

**To:** Planning & Regulatory Committee

**Date:** 27 November 2024

**By:** Planning Development Manager

**District(s)** Runnymede

**Electoral Division(s):**

**Chertsey**

Mr Nuti

**Case Officer:**

David Maxwell

**Purpose:** For Decision

**Grid Ref:** 503592 165238

**Title: Surrey County Council Proposal RU.23/1759**

**Summary Report**

**Meadowcroft Community Infant School, Little Green Lane, Chertsey KT16 9PT**

**Extension to existing school and new classroom building following demolition of existing caretaker's accommodation, alteration to parking layout, and alteration to external areas including multi-use games area to enable increase in pupil numbers from 90 to 210.**

The application site extends to 0.48 hectares (ha) and is located in a residential area and a short distance to the west of the M25 motorway on the northern side of Little Green Lane in Chertsey. Meadowcroft School is single-storey and located centrally within the site which is roughly rectangular in shape with recreational space to the rear (north). A single vehicle access point leads from Little Green Lane to a parking area to the front of the site. To the western side of the site is a caretaker's bungalow, currently occupied by staff members, and an associated garage, sheds and small residential garden. The field to the rear of the school and the narrow margin of grass along the eastern site boundary are designated as open space.

The application seeks to expand the one-form entry infant school for pupils aged 4-7 years into a one-form entry primary school for pupils aged 4-11 years. This would increase the capacity of the school from 90 to 210 pupils. To accommodate the increase in pupils, the proposal would involve an extension towards the rear of the main school building and the construction of a new detached single-storey classroom block to the west of the main school, following the demolition of the existing caretaker's accommodation. The application also proposes an alteration to the parking layout and changes to the external layout of the school including the development of a multi-use games area (MUGA) to the rear of the site.

There are mature trees within the site and also in the grass verges on the frontage of Little Green Lane. Some of the mature trees beyond the rear boundary of the site are subject to a Tree Preservation Order. The field to the rear of the school and the narrow margin of grass along the eastern site boundary are designated as open space. The application site is situated within both Flood Zone 1 and an indicative area of surface water flooding and lies within Source Protection Zone 3. The closest Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) lies around 116m to the west of the site and extends 70m to the east and west of the M25 motorway.

Runnymede Borough Council has raised no objection to the application subject to a full and proper assessment of planning policy, local resident / Councillor concerns and any drainage, flood risk and highway impacts. The Borough Environmental Health Officer has recommended that controls be put in place to prevent external use of the MUGA outside of the extended school day to limit the noise impact on residential amenity. No objections have been received from statutory and non-statutory consultees subject to conditions in respect of residential amenity,

highways, traffic and access, landscape, ecology, flooding and sustainable drainage, and archaeology.

Twenty-seven letters of representation have been received, two of which support the application with twenty-five opposed. Those writing in support of the application believe that there is a need for the proposal which would give children continuity of education in a good school that would provide a local community hub in an area that is lacking in local community premises. Those against have expressed concerns primarily in relation to the inadequate size of the application site, lack of need, the location of the development, highways, traffic and access, inadequate parking, surface water drainage, residential amenity, health and safety and procedural matters.

Although some open space would be lost or repurposed, Sport England has raised no objection to the application and Officers consider that this would be outweighed by the benefits of the proposal to the school community, in view of the identified need for the development. The proposal would also improve the quality of outdoor sports facilities within the site which would be available all year round, increasing the opportunities to improve the fitness, health and wellbeing of pupils attending the school.

Whilst the mandatory targets for biodiversity net-gain do not apply in this case, the applicant still has to demonstrate that a net-gain would be achieved. The development would result in the loss of 18 trees on the application site. Despite the proposals for additional on-site planting, the application would result in a net-loss of biodiversity on-site. To off-set this loss and ensure that a net-gain in biodiversity is achieved overall, 125 small trees would be planted off-site. The County Ecology Officer is content with this approach subject to the imposition of a condition requiring the submission of a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) in order to secure the delivery and subsequent maintenance of the additional planting.

Having assessed the planning merits of the application, taking into account the responses from consultees and representations received from local residents, Officers consider that a clear educational need for the proposed development has been demonstrated which can be given great weight in the planning balance. Officers are satisfied that any adverse impacts can be satisfactorily mitigated through the imposition of planning conditions. For these reasons, Officers consider that the proposal is in accordance with national and local planning policy and that planning permission should be granted subject to conditions.

