

24 JULY 2018 PLANNING COMMITTEE

5d 17/1063 Reg'd: 29.09.17 Expires: 31.07.18 Ward: HE
Nei. 17.11.17 BVPI Major Number of 18/28 On Y
Con. Target: Weeks on Target?
Exp: Cttee' Day:

LOCATION: Ten Acre Farm, Smarts Heath Road, Woking, Surrey, GU22 0NH

PROPOSAL: Redevelopment of former travellers site to provide new club building for Woking Gymnastics Club (part two storey) with new public access open space, cafe, car parking, vehicular access and natural landscaping incorporating flood alleviation measures adding to flood resilience in the Hoe Valley, works within the highway and associated works

TYPE: Full/Regulation 3

APPLICANT: Woking Borough Council

OFFICER: Joanne
Hollingdale

REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE

The proposed development is for major development and the applicant is Woking Borough Council. The application is thus outside the scope of the Scheme of Delegation.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Site area: 3.4 hectares (although the application site is larger as it includes the proposed off site highway area)

Proposed building footprint: 2,979 sqm (GEA)

Proposed floorspace: 3,620sqm (GIA)

Building height: maximum height of 11.4 metres in height (smaller section of building around 9.8 metres in height). The majority of the building would have a green roof.

Site Access: Formation of new vehicular access off Smarts Heath Road including a pedestrian footway into the site.

Car Park: 78no. car parking spaces (including 8no. accessible parking spaces). 52no. car parking spaces are proposed for Woking Gymnastics Club and 26no. car parking spaces are proposed for general public car parking.

Off site highway works: Two give way/priority arrangement at either end of the straight section of Smarts Heath Road within the 30mph speed zone; One give way/priority arrangement is proposed immediately to the west of the site, in proximity to the start of the existing 40mph speed zone; removal of existing centre line markings on part of the straight section of Smarts Heath Road; provision of on-carriageway cycle lanes; regular kerbed narrowing with no formal priority provided and coloured surface dressing; provision of new 30 slow down double sided vehicle activated signage; new island feature and pedestrian crossing with dropped kerbs and tactile paving; and new pedestrian crossing to the east of the site access; on-carriageway cycle symbols.

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PLANNING STATUS

- Green Belt
- Adjacent to Smarts Heath and Prey Heaths SSSI
- Adjacent to Hoe Stream Site of Nature Conservation Importance
- Adjacent to Common Land
- Thames Basin Heaths SPA
- Flood Zone 2 and 3
- Locally Listed Building (adjacent to the site Thatch Cottage)
- Great Crested Newt Yellow zone

RECOMMENDATION

1. Subject to the referral of the application to the Secretary of State under the Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2009 and failing any direction from the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government; and
2. Subject to the prior resolution of the Council's Executive to give effect to the following measures:
 - a) Participation in Great Crested Newt District Licence scheme including a financial contribution of £7,200.
3. the **Development Manager** be authorised to **GRANT** planning permission subject to conditions (and any minor amendments or additions to those conditions).

Officer note: As the Council is the owner of the land the subject of this application, it cannot enter into a Section 106 legal agreement to secure any planning obligations which may be required to mitigate the effects of the proposed development and which cannot be secured by planning condition. However the Council's Executive is able to resolve to give effect to those measures required. Any such resolution by the Council's Executive would provide certainty that such measures will be given effect to if planning permission is granted and implemented for the proposed development and that the Council will ensure obligations are passed to any successor in title or leaseholder as appropriate to give effect to the mitigation required.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The Ten Acre Farm site extends to around 3.4 hectares and is accessed directly off Smarts Heath Road. The site lies to the west of Mayford village.

Access into the site is directly off Smarts Heath Road with a tarmac roadway running along the south-western boundary of the site. The site comprises areas of grassland and areas of hard surfacing associated with the previous use of the site as a travellers site. Towards the centre of the site there are various derelict barns/buildings and sheds along with abandoned touring and static caravans and small buildings.

The site is mainly level with larger level variations immediately adjacent to the boundaries of the site. The majority of the site has been utilised in the past for the tipping of building materials and road planings which has resulted in a raising of the overall site levels by around 3 metres in places.

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Smarts Heath Road forms the northern boundary of the site with the dwellings fronting the opposite side of the road beyond. The Escarpment is visible to the north of the site in the distance. The north-eastern corner of the site is adjoined by a detached dwelling, known as the Thatch Cottage which is a Locally Listed Building. The eastern boundary of the site is formed by open land formerly known as Jackman's Nursery. This land has recently been cleared of a number of boundary trees and undergrowth. Part of the north-east boundary of the site and part of the south-western boundary (beyond the site) are formed by ditches/watercourses which collect water from the Hook Heath Escarpment and surrounding to the Hoe Stream.

The southern boundary of the site is formed by the Hoe Stream with the main railway line beyond the southern boundary. The railway line lies slightly higher than the application site. The eastern boundary of the site is bordered by the main railway line. To the west of the site lies the Smarts Heath and Prey Heaths SSSI, Common Land and to the south and west lies adjacent to the Hoe Stream Site of Nature Conservation Importance.

PLANNING HISTORY

PLAN/2013/1193 – Erection of new bungalow and associated landscaping following the demolition of existing outbuilding and removal of mobile home. Refused 21.03.14

PLAN/2013/0712 – Demolition of existing building and erection of a detached 3 bed bungalow. Refused 11.10.2013. Appeal dismissed 02.07.14

PLAN/2004/1064 – Proposed installation of a 25m high monopole to accommodate 3no 2G antennas, 3no. 3G antennas and 2no. 60 mm transmission dishes, together with a ground based equipment cabin, electric metre cabinet and ancillary development. Refused 28.10.04. Appeal dismissed 04.07.05

PLAN/1998/0462 – Retention of shed/summer house on plot 3. Refused 10.08.98.

PLAN/1994/0845 – Certificate of lawfulness for the following existing uses, storage of machines and equipment, vehicle repairs, sand blasting, storage of scrap welding and paint spraying. Refused 03.03.95

PLAN/1994/0092 – Change of use of land to create an additional 5 caravan bays and 5 proposed toilet blocks for a private gypsy site resulting in a total of 10 caravan bays and 10 toilet blocks to be used as a private. Refused 17.06.94

PLAN/1987/1260 – Use of land for private gypsy camp site (12 pitches) and provision of toilet/wash block. Withdrawn

DC 87/0282 – Use of land as gypsy caravan site for one family. Permitted 04.08.87

DC 85/1240 – Temporary use of 2 mobile homes for owner whilst establishing pig farm. Refused 18.02.86

DC 85/0044 – Erection of detached dwelling for agricultural use. Refused 04.06.85

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This application seeks full planning permission for the redevelopment of the site to provide a new club building for Woking Gymnastics Club (part two storey) with new public access open space, cafe, car parking, vehicular access and natural landscaping incorporating flood

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alleviation measures adding to flood resilience in the Hoe Valley, works within the highway and associated works.

Building

The proposed building would be square in shape and would occupy the central part of the site where the site widens. The building would be positioned around 195 metres from the access into the site. The building would measure 56 metres in width by 55 metres in depth. The building would have a flat roof with a maximum height of 11.4 metres.

Parts of the building would be faced with a coloured cladding pattern varying from blue-white-green colours and the remainder of the elevations would be faced with natural Red Western Cedar and white render. The majority of the north and east elevations will be faced with natural cedar. The windows would have dark grey aluminium frames.

The building would be almost wholly used for the Woking Gymnastics club to provide a 45m x 45m gymnastics hall with seating area, equipment store, 4no. changing rooms (squad change and recreational change) and associated w.c. and first aid facilities, entrance lobby and offices and staff room etc.

The ground floor would also be occupied by a small café area which would be accessible either from the gymnastics club or independently. The café area would extend to around 185sqm with w.c. facilities.

Car parking

The access into the site would lead to a public car park comprising 26no. car parking spaces, including 4no. accessible parking spaces. To the front of the proposed building would be a second car park for Woking Gymnastics Club. This car park would accommodate 52no. car parking spaces including 4no. accessible spaces. An area for cycle and refuse storage is also provided to the front of the proposed building.

Remodelling of southern part of site

The application also proposes to change the use of the land surrounding the building to publicly accessible open space. This would comprise an accessible, ecologically diverse area of green space. Outside of the building, car parks and access road the site will be remodelled and landscaped to provide open space areas comprising, meadow planting, picnic area, nature pond, wetland area and boardwalks.

The majority of the re-modelling of the site would occur to the southern side of the proposed building to create a large wetland area, a backwater to the Hoe Stream and to create a nature pond. The land would be reduced by around 1- 2 metres in depth.

To the north of the proposed building the ground levels will be raised to accommodate the material removed from the southern part of the site and to provide a more varied topography across the site. Generally the levels for the car park and footways would be raised by a lesser amount with higher mounds providing buffers between the development and the boundaries of the site to create the varied topography for the open space areas which would be subject to extensive landscaping.

The whole site would also be landscaped with new boundary planting and extensive planting across the site appropriate to promoting the ecological diversity of the site. A number of other ecological enhancements are also proposed such as bird, bat and swift boxes, nature ponds, hibernacula and owl boxes.

The following documents have been submitted by the applicant in support of the application: Green Belt Policy Assessment Statement, Design and Access Statement, Flood Risk

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Assessment, Energy Statement, BREEAM Pre-Assessment, Transport Statement, Heritage Statement, Contaminated Land Assessment, Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Reptile Survey Report, Arboricultural Information, Landscape Design Statement, Outline Construction and Environmental Management Plan, Flood Risk Assessment Addendum and letter of support from British Gymnastics.

CONSULTATIONS

County Highway Authority (1st consultation response) – Recommended conditions be imposed on any permission granted [*Officer note: Given the extent of the conditions recommended and the comments made further clarification was sought from the CHA*].

County Highway Authority (2nd consultation response) – The CHA has assessed the application on safety, capacity and policy grounds and recommends conditions and informatives.

SCC County Archaeologist – Without a desk based assessment and possibly a report on evaluation I am not in a position to comment on the archaeological implications of the proposal. If such information is not forthcoming prior to determination I would recommend refusal of the application on the grounds of insufficient information. Notwithstanding these comments if the LPA deems that a strategy of preservation by record is sufficient to mitigate the loss of the archaeological assets that may be present and that the archaeological work can be undertaken after decision then the necessary archaeological work will need to be secured by the addition of a standard archaeological condition.

SCC Lead Local Flood Authority – On the basis that Woking Borough Council's Engineer has reviewed the application and provided no objections subject to condition there are no comments on the application.

Natural England (1st consultation response) – Objection as further information is required relating to drainage and a Construction and Environmental Management Plan will be required.

Natural England (2nd consultation response) – Following the receipt of additional information Natural England is satisfied that the previous issues raised have been resolved. No objection subject to conditions.

Environment Agency – No objection subject to conditions.

Surrey Wildlife Trust – No comments received.

Thames Water – Any comments received will be reported verbally.

Sport England – The application does not fall within our statutory or non-statutory remit.

Network Rail – No comments received.

WBC Planning Policy – On the basis of the evidence provided so far, the proposal will be contrary to both national and local planning policies [*Officer note: This response was received before the applicant submitted their revised Green Belt Policy Issues Assessment. Additionally it is acknowledged that the proposal is contrary to national and local planning policies, including Green Belt policy and thus the issue for the decision maker is whether very special circumstances exist to outweigh that policy objection*].

WBC Scientific Officer – No objection subject to condition and informatives.

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WBC Arboricultural Officer – There are significant amounts of trees to be removed (47 Grade C trees and 3 Grade B trees). The loss of these trees is regrettable however the proposed landscaping plan does indicate significant replanting which should provide a suitable mitigation for this loss. The arboricultural information submitted is acceptable and should be complied with in full. The landscaping proposal is considered acceptable in principle and details of plant sizes, positions and quantities can be conditioned.

WBC Drainage and Flood Risk Engineer – The information submitted with the application is compliant with Policy CS9 of the Core Strategy and the NPPF and the accompanying technical standards subject to conditions.

In relation to the additional information submitted by the applicant quantifying the benefit of the removal of land to create additional flood plain storage, the following comments have also been provided by the Council's **Drainage and Flood Risk Engineer**:

“Based on the information provided and the substantial reduction in land form adjacent to the Hoe Stream, the proposed scheme reduces the flood levels by 150mm downstream of the development site which may prevent flood water entering a property's threshold which are normally raised 150mm above surrounding ground levels. Based on this it can be noted that this is a significant benefit of the scheme. Of course extreme flood events may still occur which will have an impact on downstream properties.”

WBC Environmental Health – No objections subject to informatives.

WBC Green Infrastructure – The proposed development has the potential to positively support conservation of Great Crested Newt populations by providing a nature pond and by opting into the Woking GCN project. Ten Acre Farm lies within the yellow zone for the purposes of the pilot GCN project. Natural England has confirmed that the development is within the scope of the GCN project. If planning permission is to be granted then the LPA should secure involvement with the Woking GCN project including financial contribution.

WBC Conservation Consultant – This is a major scheme set within an extensive landscaped area including water features. The distance of Thatch Cottage (a locally listed building) from the major building on the development site is considerable and there is an extensive tree screen between the sites. I do not consider this development will have anything other than a minor negative effect on the locally listed cottage. In such cases the 'slight harm' must be balanced against any public benefit provided by the scheme. I consider the public benefit of the development will outweigh the slight harm created and have no further adverse comments.

REPRESENTATIONS

148 local properties were sent neighbour notification letters of the application, in addition to the application being advertised on the Council's website and by statutory press and site notices. The application has been advertised as a Departure from the Development Plan.

14 letters of support have been received (including one from the Smarts Heath Residents Association). A summary of the main comments made is given below:

- the proposals will benefit the community and local area;
- as a parent of children who attend the club this is an excellent opportunity for the local area to provide much needed support for the improvement of the club so desperately needing updated facilities;

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- despite best efforts the existing club facility is falling a long way behind the needs of the world class athletes at the club;
- the traffic calming will be essential to the safety of residents and visitors to the site;
- the site is long overdue for remediation to clear it of contaminated material which is a threat to the SSSI, residents and the Hoe Stream [*Officer note: the proposal is to encapsulate the contaminated material on site rather than remove it off site*];
- would make great use of an old waste site;
- the development would remodel the land to address high ground water levels;
- the drainage channels will also be restored;
- the alternative use of the site would be of less benefit to the community as a whole;
- the proposed education boards would be an excellent educational aid to visitors;
- the plan would contribute to flood alleviation and improve drainage;
- the plan would protect the SSSI status of Smarts Heath;
- the proposal would increase biodiversity and ecology on the site;
- the plan would provide essential traffic calming measures;
- the plan would provide Woking Gymnastics Club with a much needed facility;
- the plan would provide additional public open space;
- the plan would provide additional parking, toilets, café and picnic area for users of the heath;
- the plan would provide balancing ponds;
- the plan would bring good benefits to the residents of Mayford;
- the extension of the cycleway would provide a direct link to the new Hoe Valley School and Hoe Valley linear park which would have the benefit of linking green spaces;
- the development, remediation and landscaping will greatly improve the condition of this site for residents;
- the proposed building designs and landscaping appear appropriate;
- it is a sensitive development plan for the site which can only enhance the environment for residents in the area;
- the plan would remove destructive parking along Goose Lane;
- the plan would remove any further use of this site for industrial, commercial, residential and traveller use;
- Footway narrows outside Nos 36 and 38 Smarts Heath Road and requests that the plan should extend the low kerb outside No. 36 and that vehicles are discouraged/prevented from turning right into the site;
- The plan has the support of the Mayford Village Society and Smarts Heath Road Residents Association;
- Would not support the development of neighbouring land for housing;
- Electric charging points should be included in the car park;
- Ask WBC/SCC whether it is appropriate for Smarts Heath Road to remain as an approved/designated HGV route; and
- Traffic calming measures for Saunders Lane should be included.

