharge rate of 32.4 litres per second (l/s) being very significantly reduced to 1.7 l/s; and
- The biodiversity value of the site is calculated to be increased to 0.11 biodiversity units (albeit from an existing calculated baseline of 0.00 biodiversity units) due to the inclusion within the proposed development of wildlife value shrub and herbaceous planting, in addition to new tree planting. As such, and notwithstanding the existing baseline figure, the proposed development will nonetheless deliver measurable improvements to the biodiversity value of the site.

521. This is a case (as with most large-scale Major development) where there are competing national and local planning policy objectives that pull in different directions. Although there are some reservations about; (i) the overbearing effect of the proposed development on facing first and second floor level windows serving x9 flats at Central Buildings, Chobham Road, (ii) the, very significant, loss of daylight which would arise to the x9 flats at Central Buildings, Chobham Road, combined with the very poor levels of daylight which would be retained to relevant rooms within those flats, and (iii) the, in some cases, very significant, loss of daylight which would arise to extant flats within the office-to-residential conversion of Hollywood House, Church Street East (ref: PLAN/2021/0866), combined with the, in some instances, low levels of daylight which would be retained to some of those flats, these harms and reservations are, in the overall context of the proposed development, relatively limited in extent and must be weighed against the very substantial public benefits which would flow from the proposed development, particularly having regard to the fact that the Development Plan identifies that Woking Town Centre is to undergo significant change. As such, it is concluded that the substantial benefits would outweigh the harms which have been identified. The proposed development would therefore accord with the Development Plan when taken as a whole and it is therefore recommended that planning permission should be granted (subject to the recommendation set out within this report).

### **SECTION 106 LEGAL AGREEMENT REQUIREMENTS**

- Highway / public realm works - requirement to enter into a Section 278 agreement(s) (under the Highways Act 1980) with the County Highway Authority (Surrey County Council) to secure the carrying out of highway / public realm works, including (but not limited to) the implementation of highways alterations which are required to implement the proposed development, including:
  - public realm/landscaping;
  - loading bay provision on Chobham Road; and
  - changes to on-street parking, including the relocation of blue badge parking bays and the re-provision of x2 pay and display parking spaces elsewhere within Woking Town Centre.
- Travel Plan implementation and ongoing monitoring and management.

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### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Site & Press Notices  
Letters of representation  
Consultation responses

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Planning Committee resolves to **Grant** planning permission subject to:

1. The prior completion of a Section 106 Legal Agreement to secure the requirements as set out at the conclusion of this report; and
2. Planning conditions set out at the end of this report.

The Planning Committee is also requested to authorise the Development Manager (or their authorised deputies) to take all necessary action(s) in connection with points 1-2 above.

### **Conditions**

#### Time limit

01. 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 the provision of Section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

#### Approved plans

02. The development hereby permitted must be carried out only in accordance with the approved plans listed in this notice, unless where required or allowed by other conditions attached to this planning permission, or by details subsequently approved by the Local Planning Authority pursuant to other conditions (and/or, in respect of the Landscape Plans only, where otherwise required by works subject to a Section 278 Agreement under the Highways Act 1980):

<b>Drawing No. / Revision.</b>	<b>Drawing Title.</b>	<b>Date.</b>
20040 00000 Rev. P1	Existing Site Plan	Sept 2023
20040 00100 Rev. P1	Existing Site Plan	Sept 2023
20040 02000 Rev. P1	Existing Demolition Plan	Sept 2023
<b><i>Proposed Plans</i></b>		
20040 03000 Rev. P1	Proposed Site Plan	Sept 2023
20040 03100 Rev. P1	Proposed Ground Floor Plan	Sept 2023
20040 03101 Rev. P1	Proposed Level 01 Plan	Sept 2023
20040 03102 Rev. P1	Proposed Level 02 Plan	Sept 2023
20040 03103 Rev. P1	Proposed Level 03 to Level 08 Plan (Typical)	Sept 2023
20040 03109 Rev. P1	Proposed Level 09 Plan	Sept 2023
20040 03110 Rev. P1	Proposed Level 10 Plan	Sept 2023
20040 03111 Rev. P1	Proposed Level 11 Plan	Sept 2023

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<b>Proposed Sections</b>		
20040 03301 Rev. P1	Proposed Section 1	Sept 2023
20040 03302 Rev. P1	Proposed Section 2	Sept 2023
20040 03303 Rev. P1	Proposed Section 3	Sept 2023
20040 03304 Rev. P1	Proposed Section 4	Sept 2023
<b>Proposed Elevations</b>		
20040 03201 Rev. P1	Proposed South Elevation	Sept 2023
20040 03202 Rev. P1	Proposed East Elevation	Sept 2023
20040 03203 Rev. P1	Proposed North Elevation	Sept 2023
20040 03204 Rev. P1	Proposed West Elevation	Sept 2023
<b>Proposed Detailed Studies</b>		
20040 21500 Rev. P1	Facade Types	Sept 2023
20040 21501 Rev. P1	GA Detail Elevations Brick Facade	Sept 2023
20040 21502 Rev. P1	GA Detail Elevations Brick Facade	Sept 2023
20040 21503 Rev. P1	GA Detail Elevations Aluminium Facade	Sept 2023
20040 21504 Rev. P1	GA Detail Elevations Aluminium Facade	Sept 2023
20040 21700 Rev. P1	Facade Axonometrics	Sept 2023
<b>Landscape Plans</b>		
2335-EXA-00-00-M2-L-00100 Rev. P10	General Arrangement - Ground Floor	13.12.2023
2335-EXA-00-00-M2-L-00101 Rev. P05	General Arrangement - Level 2 Terrace	22.09.2023
2335-EXA-00-00-M2-L-00102 Rev. P06	General Arrangement - Level 9 Terrace	22.09.2023
2335-EXA-00-00-MS-L- 00103 Rev. P06	General Arrangement - Level 10 Terrace	22.09.2023
2335-EXA-00-00-M2-L-00111 Rev. P04	Tree Dimension Plan	13.12.2023
2335-EXA-00-00-M2-L-00200 Rev. P06	Planting Plan	13.12.2023

Reason: To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the planning permission and to ensure that the development that is carried out is that which has been assessed.

Levels

03. The development hereby permitted must be carried out only in accordance with the proposed finished floor levels and proposed finished ground levels as shown and/or annotated on the approved plans listed within condition 02 of this notice.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity of the site and surrounding area in accordance with Policies CS2, CS21 and CS24 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), SPD Design (2015) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).



External materials / appearance

04. ++ An external facing material must not be installed and/or applied to the development hereby permitted until samples and full particulars of that external facing material have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Details submitted pursuant to this condition must include but not be restricted to:
- a) Mock-up panels of no less than 2 metres by 2 metres of each external cladding material. Details and mock-up panels of external cladding must include both red and dark/black brick cladding types and all other cladding materials (i.e., all colours and/or finishes of all types of PPC metal panel cladding and opaque panel cladding) to be used, details of bond, mortar and pointing for brick cladding and details of joints, panel sizes and fixing method for other types of cladding. If off-site manufactured cladding system(s) are to be used, the full details of the system(s) must be provided, and the sample panel(s) must include at least one junction between pre-assembled panels of each cladding type;
  - b) Details and samples of all glazing types, including with projecting mullions where relevant (and including details of finish and RAL colour, where applicable);
  - c) Details and samples of all colours and/or finishes of PPC metal mesh panels and of glass balustrades;
  - d) Details and samples of any external rainwater goods, flues, grilles, louvres and vents; and
  - e) Details of external plant, plant enclosures (including RAL colour and finish) and safety balustrades; and
  - f) 1:50 scale drawings of rooftop layout, showing plant, machinery and building services equipment required for the functioning of the building.

The details must accord with the type and quality of materials indicated within the application. The development must thereafter be carried out and permanently maintained in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenity of the site and surrounding area in accordance with Policies CS2, CS21 and CS24 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), SPD Design (2015) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

05. The approved glazing to the development hereby permitted must be formed in clear glass and must not be painted, covered or otherwise obscured or obstructed (including with any form of film or similar) without prior written approval of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenity of the site and surrounding area, including in maintaining active frontages at ground floor level within Woking Town Centre, in accordance with Policies CS2, CS21 and CS24 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), SPD Design (2015) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Uses

06. Before the floorspace at level 01 and above (i.e., level 02, level 03 etc.) of the development hereby permitted is first occupied or brought into use all of the unit(s) and/or floorspace labelled as 'Flexible Class E' (and shown coloured in green) at

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ground floor level on the approved plans listed within condition 02 of this notice must first all be constructed at least to 'shell and core' level on site in accordance with the approved plans.