**It is recommended that pursuant to Regulation 3 of The Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992, the Committee grants planning permission for application ref: RU.23/1759 subject to the recommended planning conditions.**

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### ***Application details***

#### ***Applicant***

SCC Property

#### ***Date application valid***

8 December 2023

#### ***Period for Determination***

2 February 2024 extended to 11 December 2024

#### ***Amending Documents***

- Email entitled, "RE: SCC Ref: 2023-0202: Meadowcroft Community Infant School" dated 18 January 2024 attaching: Pick Everard (Design Team) comments back to SCC's LLFA & Thames Water Planning responses Issued 03 January 2024 (rev A); and Preliminary Ecological Assessment v2.0, Wardell Armstrong, dated January 2024.

- Road Safety Audit Stage 1 (ref: VEL/24/23-088/1/BS), M & S Traffic dated 19 January 2024.
- Road Safety Audit Response (DMRB GG119) dated 26 January 2024.
- Drawing No. 23-044-SK-0002 (rev E) Proposed Off-Site Highway Works Plan Sheet 1 of 3 dated 26 January 2024.
- Drawing No. 23-044-SK-0003 (rev E) Proposed Off-Site Highway Works Plan Sheet 2 of 3 dated 26 January 2024.
- Drawing No. 23-044-SK-0004 (rev E) Proposed Off-Site Highway Works Plan Sheet 3 of 3 dated 26 January 2024.
- Email entitled, "Application RU.23/1759 - Meadowcroft Infants School, Little Green Lane, Chertsey, KT16 9PT - Planning Appraisals - Surrey County Council" dated 15 May 2024 with attached Drawing No. SUR001-PEV-XX-XX-DR-A-9056 rev P02 Proposed External Elevations - New Building dated 17 April 2024.
- Biodiversity Net Gain Baseline Report, Almnors Farm Smallholding v1 (Parts 1, 2, 3 and 4) dated 16 August 2024.
- Bat Survey Report v1.0, Wardell Armstrong, dated August 2024.
- Email entitled, "RE: Application RU.23/1579: Meadowcroft Community Infant School, Chertsey - SCC Ecology Response" dated 19 September 2024 attaching Meadowcroft NBS Performance specification Landscape – STAGE THREE (ref: SUR001-LOC-ZZ-00-DR-L-03012) dated 15 August 2023 and Annual Maintenance Schedule (ref: SUR001-LOC-ZZ-00-DR-L-03011).
- Biodiversity Net Gain Report Technical Note dated 23 September 2024.
- Biodiversity Metric 4.0 v3 dated 23 September 2024.
- Email entitled, "URGENT : Application RU.23/1579: Meadowcroft Community Infant School, Chertsey - Tree planting proposal for Almnors Farm BNG Mitigation site" dated 7 October 2024 attaching document entitled "BNG Mitigation: Space required to plant 125 small trees on the Almnors Farm site".
- Letter ref: SJA res 23447-01a dated 25 October 2024 entitled, "Response to Comments from the Tree Officer received 8th October 2024".
- Email entitled, "RE: SCC Ref: 2023-0202: Meadowcroft Community Infant School" dated 25 October 2024.
- Landscape Maintenance and Management Plan, Studio Loci dated 18 April 2024
- Drawing No. SUR001-LOC-ZZ-00-DR-L-03024 rev F Landscape Planting Plan dated 18 April 2024.
- Drawing No. SUR001-LOC-ZZ-00-DR-L-03026 rev A Soil Plan dated 17 April 2024
- Email entitled, "RE: Application SCC Ref: 2023-0202 - Meadowcroft School, Chertsey" dated 5 November 2024 attaching revised Drawing Nos: SUR001-PEV-XX-XX-DR-E-0801 rev P02 External Lighting Layout - Lux Plots dated 5 November 2024; SUR001-PEV-XX-00-DR-C-1120 rev P05 Proposed Contour and Levels Plan dated 4 November 2024; SUR001-PEV-XX-00-DR-C-0520 rev P03 Overview Drainage Drawing dated 4 November 2024; SUR001-PEV-XX-XX-DR-A-9012 rev P02 Proposed Site Block Plan dated 4 November 2024; SUR001-PEV-XX-XX-DR-A-9080 rev P02 Existing & Proposed Street Frontage Elevations dated 4 November 2024; SUR001-PEV-XX-00-DR-C-0700 rev P05 Pavement Plan dated 4 November 2024; SUR001-PEV-XX-00-DR-A-9040 rev P02 Proposed Plan 00 - Ground Floor dated 4 November 2024; and, SUR001-PEV-XX-XX-DR-A-9061 rev P03 Proposed Site Sections dated 4 November 2024.