1 further letter has been received which neither objects nor supports the application but requests confirmation that there would be no direct access from the site onto Smarts Heath [*Officer note: No direct access is proposed*].

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

National Planning Policy Framework 2012

Woking Core Strategy 2012

CS1 – A Spatial Strategy for Woking

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CS6 – Green Belt
CS7 – Biodiversity and Nature Conservation
CS9 – Flooding and Water Management
CS16 – Infrastructure Delivery
CS17 – Open Space, Green Infrastructure, Sport and Recreation
CS18 – Transport and Accessibility
CS19 – Social and Community infrastructure
CS20 – Heritage and Conservation
CS21 – Design
CS22 – Sustainable Construction
CS24 – Woking’s Landscape and Townscape
CS25 – Presumption in favour of sustainable development

Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (DPD) October 2016

DM1 – Green Infrastructure Opportunities
DM2 – Trees and Landscaping
DM3 – Outdoor Recreation and Sport Facilities
DM5 – Environmental Pollution
DM6 – Air and Water Quality
DM7 – Noise and Light Pollution
DM8 – Land Contamination and Hazards
DM13 – Buildings in and adjacent to the Green Belt

Supplementary Planning Document

Design February 2015
Climate Change December 2013
Parking Standards July 2018

Draft Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) June 2015

Policy GB7 – Ten Acre Farm, Smarts Heath Road, Mayford

National Planning Practice Guide

PLANNING ISSUES

1. The key planning matters for consideration in this case are the Green Belt, provision of open space and building for sport/recreation use, highways and movement, ecology and biodiversity, design and visual impact including impact on heritage assets, trees and landscaping, flood risk and drainage, contamination, sustainable construction, impact on neighbouring residential amenity and local finance considerations.

Background

2. The planning history for the site identifies that in August 1987 planning permission (DC 87/0282) was granted for the “*use of land as gypsy caravan site for one family*”. Condition 3 of this planning permission states that “*this consent shall enure for the benefit of the Applicant and his family only and for no other person or firm.*” The applicant at the time was a Mr J. Lee. In 2013 an application was submitted for the “*erection of new bungalow and associated landscaping following the demolition of existing outbuilding and removal of mobile home*” under PLAN/2013/1193. Although this application was refused it is noted that the applicant was a Mr John Lee. There is also a letter on the file from the applicant at the time stating he has owned the land for 45 years. On the basis of this information it is taken that he was the same applicant as in the 1987 application. The site was therefore at this time being occupied in accordance with the requirements of the condition on the 1987 planning permission.

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3. The site is now vacant with various derelict abandoned caravans and the site is now owned by Woking Borough Council. At some time between 2013 and the submission of the current application in 2017 Mr Lee and any family left the site. At this time the 1987 planning permission would have fallen away. No other lawful use could have assumed an established use in the intervening time as less than 10 years has lapsed in any event since 2013, if Mr Lee left the site at this time.
4. As the 1987 planning permission was for the “*use of land as a gypsy caravan site for one family*” (emphasis added) on termination of the personal permission (by Mr Lee leaving the site), the personal permission has ended and the land has now reverted to its pre-existing use, in this case agricultural use. Therefore the site is no longer an ‘existing authorised site’ for the purposes of Policy CS14 (Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople) and this policy is therefore not engaged by the proposal.
5. The emerging Draft Site Allocations DPD was published in June 2015 for public consultation which closed on 31 July 2015. Policy GB7 relates to the application site and seeks to allocate the site to enable the delivery of up to 12 pitches to meet the needs of Travellers from the adoption of the DPD to 2027. At this stage, the policies contained in the Draft Site Allocations DPD have the potential of being a material consideration. However what weight, if any, to be given to any policy is a matter for the decision maker and may be different in the consideration of each policy in relation to any development scheme proposed. Although this policy document has been subject to public consultation it is noted that a significant number of representations have been received against the allocation of this site for Traveller pitched during the Regulation 18 consultation and the Council will be taking these into account when finalising the DPD for Regulation 19 consultation. Until the Site Allocations DPD has been formally submitted for public examination, it is considered that very limited weight can be attached to it.

Green Belt

6. The site is located in the Green Belt. The NPPF makes clear that the Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. Paragraph 80 of the NPPF advises that the Green Belt serves five purposes. Paragraph 81 also advises that local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt such as to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation, to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity.
7. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances (NPPF paragraph 87). When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. ‘Very special circumstances’ will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations (NPPF paragraph 88). This approach is replicated in Policy CS6 of the Core Strategy and Policy DM13 of the DM Policies DPD.
8. The planning application includes the provision of a new building. The construction of new buildings is inappropriate development in the Green Belt, unless it is classed as an exception listed in paragraph 89 of the NPPF. The provision of a building for an indoor sporting/leisure use is not one of the ‘excepted’ buildings listed in paragraph 89 and therefore it is inappropriate development. A material change of use of land from agriculture to open space use is also inappropriate development within the Green Belt

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as this use does not fall within the categories of development listed in paragraph 90 of the NPPF [*Fordent Holdings Ltd v SSCLG [2013] EWHC 2844 (Admin) and R (Timmins & Anr) v Gedling BC & Anr [2015] EWCA Civ 10*].

9. The remodelling of the land to provide the inlet is an engineering operation. Under Paragraph 90 engineering operations are not inappropriate development providing they preserve the openness of the Green Belt. In this case it is considered that the remodelling of this area adjacent to the Hoe Stream to provide an inlet would not affect the openness of the Green Belt and therefore itself would not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Nonetheless it should be noted that even if an application contains elements that on their own would be appropriate development, the Courts have held that the whole of the development is still to be regarded as inappropriate development in the Green Belt [*Kemnal Manor Memorial Gardens Ltd v First Secretary of State [2005] EWCA Civ 835*]. Therefore in this case the proposed development is inappropriate development in the Green Belt, which by definition is harmful. It is therefore necessary to consider whether other harm to the Green Belt would also result from the proposed development.
10. Given the character of the existing site which is largely undeveloped and the nature and character of the proposal it is also considered that the development will result in a permanent loss of openness to the Green Belt.

Purposes of the Green Belt

11. With regard to the five purposes of the Green Belt, the proposed building is not considered to result in the unrestricted sprawl of a large built up area as this site is located in an isolated position but it is noted that the proposal would result in some urban sprawl as the proposed building constitutes a form of urban sprawl that this Green Belt purpose is seeking to restrain. The proposed building would be located in the large gap which currently exists between Woking (to the south of Mayford) and Guildford. This gap would be diminished by introducing built form within this gap between the settlements, although it is noted that it will not result in the physical or visual merging of these two towns. As the site has reverted to its former agricultural use (notwithstanding the recent use as a Gypsy and Traveller site, the proposed development would result in the encroachment of the countryside. The proposed development therefore conflicts with these purposes of the Green Belt. The proposed development will however preserve the setting and special character of historic towns as neither Woking nor Mayford are considered to be historic towns in this sense. In addition the proposed development is not considered to compromise urban regeneration elsewhere within the Borough. The applicant also considers that the proposal may assist with urban regeneration by recycling existing urban land as the relocation of Woking Gymnastics Club from its current site would create an opportunity for development on its existing site and the wider area around Woking Football Club.

Beneficial uses of the Green Belt

12. Paragraph 81 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt such as looking for opportunities to provide access, opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation, to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity and to improve damaged and derelict land.
13. In this case there is currently no public access to the land. Alongside the provision of the gymnastics building, the proposed development would make land available for outdoor recreation. The adjacent SSSI is also common land and is managed for conservation and low key recreational use e.g. walkers. There can exist a tension between the status

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of the land as a SSSI and also its recreational use. The application proposal includes the provision of publicly accessible open space which would include a picnic area and circular walk. Newly created habitat including nature ponds/wetlands will provide new green space in this locality and would complement the adjacent open space areas. Visitors to the site will also be able to use the café provided within the building. The proposal also includes the provision of education boards which will provide information explaining the value of the Heath and its flora and fauna and explaining the value of preserving the existing environment and its vulnerability especially at certain times of the year. Boards will also be used to take the public through the newly created habitats on site and encourage walkers to remain within the newly created landscape. This element of the proposal would provide access and opportunities for outside recreation which would significantly improve the beneficial use of land within the Green Belt for the wider community.

14. In terms of retaining and enhancing landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity, it is acknowledged that the provision of a large building on this site would change the character of the site and would result in a visual impact as assessed in paragraphs 104-108 of this report. Nonetheless it is noted that surrounding the building and allied to the proposed open space use of the wider site a significant landscaping scheme is proposed to improve the landscape structure of the site and to result in a significant enhancement of the biodiversity value of the site. These aspects are assessed in more detail in paragraphs 72-89 and 95 to 103 of this report.
15. With regard to improving damaged and derelict land, a large area of the site has historically been subject to commercial waste tipping such that levels on the site have been raised by as much as 3 metres in places. The waste which has been deposited has also introduced contamination onto the site. In addition there are a number of semi-derelict buildings and caravans in various states of repair on the site. As part of the proposed development the ground levels to south of the proposed building would be reduced to re-instate floodplain capacity providing a significant beneficial flood alleviation impact and the historic imported material on the site will be encapsulated on the site to create new landscapes and put the land around the building to a beneficial use. These aspects are assessed in more detail in paragraphs 46-50 and 115-123 of this report. The proposal is considered to improve damaged land.
16. Whilst some of the proposal would result in some benefits to the use of this Green Belt land, this does not alter the fact that the proposed development comprises inappropriate development within the Green Belt which is by definition harmful, with harm to openness and conflict with some of the purposes of the Green Belt. In accordance with the NPPF substantial weight is required to be given to this harm.
17. It is therefore necessary to consider whether any very special circumstances exist in this case which would clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm. In this particular case 'other harm' to the Green Belt has been identified as harm to openness and conflict with one of the purposes but it also includes any 'other harm' which may be considered to result from the proposed development. In this respect all of the material planning considerations are relevant and these are dealt with in the paragraphs following the consideration of the very special circumstances. The conclusion – planning balance is provided at the end of this report where the identified harm will be balanced with the Very Special Circumstances and any other benefits of the proposed development.

Very Special Circumstances

18. Very special circumstances to justify the granting of planning permission will not exist

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unless the harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm is clearly outweighed by other considerations. Very special circumstances can constitute one consideration or the combination of a number of considerations.

19. In considering Very Special Circumstances (VSC), the judgement in the case of R (lee Valley Regional Park Authority) v Broxbourne Borough Council [2015] EWHC 185 (Admin) provides assistance in that:

“Once the issue is whether or not inappropriate development should be permitted in the Green Belt, all factors which tell in favour of the grant go to making up very special circumstances, which may or may not suffice. It is not necessary to go through the process of considering whether a factor is not a very special circumstance but nonetheless falls to be taken into account in favour of the development as another relevant material consideration. See Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government v Redhill Aerodrome Ltd [2014 EWCA Civ 1386.]”

20. In this case the applicant has submitted a case for VSC and considers that there are 6 as follows:

- VSC1 – Meeting demand for Gymnastics;
- VSC2 – Meeting the specific needs of Woking Gymnastics Club;
- VSC3 – the absence of a credible and viable alternative site;
- VSC4 – the implications of a ‘Do nothing’ scenario;
- VSC5 – the range and scale of health, socio-economic and other benefits arising from the proposal; and
- VSC6 – Flood resilience benefits to the Hoe Valley.

VSC1 – Meeting demand for Gymnastics

21. The applicant’s case sets out that the Council’s Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) states that “indoor sports facilities are important for the health and well-being of the population” and that indoor sports will be defined as swimming pools and sports halls/courts. The applicant recognises that no specific reference is made to a specialist gymnastics centre but considers that gymnastics clearly falls into a category where increased space is required to cater for high demand. The applicant’s case also identifies that the IDP addresses community facilities and recognises these as providing a publicly available space for communities to meet together. Within the IDP the definition of communities is broad and includes people with a shared interest e.g. hobby or other common bonds.

22. The applicant advises that the Gymnastics Club provides an important facility and community for many people in the Borough and that this role will be strengthened through the delivery of the proposed development. The applicants also identify that the Council’s Social and Community Facilities Audit 2011 concluded that, whilst there was not a shortage of social and community facilities in the Borough, some facilities were operating at capacity and require more space. It is stated that this is the case for Woking Gymnastics Club. In terms of demand it is stated that whilst gym and acrobatics classes are available at other facilities, WGC is the only specialist provider of gymnastics training and classes in the Borough. It has been an established part of the community for over 30 years within this time it has not only benefitted thousands of users but has produced national and international calibre athletes. This has resulted in its strong reputation and a resultant level of demand which cannot be met at the current facility.

Demand

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23. The applicant has advised that the WGC currently has 972 members actively enrolled in term or monthly bookings as follows:
- 0-4 years (pre-school) – 133 members;
 - 4-11years (primary school) – 655 members;
 - 11-17years (secondary school) – 184 members
24. It is stated as being the largest single youth organisation in Woking. In addition there is a significant number of users who attend various classes and drop in sessions. This equates to a monthly average of 902 users. The centre is also used by elite gymnasts for their rigorous training programmes, the coaching offered and the equipment available to practice on. The WGC is highly successful but is at capacity and its term/monthly bookings currently have a waiting list of 110 people as follows:
- 0-4 years (pre-school) – 4;
 - 4-11years (primary school) – 101;
 - 11-17years (secondary school) – 5
25. This additional demand represents over 11% on top of the existing members. It is also stated that the Club is a regional hub for disabled gymnastics and it is stated that there is demand for additional classes and disciplines. In this regard it is also stated that coaches from the centre visit other organisations to provide gymnastics at the White Lodge Centre, local Sure Start centres and schools. The number of people who benefit from the centre goes beyond its members and direct users. The Club also has a desire to reach out to an even broader spectrum of the local community to spread the benefits of gymnastics. As the centre is currently operating at capacity and as the existing premises provide such poor facilities for changing, showering (none), spectating (none) and socialising, it is not possible to meet this demand. The applicant considers that the need for improved facilities for gymnastics to support the clear demand within the local community and local area is a need which should be met and contributes to VSC.
26. Having regard to this information it is considered that the WGC is a long standing and well established sporting/recreational/community facility serving an important function in the Borough and wider locality. It is further considered that the WGC offers a sporting/recreation/community facility to a wide range of people and in particular children and as such positively contributes to the health and wellbeing of the local community. There is no other comparable gymnastics facility/club in the Borough. It is accepted that the Woking Gymnastics Club is in high demand particularly for pre-school and school age children and that the Club is currently operating at capacity. The need for Woking Gymnastics Club is accepted, in addition to its need to expand to meet the demand and to continue to provide important sporting infrastructure within the Borough which has a positive benefit on the health, well-being and social and community infrastructure in the Borough.