Notwithstanding the provisions of The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) or Article 3, Schedule 2 of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) (and/or any order(s) revoking and/or re-enacting those Order(s) with or without modification(s)) the use of the unit(s) and/or floorspace labelled as 'Flexible Class E' (and shown coloured in green) at both ground floor level and level 01 on the approved plans listed within condition 02 of this notice must be restricted solely to uses falling within Use Class E (Commercial, Business & Service) of The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) and for no other purpose(s) without the prior written permission of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that active ground floor uses are provided in this Woking Town Centre location in accordance with Policy CS2 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), SPD Design (2015) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

07. Notwithstanding the provisions of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) (and/or any Order(s) revoking and/or re-enacting or amending that Order with or without modification(s)), the use of the floorspace labelled 'Office' (and shown coloured in blue) at levels 02 to 10 inclusive on the approved plans listed within condition 02 of this notice must only be for purposes falling within Class E (g) (i) (Office) of Schedule 2 to The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) and for no other purpose(s) (including any other purpose(s) within Class E of Schedule 2 to The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended)) or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking and/or re-enacting that Order with or without modification(s) and for no other purpose(s) whatsoever without express planning permission from the Local Planning Authority first being obtained.

The area labelled as 'Lounge' at level 10 (and shown coloured in purple) of the development hereby permitted must only be used for purposes ancillary to the use of the Class E (g) (i) (Office) floorspace within the development hereby permitted and must not be used for the purposes of any standalone function and/or events space(s).

The roof terrace areas labelled as 'Terrace' (and shown coloured in green) at level 02, level 09 and level 10 (inclusive) of the development hereby permitted must only be used for purposes ancillary to the use of the Class E (g) (i) (Office) floorspace within the development hereby permitted and must not be used for the purposes of any standalone function and/or events space(s).

Reason: To protect the function of Woking Town Centre and the amenity of the surrounding area in respect of noise and disturbance, vehicle movements and highway impacts and parking provision in accordance with Policies CS2, CS18 and CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), Policy DM7 of the Development Management Policies DPD (2016), SPDs Design (2015) and Parking Standards (2018) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

### Aerials/ pipework etc

08. Notwithstanding The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) (and/or any equivalent Order(s) revoking and/or

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re-enacting and/or modifying that Order with or without modification(s)), no cables, wires, aerials, pipework, meter boxes or flues must be fixed to any elevation of the building hereby permitted without the prior written consent of the Local Planning Authority. Any such works must be undertaken only in accordance with the approved details and thereafter permanently maintained for the lifetime of the building.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenity of the site and surrounding area in accordance with Policies CS2, CS21 and CS24 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), SPD Design (2015) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

### Landscape

09. ++ The overall concept, layout, extent and type of hard and soft landscaping for the development hereby permitted (including to all of the roof terraces) must generally accord with the approved plans listed within condition 02 of this notice (and must have regard to Section 278 works under the Highways Act 1980). Prior to the commencement of any superstructure works (for the avoidance of any doubt this allows for demolition and works below ground level to first take place) details of the hard and soft landscaping scheme must first be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The submitted details must include:
- a) full details of all soft planting, trees, planters, shrub and herbaceous areas including details of species, sizes, numbers/densities and sections of landscaped areas;
  - b) a Tree Planting Statement providing full details of tree location, species and sizes and specifications and construction methods for all purpose-built tree pits and/or cellular tree pits and associated above ground features, including specifications for tree protection and a stated volume of suitable growing medium to facilitate and promote the healthy development of the proposed trees;
  - c) specifications for operations associated with plant establishment and maintenance that are compliant with best practice;
  - d) enclosures including type, dimensions and treatments of any walls, screen walls, and railings;
  - e) hard landscaping, including samples and specifications of all ground and roof terrace surface materials, kerbs, edges, steps and any synthetic surfaces;
  - f) any other landscaping features forming part of the scheme, including any associated outdoor structures;
  - g) a landscape management plan for the public and private areas to include a maintenance schedule for all landscaped areas;
  - h) any signage and information boards; and
  - i) the wind mitigation measures referred to in the submitted Wind Microclimate report, prepared by FD Global Limited (FDG), dated 18 September 2023.

All landscaping must be completed/planted in accordance with the approved details prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted or in accordance with a programme otherwise first agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. All soft landscaping must have a written five year maintenance programme following planting. Any new tree(s) that die(s), is/are removed or become(s) severely damaged or diseased must be replaced and any new planting which dies, is removed, becomes severely damaged or diseased within five years of planting must be replaced. Unless further specific permission has been given by the Local Planning Authority, replacement planting must be in accordance with the approved details and take place in the next planting season.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity of the site and surrounding area in accordance with Policies CS2, CS21 and CS24 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), Policy DM2 of the Development Management Policies DPD (2016), SPD Design (2015) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP)

10. ++ Development must not take place, including any works of demolition and/or site clearance, until an updated detailed Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) has first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The updated detailed CEMP must accord with and give effect to the principles for such a plan proposed by the Framework Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), dated September 2023, prepared by Greengage, which was submitted with the planning application. The detailed CEMP must include the following matters:
- a. Contractors' access arrangements for vehicles, plant and personnel including the location of construction traffic routes to, from and within the site, details of their signing, monitoring and enforcement measures, along with location of parking for contractors and construction workers;
  - b. Delivery and collection times for demolition and construction phases;
  - c. Hours of working on the site for demolition and construction phases;
  - d. Dust management - measures to control the emission of dust/dirt during demolition and construction phases (including details of measures to prevent the deposition of mud and debris on the public highway, including wheel washing facilities and the sheeting of vehicles transporting loose aggregates or similar materials on or off site) through provision and implementation of a Dust Management Plan (DMP) which accords with the principles set out in Appendix C of the Air Quality Assessment, prepared by Kairus Ltd (Project Reference: AQ052086AQA, Revision: V5 FINAL, Issue Date: 22nd September 2023), which was submitted with the planning application;
  - e. Measures to control noise and vibration during demolition and construction phases and the use of best practical means to minimise noise and vibration disturbance from works;
  - f. Measures to prevent ground and water pollution from contaminants on site/a scheme to treat and remove suspended solids from surface water run-off during demolition and construction phases, including the use of settling tanks, oil interceptors and bunds;
  - g. Soil management measures;
  - h. Details of any temporary lighting to be used for demolition/construction purposes including confirmation from the project Ecologist that the temporary lighting would not be harmful to the ecology of the site and measures for monitoring of such lighting;
  - i. Site fencing/hoarding and security measures;
  - j. The prohibition of burning of materials and refuse on site;
  - k. Management of materials and waste;
  - l. External safety and information signage and notices;
  - m. Liaison, consultation and publicity arrangements including dedicated points of contact and contact details for site management;
  - n. Complaints procedures, including complaints response procedures;
  - o. Access and protection arrangements around the site for pedestrians, cyclists and other road users including any temporary routes, where relevant;

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- p. Procedures for interference with public highways, permanent and temporary realignment, diversions and road closures, where relevant;
- q. Construction management plan for surface water run-off during the demolition and construction period;
- r. a Demolition and Construction Waste Management Plan that identifies the main waste materials expected to be generated by the development during demolition and construction phases, together with measures for dealing with such materials so as to minimise waste and maximise re-use and recycling; and
- s. arrangements for liaising with other contractors in the vicinity of the site to maximise the potential for consolidated construction traffic movements and to minimise traffic impacts.

Development must be carried out only in accordance with the approved updated detailed Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).

Reason: To ensure the proposed development does not unduly prejudice the amenities of occupiers of adjoining properties during demolition and construction phases and in the interests of highway and pedestrian safety and to protect the environmental interests and the amenity of the area in accordance with Policies CS2, CS7, CS9 and CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This condition is required to be addressed prior to commencement (including prior to demolition and site clearance) in order that the ability to discharge its requirement is not prejudiced by the carrying out of building works or other operations on the site.

### Highways / Transport

11. ++ No part of the development hereby permitted must be first occupied unless and until the proposed:
- a) delivery/loading bay, and disabled parking bay alterations to the existing parking restrictions on Chobham Road and the associated Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs); and
  - b) landscape features on the adjacent sections of Christchurch Way, Church Street East and Chobham Road; and
  - c) Two (2) replacement Pay and Display on-street parking spaces within Woking Town Centre

have first been designed and implemented at the applicant's expense in accordance with a scheme which has first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority (in consultation with the County Highway Authority, Surrey County Council).

Thereafter the delivery/loading bay, and disabled parking alterations to the existing parking restrictions on Chobham Road and the associated Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs), landscape features on the adjacent sections of Christchurch Way, Church Street East and Chobham Road, and two (2) replacement Pay and Display on-street parking spaces within Woking Town Centre must be permanently maintained for the lifetime of the development hereby permitted (unless otherwise first agreed by the County Highway Authority through a subsequent Section 278 agreement under the Highways Act 1980).