### **Summary of Planning Issues**

This section identifies and summarises the main planning issues in the report. The full text should be considered before the meeting.

	<b>Is this aspect of the proposal in accordance with the development plan?</b>	<b>Paragraphs in the report where this has been discussed</b>
Need for the Development	Yes	34-51
Existing Open Space	Yes	52-57
Loss of Residential Dwelling	Yes	58-60

Design, Sustainability and Visual Appearance	Yes	61-85
Residential Amenity	Yes	86-115
Highways and Traffic Implications	Yes	116-139
Landscape	Yes	140-150
Ecology	Yes	151-166
Flooding and Sustainable Drainage	Yes	167-189
Archaeology	Yes	190-197

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### ***Illustrative material***

#### **Site Plan**

Plan 1: Site Location and Application Site

#### **Aerial Photographs**

Aerial 1: Surrounding Area

Aerial 2: Application Site

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### ***Background***

#### ***Site Description***

1. The application site occupies an area of approximately 0.48 hectares (ha) and is located on the northern side of Little Green Lane in Chertsey. It is situated around 1,600 metres (m) to the south-west of the town centre and on the opposite side of the M25 motorway which lies around 175m to the east of the site. The wider triangular shaped residential area in which the application site lies is bounded by three main roads comprising the A320 St Peter's Way to the south, the A320 Guildford Road to the north-west and Green Lane to the north-east.
2. Meadowcroft School is located centrally within the site which is roughly rectangular in shape with recreational space to the rear. A single vehicle access point leads from Little Green Lane to a parking area to the front of the site containing 8 spaces. On the western side of the site is a caretaker's bungalow, currently occupied by staff members, and an associated garage and small residential garden.
3. The site is situated within a residential area. The two storey dwellings of Jersey Close to the west and north, and Inglewood to the east, enclose the site on its north, east and western boundaries. Little Green Lane is a residential road and two storey properties lie opposite the site on the southern side of the road.
4. There are mature trees within the site and also in the grass verges on the frontage of Little Green Lane. Some of the mature trees beyond the northern site boundary are subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). The field to the rear of the school and the narrow margin of grass along the eastern site boundary are designated as open space. The school is single storey and currently has the capacity to accommodate 90 pupils.
5. The application site is situated in Flood Zone 1 which has a low probability of flooding from rivers and seas. However, a large section of the undeveloped part of the site is at risk from surface water flooding. The site also lies within Source Protection Zone 3. The closest Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) lies around 116m to the west of the site and extends 70m to the east and west of the M25 motorway.

#### ***Planning History***

6. On 15 October 2024, a notification request for permitted development was considered and agreed for the construction of classroom accommodation and storage building to the front of the school for a temporary period until August 2025.

7. Planning permission (ref: RU.13/1261) was granted in February 2014 for the erection of a detached timber framed building to provide a single classroom space with external deck area for use for educational purposes in connection with the school. This replaced three sheds on the hard surfaced area at the rear (north) of the school.
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### ***The proposal***