VSC2 – Meeting the specific needs of Woking Gymnastics Club

27. In addition to the need, it is stated that the Club has as series of specialist needs which area not and cannot be met by the current facility. When the existing centre was opened it is noted that the area for gymnastics training was regarded as “state-of-the-art” but is no longer adequate for the club’s present or future needs. It is stated that the limitations imposed by the facilities prevent the club from providing gymnastics activities and training to all those who seek them.
28. The limitations of the current facility are as follows:
- The centre has a single gymnastics hall with no other training or ancillary rooms

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- preventing running multiple classes;
 - There is no space for parents to observe classes which limits the ability to run competitions. There are no proper waiting facilities within the building;
 - Changing facilities are of a very low standard and are below that expected from a successful specialist gymnastics centre. There is limited changing space, far less than required for the number of members and there are no showering facilities for members, casual participants or staff;
 - Office and meeting space is poor and there is only one room for permanent staff, volunteers and coaches; and
 - There are no facilities for disabled gymnasts or disabled visitors.
29. The applicant advises that the above limitations severely impact on the Club's offering to gymnasts, their families and wider community. It is further advised that the building is an unattractive place to visit and the Club finds it hard to attract and retain staff to work in the current environment. The building is inherently inefficient and creates a poor customer experience. Nonetheless despite the deficiencies, the applicant has advised that the Woking Gymnastics Club continues to produce national and international level athletes but due to a lack of space athletes have to share apparatus with other groups. The athletes that train at WGC provide a boost to the centre by attracting others. The applicant considers that if the facilities are not improved athletes will look elsewhere to train and this would impact on the reputation of the club and its ability to attract and retain both coaches and new members.
30. The proposed development would provide the club with facilities to address the deficiencies and would allow the club to:
- satisfy the demand for high quality gymnastics training within the community;
 - reduce overcrowding and improve health and safety for gymnasts;
 - offer more gymnastics opportunities to children and adults;
 - increase and accommodate work with disability groups;
 - raise the age range beyond teenagers and for the over 40s;
 - give more children opportunities to be fit through gymnastics;
 - provide more opportunities for elite artistic gymnasts who can compete at international level; and
 - work in partnership with other local groups to provide activities for older children especially teenagers.
31. The Club also considers that the following benefits would also result from relocation:
- The club will be able to satisfy its waiting list of school age children, for which there is demand;
 - Elite gymnasts will have more opportunity to train without having to share apparatus with the ability to focus on competition pieces;
 - The club will be able to offer activities such as trampolining and cheerleading which are recognised British Gymnastics disciplines which are not currently offered due to space limitations;
 - The club will be able to offer more dates and timeslots convenient to its disability partners and their participants as the current facility restricts offering a regular scheduled time for disability groups;
 - Providing more adult classes as there is currently no capacity to do so; and
 - Providing women only classes, including classes for Muslim women.
32. The applicant advises that the club plays an important role in the sports and community life of Woking and its need to continue to do so in a manner which more fully meets the requirements of the local community is a very special circumstance. In light of the information given within the application in relation to the specific situation of Woking

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Gymnastics Club it is accepted that the current facility at Kingfield Road is limited in terms of the range and condition of the facilities on offer and that the existing building is aged and the current facilities are not able to meet the needs of its users or enable the club to expand to meet the demand for gymnastics. However the specific needs of Woking Gymnastics Club along with the demand for Woking Gymnastics Club does not necessarily mean that the proposal on this site is acceptable as it is necessary to consider whether there is any other available site for Woking Gymnastics Club.

VSC3 - the absence of a credible and viable alternative site

33. Woking Gymnastics Club is currently located on a site adjacent to Woking Football Club at Kingfield Road and it is advised that the limitations of the current site have been recognised by the club for many years and it has over the years attempted to find suitable alternative sites for relocation on a number of occasions.
34. The application submission provides details on the previous attempts to relocate to a new site and provides details of which sites were considered, measures undertaken and why the Gymnastics Club was not able to re-locate. The sites considered were, land adjacent to Woking Leisure Centre, land at Bishop David Brown School, former Mushroom Farm (now Heather Farm), Woking Business Park and the permanent Hoe Valley School site. The reasons given why these sites were not successful are development was prohibited by flood risk issues, no other land is available, the land/sites could not accommodate the requirements of the Gymnastics Club due to insufficient space, owners of site were not supportive of proposals and proposals would displace existing employment floorspace. In respect of all of these noted sites, it is accepted that none of these sites are able to offer an alternative site for the proposed Gymnastics Club.
35. In addition and, given the difficulties encountered in identifying and securing an alternative site, the Club has also sought planning permission to re-develop their existing site by incorporating the adjacent snooker club site. In May 2017 planning permission was granted for the change of use of the adjacent snooker club and extension to link the two buildings to provide additional space for the Gymnastics Club. The approved plans show that the following facilities would have been provided:
 - Dedicated space for staff including offices and staff room;
 - Significant improvements to changing rooms;
 - A café;
 - Viewing areas;
 - Two large gymnastics rooms; and
 - A multi-purpose room which could be split in two.
36. It is stated that if it had been possible to proceed with this development then it would have gone a long way in addressing the needs of the Woking Gymnastics Club. The applicant advises that notwithstanding that the terms of lease on the snooker building were agreed and planning permission granted, the freeholder of the wider site was not willing to give its agreement to the redevelopment proceeding. It is understood that this is because to do so would prejudice wider ambitions regarding the retention of the football club and the ability to deliver related development which could secure the retention of the football club. Therefore it is not possible for the gymnastics club to re-develop on or adjacent to its current site as the freeholder will not grant permission.
37. In addition to the above, the applicant has also undertaken a current market search of available sites. The following methodology was adopted in undertaking the research:

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- A search radius of 10 miles from Woking town centre was adopted. This radius takes in the home locations of the majority (96.7%) of Woking Gymnastics Club members although, in reality, some 82.7% of members live within a 5 mile radius of the town centre and the existing gymnastics club.
 - The search parameters were defined to include “vacant space” (which is defined as space not currently occupied by a tenant regardless of any lease obligations that may exist) and “available space” (which is defined as the total amount of space that is currently being marketed as available regardless of whether the space is vacant, occupied, available for sublease or available at a future date).
 - From the above exercise a long-list of available properties was produced. This long-list was then refined with reference to the specific requirements of the gymnastics club in relation to overall floorspace and building height to derive a short-list of properties for further investigation. As noted in the Design and Access Statement, the gymnastics club requires a gymnastics hall which, to provide suitable space to BGA standards, must have a 45m x 45m with a clear uninterrupted span with no intermediate columns. A minimum 8.5m clear height internally within this space is required to provide safe clearance for the higher pieces of equipment and trampolines. In addition to this principal space, accommodation is also required for changing areas, storage and plant, office, staff and multi-purpose sport spaces. The proposed building at 10 Acre Farm would provide 3620 sq.m. (38,965sq.ft) of floorspace.
38. Buildings which were clearly unsuitable against the floorspace and building height requirements were removed from the search generating a short-list of four properties as follows:
1. The Rock, 2 Thornbury Way, Slyfield Industrial Estate, GU1 1QB

This site does not meet the BGA standards in terms of clear internal height; it does not provide for long-term security of tenure and there is no certainty that planning permission would be granted for the club’s use of the premises.
 2. Units 7-10, Egham Business Park, Ten Acre Lane, Egham, TW20 8RJ

The physical characteristics of these buildings would not allow for facilities of an appropriate standard to be provided (insufficient floor area, even when units combined, insufficient height clearance). The site is also poorly located in relation to the existing membership of Woking Gymnastics Club and the site owners are unlikely to make the premises available to Woking Gymnastics Club from a commercial perspective.
 3. Royal Mills, Sandown Industrial Park, Mill Road, Esher, KT10 8BL

The premises, even when re-furnished, will have an insufficient clear internal height and would therefore not comply with BGA standards for a gymnastics hall. The site is unlikely to be made available by the freehold owners for commercial reasons and is also subject to a planning policy which protects existing employment sites for employment use. In addition, the site is poorly located in relation to the Gymnastics Club’s members.
 4. Burnt Common Distribution Centre, London Road, Guildford, GU23 7LN

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This site is identified as a Strategic Industrial Employment Site and is safeguarded for such use thereby making it unlikely that planning permission for a change of use to a gymnastics club would be forthcoming. Even if permission could be secured, the gymnastics club would then occupy part of a site surrounded by Class B1, B2 and B8 employment uses which would not be an appropriate or safe environment for the Gymnastics Club.

39. In light of the above information it is accepted that there are no alternative sites available to accommodate the requirements of Woking Gymnastics Club. It is therefore concluded that this is currently the only site available for the provision of a building for Woking Gymnastics Club and this is considered to comprise a very special circumstance.

VSC4 – the implications of a ‘Do nothing’ scenario

40. The applicant also considers that weight should be given to the situation which would result should planning permission not be granted for the application proposal, resulting in the club relying on its current location. The applicant has advised that the current ‘status quo’ would not be retained and that the inability to re-locate would have the following implications:
- They would immediately trim all classes by 20-25% due to overcrowding and safety concerns;
 - The resulting drop in revenues would result in a need to reduce staff resulting in redundancies;
 - The club would be forced to cut down on the number of Gymnastics for All classes it offers to school age children (there is currently a waiting list of over 100 children for these classes);
 - The elite squad would suffer due to limited training times and space having a negative effect on their training and performance results;
 - Top athletes would be urged by British Gymnastics to find a more suitable club to train at;
 - The club would need to redevelop the foyer and changing area space as it is currently unsafe for the volume of current members;
 - The club could not keep up with demand for classes and it would not be able to introduce new activities to keep children engaged;
 - Residents of the Borough would miss out on the community and health benefits gymnastics offer; and
 - The limitations faced by the club would not be addressed and these will begin to affect its ability to attract and retain staff and members.
41. The applicant also states that whilst the club has a long term lease, its future is not certain as there is an apparent ambition from the freeholder to redevelop the wider site and this is consistent with the identification of the site on the Council’s Brownfield Land Register. The applicant considers that the negative consequences of a ‘do nothing’ scenario for the club and the wider community contribute to the very special circumstances.
42. The comments made by the applicant are noted and whilst it is not considered that the effects of a ‘do nothing’ scenario would immediately follow it is recognised that as the facility continues to be constrained both spatially and in terms of the range and quality of facilities on offer and the likely reduced user experience that a ‘do nothing’ scenario is capable of contributing some weight to very special circumstances.

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VSC5 - the range and scale of health and socio-economic and other benefits arising from the proposal

43. The applicant has advised that there would be a range of health, socio-economic and environmental benefits arising from the proposed development. In summary the applicant considers these are:
- The creation of an improved community facility which will create and promote links between different members of the community;
 - The creation of publicly accessible open space which has potential to relieve pressure on the Smarts and Prey Heath SSSI;
 - Ecological enhancements including the creation of a variety of terrestrial and wetland habitats and ponds. The assessment of all of the ecological effects and benefits of the proposal are assessed in detail in paragraphs 72-89;
 - Highway improvements including traffic calming measures on Smarts Heath Road and a new pedestrian and cycle link. The assessment of these off-site highway improvements are provided in paragraphs 59-71;
 - Safe-guarding existing employment at Woking Gymnastic Club (currently 9FTE) and the creation of additional employment opportunities;
 - Construction phase economic benefits from construction employment and construction supply chain;
 - Operation phase economic benefits including an increase in the number of jobs on the site to 15 FTE jobs in addition to indirect economic benefits; and
 - The new facility will be able to accommodate an additional 110 people currently on the waiting list which would result in an NHS cost saving of reduced GP visits resulting from increased participation in sport.
44. The applicant considers that these socio-economic benefits would comprise a very special circumstance which would justify the proposed development. The benefits resulting from the proposed development are not disputed but it could be argued that some of these benefits would result from the proposed development irrespective of whether the development is located within the urban area or Green Belt. However it is also acknowledged that some other sites, if available would not result in all of the benefits which would result from this site such as the creation of publicly accessible space, the highway improvements to Smarts Heath Road and the on-site ecological enhancements. However, as identified above, as there is no other suitable alternative site which could accommodate the development the stated benefits would not result without this site.
45. It is therefore considered that the benefits that would result from the proposed development including the provision of a new sporting/recreation/community establishment, for a long standing and well established existing club, the health and well-being benefits that would derive from the sporting facilities and the increased participation in sport, the economic, highway safety and ecological benefits that would derive from the proposed development do have the potential to contribute to a case for very special circumstances in combination with any other identified very special circumstances.

VSC6 – Flood resilience benefits to the Hoe Valley

46. The applicant has also advised that the proposed development would also deliver significant benefits in relation to flood resilience and that these benefits extend beyond the application site itself for long distance upstream and downstream. The application is supported by a Flood Risk Assessment and an Addendum which quantifies the flood reduction/flood resilience benefits arising as a result of the additional flood storage

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provided on the application site.

47. The applicant further advises that the application site is located within the Hoe Stream Sub-area 8 of the Thames Catchment Flood Management Plan (CFMP). The CFMP identifies flood risk, the source of these risks and any associated concerns or issues in the Thames catchment from rivers, groundwater, surface water and tidal flooding. Within the Hoe Stream sub-area 8 there are currently 250 properties with a 1% risk of flooding from rivers and the preferred policy options for this area are to:
 - Design new buildings to be flood resilient and resistant;
 - Maintain the existing capacity of the river streams in developed areas that reduces the risk of flooding from more frequent events; and
 - Identify locations where the storage of water could benefit communities by reducing flood risk and providing environmental benefits (applicant's emphasis) and encourage flood compatible land uses and management.
48. The SuDS strategy for the development includes measures to attenuate run-off to greenfield rates and it also provides an additional area of flood storage to the south of the site in the vicinity of the Hoe Stream. Existing ground levels in the southern part of the site would be lowered to re-instate/increase the capacity of the Hoe Stream floodplain. Creating this additional floodplain capacity will lower peak flood levels at the application site and would also provide betterment to properties downstream of the site by reducing the risk of flooding. As noted in paragraphs 115-123, the proposals would result in a reduction in peak water levels of up to 150mm downstream and in accordance with the advice of the Council's Flood Risk and Drainage Engineer, this is a significant benefit.
49. The applicant concludes that the ability of the project to provide increased flood storage to significantly reduce peak flood water levels upstream and downstream of the site and to reduce the risk to property during a flood event is an important planning benefit of the proposal to which significant weight should be attached. Flood alleviation in the Hoe Valley has been an important strategic priority for the Council for many years with initial works completed in 2021 and future works proposed through the Hoe Stream Restoration project.
50. In light of the above comments, it is considered that the proposal would result in significant benefits to flood alleviation in the Hoe Valley and to people and property and that this is very special circumstance.