Reason: In order that the development should not prejudice highway safety nor cause inconvenience to other highway users in accordance with Policy CS18 of the Woking

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Core Strategy (2012), Policy DM16 of the Development Management Policies DPD (2016) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

12. ++ The development hereby permitted must not be first occupied unless and until the cycle parking has been constructed and provided in accordance with a scheme to first be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme must be for a minimum of two hundred and twenty five (225) cycle parking spaces within the cycle store internally within the development and for a further minimum of six (6) cycle parking spaces within the external landscaping areas of the development. The submitted scheme must include:

- details on how the cycle spaces and access to the cycle store will be managed and enforced;
- details of the design and materials of all types of cycle stands/storage (including details of the two-tier cycle parking stands which are to be provided);
- details of any CCTV coverage and of all internal and external lighting for the cycle storage area, including any CCTV coverage and lighting to the entrance/exit doors to and from the cycle store/cycle repair area from Chobham Road;
- details of the six (6) cycle parking spaces which are to be provided within the external landscaping areas, including location(s) and cycle stand type(s);
- details of access control measures, of door width(s), of door type(s) and of opening and closing mechanism(s) of doors which are located between the building entrance from Chobham Road (including details of the building entrance doors) and the cycle store/cycle repair area;
- details of the cycle repair area, including facilities to be provided within;
- details of facilities for cyclists to change into and out of cyclist equipment and/or shower; and
- details of facilities for cyclists to store cyclist equipment.

The cycle store, cycle repair area, external cycle stands, and facilities for cyclists to change into and out of cyclist equipment / shower and facilities for cyclists to store cyclist equipment approved under this condition must be installed and made available for use prior to the first occupation of any part of the development hereby permitted and must thereafter be permanently retained at all reasonable times for the intended purpose(s) only and must not be used for any other purpose(s).

Reason: To encourage (active) travel by means other than the private car in accordance with Policy CS18 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), SPD Parking Standards (2018) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

13. ++ Development must not commence, including any works of demolition and site clearance, until a Construction Transport Management Plan (CTMP) has first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The submitted CTMP must include details of:

- a. loading and unloading of plant and materials within the site and/or to/from the public highway;
- b. storage of plant and materials within the site and/or on the public highway;
- c. provision of any boundary hoarding on the public highway frontage(s) of the site;
- d. the routing of heavy goods vehicles to/from the site;
- e. measures to prevent the deposit of earth or other construction-related materials from the site onto the public highway;

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- f. turning of heavy goods vehicles; and
- g. any proposed temporary occupation of the public highway, associated with the demolition and/or construction of the development together with any proposals to temporarily divert public highway users during any such highway occupation;
- h. a plan showing the area to be surveyed to establish existing public highway condition; and
- i. a pre-start record of the condition of the public highway identified by the plan referred to above, undertaken in consultation with Surrey County Council Highways, together with a written commitment (including a timetable for implementation) to repair any damage caused by the carrying out of the development.

Development must be carried out only in accordance with the approved Construction Transport Management Plan (CTMP).

Reason: In order that the development should not prejudice highway safety nor cause inconvenience to other highway users in accordance with Policy CS18 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), Policy DM16 of the Development Management Policies DPD (2016) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This condition is required to be addressed prior to commencement (including prior to demolition and site clearance) in order that the ability to discharge its requirement is not prejudiced by the carrying out of building works or other operations on the site.

14. ++ Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted a Service and Deliveries Management Plan (SDMP) for the development must first be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The SDMP must include (but not be limited to) details of:
- a. details of the parcel drop facilities and its management;
  - b. maximum delivery and service vehicle sizes;
  - c. key staff to manage delivery and serving activity;
  - d. monitoring of delivery and servicing activity;
  - e. refuse and recycling collection procedure; and
  - f. for servicing and delivery activities taking place between the hours of 23:00 and 07:00 on any day the SDMP must detail measures for protecting residential receptors from noise (including, but not limited to, noise from vehicle movements) such as use of white noise reversing beepers, rubber mats to minimise noise from cages etc.

The development must thereafter be permanently operated and maintained only in accordance with the approved Service and Deliveries Management Plan (SDMP) for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: In order that the development should not prejudice highway safety nor cause inconvenience to other highway users, or undue noise and disturbance during night-time hours, in accordance with Policy CS18 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), Policies DM7 and DM16 of the Development Management Policies DPD (2016) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

### Air quality

15. The primary source(s) of energy for the development hereby permitted must be electric Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHPs) and/or Photovoltaic (PV) panels and/or connection to the local District Energy Network (DEN) unless otherwise first agreed in

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writing by the Local Planning Authority. If electric ASHPs and/or PV panels and/or connection to the local District Energy Network (DEN) are not to provide the main source(s) of energy for the development hereby permitted for any reason(s), additional future air quality modelling in respect of alternative energy source(s) must first be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in order to ensure that there are no significant adverse air quality impacts. The development must thereafter be permanently maintained in accordance with any such approved details.

Reason: To ensure no adverse impact upon air quality in accordance with Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), Policy DM6 of the Development Management Policies DPD (2016) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

### Noise

16. a) Plant and building services equipment (including, but not limited to, Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHPs) and Air Handling Units (AHUs)) within the development hereby permitted must only be installed in strict accordance with the plant and building services equipment specifications and acoustic mitigation measures (including that the barrier installed around the edge of the 11th floor level must be a double bank acoustic louvre, the installation of duct attenuators on the atmosphere side of both AHUs, as well as the installation of an acoustic package to the ASHPs) as specified within the Acoustic Assessment Report, prepared by Cahill Design Consultants (Revision 1.4, dated 14/9/2023), which was submitted with the planning application.

b) Within three (3) months of plant and building services equipment (including, but not limited to, Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHPs) and Air Handling Units (AHUs)) being first installed a post completion acoustic verification report, including acoustic test results and confirming that all plant and building services equipment within the development hereby permitted (with acoustic mitigation measures installed) complies with the maximum noise rating levels which are specified within the Acoustic Assessment Report, prepared by Cahill Design Consultants (Revision 1.4, dated 14/9/2023), which was submitted with the planning application, must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Should the post completion acoustic verification report indicate that the relevant maximum noise rating levels have not been met in respect of plant and building services equipment, the report must include a mitigation scheme detailing measures to remedy the shortfall. Mitigation measures as may be approved must be implemented within three (3) months of the date of being approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Plant and building services equipment (including, but not limited to, Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHPs) and Air Handling Units (AHUs)) within the development hereby permitted must thereafter be permanently maintained (including with all acoustic mitigation measures) only in accordance with the approved details for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To safeguard the amenity of the surrounding area and the residential amenities of proximate existing and future occupiers in accordance with Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), Policy DM7 of the Development Management Policies DPD (2016) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).



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17. ++ Prior to the installation of any plant and building services equipment and trunking, including any heat pump equipment, equipment associated with air moving equipment, compressors, generators, ventilation and filtration equipment and any commercial kitchen exhaust ducting/ventilation equipment (except where such plant and building services equipment is otherwise specified within the Acoustic Assessment Report, prepared by Cahill Design Consultants (Revision 1.4, dated 14/9/2023), which was submitted with the planning application) full details (including acoustic specifications, and acoustic mitigation measures, where relevant) of any such equipment must first be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development must thereafter be carried out only in accordance with the approved details and all flues, ducting and other equipment must be installed in accordance with the approved details prior to the relevant use commencing and must thereafter be permanently operated and maintained in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To safeguard the amenity of the surrounding area and the residential amenities of proximate existing and future occupiers in accordance with Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), Policy DM7 of the Development Management Policies DPD (2016) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

18. Sound reproduction equipment which conveys messages, music or other sound by voice or otherwise which is audible outside the development hereby permitted must not be installed on the site without the prior written approval of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard the amenity of the surrounding area and the residential amenities of proximate existing and future occupiers in accordance with Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), Policy DM7 of the Development Management Policies DPD (2016) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

19. ++ Superstructure works pursuant to the development hereby permitted must not commence until (for the avoidance of any doubt this allows for demolition and works below ground level to first take place):

a) Details of the location(s) of ducting to be installed from the unit(s) and/or floorspace labelled as 'Flexible Class E' (and shown coloured in green) at both ground floor level and level 01 up through the building to the roof level and details of the height and type of flue(s) must first be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development must thereafter be constructed only in accordance with the details which are approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

b) Prior to the commencement of use of any of the unit(s) and/or floorspace labelled as 'Flexible Class E' (and shown coloured in green) at both ground floor level and level 01 where food will be prepared, full particulars and details of a kitchen extract scheme for the ventilation of the relevant kitchen to the appropriate outlet level approved in part a) must first be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such application should include details of odour emissions abatement equipment, sound attenuation for any necessary plant, filtration systems and the standard of dilution of exhaust air expected, and a maintenance plan for its ongoing management. Development must not be carried out otherwise than in accordance with the details which are approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

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Reason: To safeguard the amenity of the surrounding area and the residential amenities of proximate existing and future occupiers in accordance with Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), Policy DM7 of the Development Management Policies DPD (2016) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

20. The use(s) of the unit(s) and/or floorspace labelled as 'Flexible Class E' (and shown coloured in green) at both ground floor level and level 01 of the development hereby permitted must not operate other than between the following hours:

- 07:00 and 23:00 hours on Mondays to Saturdays (inclusive) (excluding Bank and Public Holidays); and
- 08:00 and 22:00 hours on Sundays, Bank and Public Holidays.