8. The application seeks to expand the one-form entry infant school for pupils aged 4-7 years into a one form entry primary school for pupils aged 4-11 years. This would increase the capacity of the school from 90 to 210 pupils.
9. The proposal would involve the demolition of the existing caretaker's bungalow, garage, ancillary timber sheds and the school's external 'Daisy Den' building to the western side of the site totalling 145 square metres (sq m) gross external area (GEA). The 'Daisy Den' comprises an external standalone building for children with special educational needs (SEN), which originally housed the school library. These buildings would be replaced with a new single storey building with a gross internal area (GIA) of around 400 sq m. This would provide four classrooms, library/group space, group room, hygiene room, WCs, and ancillary space. A covered indoor/outdoor style teaching space would also be provided for the library/group space to the south. An external stairway to the west boundary would allow access to the roof for maintenance only.
10. The new building would be single-storey and include photovoltaic (PV) panels on the roof, to capture solar energy, which would be partly obscured by a 1.1 metre (m) high parapet. The parapet wall would rise to a height of 4.65m with the highest point of the roof lights containing the PV panels being 6.10m in height. The building would be 29m in length, 17.35m in width and located approximately 1.8m from the residential boundary with properties in Jersey Close.
11. The existing school would also be extended towards the rear with a c.96 sq m GIA extension to provide an enlarged hall space, a new room for children with special educational needs and furniture store. The extension would be heated by the existing school boiler system. New internal roof access and balustraded edge protection would also be added to the existing school building to improve maintenance access. Other internal reconfiguration and refurbishments would take place within the existing school building to allow for programmatic changes and WC upgrades.
12. A new multi-use games area (MUGA) would be provided to the rear of the site. This would measure approximately 28 by 18.5 metres and would allow for games such as mini-tennis, basketball or five a side. The MUGA would be enclosed by 3 metre high fencing and protective netting across the top to contain sporting activities. The proposed MUGA would not have any associated flood lighting and would not be used for community use. Any use of the MUGA and adjoining external areas would only be during normal school hours. Meadowcroft School also has an agreement with Salesian Secondary School on Guildford Road, Chertsey to share its sporting facilities during the school day.
13. Several new external support structures are proposed including a bin store, store with canopy containing 29 secure cycles parking bays including 1 accessible parking bay, parking for 16 scooters, caretaker's office & store, and 3 new sheds. The existing vehicle and pedestrian access points from Little Green Lane would remain. The proposed parking area would remain in the south-west corner of the site and accommodate a total of 15 parking spaces and a delivery/drop off area.
14. Site-wide landscaping works are proposed to improve and upgrade the external spaces for the school's expansion. The external areas of the school would be reconfigured. At the front of the school, the existing hard play area would be replaced with a new artificial grass area including artificial grass mounds together with landscaping and a series of storage

buildings. Areas of fixed play equipment and landscaped areas would extend along the eastern boundary of the site. The northern boundary would contain landscaping and tree and hedgerow planting. A lawned area with existing trees would be retained in the south-western corner of the site. The proposals incorporate new tree planting and extensive buffer planting to support biodiversity improvements. New fencing and entrance gates for pedestrians and vehicles would feature along the southern boundary to maintain security.

15. The school currently has 11 full time equivalent staff and would be seeking to expand by a further 4 full time equivalent staff when the expanded one form entry facility opens. The proposal is designed to cater for the rising demand for school places. Despite a falling birth rate across the county since 2012, inward migration and new housing coming forward has meant that demand for school places has continued to increase in some areas of Runnymede, specifically in the more urban areas of Chertsey and Addlestone.

### ***Consultations and publicity***

#### ***District Council***

- |                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| 16. Runnymede Borough Council    | No objection subject to full and proper assessment of national and local planning policy, the concerns raised by local residents and local Councillors and any drainage, flood risk and highways impacts. |
| 17. Environmental Health Officer | Recommends that controls are in place to prevent the external use of the MUGA outside of the extended school day to limit the noise impact on residential amenity.  |

#### **Consultees (Statutory and Non-Statutory)**

- |                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 18. County Highway Authority   | No objection subject to conditions.   |
| 19. Lead Local Flood Authority | The applicant has considered the surface water flood risk to and from the site and has suggested appropriate mitigation measures to inform the planning application. A condition is suggested to ensure the development does not increase flood risk on or off-site and is maintained for the lifetime of the development.                                      |
| 20. Affinity Water             | No views received.  |
| 21. Thames Water               | No objection in respect of the waste water network, sewage treatment works infrastructure capacity and surface water drainage provided the developer follows the sequential approach to surface water. As the development is within 20m of a sewage pumping station, the amenity of the occupiers of the development must be considered and taken into account. |
| 22. Landscape Officer          | No objection subject to the County Arboriculturist being satisfied with the proposals. Questions the proposals for irrigation and recommends the imposition of a planning condition to secure the implementation of the proposed landscaping scheme.  |

23. County Arboricultural Officer No objection or significant comments to add to the proposed layout or species choices within the planting scheme and believes that the aftercare / landscape management arrangements plan is sufficient. Recommends a condition to secure measures to protect retained trees.
24. County Ecology Officer No objection subject to a condition to provide a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan.
25. Archaeological Officer No objection subject to the imposition of a pre-commencement condition requiring a programme of trial trench evaluation to be undertaken to enable the identification of any buried remains and allow suitable mitigation measures to be devised if necessary.
26. Sport England As the proposed development does not fall within either our statutory or non-statutory remit, a detailed response has not been provided. Response cross refers to general guidance and advice.
27. HSE Planning Advice The development does not intersect a pipeline or hazard zone. HSE (Health and Safety Executive) Planning Advice does not have an interest in the development.