Conclusion on very special circumstances

51. In this particular case it is therefore considered that the following matters do comprise very special circumstances:
 - Meeting the current need for gymnastics by Woking Gymnastics Club and its need to expand to meet demand and to continue to provide important sporting infrastructure within the Borough which has a positive benefit on the health, well-being and social and community infrastructure in the Borough.
 - The specific needs of Woking Gymnastics Club to provide suitable facilities for Woking Gymnastics Club;
 - The absence of any alternative site for the proposed development, which has been robustly assessed using a wide search area and the minimum requirements for a gymnastics facility;
 - The likely resulting implications of a 'do nothing' scenario;
 - The health, socio-economic, highway improvements and environmental benefits

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resulting from the proposal which would not otherwise occur as there is no alternative site for the provision of the development;

- The flood alleviation benefits to the Hoe Stream through the significant increase in floodplain storage capacity.
52. However whether these matters in isolation or combination are considered to outweigh the harm to the Green Belt and any other harm resulting from the proposed development will be assessed as part of the conclusion-planning balance at the end of this report, once all other material planning considerations have been assessed. The consideration of all other material planning considerations will identify whether ‘any other harm’ would result from the proposed development in addition to that already identified and whether or not there are any other benefits which should also be weighed in the planning balance.
53. If however it is concluded that the very special circumstances in this case outweigh the harm to the Green Belt and any other harm, to justify planning permission being granted then it is considered that the use of the building (excluding the café) should be restricted to Woking Gymnastics Club as the overall need for the facility derives directly from the unique needs of the long standing and well established Woking Gymnastics Club rather than any other leisure use or club.

Provision of open space on site and a building for sporting/recreational use

54. One of the three main dimensions of sustainable development, as stated in the NPPF, is a social role to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities including providing accessible local services that reflect the community’s needs and supports its health, social and cultural well-being. One of the core principles of planning is to “deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs” (paragraph 17).
55. This approach is supported in Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy which seeks to provide accessible and sustainable social and community infrastructure to support growth in the Borough. The supporting preamble to the policy advises that social and community infrastructure includes *inter alia* “indoor and outdoor recreation and sports facilities.” Policy CS17 relates to open space, green infrastructure, sport and recreation and seeks to encourage the improvement in the quality and quantity of the Green Infrastructure network in the Borough. Policy CS17 also seeks to protect river corridors by creating undeveloped buffer zones which will serve as green infrastructure as well as habitats of biodiversity value. Policies DM1 (Green Infrastructure Opportunities) and DM3 (facilities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation) also seek to encourage the provision of green infrastructure facilities and outdoor recreation facilities subject to a number of criteria.
56. In general, notwithstanding the conflict with Green Belt policy, the provision of additional social and community infrastructure and new publicly accessible open space in the Borough is encouraged subject to other policy and detailed planning considerations.
57. In this case the proposal would result in the provision of a high quality building for a specific sporting and recreation purpose which would assist in supporting the needs of the community and would make a positive contribution to the health and well being of the local community. The proposed building would be for Woking Gymnastics Club which is a long standing, well established successful provider of indoor gymnastics in the Borough. In terms of Policy CS19 alone, the proposal would comply with the policy requirements by providing infrastructure to support the growth of the Borough.

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58. With regard to the provision of publicly accessible open space the proposal would increase the quantity of open space/green infrastructure in the Borough as encouraged by Policy CS17 of the Core Strategy. The proximity of the proposed open space to the adjacent Common Land would also improve the connectivity of open space within the Borough. The proposed open space would provide a public car park, amenity spaces and a picnic area to support the proposed open space. In addition the proposed open space would also maximise the range of green infrastructure benefits and functions by the provision of a range of features, ponds, wetlands, picnic area, meadows and biodiversity enhancements. The proposed development would also provide an 80 metre buffer zone to the Hoe Stream. The open space proposals on the site are therefore considered to comply with Policies CS17 of the Woking Core Strategy and Policy DM1 of the DM Policies DPD.

Highways and Movement

59. The NPPF promotes sustainable transport. Development should only be refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe. The applicant has submitted a Transport Statement with the application.
60. In terms of traffic generation, the Woking Gymnastics Club is anticipated to generate around 67 two-way vehicular movements during the evening peak hour, 256 two-way movements over the course of a typical weekday and around 76 two-way vehicle movements during a typical weekend peak hour. The 67 two-way vehicle movements generated by the site during the PM peak hour period would represent a 9.6% increase in the level of traffic on Smarts Heath Road. During the weekend, the worst case impact would be 76 two-way movements between 11:30 and 12:30 hours, whilst the peak traffic on Smarts Heath Road is between 12:00 and 13:00 hours. If these peaks were coincident during a weekend hour then the resulting traffic generation would still be lower than the peak hour movement on a typical weekday. On this basis it is considered that the traffic generated by the proposed development would not be detrimental to the operation of the local highway network.
61. A new access off Smarts Heath Road would be provided into the site. A new bellmouth junction with a 9 metre radii and a 5.5 metre access width would be provided. Dropped kerbs and tactile paving would be included to provide a safe crossing of the junction for pedestrians. An Automatic Traffic Counter (ATC) on Smarts Heath Road, has been used by the applicant to establish vehicle speeds and volumes on the road. The ATC showed that 85th percentile vehicle speeds in both directions are above the 40 / 30 mph speed restrictions present on Smarts Heath Road demonstrating that the existing traffic calming measures (painted speed cushions) are not effective in this instance. The speed of the vehicles recorded provides the required visibility splays in both directions for the proposed new access. The plans provided with the application demonstrate that the required visibility splays can be provided in both directions within the publicly maintainable highway from the proposed access.
62. Parking Standards SPD 2018 advises that the parking standards for non-residential uses are maximum standards. For Class D2 (Assembly and Leisure) uses which are not mentioned in the standards an individual assessment/justification is required. With regard to parking, a total of 78 car parking spaces would be provided on the site. 52 spaces would be provided within the Gymnastics Club car park, including 4 accessible parking spaces, whilst 26 spaces would be provided in the public car park, also including 4 accessible parking spaces. The Gymnastics Club has a current membership of 1,053 and the applicant's Transport Statement advises that the club could generate a parking demand for 19 vehicles during a typical weekday peak and a parking demand of 37 vehicles during a peak on a Saturday. The applicant's Transport Statement therefore

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considers that the proposed provision of 52 parking spaces would provide adequate parking for current membership levels (1,053) as well as offering sufficient capacity for future growth and for competition days when parking demand would be greater. The proposed parking provision of the Gymnastics Club is therefore considered to be acceptable.

63. A public car park is also proposed associated with the common land which would provide a safe and convenient place to park for recreational use of the adjacent common land away from the local highway network. As for the Gymnastics Club itself, there are no set parking standards for open space in the Parking Standards SPD. It is understood that some dog walkers and recreational walkers park on Goose Lane which can damage the edge of the highway and can also obstruct passing vehicles on the highway causing road safety concerns. The provision of a public car park would assist in providing an improved alternative parking provision to any parking on Goose Lane. The provision of a public car park in this location would assist in enhancing the beneficial use of the Green Belt by providing access and therefore opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation on the site and on the adjacent common land. This is a benefit of the proposal.
64. Cycle storage facilities will be provided on the site in addition to showers, lockers and changing facilities. Space is shown on the site layout plan to the front of the building for cycle storage. It is stated in the applicant's Transport Statement that based on the number of staff currently employed and at the site and the maximum number of children per class, a minimum of 5 cycle parking spaces should be provided. The Parking Standards SPD advise that the provision of cycle parking spaces should be based on individual assessment. The applicant's Transport Statement therefore advises that a dedicated cycle storage space would be provided to accommodate all users of the site as well as sufficient capacity to accommodate a potential increase in memberships and employees at the site. On this basis a condition is included to require the provision of covered and secure cycle storage facilities.
65. The applicant's Transport Statement advises that it has been highlighted by Surrey County Council and local residents that vehicle speeds along Smarts Heath Road are a problem and the ATC survey results and accident review demonstrate that speeds are in excess of the limit and that the existing traffic calming measures are not effective in reducing vehicle speeds. Whilst the required visibility splays based on vehicle speeds are achievable for the proposed access, the applicant has advised that there is a desire to reduce vehicle speeds to promote pedestrian and cycle access along Smarts Heath Road to the Gymnastics Club and also the adjacent common land.
66. In this regard a number the off-site highway improvements proposed are:
 - Two give-way/priority arrangements at either end of the straight section of Smarts Heath Road within the 30mph speed zone. One give-way/priority arrangement is proposed immediately to the west of the site, in proximity to the start of the existing 40mph speed zone and the other would be to the east of the site.
 - The centre line markings would be removed on part of the straight section of Smarts Heath Road and provide on-carriageway cycle lanes. The provision of on-carriageway cycle lanes would increase the awareness of cyclists. The cycle lanes would be used to allow 2 large vehicles to pass with caution in such an event.
 - Smarts Heath Road would be supported by regular kerbed narrowing with no formal priority provided and coloured surface dressing.
 - To the east of the site a new '30 slow down' double sided vehicle activated

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signage would also be provided on one of the build outs.

- A new island feature and pedestrian crossing with dropped kerbs and tactile paving is proposed immediately to the west of the site to provide a formalised crossing linking the footway on the northern side of Smarts Heath Road with the adjacent common land footpath and the application site.
- A new pedestrian crossing is also proposed immediately to the east of the site access.
- To the east of the straight section of Smarts Heath Road, further on-carriageway cycle symbols would be provided to encourage cyclists and to increase awareness amongst drivers.

67. These features would link with the existing cycle facilities at the roundabout with Egley Road and Guildford Road which would also provide a link to the new Hoe Valley School. Pedestrian crossing facilities are also proposed to be improved for those pedestrians crossing the side roads along Smarts Heath Road between Egley Road and the site. These proposals seek to provide safer and a more convenient way of accessing the site by offering realistic opportunities to travel by sustainable modes on a regular basis. The applicant suggests that the proposals would also act as suitable and more effective traffic calming measures along Smarts Heath Road. A Travel Plan is also proposed to encourage a greater take up of sustainable travel to and from the site by gym members, staff and visitors.

68. The County Highway Authority (CHA) has reviewed the applicant's Transport Statement. With regard to traffic generation it is predicted that the two-way vehicular traffic trips for the evening peak hours would be higher than that estimated by the applicant's assessment based on the existing travel survey for the club and a traffic survey undertaken at a similar club elsewhere. The County Highway Authority has estimated that there would be 93 two-way traffic movements for the evening peak hour and that this represents some 13% of the recorded traffic movements for that period. The CHA has also advised that the proposed development is in a location with very poor public transport accessibility but that it is recognised that most journeys to the gymnastics club would be undertaken by parents taking their children by car to lessons after school. The CHA notes that a 78 space car park is proposed and that an 'Easylift' two-tier 48no. cycle parking facility is proposed. The applicant's Transport Statement also refers to a Travel Plan. In this regard the CHA has advised that the parking and cycle provision is acceptable taking into account forecasted movements and that a Travel Plan should be submitted prior to the opening of the gymnastics facility.

69. With regard to the off-site highway proposals to improve the connectivity/linkage of the site, the CHA has advised that there is currently no footway along the southern side of Smarts Heath Road, although there is one on the northern side that connects eastwards to the pedestrian routes along Egley Road. These pedestrian routes join with Mayford Meadows and Westfield Common residential areas. The application proposes a short section of footway on the southern side of Smarts Heath Road eastwards from the access to enable pedestrians to cross the road at a new pedestrian crossing point. The existing vehicular access would be re-sited and would connect via an internal road with footway along its eastern side to the car parking areas. The CHA further comments that there are virtual traffic calming measures close to this site on Smarts Heath Road to slow vehicles down but speed surveys carried out by the applicant's consultants indicate that vehicles on this section of Smarts Heath Road are exceeding the speed limit of 30mph. The recorded mean average speed is 38.7mph, while some vehicles are travelling in excess of 45mph in the easterly direction. In addition the traffic accident analysis by the applicant's consultants for the last 5 year period ending 30 April 2017 has suggested that 4 of the 22 recorded accidents which were all serious, relate to

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vehicles overtaking or not giving way on Smarts Heath Road and at this road's junctions with Smarts Heath Lane and Egley Road. To reduce the speed in this part of Smarts Heath Road more effectively and thereby reduce accidents a series of highway safety measures encompassing kerb-buildout, cycleways, pedestrian crossing facilities plus improved road marking have been proposed.

70. In light of the above comments the CHA has concluded that there are no objections from a highway and transportation subject to the recommended conditions and informatives including the off site highway improvements. As it is necessary to secure the off-site highway improvements to improve the accessibility of the site by alternative modes of transport, these improvements would also result in a significant benefit to the local highway network by more effectively reducing vehicles speeds along this part of Smarts Heath Road. This benefit would result to all users of the local highway network and not just those accessing the site.
71. The proposed development is therefore considered to comply with Policy CS18 of the Woking Core Strategy and also the policies in the NPPF and would also result in highway safety benefits.

Ecology and Biodiversity

72. The NPPF states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible. Circular 06/05 – Biodiversity Geological Conservation also requires the impact of a development on protected species to be established before planning permission is granted and in relation to habitat types of principal importance to assess the impact of development on these as part of the planning application process. This approach is reflected in Policy CS7 of the Woking Core Strategy. A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and Reptile Survey have been submitted with the application.
73. The application site adjoins the adjacent Smarts and Prey Heaths SSSI on its western boundary and this is the nearest statutory designated ecological site. The southern part of the site is bounded by the (Kemishford Brid to Railway) Hoe Stream SNCI.
74. The northern section of the application site comprises of grassland habitat which is relatively short and herb rich with the northern boundary of the site being formed by a narrow belt of woodland with a dry ditch. The southern part of the site comprises gravel and hard surfacing parts of which have ruderal vegetation growing over it/through it. Within this area of the site are a number of buildings/structures e.g. a large nissen hut, small shed, abandoned caravans, small single storey buildings. The majority of the remainder of the southern part of the site comprises grassland habitat with a hedgerow to the western boundary and vegetation and trees to other boundaries. At the south-east corner of the site where the Hoe Stream and railway meet is an area of dense bramble scrub, adjacent to an area of boggy, wet grassland. This is the only area on the site which has not been subject to land raising. Invasive species of Japanese knotweed and Himalayan balsam were found on the site. Overall the applicant's PEA considered the site to be of likely moderate value for wildlife at a local level and low value at regional level due mostly to its supporting/buffer function to adjacent habitats of greater value, including the heathland SSSI and Hoe Stream.
75. In terms of impact on the SSSI the retention and provision of a substantial tree/scrub buffer to the SSSI would prevent adverse impacts from noise and lighting disturbance from occurring. In terms of potential for increased disturbance to the SSSI from recreational disturbance, no direct access is proposed to the SSSI and public open

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space areas are proposed on the site along with interpretation boards which will explain the value of preserving the existing environment and its vulnerability especially at certain times of the year. Natural England have been consulted on the application and following the receipt of additional information regarding foul water drainage (which will be connected to the mains sewage system), Natural England has not raised any objection to the application subject to conditions. Subject to conditions it is considered that the proposed development would not result in any adverse impacts to the SSSI.