Reason: To safeguard the amenity of the surrounding area and the residential amenities of proximate existing and future occupiers in accordance with Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), Policy DM7 of the Development Management Policies DPD (2016) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

21. The use of the Class E (g) (i) (Office) floorspace labelled as 'Office' (and shown coloured in blue) at level 02 up through to level 10 (inclusive) of the development hereby permitted, including the area labelled as 'Lounge' at level 10 (and shown coloured in purple) ancillary thereto, must not operate other than between the following hours:

- 07:00 and 23:00 hours on Mondays to Saturdays (inclusive) (excluding Bank and Public Holidays); and
- 08:00 and 22:00 hours on Sundays, Bank and Public Holidays.

Reason: To safeguard the amenity of the surrounding area and the residential amenities of proximate existing and future occupiers in accordance with Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), Policy DM7 of the Development Management Policies DPD (2016) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

22. Other than for maintenance and/or repair purposes, or means of escape, the roof terrace areas labelled as 'Terrace' (and shown coloured in green) at level 02, level 09 and level 10 (inclusive) of the development hereby permitted must not be used other than between the hours of 08:00 - 22:00 on any day.

Reason: To safeguard the amenity of the surrounding area and the residential amenities of proximate existing and future occupiers in accordance with Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), Policy DM7 of the Development Management Policies DPD (2016) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

### External lighting / CCTV etc

23. ++ Before the development hereby permitted is first occupied or brought into use, the following details on and/or around the building hereby permitted must first be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:

- any Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV);
- any General external lighting;
- any Security lighting; and

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- any Access control measures for building entrances.

The submitted details must include the location and specification of all lamps, light levels/spill, illumination, close circuit television cameras (CCTV) (including view paths) and support structures including type, materials and manufacturer's specifications. The details must include an assessment of the impact of any such lighting on the surrounding environment of Woking Town Centre. Development must be carried out in accordance with the approved details before the first occupation and/or use and must be permanently retained and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To protect the general environment, the amenities of the area, the residential amenities of neighbouring and nearby existing and future properties and the habitat for bats and other nocturnal animals in accordance with Policies CS7 and CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), Policy DM7 of the Development Management Policies DPD (2016) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

### Bin store

24. The bin store shown at ground floor level on the approved plans listed within condition 02 of this notice must be provided prior to first occupation of any part of the development hereby permitted and thereafter be made permanently available (during reasonable hours) for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure the provision of satisfactory facilities for the storage and recycling of waste and to protect the general amenity of the area in accordance with Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), SPD Design (2015) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

### Biodiversity / ecology

25. The development hereby permitted must be undertaken only in accordance with the measures to achieve the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) that have been identified within the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment, prepared by Greengage (which is at Appendix D of the Ecological Appraisal report, dated September 2023, prepared by Greengage), and The Biodiversity Metric 4.0 Calculation Tool. The measures identified to achieve the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) include the provision of ground level planting which should incorporate wildlife value planting featuring resilient, pollinator friendly species that encourage night flying insects, tree planting, bird nest boxes and bat boxes and invertebrate features (e.g., bee bricks, bee posts and habitat panels) and must be provided in full prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted and thereafter be permanently retained and maintained for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To contribute towards and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity in accordance with Policies CS7 and CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

26. ++ Demolition of existing building(s) and/or clearance of the site must be undertaken between September and February (inclusive). If this is not possible then a suitably qualified and experienced Ecologist must carry out an inspection of the relevant area(s) and/or building(s) to be cleared and/or demolished within 48 hours of the

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clearance and/or demolition of those area(s) and/or building(s) commencing to ensure that no nesting or nestbuilding birds are present within those area(s) and/or building(s). If any nesting birds are present, then the area(s) and/or building(s) containing the nest(s) must not be cleared and/or demolished until a suitably qualified and experienced Ecologist confirms that the birds have finished nesting.

If no nesting birds are found, there is no need to report the survey findings to the Local Planning Authority before clearance and/or demolition of those area(s) and/or building(s).

Once the site has been completely cleared, details of measures taken to ensure no nesting or nestbuilding birds were harmed must be subsequently submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This could include that the site has been cleared between the months of September and February (inclusive); that a survey has been undertaken and no nests were found; or that nests were found, protection measures put in place around the nest(s), and a subsequent survey found that birds were no longer nesting.

Reason: The Ecological Appraisal identifies that a pair of swift were observed nesting in one location on site and therefore that the site has a confirmed presence of nesting birds. As such, this condition is required to prevent nesting birds and/or active bird nests being injured, killed or destroyed during site clearance and demolition works in accordance with Policy CS7 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), Circular 06/05 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

27. Site clearance and/or demolition work must be undertaken in accordance with the following precautionary method of working unless an alternative precautionary method of working (prepared by a suitably qualified and experienced Ecologist) is first submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:

- Prior to any internal or external demolition works commencing on site, all demolition personnel must receive a toolbox talk from a licensed Ecologist regarding bats and their awarded level of protection and places of shelter. The toolbox talk must also include information on how to proceed if a bat is discovered during the course of works;
- Following the toolbox talk and immediately before to the commencement of works, the bat licenced Ecologist must undertake an internal and external inspection of the buildings to confirm no Potential Roosting Features have formed since the survey date, as well as to confirm the absence of bats from the site;
- Demolition works must take reasonable avoidance measures such as removing roof tiles carefully, checking beneath for the presence of bats before being discarded. A licenced bat worker should carry out a watching brief when critical works are being carried out, such as when tiles and other key roofing components are removed from the roofs;
- Once the most likely areas for bats have been demolished / removed it may not be necessary for an Ecologist to be on site. If the Ecologist is not on site when a bat is found (or suspected to be found), then all work must stop, and the bat licenced Ecologist be immediately contacted for further advice; and
- Should bats be discovered at any point during the demolition works all works must cease immediately and the bat licenced Ecologist contacted.

Reason: Whilst the Bat Survey Report has identified the likely absence of active bat roosts within the development site (such that bats do not appear to present a

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constraint to the proposed development) bats are highly mobile and move roost sites frequently. As such, unidentified bat roosts may still be present on the site and therefore a precautionary approach to works should be implemented to prevent bats being injured or killed during demolition and clearance works and to comply with Policy CS7 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), Circular 06/05 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

28. ++ External lighting must not be installed within the red line of the development hereby permitted (with the exception of any temporary demolition/construction required external lighting and/or any street lighting which may be relocated and/or installed as part of the Section 278 works under the Highways Act 1980) until full details (to include a layout plan with beam orientation and a schedule of equipment in the design (luminaire type, mounting height, aiming angles and luminaire profiles)) and demonstrating compliance with both the recommendations of the BCT & ILP (2023) Guidance Note 08/23. Bats and artificial lighting at night (Bat Conservation Trust, London & Institution of Lighting Professionals, Rugby) (or any future equivalent(s)) and the recommendations of the Institute of Lighting Professionals Guidance Note GN01/21 for The Reduction of Obtrusive Light (2021) (or any future equivalent(s)) have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The external lighting scheme must thereafter be installed and permanently maintained and operated only in accordance with the approved details for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To protect the general environment, the amenities of the area, the residential amenities of proximate existing and future properties and the habitat for bats and other nocturnal animals. Nocturnal animals, including bats, are sensitive to any increase in artificial lighting. To accord with Policies CS7 and CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), Policy DM7 of the Development Management Policies DPD (2016), Circular 06/05 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

29. ++ Superstructure works must not commence until full details of biodiversity enhancements have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority (for the avoidance of any doubt this allows for demolition and works below ground level to first take place). The biodiversity enhancements across the development must be in accordance with the relevant recommendations of the Ecological Appraisal report, prepared by Greengage, dated September 2023; (including Bat Survey Report and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment) and must include (as a minimum) the following biodiversity enhancement measures:
- a) external landscaping to consist of wildlife friendly trees/shrubs and herbaceous planting selected from the RHS plants for pollinators guide. Night scented planting should also be incorporated to enhance the site for bats;
  - b) bird nest boxes incorporated into the building (including a mix of boxes which are suitable for multiple species including house sparrow and swift), details of which must include number, locations and type of boxes;
  - c) bat boxes incorporated into the building (positioned at least 3 metres above ground level), details of which must include number, locations and type of boxes; and
  - d) invertebrate features such as bee bricks, bee posts and habitat panels to be located on suitable external landscaping areas.