#### **Parish/Town Council and Amenity Groups**

28. The Chertsey Society No views received.

#### **Summary of publicity undertaken and key issues raised by public**

29. The application was publicised by the posting of 4 site notices. A total of 142 owner/occupiers of neighbouring properties were directly notified by letter. Twenty-seven letters of representation have been received, two of which support the application with twenty-five raising objection. A summary of the main reasons given both in support and against the application are provided below.

##### *Letters of Support*

- Would give children continuity of education in a good school;
- Would be good to see school become hub of local community given lack of local community premises.
- Primary school places are much needed in the area.
- Takes account of the needs of students attending the school and ensures local neighbours are not impacted.

##### *Letters of Objection*

##### **Size of Application Site**

- Lack of play/amenity space for children which is too small and below minimum requirements.
- Constitutes over development as pupil expansion is too large for the size of the site.

##### **Need**

- Students are able to be allocated places within our other local primary schools.

### Location of Development

- School is surrounded by residential properties.
- A new site should be identified as land in the immediate area has been removed from the Green Belt and allocated for development.
- Suitable locations for a replacement school are available 200-300m off Bittams Lane.
- Should be located on the area right of Green Lane in the direction of Addlestone.
- Field to be developed on Green Lane has space to build a new school and there is also space at Chertsey High School where facilities could be shared.

### Highways, Traffic and Access

- Little Green Lane is too small to support this expansion and dangerous to drive along during school drop-off / pick-up times.
- Little Green Lane can become grid-locked at school pick-up and drop-off times.
- Proposals in Traffic Audit for a Give Way and Priority to Oncoming Traffic solution would result in gridlock on Little Green Lane causing confusion and frustration.
- Little Green Lane is extremely narrow and poor visibility due to resident on-street parking, road curvature and large trees would become worse.
- Stunned at traffic management plans as parent parking turns Little Green Lane into a chicane and forces traffic onto the wrong side of the road.
- Making part of Little Green Lane a preferential lane for westbound traffic would be dangerous and make it impossible for traffic to pass.
- Jersey Close and Inglewood have no pavements contrary to the Transport Statement.
- Near impossible to access/egress Jersey Close at school start/finish times due to inadequate space and poorly parked vehicles.
- Vehicles turning left out of Jersey Close can be confronted by a vehicle on the wrong side of the road due to parking on Little Green Lane which reduces safety.
- Additional parking and traffic would trap drivers trying to exit Jersey Close.
- Parents are not walking children into school.
- Congestion would spread onto Bittams Lane and further on Little Green Lane.
- No mention of a speed limit reduction in Bittams Lane and no provision for a cycle path in Little Green Lane or Bittams Lane.
- Analysis of traffic situation is inadequate.
- Lorries will cause more and more trouble for local traffic especially during construction.
- More thought needs to be given to traffic flow although we support raised crossings and slowing traffic outside the school.
- Traffic survey results are false as it was undertaken in the summer when traffic is at its lowest with no school traffic and residents away on holiday.
- Concern over access for refuse trucks / emergency vehicles due to increased traffic.
- Danger of area becoming clogged with traffic due to over development.
- Concern over cumulative traffic impact with 700 new homes planned nearby.
- Traffic Audit includes proposals to regularly maintain bushes outside our home which are the subject of preservation orders and teeming with nesting birds.

### Parking

- Inadequate on-street parking areas for parent drop-off and pick-up.
- Little Green Lane would be blocked from resident on road parking at school drop-off and pick-up times due to its narrow width.
- Displaced parking from proposed parking restrictions on Little Green Lane would put more strain on residents either side of the school.
- Parking Plan promotes parent parking across the driveway of 93 Little Green Lane.
- Cars are parked all along grass verge/road in Bittams Lane at school drop-off and pick-up times.
- Grass verges on Bittams Lane have become a mud bath due to parent parking.
- Parent parking in private parking areas in Jersey Close restricts visibility.
- Parent parking in Jersey Close would make it impossible for cars to pass and force pedestrians to walk in the road creating a safety risk.
- Jersey Close cannot safely accommodate the current or increased level of parking.
- There are no park and stride areas available in Jersey Close.
- Jersey Close and Inglewood need to be removed from the Parking Plan.