76. In terms of non-designated sites, the site lies adjacent to the Hoe Stream SNCI and the application includes proposals to enhance the habitats of the SNCI. The removal and subsequent control of Himalayan balsam on the riverbank and the planting of native bank species would further enhance the interest features of the Hoe Stream. An 80 metre wide buffer zone alongside the Hoe Stream would also be provided. The Environment Agency has been consulted on the application and has advised that the strategy for delivering ecological enhancement has also been outlined in the application which is supported. No objection is raised subject to conditions.
77. In terms of on site habitats, the existing hedgerow along the western boundary and the small area of wet land will be retained. Whilst some tree removal would occur the majority of the boundary tree planting will be retained and supplemented by new planting. The proposed building would be largely positioned on the part of the site which is currently hard surfaced. The proposals would not therefore adversely affect the habitats on site. With regard to protected species the following information is relevant:
78. Bats – There is very low risk of roosting bats occurring in any of the buildings on the site. Trees to be removed have also been assessed as having a negligible impact on bats. The removal of some of the trees along the northern boundary to create the new access is not considered to result in a significant impact in terms of commuting bats as other tree boundaries would be retained which are considered to have higher value for bats than the northern boundary. External lighting on the site would also be controlled.
79. Badgers – The site is considered to provide significant potential for foraging and commuting badgers, but only some snuffle holes were found. A repeat assessment should be carried out 6 months before commencement of works to prevent any harm to badgers. The proposed soft landscaping is considered to provide equivalent foraging potential to the existing site.
80. Reptiles – A reptile survey has been undertaken and no reptiles were found during the survey. Impact avoidance measures as for other species would be sufficient to avoid any adverse impacts to reptiles.
81. Other species – There is a low likelihood of hazel dormice on site and no signs or evidence of otters were found. Although no signs or evidence of water voles were found, to prevent harm a further water vole survey should be undertaken prior to any works adjacent to the stream commencing. Measures to minimise risks to hedgehogs, common toads and birds are recommended. In terms of invertebrates it is considered that the proposal would result in a negligible impact to any locally recorded Section 41 invertebrate species.
82. Great Crested Newts – Although there was a small amount of wetland habitat in the south-east corner of the site, this area is heavily vegetated and shaded and is considered highly unlikely to provide any suitable habitat for great crested newts. The flowing Hoe Stream was also considered to be unsuitable for breeding great crested newts and therefore risk to breeding great crested newts is considered to be negligible. The terrestrial habitats on site are considered to provide low-moderate value and as

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such there is considered to be a low likelihood of great crested newts on the site.

83. Nonetheless it is noted that the provision of wetland and pond habitats on the site would enhance the site to the benefit of GCN. The addition of multiple hibernacula and other features are also likely to further enhance the site for GCN. The Council's Green Infrastructure Officer has advised that the GCN habitat improvements incorporated into the scheme will provide additional habitat not far from where the Council is already making habitat improvements at Westfield Common and will positively contribute to towards building a habitat network, addressing the issue of habitat fragmentation.
84. Woking Borough Council and Natural England are participating in a pilot GCN scheme. The scheme provides for certain areas to be enhanced for GCN, partly funded by developers as well as a Borough wide licence which allow the Council to provide permits to developers to allow them to undertake works on sites which would otherwise require extensive GCN surveys and a site licence. In this case the applicant wishes to opt into the scheme. The application site is located within the yellow GCN zone for the purposes of the pilot which means that there is a "*moderate likelihood of direct impact on GCN. Important for connecting habitats, so prone to indirect impact from habitat fragmentation. Contribution payable. No further survey or mitigation required.*" In this case the applicant's ecology report has identified a low rather than negligible risk to GCN and additional surveys would normally be required. However by taking part in the pilot the development will contribute to the Council's on-going programme of habitat improvements for GCN whilst benefiting from the pilot's streamlined survey and licensing requirements. Natural England has also confirmed that the proposed type of development is within the scope of the GCN district licence. In this context, a financial contribution of £7,200 is required to participate in the GCN pilot. As the Council owns the application site an Executive Obligation is required to secure the participation in the pilot and the required financial contribution.
85. Given the proposed participation in the GCN pilot, the Council's Green Infrastructure Officer has advised that the impact avoidance measures recommended at paragraph 5.2.7 in the applicant's ecological assessment may be more than are necessary and the applicant was advised of this. The risk to newts identified in the assessment report is extremely low and therefore it is advised that destructive searches are likely to be sufficient. The aim of the GCN pilot is to invest more into long term management for newts rather than short term mitigation methods which are unlikely to have any significant impact. It is also advised that a management plan should be required to ensure a clear future maintenance programme for the site which would be sympathetic to biodiversity protection e.g. retaining areas of long grass, managing invasive species and looking after water bodies.
86. The submitted PEA also recommends a number of impact avoidance and mitigation measures to ensure that no further surveys would be necessary and no other species are likely to occur at the site or be impacted by development on the site. The mitigation measures include the provision of bat boxes prior to demolition, supervised removal of roofing material, guidance for security lighting during construction, use of new lighting, measures to prevent risk of harm to GCN (destructive search), hedgehogs, common toads, nesting birds, the removal of invasive plant species and general precautions to protect biodiversity.
87. A number of biodiversity enhancement are also recommended including bat boxes, maintenance of dark habitats, provision of small log piles, hibernacula for GCN, new ponds for GCN, 20no. swift boxes and owl boxes. The provision of a backwater will also provide increased potential for spawning habitats for fish. Tree and shrub planting will improve the structural diversity of the site and attract a greater number and diversity of

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animal species. Species rich grasslands will also be of benefit to a variety of species including invertebrates and provide nesting habitat and foraging grounds for reptiles and other species.

88. The site is currently considered to be of moderate ecological value at local level. With additional survey work and appropriate impact avoidance and/or mitigation measures the proposals are not considered to have any negative impact on protected species, habitats or the interest features of the adjacent SSSI.
89. The NPPF and local planning policies advise that “*opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments should be encouraged*”. In this case the site around the proposed building and car park for the gymnastics club is proposed to be put to a beneficial land use which would incorporate significant enhancement works which would be of benefit to local wildlife and habitats and would result in a significant net gain for local biodiversity on the site and in the surrounding local area. The proposals for the site in terms of improved drainage, wetland, provision of a variety of habitats with extensive planting areas would create a variety of habitats which would result in a significant benefit to ecology and enhancement of the green infrastructure network in this locality.

Design

90. One of the core principles of planning as identified in the NPPF is securing high quality design. Paragraph 57 of the NPPF refers to the need to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development. Policy CS21 of the Core Strategy states that new development should respect and make a positive contribution to the street scene and the character of the area within which it is located.
91. The proposed gymnastics building would be located centrally on the site around 195 metres from the access into the site. The access into the site is off Smarts Heath Road and to the north of the site is a public car park, with the gymnastics club car park located to the front of the building. To the western side of the building would be the café with a timber decked area which would cantilever over a wetland pond. The area outside of the proposed building would be fully landscaped to provide different character areas of public open space and wetland areas. The areas to the south and west of the proposed building would comprise two wetland ponds, following the excavation and re-modelling of the ground to reduce the levels and provide additional flood plain storage. A backwater for the Hoe Stream would also be provided. Overall the proposed site layout is considered to respond to the irregular shape of the application site and provide an acceptable layout.
92. The building would measure 56 metres in width by 55 metres in depth. The building would have a flat roof with a maximum height of 11.4 metres. It is acknowledged that the proposed building would form a large cubed shape on the site, which primarily results from the functional need of the proposed use of the building. Nonetheless in terms of design, the building has been articulated by the use of small variations to the footprint and height for each elevation and also the use of glazing and different facing materials to the elevations. The north elevation with the gymnastics club entrance would be faced with natural cedar cladding, some render and glazing and the west elevation, with the café entrance (although there is an internal link also) would be faced with white and grey render, natural cedar cladding to distinguish the café and coloured cladding to the gymnastics hall. This elevation would also feature a curved high level window to add interest to this elevation and light the first floor ancillary facilities e.g. offices to the gymnastics club. The east elevation facing open land would be faced entirely with natural cedar cladding and the south elevation, facing the Hoe Stream, would primarily

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be faced in coloured cladding with blue cladding to the north-west part of the elevation through to a porcelain colour through to a green colour to the south-east corner of the elevation. The applicant's agent has advised that the use of coloured cladding to the colours and pattern shown on the proposed elevations "*disrupts the solid outline of the regular box form reducing its apparent volume*".

93. Overall it is acknowledged that the building would be large. As a gymnastics club building primarily, it is considered that it would have a strong functional use and thus the scale and appearance of the building is considered to be acceptable. The footprint for each elevation is varied and this provides articulation in the elevations, which is further accentuated by the proposed facing materials adding visual interest and quality to the overall design of the building. The use of natural cedar cladding for the eastern elevation and for other parts of the building is considered to be respectful of the location of the site and building. In addition given the position of the building on the site it is considered that the building would not appear cramped.
94. Overall in design terms the proposed development is considered to be acceptable, subject to conditions requiring approval of materials and relating to levels on the site. The proposal would therefore comply with Policies CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy and relevant policies relating to design in the NPPF.

Trees and Landscaping

95. An Arboricultural Implications report has been submitted with the application. There are no TPO trees on the site.
96. To accommodate the proposed development, 50 trees are to be removed from the site. Of these, no trees are Category A trees (trees of high quality), 3 are Category B trees (trees of moderate quality) and 28 are Category C (trees of low quality) trees. An additional 9 trees will be removed as these have been assessed as Category U (trees unsuitable for retention) and should be removed for arboricultural reasons. The three Category B trees to be removed are English Oaks. Two of the trees are located in the northern group of trees which are to be removed to facilitate the new vehicular access into the site. It is noted in the Arboricultural report that these two trees contribute to the screening along the northern boundary of the site but they are typical examples of self-seeded specimens which have grown as part of a cohesive group and are unlikely to amount to significant specimens. It is also noted that their canopies have become suppressed over time by surrounding specimens. The third Category B tree to be removed is located along the eastern boundary of the site and this tree is also suppressed by surrounding canopies and given its position on the site is not considered to have moderate landscape value.
97. Some of the existing trees on the site will be pruned to facilitate the development but this is not considered to detract from the health or appearance of the relevant trees. The proposed development will result in some incursions to the root protection areas of a few of the retained trees but these incursions are considered to be minor. Where incursions do occur, supervised demolition and/or manual excavation and/or above soil surfacing will occur.
98. Notwithstanding the removal of trees from the site, a significant number of trees will be retained along the boundaries of the site and the proposals also incorporate significant replacement tree planting to mitigate the loss of trees to facilitate the development and provide a high quality landscaped site. In this regard a Landscape Design Statement and landscape proposal plans have been submitted with the application. The landscaping proposals aim to provide high quality landscape features on the site which

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improve the appearance of the site, enhance the existing ecology on the site, create new biodiverse habitats and facilitate the use of the site for outdoor recreation and publicly accessible open space. The proposed landscaping will comprise the following areas:

- Bio-diverse meadow habitats and grassland;
- Car parking areas located within mounding or enclosed by the existing densely planted boundaries and the new building;
- Amenity landscaped public spaces for relaxation and enjoyment;
- Bio-diverse water bodies with 3 distinct characters all accessible to the public;
- Existing densely planted boundaries which will be reinforced by new native planting to provide additional screening to the development and further enhancing biodiversity; and
- New woodland planting areas.

99. The amenity landscaped area to the northern part of the site has been designed as flexible open space offering a grassed area overlooking the wildlife pond. A series of grassy mounds would enclose the space and enable views of the surrounding landscape, boardwalks and building. The main car park will be permeable and will be heavily planted around its edges to help soften its appearance and help it to blend with the existing landscape. To the southern side of the building, the land will be excavated and remodelled to recreate a flood plain area, before it was land raised. The material excavated from these areas will be used to create the mounds in the northern parts of the site. A series of wetland habitats will be established in these areas including the creation of the backwater from the Hoe Stream. The café will also have decked area which cantilevers over the pond adjacent to the building and overlook the wetland areas. Reed beds and wildflower meadows will be created in these areas. The larger wetland pond would be fed by the Hoe Stream and rainfall via the roof of the building and the drainage ditches that run within the site along its boundaries. The banks of the ponds will be gently sloped to allow vegetation to establish in areas and allow wildlife to use the reed beds. A long boardwalk will hover above the water enabling visitors to walk around the edge of the wetland. Any lighting on the site will project down or horizontally to reduce light pollution given the proximity of the SSSI.

100. The Landscape Design Statement advises that the landscape on the site will be split into a range of diverse character areas each with its own identity and biodiversity and will include woodland belt boundary buffer, rough and mown grass, meadow, wetlands, natural pond planting, reed beds, swales, ornamental planting and green roofs. Extensive landscaping and planting details are given in the application and the principles of these planting details are considered to be acceptable and would support the landscape rationale for the site. It is however noted that a significant amount of off-site boundary planting has been removed from the adjacent site since the application was submitted. However the applicant has advised that they are intending to incorporate additional native tree and hedgerow planting to the respective boundaries to re-establish a continuous landscaped and ecological boundary to the site. It is considered that sufficient space exists within the site to achieve this. Therefore notwithstanding the detailed landscaping plans submitted to date further plans will be required to be submitted and approved for the detailed landscaping scheme across the whole site.

101. The Council's Arboricultural Officer has advised that the loss of these trees is regrettable however the proposed landscaping plan does indicate significant replanting which should provide a suitable mitigation for this loss. He further advises that the arboricultural information submitted is acceptable and should be complied with in full. The landscaping proposal is considered acceptable in principle and details of plant sizes, positions and quantities can be conditioned.

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102. The arboricultural implications of the proposal are therefore considered to be acceptable and the proposed replacement tree planting would mitigate the loss of trees to facilitate the development. However the proposed landscaping scheme is significant and would not only mitigate the loss of trees but would also significantly enhance the overall appearance of the site, facilitating its proposed use as publicly accessible open space and also significantly enhancing the biodiversity of the site. This is a significant benefit of the scheme.
103. Overall the proposed development is considered to be acceptable and subject to conditions would comply with Policies CS7 and CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012, Policies DM1 and DM2 of the DM Policies DPD 2016 and the policies in the NPPF.