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The approved biodiversity enhancement measures must be implemented in full prior to the first occupation of any part of the development hereby permitted and must thereafter be permanently retained as such for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To contribute towards and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity in accordance with Policies CS21 and CS7 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

30. ++ The development hereby permitted must not be commenced, other than site clearance and/or demolition works, until a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) has first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The submitted LEMP must be based on the proposed impact avoidance, mitigation and enhancement measures specified in the Ecological Appraisal report, prepared by Greengage, dated September 2023, and should include, but not be limited to, the following:
- a) Description and evaluation of features to be managed;
  - b) Ecological trends and constraints on site that might influence management;
  - c) Aims and objectives of management;
  - d) Appropriate management options for achieving aims and objectives;
  - e) Prescriptions for management actions, together with a plan of management compartments;
  - f) Preparation of a work schedule (including an annual work plan capable of being rolled forward over a 30 year period);
  - g) Details of the body or organisation responsible for implementation of the plan;
  - h) Ongoing monitoring and remedial measures;
  - i) Legal and funding mechanisms by which the long-term implementation of the plan will be secured by the applicant with the management body(ies) responsible for its delivery;
  - j) Monitoring strategy, including details of how contingencies and/or remedial action will be identified, agreed, and implemented so that the development still delivers the fully functioning biodiversity objectives of the originally approved scheme; and
  - k) A Swift mitigation and compensation strategy, which must include details of suitable nesting boxes for swifts (including number, locations and type of boxes) to be provided within the proposed development and a timeline for their provision (in line with the Ecological Appraisal report, prepared by Greengage).

The LEMP as approved must be carried out concurrently with the development hereby permitted and thereafter be permanently maintained for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: In the interests of biodiversity and to protect the general amenity and character and appearance of the locality in accordance with Policies CS7, CS17, CS21 and CS24 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

### Water management (SuDS) (LLFA)

31. ++ Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted, other than site clearance and/or demolition, details of the design of a surface water drainage scheme must first be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The submitted surface water drainage scheme design must satisfy the

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SuDS Hierarchy and be compliant with the national Non-Statutory Technical Standards for SuDS, National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Ministerial Statement on SuDS. The required drainage details must include:

- a) The results of infiltration testing completed in accordance with BRE Digest: 365 and confirmation of groundwater levels;
- b) Evidence that the proposed final solution will effectively manage the 1 in 30 (+35% allowance for climate change) & 1 in 100 (+45% allowance for climate change) storm events during all stages of the development. If infiltration is deemed unfeasible, associated discharge rates and storage volumes must be provided using a maximum discharge rate of 1.7l/s;
- c) 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.);
- d) 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 from increased flood risk;
- e) Details of drainage management responsibilities and maintenance regimes for the drainage system; and
- f) 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.

Reason: To ensure the SuDS design meets the national Non-Statutory Technical Standards for SuDS and the final drainage design does not increase flood risk on or off site in accordance with Policies CS9 and CS16 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), the national Non-Statutory Technical Standards for SuDS, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Ministerial Statement on SuDS. This condition is required to be addressed prior to commencement (other than site clearance and/or demolition) in order that the ability to discharge its requirement is not prejudiced by the carrying out of building works or other operations on the site.

32. ++ Prior to the first occupation of any part of the development hereby permitted, a surface water drainage verification report, prepared out by a qualified drainage engineer, must first be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This verification report must demonstrate that the surface water drainage system has been constructed as per the agreed scheme (or detail any minor variations), provide the details of any management company and state the national grid reference of any key drainage elements (surface water attenuation devices/areas, flow restriction devices and outfalls), and confirm any defects have been rectified.

Reason: To ensure the constructed design meets the national Non-Statutory Technical Standards for SuDS and does not increase flood risk on or off site in accordance with Policies CS9 and CS16 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), the national Non-Statutory Technical Standards for SuDS, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Ministerial Statement on SuDS.

### Thames Water

33. ++ Piling must not take place pursuant to the development hereby permitted until a piling method statement (detailing the location(s), depth(s) and type(s) of piling to be

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undertaken and the methodology by which such piling will be carried out, including measures to prevent and minimise the potential for damage to subsurface sewerage infrastructure, and the programme for the works) has first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority (in consultation with Thames Water). Piling must thereafter be undertaken only in accordance with the terms of the approved piling method statement.

Reason: The proposed works will be in close proximity to underground sewerage utility infrastructure and piling has the potential to significantly impact / cause failure of local underground sewerage utility infrastructure. This condition is required by Policy CS16 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

### Contamination

34. ++ Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted, including prior to any and all site clearance and/or demolition works, evidence that the building(s) within the site were built post year 2000 or an intrusive pre-demolition asbestos survey in accordance with HSG264 must first be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The survey must be undertaken, and a report produced by a suitably qualified person and must include any recommendations deemed necessary. The development must then be undertaken only in accordance with the approved details. Upon completion of site clearance and/or demolition works, the developer must provide in writing to the Local Planning Authority suitably detailed confirmation that site clearance and/or demolition works were carried out with regard to the aforementioned pre-demolition asbestos survey and recommendations contained therein.

Reason: To address any potential asbestos contamination and make the land suitable for the development hereby permitted without resulting in risk to demolition and/or construction workers, future users of the land, occupiers of nearby land and the environment generally in accordance with Policy DM8 of the Development Management Policies DPD (2016) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This condition is required to be addressed prior to commencement (including prior to site clearance and/or demolition works) in order that the ability to discharge its requirement is not prejudiced by the carrying out of building works or other operations on the site.

35. ++ Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted (with the exception of site clearance and/or demolition which may first take place) a contaminated land site investigation and risk assessment, undertaken in accordance with the submitted Ground Condition Desk Top Study, prepared by Ground Condition Consultants Ltd (GCC) (Report No. J23-020-R01, Version 4.0, dated 14.09.23), that determines the extent and nature of contamination on the site and reporting in accordance with the current best practice and guidance such as Land Contamination Risk Management (LCRM) and British Standard BS 10175 (or any future equivalents), must first be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority (including any additional requirements that the Local Planning Authority may specify). If applicable, ground gas risk assessments must be completed in line with CIRIA C665 guidance.

Reason: To address any potential land contamination and make the land suitable for the development hereby permitted without resulting in risk to construction workers, future users of the land, occupiers of nearby land and the environment generally in



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accordance with Policy DM8 of the Development Management Policies DPD (2016) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This condition is required to be addressed prior to commencement (with the exception of site clearance and/or demolition) in order that the ability to discharge its requirement is not prejudiced by the carrying out of building works or other operations on the site.

36. ++ Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted (with the exception of site clearance and/or demolition which may first take place), a detailed remediation method statement must first be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority (including any additional requirements that the Local Planning Authority may specify). The remediation method statement must detail the extent and method(s) by which the site is to be remediated, to ensure that unacceptable risks are not posed to identified receptors at the site and must detail the information to be included in a validation report. The remediation method statement must also provide information on a suitable discovery strategy to be utilised on site should contamination manifest itself during site works that was not anticipated. The Local Planning Authority must be given a minimum of two weeks written prior notice of the commencement of the remediation works on site. The development must then be undertaken only in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To address any potential land contamination and make the land suitable for the development hereby permitted without resulting in risk to construction workers, future users of the land, occupiers of nearby land and the environment generally in accordance with Policy DM8 of the Development Management Policies DPD (2016) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This condition is required to be addressed prior to commencement (with the exception of site clearance and/or demolition) in order that the ability to discharge its requirement is not prejudiced by the carrying out of building works or other operations on the site.

37. ++ Prior to the first occupation of any part of the development hereby permitted, a remediation validation report for the site must first be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The report must detail evidence of the remediation, the effectiveness of the remediation carried out and the results of post remediation works, in accordance with the approved remediation method statement and any addenda thereto, so as to enable future interested parties, including regulators, to have a single record of the remediation undertaken at the site. Should specific ground gas mitigation measures be required to be incorporated into the development the testing and verification of such systems must have regard to current best practice and guidance for the design of protective measures for methane and carbon dioxide ground gases for new buildings.