Visual Impact

104. Paragraph 81 of the NPPF also advises that once Green Belts have been defined local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance their beneficial use to inter alia “retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity.” In addition Policy CS24 of the Woking Core Strategy relates to Woking’s landscape and townscape and states that all development proposals are required to provide a positive benefit in terms of landscape and townscape character and local distinctiveness and have regard to landscape character areas.
105. The existing site is notably made ground and is characterised by some expanses of green landscaping (although this is above the made ground) and areas of extensive hard surfacing, although though un-used. These areas are being reclaimed by vegetation. There are a few single storey buildings on the site, remnants of previous buildings, an old ‘nissen’ hut style building and a few derelict caravans.
106. To the east and south the site is relatively contained by the main railway line which is higher than the application site and the Hoe Stream, although there would inevitably be clear views of the site from passing trains. To the west the site adjoins the Smarts and Prey Heaths SSSI and common land which is heavily wooded and prevents long range views of the application site in this direction. To the north the site is adjoined by Thatch Cottage and, given the extensive tree screening in the northern part of the site, only glimpses of the roof of this property are viewed from within the site. This vegetation would also filter views from this property into the site. The removal of some of the tree screening along the northern boundary of the site would open up the access, although this would be no more than is required to achieve the proposed new access junction. The removal of the extensive tree screening on the adjacent land has opened up part of the northern boundary of the site, such that views from the dwellings fronting south on Smarts Heath Road into the site, across the adjacent land would now be possible as would views from the adjacent land to the east of the site, although it is noted that there are no public rights of way on this land. In time the proposed replacement tree planting along these boundaries would serve to filter these views of the site. The eastern elevation of the building would be clad entirely in natural timber cladding which would provide an appropriate backdrop to any views through the existing and proposed tree planting and timber cladding would also be used on a large part of the northern elevation of the building. The roof of the building would be a green roof.
107. It is also noted that the site will be extensively landscaped which will enhance the appearance of the site, although views of the building would still be possible from the railway line to the south and some near distance views from Smarts Heath Road. Long distance views from the Hook Heath Escarpment to the north of the site may also be

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possible but these would be over a long distance and such that the green roof may be possible to be viewed and the building would be viewed in the wider context of this part of Mayford village.

108. Notwithstanding the elevational treatment of the building and the proposed extensive landscaping scheme, it is identified that the proposed development would change the character of the site. This impact occurs because the proposed development would change the character of the site replacing it with development which is urban in character given the scale of the proposed building. It is inevitable that when built development is proposed on land which is currently open and largely free from built structure it will significantly change the character and views of that land. Although the visual effects of the proposed development would reduce over time with the mitigation, the proposed development would result in harm to the character and appearance of the site and in this regard would conflict with Policy CS24 of the Woking Core Strategy as the proposed development would not conserve the existing character of the site. This identified harm will add to the Green Belt harm identified above and will need to be weighed with the other material planning considerations, including the very special circumstances, which occurs at the end of this report.

Heritage

109. There are no statutory listed buildings on the site and the site is not located within or adjacent to any conservation area. The adjacent dwelling to the north of the site is a Locally Listed building and for the purposes of the NPPF, a locally listed building is a non-designated heritage asset, rather than a designated heritage asset. In relation to non-designated heritage assets the NPPF states that in weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset. Policy CS20 of the Core Strategy and Policy DM20 both relate to heritage assets and Policy DM20 states that proposals will be required to preserve and/or enhance the heritage asset including its setting. A Heritage Statement has been submitted with the application.

110. Thatch Cottage is a building of Architectural Significance but it is heavily screened from the application site such that only parts of the roof of the building are visible from within the site. The Council's Conservation Consultant has advised that the distance of Thatch Cottage from the major building on the development site is considerable and there is an extensive tree screen between the sites. He does not consider this development will have anything other than a minor negative effect on the locally listed cottage and that in such cases the 'slight harm' must be balanced against any public benefit provided by the scheme. He considers the public benefit of the development will outweigh the slight harm created. As some minor harm to the setting of the Locally Listed building has been identified this harm will add to the Green Belt harm identified above and will need to be weighed with the other material planning considerations, including the very special circumstances, which occurs at the end of this report.

111. In respect of archaeological impacts, the site does not lie within a locally designated area of high archaeological potential. An archaeological desk study has not been submitted with the application due to the significant land raising (by around 3 metres) which has occurred in the past. The County Archaeologist has advised that without a desk based assessment and possibly a report on evaluation she is not in a position to comment on the archaeological implications of the proposal. The County Archaeologist further advises that, if information is not forthcoming prior to determination, she would recommend refusal of the application on the grounds of insufficient information but that notwithstanding these comments if the LPA deems that a strategy of preservation by

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record is sufficient to mitigate the loss of the archaeological assets that may be present and that the archaeological work can be undertaken after decision then the necessary archaeological work will need to be secured by the addition of a standard archaeological condition. In this regard, given the extensive ground raising which has occurred on the site previously and that the ground levels on the site will not be reduced, except where the re-instatement of the flood plain would occur to the south of the proposed building it is considered that the imposition of a condition would be a reasonable approach to archaeology on this site.

112. Subject to condition the proposed development would not therefore have an adverse effect on archaeology and would comply with Policy CS20 of the Woking Core Strategy, Policy DM20 of the DM Policies DPD and the relevant policies in the NPPF. With regard to the impact on the Locally Listed building, this harm would add to the Green Belt harm and will be considered in the Planning Balance at the end of the report.

Contamination

113. Paragraphs 120 and 121 of the NPPF relate to contamination and advise that the effects of pollution should be taken into account and that the responsibility for securing a safe development rests with the developer and/or landowner. As noted previously the site has been subject to ground raising by around 3 metres previously. The applicant has submitted a Contaminated Land Assessment report. The applicant's approach to contamination will be that it will be encapsulated on the site such that the material removed to re-instate the flood plain will be used to create the mounds on the northern parts of the site and this will be encapsulated and then landscaped to provide a new character to the site.

114. The Council's Land Contamination Officer has raised no objection to the application subject to condition. The Environment Agency has also raised no objection to the application on contamination grounds subject to condition but this condition largely replicates the Land Contamination Officer's condition. It is therefore considered that subject to condition the proposed development, in relation to contamination, is acceptable and complies with the guidance in paragraphs 120 and 121 of the NPPF relating to contamination.

Flood risk and Drainage

115. In accordance with the policies in the NPPF all forms of development are suitable in this flood zone. With regard to surface water drainage in accordance with the NPPF and Policy CS9 of the Woking Core Strategy local planning authorities should seek opportunities to reduce flood risk through the appropriate application of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS). A Flood Risk Assessment has been submitted with the application.

116. The majority of the application site is located in Flood Zone 1 (low risk), partly Flood Zone 2 (medium risk) and partly Flood Zone 3 (high risk). The southern parts of the site adjacent to the Hoe Stream area located within Flood Zones 2 and 3. Therefore this part of the site is at high risk from fluvial flooding. The site is also at high risk from pluvial (i.e. surface water) flooding given the local network of drainage ditches along the eastern and western site boundaries. The eastern ditches are within the site and the western ditches are adjacent to the site. Given the large volume of fill on the site with the condition of the boundary ditches, this has resulted in an artificial bund preventing the free flow of water from the Hook Heath escarpment down to the Hoe Stream.

117. The application proposes a large building and also the lowering of ground levels in the

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southern part of the site to increase the capacity of the floodplain.

118. In terms of surface water the existing surface water drainage features on site would be retained and enhanced whilst the western drainage ditch would be diverted into the wetland area proposed in the southern part of the site. The drainage ditches would be cleared and restored and a network of sustainable drainage, rainwater gardens and ponds will restore natural paths for water to drain to the Hoe Stream in an attenuated and gradual manner. Through enhancement of the existing drainage features the risk from surface water flooding to and from the development would be very low.
119. Due to the made ground on site, disposal of surface water via infiltration is not possible. Therefore surface water will be discharged into the nearest watercourse, the Hoe Stream. The peak discharge rates from the proposed development to the Hoe Stream will be limited to or set below Greenfield runoff rates. Surface water storage is to be provided to ensure that additional volumes of surface water generated by the development do not adversely impact flood risk. Attenuation will be provided in the form of two above ground ponds/wetland areas, permeable paving to car parks, bio-retention areas/rainwater gardens along the access road and a sedum roof to part of the gymnastics building. SuDS features and associated flow control devices will be in place to support the proposed development prior to occupation. During the construction phase the excavation of the proposed flood mitigation/wetland area in the southern part of the site will be undertaken prior to the introduction of the proposed additional impermeable areas. The proposed building would also be set at around 150mm above the existing current ground level to avoid surface water flooding into the building.
120. The southern part of the site would be subject to excavation to create a backwater to the Hoe Stream and to reduce the ground levels across the site to increase/re-instate floodplain capacity which has been removed due to historical land raising. The ground levels in the southern part of the site would be reduced by around 1-2 metres. An Addendum to the Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has been submitted to quantify the off site benefits to flood alleviation in the Hoe Valley as a result of the proposed development. The Addendum to the FRA advises that the longitudinal profile indicates that peak water levels are reduced both up stream and down stream for long distances with the largest difference down stream of around 150mm. This is considered a significant change for the 1 in 100 year flood event. The Addendum to the FRA concludes that the assessment of both the peak water levels and flows confirm that the additional floodplain storage would provide a significant benefit to the wider Hoe Valley scheme and in particular the reduction in flood risk. The Council's Flood Risk and Drainage Engineer has advised that *“based on the information provided and the substantial reduction in land form adjacent to the Hoe Stream, the proposed scheme reduces the flood levels by 150mm downstream of the development site which may prevent flood water entering a properties threshold which are normally raised 150mm above surrounding ground levels. Based on this it can be noted that this is a significant benefit of the scheme. Of course extreme flood events may still occur which will have an impact on downstream properties.”*
121. The Council's Drainage Engineer has advised that, following a review of the Flood Risk Assessment, the information submitted is compliant with Policy CS9 of the Woking Core Strategy and the NPPF and approval of the application is recommended on drainage and flood risk grounds subject to conditions.
122. In addition the Environment Agency has also advised that *“in terms of flood risk, the sequential approach has been applied to ensure all development is located in Flood Zone 1, thereby resulting in no increased flood risk to the site or surrounding area. In addition, the application proposes a flood alleviation scheme to provide additional*

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storage on site which will give some benefit to the local area. This is something we support.” No objection is raised by the Environment Agency to the application subject to conditions.

123. In light of the above comments and the details of the application, it is considered that the proposed development complies with local and national planning policies relating to flood risk and drainage. Furthermore the proposal also includes a significant increase in floodplain capacity on the site which would result in a significant benefit in terms of flood alleviation to properties down stream. This is considered to be significant benefit of the scheme.

Sustainable Construction

124. Policy CS22 of the Core Strategy sets out local policy relating to sustainable construction which new developments should achieve. In this case the policy states that all new non-residential development should achieve a BREEAM very good rating, new development should consider the integration of Combined Heat and Power (CHP) and applications for developments with exceptionally high energy consumption e.g. leisure facilities will be required to reduce total carbon emissions by 10% through the use of renewable energy measures on site.
125. The application is supported by an Energy Statement and a BREEAM Pre-Assessment report. The Energy Statement will follow the energy hierarchy and advises that the overall energy demand for the development will be reduced by implementing energy efficiency measures, placing emphasis on a very high standard of fabric and reducing heat loss through the building envelope. In addition 140no. photovoltaic cells (solar PV panels) would be added to the roof of the proposed building which would result in a 10% reduction in carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions, thus meeting the 10% policy requirement. A BREEAM pre-assessment has been conducted and advised that BREEAM Very good rating is achievable for the proposed development. The ecology section above also highlights the biodiversity enhancements which will be provided as part of the proposed development.
126. In light of this information it is considered that the proposed development would comply with Policy CS22 of the Core Strategy, the Council’s Climate Change SPD and the policies in the NPPF on sustainable construction.

Impact on neighbouring residential amenities

127. There is only one dwelling which adjoins part of the north-eastern boundary of the site. The shared boundary between the application site and this neighbouring dwelling is heavily treed such that only glimpses of the roof of the dwelling are visible from within the site. The closest part of the building would be located around 125 metres from the dwelling and as such the proposed building would not appear overbearing or result in any adverse light or privacy impacts. The existing trees and vegetation to the south of the dwelling would be retained whilst to the west of this dwelling a landscaped mound/buffer will be provided within the site.
128. It is acknowledged that the proposed use of the site will generate a greater level of activity than the previous land use through the increased comings and goings but as the access road would be positioned between 30-50 metres away from this neighbouring dwelling with meadow planting and the mound/buffer in the intervening area it is not considered that this resultant activity would result in an unacceptable level of noise and/or disturbance to the occupiers of this property. As required by Natural England a barrier will restrict access to the site outside the opening hours of the gymnastics

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building to avoid any adverse ecological impact and this access control would be beneficial to ensuring no adverse neighbour impact outside of the opening hours of the site.

129. Whilst occupiers of nearby dwellings to the north of Smarts Heath Road would be aware of the increased activity on the site it is not considered that this would result in any adverse impacts to their residential amenities. It is not therefore considered that the proposed development would adversely affect the amenities of nearby residential occupiers from noise and disturbance. The proposed development is therefore considered to comply with Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy and the relevant policies in the NPPF.

Local finance considerations

130. As the proposed development is for leisure uses, the development is nil rated under the Council's Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule.

CONCLUSION - THE PLANNING BALANCE

131. The NPPF sets out that it is the Government's clear expectation that there is a presumption in favour of development and growth except where this would compromise key sustainable development principles and be contrary to local planning policies, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The role of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. This often involves balancing the economic, social and environmental aspects of a proposal. In addition where a proposal comprises inappropriate development within the Green Belt a balancing exercise is required to establish whether very special circumstances exist that clearly outweigh the substantial harm to be given to the impact on the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm.

132. The proposed development is inappropriate development in the Green Belt, which is by definition harmful. The other harm resulting from the inappropriate development is the loss of openness to the Green Belt, harm to some of the purposes of the Green Belt, harm to the visual amenity of the area through the change in the character of the site and the harm to the setting to the adjacent locally listed building. The NPPF requires substantial weight to be given to this harm.

133. Very special circumstances will not exist unless the harm to the Green Belt is clearly outweighed by other considerations. The considerations in favour of the application as detailed in the very special circumstances section and other sections of this report are, in summary, as follows:

- Meeting the current need for gymnastics by Woking Gymnastics Club and its need to expand to meet demand and to continue to provide important sporting infrastructure within the Borough which has a positive benefit on the health, well-being and social and community infrastructure in the Borough.
- The specific needs of Woking Gymnastics Club to provide suitable facilities for Woking Gymnastics Club;
- The absence of any alternative site for the proposed development, which has been robustly assessed using a wide search area and the minimum requirements for a gymnastics facility;
- The likely resulting implications of a 'do nothing' scenario;
- The wide range of health, socio-economic, highway improvements and environmental benefits resulting from the proposal which would not otherwise

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- occur as there is no alternative site for the provision of the development;
 - The flood alleviation benefits to the Hoe Stream through the significant increase in floodplain storage capacity.
134. Compliance or general conformity with, national, regional and local planning policies are not in themselves considered to be unique circumstances which justify a departure from Green Belt policy. However in this particular case the proposed development would result in significant planning benefits which would contribute to the provision of sustainable development as set out in this report. Local Planning Authorities are also required to positively plan to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation in the Green Belt (NPPF paragraph 81), provide access to the Green Belt and improve damaged or derelict land. This proposal would also contribute to these requirements.
135. It is therefore considered that, when taken together in combination, these factors would represent very special circumstances which are considered to outweigh the substantial harm to be given to the Green Belt and the other harm identified resulting from the proposal and would justify a recommendation of approval for the application. The comments in the letters of representation submitted in support of the application have also been considered as part of the assessment of the application.
136. In relation to all of the planning matters assessed above, it is considered that the very special circumstances identified would outweigh the identified harm resulting from the proposed development subject to the mitigation measures being secured by conditions and the Council's Executive Undertaking.
137. In light of the very special circumstances which exist in this case it is considered that a recommendation of approval is justified. Other than the conflict with Policies CS6, CS20 and CS24 of the Woking Core Strategy, which are addressed by the very special circumstances, the proposed development is considered to comply with the other relevant Core Strategy policies, the relevant policies in the DM Policies DPD, the relevant supplementary planning documents and the policies in the NPPF and the NPPG subject to the recommended conditions and the Council's undertaking. Regard has been had to the Draft Site Allocations Development Plan Document.
138. In view of the recommendation, under the Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2009, if the Planning Committee resolves to grant planning permission as set out, the application will be referred to the Secretary of State to ascertain whether he wishes to call-in the application for his own determination.
139. The recommendation has been made in compliance with the requirement of the NPPF to foster the delivery of sustainable development in a positive and proactive manner.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Planning application file PLAN/2017/1063

RECOMMENDATION

1. Subject to the referral of the application to the Secretary of State under the Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2009 and failing any direction from the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government; and

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2. Subject to the prior resolution of the Council's Executive to give effect to the following measure:

Full participation in the Great Crested Newt District Licence scheme including a financial contribution to the sum of £7,200.

3. the **Development Manager** be authorised to **GRANT** planning permission subject to the following conditions (and any minor amendments or additions to those conditions):

1. 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).

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance the following approved plans:

DP/586/LOC-01
DP/586/00-01 P6
DP/586/00-02 P2
DP/586/01-01 P1
DP/586/01-02 P1
DP/586/02-03
DP/586/02-04
DP/586/02-05
DP/586/02-06
DP/586/04-01 P1

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

3. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out only in accordance with the proposed finished floor levels and ground levels as shown on the approved plans unless otherwise first approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity of the site in accordance with Policies CS6 and CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012 and policies in the NPPF.

4. ++The development hereby permitted shall not commence until samples and details of the materials to be used in the external elevations of the building and the hard surfaced areas have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out and thereafter retained in accordance with the approved details unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity of the site in accordance with Policies CS6 and CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012 and policies in the NPPF.

5. Except for the use of the café, the building hereby approved shall only be used for the provision of gymnastics by Woking Gymnastics Club and by no other person, persons

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or organisation and shall not enure for the benefit of the land. Upon the cessation of occupation by Woking Gymnastics Club the use hereby permitted shall cease.

Reason: The use of the building is only justified on the basis of the needs of Woking Gymnastics Club and having regard to the restrictive policies of the Green Belt.

6. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 and Article 3, Schedule 2, of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any Orders revoking or e-enacting these Orders with or without amendments), except for the use of the café, the building hereby approved shall only be used for the provision of gymnastics and for no other purpose whatsoever including any other purpose in Class D2 (Assembly and Leisure) of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987.

Reason: The use of the building is only justified on the basis of the needs of Woking Gymnastics Club and having regard to the restrictive policies of the Green Belt, any other potential use should be assessed having regard to the material planning considerations.

7. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 and Article 3, Schedule 2, of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any Orders revoking or e-enacting these Orders with or without amendments), the café (Class A3) hereby approved shall only be used as a café and for no other purposes whatsoever.

Reason: The café use is provided to support the gymnastics use and open space use on the site and having regard to the restrictive policies of the Green Belt, any other potential use should be assessed having regard to the material planning considerations.

8. ++The development hereby permitted shall not commence until a scheme to deal with contamination of the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include:-

- (a) a contaminated land desk study and suggested site assessment methodology;
- (b) a site investigation report based upon (a);
- (c) a remediation action plan based upon (a) and (b);
- (d) a "discovery strategy" dealing with unforeseen contamination discovered during construction; and
- (e) a "validation strategy" identifying measures to validate the works undertaken as a result of (c) and (d)
- (f) a verification report appended with substantiating evidence demonstrating the agreed remediation has been carried out

Unless otherwise first approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority the development shall be carried out and completed wholly in accordance with such details and timescales as may be agreed.

Reason: To ensure that a satisfactory strategy is put in place for addressing contaminated land before development commences and to make the land suitable for the development without resulting in risk to construction workers, future users of the land, occupiers of nearby land and the environment generally in accordance with Policies CS9 and CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012 and policies in the NPPF.

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9. The development hereby approved shall not be carried out otherwise than in accordance with the Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan ref. DP/586/OCEMP/01.

Reason: To protect the environmental interests and the amenity of the area and to comply with Policies CS6, CS7, CS9 and CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012 and the policies in the NPPF.

10. Foul water from the building hereby approved shall not be disposed of otherwise than into the mains sewer system.

Reason: To protect the environmental interests and the amenity of the area and to comply with Policies CS6, CS7, CS9 and CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012 and the policies in the NPPF.

11. Access to the site, including the public car park, should be limited by barriers to the operational hours of the gymnastics use, precluding visitor pressure out of hours (early morning and later in the evening).

Reason: To protect the environmental interests and the amenity of the area and to comply with Policies CS6, CS7 and CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012 and the policies in the NPPF.

Highways

12. The development hereby approved shall not be first occupied unless and until the following highway improvements have been carried out:

(i) Construction of two give way/ priority arrangements, the removal of centre line markings, cycleway markings and kerb build outs, to reduce speed on the 30mph section of Smart's Heath Road close to this development, all as shown generally on Drawings 2017/3678/009 Rev C 2017/3678/010 Rev A and 2017/3678/ 011 RevA

(ii) Installation of a new '30 Slow Down' double-sided vehicle activated traffic sign on Smart's Heath Road

(iii) Creation of new length of footway from the new access of the site to the pedestrian crossing point on the east of the entrance.

have been constructed in accordance with a scheme to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In order that the development should not prejudice highway safety nor cause inconvenience to other highways users and to comply with Policy CS18 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012 and the policies in the NPPF.

13. The development hereby approved shall not be first occupied unless and until the proposed vehicular access to Smart's Heath Road has been constructed and provided with visibility zones in accordance with the approved plans and thereafter the visibility zones shall be kept permanently clear of any obstruction measured from 0.6m above the road surface

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Reason: In order that the development should not prejudice highway safety nor cause inconvenience to other highways users and to comply with Policy CS18 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012 and the policies in the NPPF.

14. The development hereby approved shall not be first occupied unless and until the proposed internal road and footway has been constructed in accordance with the approved plans.

Reason: In order that the development should not prejudice highway safety nor cause inconvenience to other highways users and to comply with Policy CS18 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012 and the policies in the NPPF.

15. The development hereby approved shall not be first opened for trading unless and until existing access from the site to Smarts Heath Road has been permanently closed and any kerbs, verge, footway, fully reinstated.

Reason: In order that the development should not prejudice highway safety nor cause inconvenience to other highways users and to comply with Policy CS18 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012 and the policies in the NPPF.

16. The development hereby approved shall not be first occupied unless and until the car parking spaces have been laid out within the site in accordance with the approved plans for vehicles to be parked, and for loading and unloading and for vehicles to turn so that they may enter and leave the site in a forward gear. Thereafter the parking, loading and unloading, and turning areas shall be retained and maintained for their designated purposes.

Reason: In order that the development should not prejudice highway safety nor cause inconvenience to other highways users and to comply with Policy CS18 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012 and the policies in the NPPF.

17. No development shall commence until a Construction Transport Management Plan, to include details of :

- (a) parking for vehicles of site personnel, operatives and visitors
- (b) loading and unloading of plant and materials
- (c) storage of plant and materials
- (d) programme of works (including measures for traffic management)
- (e) provision of boundary hoarding behind any visibility zones
- (f) HGV deliveries and hours of operation
- (g) vehicle routing
- (h) measures to prevent the deposit of materials on the highway
- (i) before and after construction condition surveys of the highway and a commitment to fund the repair of any damage caused
- (j) on-site turning for construction vehicles
- (k) noise and dust suppression measures
- (l) Timing and consolidation of deliveries

has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Only the approved details shall be implemented during the construction of the development.

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Reason: In order that the development should not prejudice highway safety nor cause inconvenience to other highways users and to comply with Policy CS18 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012 and the policies in the NPPF.

18. Prior to the commencement of the development a Travel Plan shall be submitted for the written approval of the Local Planning Authority in accordance with the sustainable development aims and objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework, Surrey County Council's "Travel Plans Good Practice Guide" and then the approved Travel Plan shall be implemented within 3 months of first occupation of the development hereby approved and thereafter maintained and developed to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To promote sustainable modes of transport in accordance with Policy CS18 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012 and policies in the NPPF.

Land Drainage & Flood Risk

19. "All development shall be constructed in accordance with the submitted and approved Flood Risk Assessment dated August 2017 unless otherwise first approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the flood risk is adequately addressed for each new dwelling and not increased in accordance with NPPF and policy CS9 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012 and the policies in the NPPF."

20. "No development shall commence until construction drawings of the surface water drainage network, associated sustainable drainage components, flow control mechanisms and a construction method statement have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall then be constructed in accordance with the approved drawings, method statement and Micro drainage calculations prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved. No alteration to the approved drainage scheme shall occur without prior written approval of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the development achieves a high standard of sustainability and to comply with Policies CS9 and CS16 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012 and the policies in the NPPF."

21. "Prior to first use a verification report, (appended with substantiating evidence demonstrating the approved construction details and specifications have been implemented in accordance with the surface water drainage scheme), has been submitted to and approved (in writing) by the Local Planning Authority. The verification report shall include photographs of excavations and soil profiles/horizons, any installation of any surface water structure and Control mechanism.

Reason: To ensure that the development achieves a high standard of sustainability and to comply with Policies CS9 and CS16 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012 and the policies in the NPPF."

22. "The development hereby approved shall not be first occupied until details of the maintenance and management of the sustainable drainage scheme have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The drainage scheme shall be implemented prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved and thereafter managed and maintained in accordance with the approved details in perpetuity. The Local Planning Authority shall be granted access to inspect

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the sustainable drainage scheme for the lifetime of the development. The details of the scheme to be submitted for approval shall include:

1. A timetable for its implementation,
2. Details of SuDS features and connecting drainage structures and maintenance requirement for each aspect,
3. A table to allow the recording of each inspection and maintenance activity, as well as allowing any faults to be recorded and actions taken to rectify issues; and;
4. A management and maintenance plan for the lifetime of the development which shall include the arrangements for adoption by any public body or statutory undertaker, or any other arrangements to secure the operation of the sustainable drainage scheme throughout its lifetime.

Reason: To ensure that the development achieves a high standard of sustainability, continues to be maintained as agreed for the lifetime of the development and to comply with Policies CS9 and CS16 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012 and policies in the NPPF.”

23. ‘No development shall commence until details of the proposed Flood Attenuation Scheme including the proposed wetland areas and backwater as shown on drawing no. DP/586/00-01 P4 has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme and any subsequent amendments shall be agreed in writing with the local planning authority This shall include:

1. Detailed designs of the proposed flood alleviation scheme and works to the channel and banks of the Hoe Stream and the adjacent ordinary Watercourses.
2. Detailed designs of all boardwalks which shall be open in design so as not to impede the flow of flood water.

No alteration to the approved scheme shall occur without prior written approval of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the development achieves a high standard of sustainability, continues to be maintained as agreed for the lifetime of the development and to comply with Policies CS9 and CS16 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012 and policies in the NPPF.”

Land contamination

24. ++The development hereby permitted shall not commence until a scheme to deal with contamination of the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include:-

- (a) a contaminated land desk study and suggested site assessment methodology;
- (b) a site investigation report based upon (a);
- (c) a remediation action plan based upon (a) and (b);
- (d) a "discovery strategy" dealing with unforeseen contamination discovered during construction; and
- (e) a "validation strategy" identifying measures to validate the works undertaken as a result of (c) and (d)

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(f) a verification report appended with substantiating evidence demonstrating the agreed remediation has been carried out

Unless otherwise first approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority the development shall be carried out and completed wholly in accordance with such details and timescales as may be agreed.

Reason: To ensure that a satisfactory strategy is put in place for addressing contaminated land before development commences and to make the land suitable for the development without resulting in risk to construction workers, future users of the land, occupiers of nearby land and the environment generally in accordance with Policies CS9 and CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012 and policies in the NPPF.

Archaeology

25. No development shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To allow the site to be investigated for archaeological purposes and to comply with Policy CS20 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012 and policies in the NPPF.

Ecology

26. ++No development shall commence (excluding any works of demolition and earth moving works) until details of the measures for the enhancement of biodiversity on the site, in accordance with the guidance contained in the Surrey Wildlife Trust response dated 11th August 2015, and a timetable for their provision on the site have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The biodiversity enhancements shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and shall thereafter be retained on the site.

Reason: In order to enhance the biodiversity on the site and to comply with Policy CS7 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012, Circular 06/05 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation and the policies in the NPPF.

27. Any scrub, hedgerow and tree clearance must be undertaken outside the bird breeding season (March to August inclusive) unless the applicant has first carried out a survey of such vegetation which shows that there are no nesting species within relevant parts of the application site and any such survey results have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To prevent birds being injured or killed during site clearance works and to comply Policy CS7 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012, Circular 06/05 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation and the policies in the NPPF.

Trees and Landscaping

28. The development hereby approved shall be carried out wholly in accordance with the arboricultural information provided by SJA Trees (Ref: SJA air 17166-01 dated August 2017) including making provision for a site meeting between the Local Authority's Arboricultural Officer, the Project Arboriculturalist and the Project Manager prior to the commencement of the development.