Reason: To address any potential land contamination and make the land suitable for the development hereby permitted without resulting in risk to construction workers, future users of the land, occupiers of nearby land and the environment generally in accordance with Policy DM8 of the Development Management Policies DPD (2016) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

38. Contamination not previously identified by the site investigation, but subsequently found to be present at the site must be reported to the Local Planning Authority as soon as is practicable. If deemed necessary development must cease on site until an addendum to the remediation method statement, detailing how the unsuspected contamination is to be dealt with, has first been submitted to and approved in writing to the Local Planning Authority (including any additional requirements that the Local Planning Authority may specify). The development must then be undertaken only in

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accordance with the approved details. Should no further contamination be identified then a brief comment to this effect must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the first occupation of any part of the development hereby permitted.

Reason: To address any potential land contamination and make the land suitable for the development hereby permitted without resulting in risk to construction workers, future users of the land, occupiers of nearby land and the environment generally in accordance with Policy DM8 of the Development Management Policies DPD (2016) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

### Energy

39. The development hereby permitted must be constructed only in accordance with the provisions specified within the Energy Strategy (Revision: R4, Revision date: 22.09.2023) and the Sustainability Statement (Revision: 04, Revision date: 22.09.2023), both prepared by AECOM Limited (and both submitted with the planning application), unless otherwise first agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the development must be permanently maintained and operated as such for its lifetime.

Reason: To ensure that the development achieves a high standard of sustainability and makes efficient use of resources in accordance with Policies CS22 and CS23 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), SPD Climate Change (2023) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

40. ++ The ground floor level flexible Class E unit(s) of the development hereby permitted must achieve a minimum post construction BREEAM New Construction v6.1 Retail and / or Office (shell only) rating of at least 'Very Good' (or such equivalent national measure of sustainable building which replaces that scheme). Within six (6) months of the completion of the ground floor level flexible Class E unit(s) a final Certificate confirming that that component of the development hereby permitted has achieved a BREEAM rating of at least 'Very Good' (or such equivalent national measure of sustainable building which replaces that scheme) must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the development must be permanently maintained and operated as such for its lifetime.

Reason: To ensure that the development achieves a high standard of sustainability and makes efficient use of resources in accordance with Policies CS22 and CS23 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), SPD Climate Change (2023) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

41. ++ The level 01 and above floorspace (i.e., level 02 up through to level 10 inclusive) of the development hereby permitted must achieve a minimum post construction BREEAM New Construction v6.1 CAT A Office (Shell & Core) rating of at least 'Very Good' (or such equivalent national measure of sustainable building which replaces that scheme). Within six (6) months of the completion of the level 01 and above floorspace a final Certificate confirming that that component of the development hereby permitted has achieved a BREEAM rating of at least 'Very Good' (or such equivalent national measure of sustainable building which replaces that scheme) must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the development must be permanently maintained and operated as such for its lifetime.

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Reason: To ensure that the development achieves a high standard of sustainability and makes efficient use of resources in accordance with Policies CS22 and CS23 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), SPD Climate Change (2023) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

### Flat roof areas

42. Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 3 of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) (and/or any order(s) amending and/or re-enacting that Order, or superseding equivalent Order(s), with or without modification(s)), other than where specifically shown and/or identified as such on the approved plans listed within condition 02 of this notice the flat roof areas of the development hereby permitted must not be used as a roof terrace, sitting out area or similar amenity area.

Reason: In order to protect proximate residential properties from overlooking and noise in accordance with Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), Policy DM7 of the Development Management Policies DPD (2016) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

### Telecoms equipment / satellite antenna

43. Notwithstanding the provisions of Schedule 2 of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) (and/or any order(s) amending and/or re-enacting that Order(s), or superseding equivalent Order(s), with or without modification(s)), the following development must not be undertaken without prior specific express planning permission in writing from the Local Planning Authority:

The installation of any structures or apparatus for purposes relating to telecommunications on any part the development hereby permitted, including any structures or development otherwise permitted under Part 16 "Communications".

Reason: To ensure that any structures or apparatus for purposes relating to telecommunications on the development hereby permitted do not adversely affect the appearance of the area in accordance with Policies CS2, CS21 and CS24 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), SPD Design (2015) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

44. ++ Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 4 (1) and Part 25 of Schedule 2 of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) (and/or any order(s) amending and/or re-enacting that Order(s), or superseding equivalent Order(s), with or without modification(s)), satellite antennae must not be erected or installed on the development hereby permitted. The development hereby permitted must have a central dish or aerial system for receiving all broadcasts; details of such a scheme must be first submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to first occupation of any part of the development hereby permitted, and the approved scheme must be implemented and permanently maintained and operated for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure that any satellite antennae on the development hereby permitted do not adversely affect the appearance of the area in accordance with Policies CS2, CS21 and CS24 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), SPD Design (2015) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

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### No mezzanine floors

45. Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 3 of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), (and/or any equivalent Order(s), replacing, amending and/or re-enacting that Order(s) with or without modification(s)) additional floors, including mezzanine floors, other than as shown on the approved plans listed within condition 02 of this notice, must not be erected and/or installed within the development hereby permitted without prior specific express planning permission in writing from the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To avoid potential over-intensification of use (above the use(s) which have been assessed) and subsequent adverse implications for car parking, noise and neighbouring amenity in accordance with Policies CS18 and CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), Policy DM7 of the Development Management Policies DPD (2016) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

### **Informatives**

01. The Council confirms that in assessing this planning application it has worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive way, in line with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
02. The applicant's attention is specifically drawn to the planning conditions above marked ++. These condition(s) require the submission of details, information, drawings, etc. to the Local Planning Authority PRIOR TO THE RELEVANT TRIGGER POINT. Failure to observe these requirements will result in a contravention of the terms of the planning permission and the Local Planning Authority may serve Breach of Condition Notices (BCNs) to secure compliance. The applicant is advised that sufficient time needs to be allowed when submitting details in response to planning conditions, to allow the Local Planning Authority to consider the details and approve details pursuant to the condition(s). A period of between five and eight weeks should be allowed for.
03. The applicant is advised that Council officers may undertake inspections without prior warning to check compliance with approved plans and to establish that all planning conditions are being complied with in full. Inspections may be undertaken both during and after construction.
04. All bridges, buildings or apparatus (with the exception of projecting signs) which project over or span the highway may be erected only with the formal approval of the Transportation Development Planning Team of Surrey County Council under Section 177 or 178 of the Highways Act 1980.
05. The planning permission hereby granted must not be construed as authority to obstruct the public highway by the erection of scaffolding, hoarding or any other device or apparatus for which a licence must be sought from the Highway Authority Local Highways Service (Surrey County Council).
06. The planning permission hereby granted must not be construed as authority to carry out any works (including Statutory connections/diversions required by the development itself or the associated highway works) on the highway or any works that may affect a drainage channel/culvert or water course. The applicant is advised that a permit and, potentially, a Section 278 agreement must first be obtained from

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the Highway Authority (Surrey County Council) before any works are carried out on any footway, footpath, carriageway, verge or other land forming part of the highway. All works (including Statutory connections/diversions required by the development itself or the associated highway works) on the highway will require a permit and an application will need to be submitted to the Surrey County Council Street Works Team up to 3 months in advance of the intended start date, depending on the scale of the works proposed and the classification of the road. Please see <http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-andtransport/permits-and-licences/traffic-management-permit-scheme>. The applicant is also advised that Consent may be required under Section 23 of the Land Drainage Act 1991. Please see [www.surreycc.gov.uk/people-and-community/emergency-planning-and-community-safety/flooding-advice](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/people-and-community/emergency-planning-and-community-safety/flooding-advice).

07. Section 59 of the Highways Act permits the Highway Authority (Surrey County Council) to charge developers for damage caused by excessive weight and movement of vehicles to and from a site. The Highway Authority (Surrey County Council) will pass on the cost of any excess repairs compared to normal maintenance costs to the applicant / organisation responsible for the damage.
08. The Contaminated Land Officer (CLO) would like to draw the applicants/agents/consultants attention to the specifics of the contaminated land conditional wording such as 'prior to commencement', 'prior to occupation' and 'provide a minimum of two weeks' notice'. The submission of information not in accordance with the specifics of the planning conditional wording can lead to delays in approving details pursuant to conditions, potentially result in details pursuant to conditions being unable to be approved or even enforcement action should the required level of evidence/information be unable to be supplied. All relevant information should be formally submitted to the Local Planning Authority and not directly to the Contaminated Land Officer (CLO).
09. Thames Water recommend that the developer read the Thames Water guide 'working near our assets' to ensure the workings will be in line with the necessary processes the developer needs to follow if the developer is working above Thames Water pipes or other structures. Please see: <https://www.thameswater.co.uk/developers/larger-scale-developments/planning-your-development/working-near-our-pipes>  
Should the developer require further information in this respect please contact Thames Water. Email: [developer.services@thameswater.co.uk](mailto:developer.services@thameswater.co.uk) Phone: 0800 009 3921 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm) Write to: Thames Water Developer Services, Clearwater Court, Vastern Road, Reading, Berkshire RG1 8DB.
10. Thames Water would expect the developer to demonstrate what measures will be undertaken to minimise groundwater discharges into the public sewer. Groundwater discharges typically result from construction site dewatering, deep excavations, basement infiltration, borehole installation, testing and site remediation. Any discharge made without a permit is deemed illegal and may result in prosecution under the provisions of the Water Industry Act 1991. Thames Water would expect the developer to demonstrate what measures will be undertaken to minimise groundwater discharges into the public sewer. Permit enquiries should be directed to Thames Water's Risk Management Team by telephoning 02035779483 or by emailing [trade.effluent@thameswater.co.uk](mailto:trade.effluent@thameswater.co.uk). Application forms should be completed online via [www.thameswater.co.uk](http://www.thameswater.co.uk). Please refer to the Wholesale; Business customers; Groundwater discharges section.

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11. Where the developer proposes to discharge to a public sewer, prior approval from Thames Water Developer Services will be required. Should the developer require further information please refer to the Thames Water website: <https://www.thameswater.co.uk/developers/larger-scale-developments/planning-your-development/working-near-our-pipes>
12. Thames Water advise that there are public sewers crossing or close to the proposed development. Thames Water will need to check that the development doesn't limit repair or maintenance activities or inhibit the services Thames Water provide in any other way. The applicant is advised to read The Thames Water guide: <https://www.thameswater.co.uk/developers/larger-scaleddevelopments/planning-your-development/working-near-our-pipes>
13. With regard to water supply, this comes within the area covered by the Affinity Water Company. For your information the address to write to is - Affinity Water Company The Hub, Tamblin Way, Hatfield, Herts, AL10 9EZ - Tel - 0845 782 3333.
14. The applicant should ensure that demolition and construction activities on site have regard to the potential presence of terrestrial mammals to ensure that these species do not become trapped in trenches, culverts, or pipes. All trenches left open overnight should include a means of escape for any animals that may fall in.
15. The applicant is advised that to prevent its spread the buddleia (a non-native species) on site should be cut and the roots treated. Any arisings should be appropriately disposed of. Further information on this species can be obtained from the GB Non-native Species Secretariat at [www.nonnativespecies.org](http://www.nonnativespecies.org).
16. The applicant is advised that, in accordance with the Town Improvement Clause Act 1987 Sections 64 & 65 and the Public Health Act 1925 Section 17, Woking Borough Council is the authority responsible for the numbering and naming of properties and new streets. You should make a formal application electronically to Woking Borough Council using the following link: [www.woking.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/street-naming-and-numbering/about-street-naming-and-numbering](http://www.woking.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/street-naming-and-numbering/about-street-naming-and-numbering) before addressing any property or installing or displaying any property name or number or street name in connection with any development the subject of this Planning Permission.
17. The developer is strongly encouraged to attain Secured by Design certification to the standards of the following document.  
Commercial  
[https://www.securedbydesign.com/images/COMMERCIAL\\_GUIDE\\_23.pdf](https://www.securedbydesign.com/images/COMMERCIAL_GUIDE_23.pdf)  
The developer is therefore strongly encouraged to liaise with the Surrey Police Designing Out Crime Officer in this regard.
18. The developer should undertake early engagement on the planned use of cranes with Farnborough Airport (because a building mounted crane may have an impact on Farnborough Airport's Instrument Flight Procedures). The developer should contact Farnborough Airport by emailing: [safeguarding@farnboroughairport.com](mailto:safeguarding@farnboroughairport.com)
19. All new food premises are required by the Food Safety Act 1990 to register with the Local Authority at least 28 days before the food business opens. To do so, please go to [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) and search 'food business registration'.

## 16 JANUARY 2024 PLANNING COMMITTEE

20. The developer is reminded that the Aviation Risk Assessment report submitted with the planning application identifies that, during construction, cranes may breach the Fairoaks Airport OLS (Obstacle Limitation Surface) and therefore that a crane operation scheme and steady red medium intensity aviation lighting for cranes may need to be agreed with Fairoaks Airport. In this respect the developer should contact Fairoaks Airport, at an early stage, by emailing [info@fairoaksairport.co.uk](mailto:info@fairoaksairport.co.uk)





**SECTION B**

**APPLICATIONS WHICH WILL BE  
THE SUBJECT OF A PRESENTATION  
BY OFFICERS**

**(Note: Ordnance Survey Extracts appended to the reports are for locational purposes only and may not include all current developments either major or minor within the site or area generally)**



# Unit 16 and 17 Monument Way West

## PLAN/2023/0745

Change of use from Class F1 (Learning and non-residential institutions) to Use Class E (g) (offices, research and development, industrial process), Class B2 (General Industrial) and Class B8 (Storage and distribution).





PLAN/2023/0745



16 & 17 Monument Way West



**Comments**

N  
SCALE 1:1,250  
0 5 10 20 30 40 Metres

Planning  
Woking Borough Council  
Civic Offices  
Gloucester Square  
Woking, Surrey GU21 6YL



**6b PLAN/2023/0745**

**WARD:** Canalside

**LOCATION:** Thameswey, Unit 16 and 17 Wintonlea, Monument Way West, Woking, Surrey, GU21 5EN

**PROPOSAL:** Change of use from Class F1 (Learning and non-residential institutions) to Use Class E (g) (offices, research and development, industrial process), Class B2 (General Industrial) and Class B8 (Storage and distribution).

**APPLICANT:** Mr Kyle Gellatly

**OFFICER:** Emily Fitzpatrick

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**REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE:**

The applicant is Woking Borough Council.

**SUMMARY OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

Change of use from Class F1 (Learning and non-residential institutions) to Use Class E (g) (offices, research and development, industrial process), Class B2 (General Industrial) and Class B8 (Storage and distribution).

**PLANNING STATUS**

- Contaminated Land
- Employment Area
- High Pressure Gas Main
- Priority Places
- Site Allocations UA27
- Surface Water Flood Risk (medium)
- Thames Basin Heaths SPA Zone B (400m-5km)
- Urban Areas

**RECOMMENDATION**

**GRANT** planning permission subject to conditions.

**SITE DESCRIPTION**

Unit 16 and 17 Wintonlea Industrial Estate are sited within the Monument Way West Industrial Estate. The units form part of an array of adjoined units (Unit 12-19) known as the Wintonlea terrace of industrial units. The site was originally two units however has now been merged into one. The site no longer has a mezzanine floor. The application site is single-storey and has a gross internal area of 220.76sqm. The height of the units are 6m, with a footprint of approximately 14.6m in depth x 6.3m in width. The units are designed in white cladding with a flat roof and shutter doors and a window above ground floor level. On-site parking provision of x6 spaces and loading areas serve the front elevation of both units.

**RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

(Not an exhaustive list)

## 17 January 2024 PLANNING COMMITTEE

PLAN/2019/1039	Change of use from Industrial units (Use Class B1 Business, B2 General Industrial and B8 storage and distribution) to Use Class D1 (Training and Education Centre) and external alterations (permitted 07.02.2020)
PLAN/2003/0257	25m galvanised 2400mm high palisade fence and 7m gate to be installed at entrance to site (amended proposal and amended location) (permitted 10.04.2003)
DC 86/1322	Servicing and repairs of motor vehicles A.R.M 85/0494 (Unit 7) (permitted)
DC 86/1029	Change of use from class III light industrial to bread storage and distribution (permitted)
DC 85/0803	Erection 20 factory units together with areas at west end of site and associated access roads and offices (permitted)
DC 85/0494	Erection of 2810 sqm of light industrial premises and 411 sqm of offices together with associated car parking and access (permitted)
DC 84/0734	Erection of 24,015 sq ft of industrial premises with industrial estate road A.R.M 83/0732

### **CONSULTATIONS**

Contamination Land Officer: No comments to make.

Environmental Health: No comments to make.

HSE: Do not advise against

Planning Policy: No objection

SCC Highways: No objection

### **REPRESENTATIONS**

No letters of representation were received.

### **RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES**

#### National Planning Policy Framework (2023):

Section 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development

Section 4 – Decision making

Section 6 – Building a strong, competitive economy

Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places

Section 14 – Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

#### Woking Core Strategy (2012):

CS5 – Priority Places

CS9 – Flooding and water management

CS15 – Sustainable economic development

CS18 – Transport and Accessibility

CS21 – Design



CS25 – Presumption in favour of sustainable development

Woking Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (2016):  
DM8 – Land Contamination and Hazards

Woking Site Allocations Development Plan Document (2021):  
UA27 – Monument Way Industrial Estate, Monument Way West, Woking, GU21 5EN

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs):

Parking Standards SPD (2018)

Woking Design (2015)

Outlook, Amenity, Privacy and Daylight (2008)

### **PLANNING ISSUES**

1. The main issues to be considered in the determination of this application is the principle of development, impact on character of the area, residential amenity, impact on highways and parking, impact on land contamination, impact on flood risk.