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Reason: To ensure the retention and protection of trees to be retained on the site in the interests of the visual amenities of the locality and the appearance of the development and ecology and to comply with Policies CS6, CS7 and CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012 and policies in the NPPF.

29. Any works within the root protection areas of any retained trees shall be undertaken under full arboricultural supervision. The construction of any hard surfaced within root protection areas shall be undertaken using no-dig techniques, the full details of which shall have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development hereby permitted shall only take place in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure the retention and protection of trees to be retained on the site in the interests of the visual amenities of the locality and the appearance of the development and ecology and to comply with Policies CS6, CS7 and CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012 and policies in the NPPF.

30. Prior to the commencement of any works on site, full details of service runs (Gas and Electricity) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved details.

Reasons: To ensure the retention and protection of trees to be retained on the site in the interests of the visual amenities of the locality and the appearance of the development and ecology and to comply with Policies CS6, CS7 and CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012 and policies in the NPPF.

31. Prior to the installation of the green roof to the building hereby approved full details, including planting details, of the green roof shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The green roof shall then be installed in accordance with the approved details prior to the first occupation of the building or any other timetable to be approved by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the green roof shall be retained and maintained in accordance with the approved details. Any plant/shrub which die, becomes seriously damaged or diseased or are removed or destroyed within a period of 5 years from the date of planting shall be replaced during the next planting season with specimens of the same size and species unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of amenity and biodiversity and to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the locality in accordance with Policies CS7, CS17, CS21 and CS24 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012 and policies in the NPPF.

32. The landscaping (including tree, hedge and shrub planting and lawn areas) of the site shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved plans. All landscaping shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans in the first planting season (November-March) following the occupation of the buildings or the completion of the development whichever is the sooner and maintained thereafter. Any retained or newly planted trees, shrubs or hedges which die, become seriously damaged or diseased or are removed or destroyed within a period of 5 years from the date of planting shall be replaced during the next planting season with specimens of the same size and species unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of amenity and biodiversity and to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the locality in accordance with Policies CS7, CS17, CS21 and CS24 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012 and policies in the NPPF.

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33. ++The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan, including long term design objectives, management responsibilities and maintenance schedules for all tree areas, landscaped areas and grass pitches has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The proposals shall be carried out and maintained in accordance with the approved scheme unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

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 policies in the NPPF.

34. The fencing on the site shall be installed in accordance with the details shown on the approved plans prior to the first use of the development hereby approved. The fencing shall thereafter be retained and maintained in accordance with the approved plans unless otherwise first agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to comply with Policies CS6 and CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012 and policies in the NPPF.

Environment

35. ++ The development hereby permitted shall not commence until details of the measures to be undertaken to acoustically insulate and ventilate the building for the containment of internally generated noise have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be implemented and retained only in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To protect the environment and amenities of the occupants of neighbouring properties in accordance with Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012 and policies in the NPPF.

36. ++ No fixed plant and equipment associated with air moving equipment, compressors, generators or plant or similar equipment shall be installed until details, including acoustic specifications have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The plant and/or equipment shall be installed and thereafter retained in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To protect the environment and amenities of the occupants of neighbouring properties in accordance with Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012 and policies in the NPPF.

37. ++ Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted, a scheme for the installation of equipment to control emissions from the premises shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. These measures shall be implemented fully in accordance with the approved scheme prior to the occupation of the development (or commencement of the use hereby approved). The outlet from the ventilation/extraction flue must finish at least one metre from openings such as doors and windows and be at least one metre above eaves level, to ensure the dispersal of fumes and odours away from neighbouring properties. The flue ductwork must be supported using mountings fixed to the external structure of the building in such a way that any vibration or noise associated with mechanical ventilation/extraction is reduced to a level which does not cause a nuisance to neighbours. All equipment installed as part of the scheme shall thereafter be operated and maintained in accordance with the approved details and retained as such thereafter.

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Reason: To protect the environment and amenities of the occupants of neighbouring properties and prevent nuisance arising from noise, fumes, smell, smoke, ash, grit or other emissions in accordance with Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012 and policies in the NPPF.

38. ++ The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until the proposed refuse and recycling bin storage areas have been provided on the site in accordance with the approved plans and have been made available for use. The refuse and recycling bin storage areas shall thereafter be retained for use at all times.

Reason: In the interests of amenity and to ensure the provision of satisfactory facilities for the storage and recycling of refuse in accordance with Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012 and policies in the NPPF.

Sustainable construction

39. The development hereby permitted shall be implemented in accordance with the approved plans and the approved Energy Statement. The combined heat and power (CHP) and photovoltaic arrays shall be installed in accordance with the application details prior to the first occupation of the development and shall thereafter be retained and maintained operational unless otherwise first approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the development achieves a high standard of sustainability and makes efficient use of resources and to comply with Policies CS6, CS21 and CS22 of the Woking Borough Core Strategy 2012 and policies in the NPPF.

40. The development hereby approved shall achieve a minimum post-construction BREEAM rating of at least 'Very Good' (or such equivalent national measure of sustainable building which replaces that scheme). Within 3 months of the completion of the development a final Certificate confirming that the development has achieved a BREEAM rating of at least 'Very Good' (or such equivalent national measure of sustainable building which replaces that scheme) has been submitted to the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the development achieves a high standard of sustainability and makes efficient use of resources and to comply with Policies CS6, CS21 and CS22 of the Woking Borough Core Strategy 2012 and policies in the NPPF.

41. Prior to the first use of the development hereby permitted the infrastructure for the provision of 5no. active and 11no. passive electric charging parking spaces shall have been provided in accordance with the application details and the infrastructure for the 5no. active electric vehicle charging parking bays shall be made available for use by users of the proposed development. The development shall thereafter be retained in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the development achieves a high standard of sustainability and makes efficient use of resources and to comply with Policies CS6, CS21 and CS22 of the Woking Borough Core Strategy 2012 and policies in the NPPF.

Removal of permitted development and restrictions on use

42. Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 3, Schedule 2, Part 2, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or an

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order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no gate, fence wall, or other means of enclosure shall be erected constructed anywhere on the site without the prior written approval of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of the Green Belt, the character and appearance of the site and trees and to comply with Policies CS6, CS7, CS9 and CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy and policies in the NPPF.

43. No mezzanine floor or any other structure shall be inserted within the indoor sports hall identified on the approved plans without the prior written permission of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that this facility remains available for the provision of indoor sports to support the secondary school on the site, given the justification for the provision of a new secondary school on this site.

44. The café area (12sqm) and the seating area (86sqm) as shown on approved drawing PL005 Revision C shall not be enlarged in any way without the prior written permission of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that this facility remains ancillary to the development hereby approved, in order that the development should not prejudice highway safety nor cause inconvenience to other highways users and to comply with Policies CS6, CS21 and CS18 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012 and the policies in the NPPF.

Hours of operation for uses

45. The indoor leisure uses hereby approved shall not be used open to customers after 10pm and before 7am.

Reason: In the interests of the character and appearance of the site, to safeguard the amenities of nearby occupiers and to comply with Policies CS6 and CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy and the policies in the NPPF.

46. The building hereby permitted shall be occupied and operated solely by Woking Gymnastics Club and by no other person, persons or organisation and shall not enure for the benefit of the land. Upon the cessation of occupation by Woking Gymnastics Club, the use hereby permitted shall cease.

Reason: This permission is granted exceptionally and only in view of the personal circumstances of the applicant.

Informatives

1. The applicant is advised that the school/leisure site including the outdoor sports pitches and athletics track are considered to be a single planning unit in *sui generis* use. Therefore planning permission will be required for any further development (including a material change of use) on the site.
2. For the avoidance of doubt, the following definitions apply to the above condition (No: PLAN/2017/1063) relating to contaminated land:

Desk study- This will include: -

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(i) a detailed assessment of the history of the site and its uses based upon all available information including the historic Ordnance Survey, Regulatory Consultations and any ownership records associated with the deeds.

Site investigation proposal- This will include: -

(i) a detailed methodology for assessing and investigating the site for the existence of any form of contamination which is considered likely to be present on or under the land based upon the desk study.

(ii) This is subject to the written approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority, and any additional requirements that it may specify, prior to any site investigation being commenced on site.

(iii) Following approval, the Local Planning Authority shall be given a minimum of two weeks written notice of the commencement of site investigation works.

Site Investigation Report: This will include: -

(i) a relevant site investigation including the results of all sub-surface soil, gas and groundwater sampling taken at such points and to such depth as the Local Planning Authority may stipulate.

(ii) a risk assessment based upon any contamination discovered and any receptors.

Remediation action plan: This plan shall include details of: -

(i) all contamination on the site which might impact upon construction workers, future occupiers and the surrounding environment;

(ii) appropriate works to neutralise and make harmless any risk from contamination identified in (i)

Discovery strategy: Care should be taken during excavation or working of the site to investigate any soils which appear by eye or odour to be contaminated or of different character to those analysed. The strategy shall include details of: -

(i) supervision and documentation of the remediation and construction works to ensure that they are carried out in accordance with the agreed details;

(ii) a procedure for identifying, assessing and neutralising any unforeseen contamination discovered during the course of construction

(iii) a procedure for reporting to the Local Planning Authority any unforeseen contamination discovered during the course of construction

Validation strategy: This shall include : -

(i) documentary evidence that all investigation, sampling and remediation has been carried out to a standard suitable for the purpose; and

(ii) confirmation that the works have been executed to a standard to satisfy the planning condition (closure report).

Verification report: This shall include : -

(i) The report shall detail evidence of the remediation, the effectiveness of the remediation carried out and the results of post remediation works. The inclusion of site photographs is considered advantageous.

All of the above documents, investigations and operations should be carried out by a qualified, accredited consultant/contractor in accordance with a quality assured sampling, analysis and recording methodology. In addition to this it is expected that best practice guidance from authorities such as the EA, British Standards, CIRIA and NHBC would be followed where applicable.

3. The applicant is advised that all retained trees on the site are protected by Area Tree Preservation Order 154/1973. Any works to trees (other than the works specifically

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approved by this consent) will require the formal written consent of the Local Planning Authority.

4. 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 paragraph 186-187 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012.
5. You are 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.
6. Soakaways should be as shallow as possible, not intercept the water table at any time and not be placed in contaminated ground. There should preferably be 1 metre unsaturated ground beneath the base of any infiltration devices.
7. Details of the highway requirements necessary for inclusion in any application seeking approval of reserved matters may be obtained from the Transportation Development Planning Division of Surrey County Council.
8. The permission hereby granted shall not be construed as authority to carry out any works on the highway. The applicant is advised that prior approval must be obtained from the Highway Authority before any works are carried out on any footway, footpath, carriageway, or verge to form a vehicle crossover to install dropped kerbs. www.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/road-permits-and-licences/vehicle-crossovers-or-dropped-kerbs
9. The permission hereby granted shall not be construed as authority to carry out any 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 be obtained from the Highway Authority before any works are carried out on any footway, footpath, carriageway, verge or other land forming part of the highway. All works on the highway will require a permit and an application will need to be submitted to the County Council's 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-and-transport/road-permits-and-licences/the-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.
10. A pedestrian inter-visibility splay of 2m by 2m shall be provided on each side of the access, the depth measured from the back of the footway and the widths outwards from the edges of the access. No fence, wall or other obstruction to visibility between 0.6m and 2m in height above ground level shall be erected within the area of such splays.
11. The developer is advised that as part of the detailed design of the highway works required by the above condition(s), the County Highway Authority may require necessary accommodation works to street lights, road signs, road markings, highway drainage, surface covers, street trees, highway verges, highway surfaces, surface edge restraints and any other street furniture/equipment.
12. The permission hereby granted shall 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.

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13. The developer is advised that a standard fee may be charged for input to, and future monitoring of, any Travel Plan
14. Any unilateral undertaking shall be in accordance with Surrey County Council's standard format.
15. The developer would be expected to instruct an independent transportation data collection company to undertake the monitoring survey. This survey should conform to a TRICS Multi-Modal Survey format consistent with the UK Standard for Measuring Travel Plan Impacts as approved by the Highway Authority. To ensure that the survey represents typical travel patterns, the organisation taking ownership of the travel plan will need to agree to being surveyed only within a specified annual quarter period but with no further notice of the precise survey dates. The Developer would be expected to fund the survey validation and data entry costs.
16. Thames Water informative - Surface water drainage – With regard to surface water drainage it is the responsibility of a developer to make proper provision for drainage to ground, water courses or a suitable sewer. In respect of surface water it is recommend that the applicant should ensure that storm flows are attenuated or regulated into the receiving public network through on or off site storage. When it is proposed to connect to a combined public sewer, the site drainage should be separate and combined at the final manhole nearest the boundary. Connections are not permitted for the removal of groundwater. Where the developer proposes to discharge to a public sewer, prior approval from Thames Water Developer Services will be required. They can be contacted on 0800 009 3921.
17. Thames Water informative – A Groundwater Risk Management Permit from Thames Water will be required for discharging groundwater into a public sewer. Any discharge made without a permit is deemed illegal and may result in prosecution under the provisions of the Water Industry Act 1991. We would expect the developer to demonstrate what measures he will undertake to minimise groundwater discharges into the public sewer. Permit enquiries should be directed to Thames Water's Risk Management Team on 0203 577 9483 or be emailing wwriskmanagement@thameswater.co.uk. Application forms should be completed online via www.thameswater.co.uk/wastewaterquality.
18. The applicant is advised that an application will need to be made under the Control of Pollution Act to Woking Borough Council's Environmental Health Team for consent for the proposed additional working hours outside of the normal working hours of 08.00 to 18.00 Monday-Friday and 08.00 to 13.00 on Saturdays.
19. The applicant is advised that advertisement consent will be required for any signage on the building/site.
20. The applicant is advised to fully take account of the comments submitted by Network Rail in response to this planning application which provides advice, guidance and the need for approval for some detailed works. The applicant is advised the following "*as the site is adjacent to Network Rail's operational railway infrastructure, Network Rail strongly recommends the developer contacts AssetProtectionWessex@networkrail.co.uk prior to any woks commencing on site, and also to agree an Asset Protection Agreement with us to enable approval of detailed works. More information can also be obtained from our website at www.networkrail.co.uk/asp/1538.aspx*"

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- 21. Food Safety Act (1)** The premises will be required to comply with the Food Safety Act 1990 and the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. In this context details of the kitchen/food preparation areas including the number and position of sinks, wash hand basins and other fittings, water closet and urinal accommodation for staff and public, including facilities for disabled persons, should be submitted to the Environmental Health Manager prior to the commencement of any work.
- 22. Food Safety Act (2)** 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. Please go online at www.gov.uk or contact Environmental Health on 01483 755855 for the appropriate registration form.
- 23. New Business- Advise Environmental Health** Before the new business opens the applicant is advised to contact Environmental Health, Civic Offices, Gloucester Square, Woking, Surrey, GU21 1YL, 01483 755855 regarding the provisions of the Health & Safety at work Etc. Act 1974.