#### Principle of Development

2. The application site falls under Policy UA27 of the Site Allocations DPD (2021). The policy identifies the 4.3ha site as allocated for redevelopment for industrial/warehousing, for road infrastructure in the form of a fourth arm to the Sheerwater link road. The key requirements of this policy says development of the site will be required to: i) be of a high design quality that takes account of and seeks to improve the character and appearance of the locality, and a scale and density that maximises the efficient use of the site whilst reflecting the development grain of the surroundings. Officers' note the proposal concerns a change of use only and no redevelopment of the site, nevertheless this policy supports reinstatement of the original use.
3. With regards to B Class Uses Policy CS15 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) states '*Safeguard land within the employment areas for B uses, except in:*
  - *The Butts Road/ Poole Road employment area where redevelopment for mixed office space and residential use will be supported if it does not result in an overall loss of employment floorspace.*
  - *The Forsyth Road employment area where redevelopment of vacant sites will be encouraged for B uses, unless redevelopment is for an alternative employment generating use which contributes to the aims of policy CS5 (priority places) and would not jeopardise the B use led nature of the employment area*'.
4. Policy CS5 states '*The Council will safeguard land within the existing employment areas in Maybury and Sheerwater for B uses and encourage proposals that create new opportunities for local employment within them. In the Forsyth Road employment area redevelopment of vacant sites will be encouraged for B uses, unless redevelopment is for an alternative employment generating use which contributes to the aims of this policy and would not jeopardise the B use led nature of the employment area. The Council will promote local labour agreements with developers to enable local people in the Priority Places to secure employment and skills development.*'
5. Policy CS19 states '*The Council will work with its partners to provide accessible and sustainable social and community infrastructure to support growth in the Borough. It will do so by promoting the use of social and community infrastructure for a range of uses.*

## 17 January 2024 PLANNING COMMITTEE

*The loss of existing and social community facilities or sites will be resisted unless the Council is satisfied that:*

- *There is no identified need for the facility for its original purpose and that it is not viable for any other social or community use, or*
- *Adequate alternative facilities will be provided in a location with equal (or greater) accessibility for the community it is intended to serve*
- *There is no requirement from any other public service provider for an alternative social or community facility that could be met through change of use or redevelopment.*

*Applicants will be expected to provide evidence that they have consulted with an appropriate range of service providers and the community.'*

6. The application site is located within the Monument Way West Industrial Estate and is a designated employment area. The proposal is for the change of use of Unit 16 and 17 from Use Class F1 (Learning and non-residential institutions) to revert back to Use Class E (g) (offices, research and development, industrial process), Class B2 (General Industrial) and Class B8 (Storage and distribution).
7. Whilst the application site is not within Forsyth Road the application site is vacant and sited within the priority places area. The current permitted use was granted by PLAN/2019/1039 in 2020, for Educational use by the Ribat Institute which is a religious charity. The change of use to education was permitted due to the community benefits. However, following the vacation of this Charity, the units remain empty and unused. The internal configuration has been amended, there is no mezzanine floor and has been stripped of fittings, a W.C, partition walls, rooflights have been boarded over and the previous tenant has deactivated the floodlights and intercom. A Schedule of Dilapidations has been provided, produced by Vail Williams, setting out the costs of these works to the landlord. The units no longer serve as functional for any further education use and given the location, a designated employment area for B uses, combined with the location as a Priority Place, it is deemed as appropriate to revert back to its original use, a purpose-built industrial space. No alterations are proposed to the exterior.
8. Further information has been provided to show the current use is not viable for any further social or community use. The cost of re-instating the building to its former site combined with the low rents afforded by community organisations, with typically poor covenant strength would show a negative land value which would mean that this option is unviable for the 'original' community use or any other social or community use.
9. The planning statement says the applicant has been marketing the property since March 2023, via letting agents Vail Williams. As part of the marketing, the unit was widely advertised, on Rightmove, EACH, Co-Star (to name a few). A detailed list of all the organisations that expressed interest in the unit has been provided by Vail Williams, and demonstrates that there has been no interest from any social, community or education organisations; all the interest has been from industrial, logistics and light-industrial firms, which would fall under the relevant Use Classes, this application seeks to apply for.
10. Given the above it is considered the proposal complies with Policies CS5, CS15 and CS19 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012).

Impact on Character of the Area

## 17 January 2024 PLANNING COMMITTEE

11. No alterations are proposed to the exterior of the units as a result of the proposal. The proposal would not be considered to cause an impact on the character of the area.

### Impact on Residential Amenity

12. Nos.1-4 Monument Way East are the closest residential properties to the application site, located approximately 45.7m to the south east. The proposal seeks to revert back to its former use for business, storage and industry. Given the location in an industrial park surrounded by existing industry use and with no changes to the exterior or increase to footprint/ height, the proposal is not considered to cause an impact on residential amenity.
13. The application is not considered to have a detrimental impact on neighbouring properties in terms of noise and disturbance over and above the existing Use Class B2, B8 and E (g) use. Environmental Health have been consulted and had no comments to make on the proposal.

### Impact on highways and parking

14. The application site has provision of x6 parking spaces sited to the west of the application site which is located within the urban area. It is unknown who the future occupancy will be i.e. business use, general industrial or warehouse and staffing numbers. The Parking Standards SPD proposes for business use 1 car space per 30m<sup>2</sup>, for general industrial this is 1 car space per 30m<sup>2</sup> and warehouse storage 1 car space per 100m<sup>2</sup>. The submitted planning statement indicates the future occupiers would likely serve as general industrial use, the retained floor area is approximately 220m<sup>2</sup>, therefore 30m<sup>2</sup> x No.6 spaces would equate to 180m<sup>2</sup>, there would be ample provision. Furthermore the original use of this site is what the proposal seeks to revert back to with no alterations to parking.
15. The County Highway Authority has undertaken an assessment in terms of the likely net additional traffic generation, access arrangements and parking provision and are satisfied that the application would not have a material impact on the safety and operation of the adjoining public highway. It is considered that the proposal would not have a detrimental impact on highways and parking.

### Impact on land contamination

16. The application site has a history of land contamination, however the proposal concerns a change of use to its previous lawful use and no alterations are proposed to the buildings footprint. The Land Contamination Officer has been consulted and has no comments to make with regards to contaminated land. There would be no impact to land contamination.

### Impact on flood risk

17. The application site is located adjacent to an area of medium surface water flood risk. However, the proposal would not increase the floor area of the building and is considered to cause no impact to flood risk.

### Local Finance Considerations

18. The Council introduced the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) on 1 April 2015. As the proposed development would not result in new build gross floor space of more than 100 sqm it is not liable for a financial contribution to CIL.

## **CONCLUSION**

19. Overall, the principle of development is considered acceptable and would have an acceptable impact on the amenities of neighbours, on the character of the area, highways, land contamination and flood risk. The proposal therefore accords with Policies CS5, CS9, CS15, CS18, CS19, CS21 and CS25 of the *Core Strategy (2012)*, Policies DM8 of the *Development Plan Document (2016)*, Policy UA27 of the *Site Allocations Development Plan Document (2021)*, Supplementary Planning Documents; *Working Design (2015)*, *Outlook, Amenity, Privacy and Daylight (2022)* and the *National Planning Policy Framework (2023)* and is recommended for approval. In considering this application the Council has given regard to the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application and to any other material considerations. In making the recommendation to grant planning permission it is considered that application is in accordance with the development plan of the area.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

1. Site visit photographs taken 07.12.2023

## **RECOMMENDATION**

PERMIT subject to the following conditions:

Recommendation:

01. The development hereby permitted shall be commenced not later than three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To accord with the provisions of Section 91 (1) of The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

02. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans listed below:

DWG No: P235-21-P002 Location & Block Plan received 19 October 2023

DWG No: P235-21-P001 Existing Floor Plan and Elevations received 19 October 2023

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is completed in accordance with the approved plans.

Informatives

01. The Council confirms that in assessing this application it has worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive way, in line with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023.





**SECTION C**

**APPLICATION REPORTS NOT TO BE  
PRESENTED BY OFFICERS UNLESS REQUESTED  
BY A MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE**

**(Note: Ordnance Survey Extracts appended to the reports are for locational purposes only and may not include all current developments either major or minor within the site or the area generally)**