- Inconsiderate parking sometimes prevents emergency vehicle access to Jersey Close.
- Larger vehicles passing on Jersey Close have to drive on the grass verges.
- Proposed parking plan includes private parking spaces owned by house numbers 1 to 10 Jersey Close and No. 1 has two allocated parking spaces.
- Would increase aggressive behaviour and conflict between residents and parents.
- Some assumptions are incorrect as there are double yellow lines and driveways that should not be parked over.
- Parking and traffic flow data is invalid as it is collected in the school holidays or just before the school is about to close which does not reflect the true picture.
- Parents have blocked or parked on our drive and have little respect for driveways or other drivers.
- Would lead to parents parking outside our homes and filling up nearby roads.
- Existing issues with double parking, parking on yellow lines and across dropped curbs making access to our property difficult.
- Concern over parking during the construction phase.
- Is already significant kerbside parking from residents, visitors and delivery drivers.
- Would increase coach parking on the pavement and double yellow lines.
- A sensible parking plan should be considered in liaison with local residents/councillors.
- Should be robust provision for the extra cars due to lack of parking.
- Road should be widened or an area provided for parents to park.
- On-site parking spaces should be increased or parents incentivised to walk children to school.
- Suggest creation of a drive through drop-off/pick-up point on site or away from the school gates.

#### Surface Water Drainage

- Potential flooding would get worse with additional concrete being laid.
- If proposed SuDS system is 1000 cu m, it would remove the same volume of flood storage capacity as the water table is a few millimetres below ground level.
- Technically any SuDS system could float due to high water table.
- Site sits largely in an Area of Indicative Flooding.
- Area is already subject to frequent flooding which has got progressively worse.
- More buildings would prevent soak away in an area with a serious flooding issue.
- Increased water levels in area already known to be at risk of flooding.
- The road is slow to drain.
- Increase in flood risk as the gully drains already overflow during intensive rainfall.
- Provides opportunity for Surrey County Council (SCC) to resolve surface water flooding in the area.
- Expansion of nearby travellers site will increase strain on blocked and overgrown drainage ditches on Bittams Lane which the gully drains on Little Green Lane flow into.
- Drainage ditches on Bittams Lane remain obstructed meaning it is only a matter of time before flood water enters 93 Little Green Lane.
- Proposed raised table crossing and footway across the grass verge would prevent surface water flowing away from 93 Little Green Lane resulting in the property being flooded during intense rainfall.
- Any approval should be conditional on the full clearance of all relevant ditches, the adjustment of pavements and the raising of driveways to keep flood water away.
- Excessive rainfall creates large area of standing water in school field against our fence.
- Raising school field would create more flooding issues, rotting the fence and causing unnecessary financial cost.
- Raising levels in the north-west corner of the site would cause flooding to our property.
- Development has potential to cause flooding to several properties around the school.
- Some drainage and sewer pipes are not shown on the application drawings.
- Properties in Inglewood are built on floating rafts as the area regularly floods.
- Raising the height of the MUGA would create a drop between the edge of the MUGA and the fence of 38 Jersey Close, resulting in a probable river whenever it rains.
- Application is based on published Environment Agency (EA) flood map which needs updating to reflect new flood depth of 500mm predicted by the EA in Green Lane.

- If further assessment of new flood depth of 500mm is required and finds that the site is in Flood Zones 2 & 3, the development is not appropriate.
- As site is in Flood Zones 2 & 3, the sequential test should be applied, and as there are nearby sites outside Flood Zones 2 & 3, the application should be refused.

#### Noise

- More noise from children due to staggered play times, increased number of breaks, increased pupil numbers, increased age of children and small play areas.
- Noise level of twice as many children in the playground would have a detrimental effect on our health, as we experience extreme noise along the whole width of our garden.
- Concern over construction noise.
- Agreement with Salesian School to use MUGA area would significantly increase noise.

#### Air Quality

- Increased school traffic would exacerbate emissions levels as some parents already leave their engines running while waiting.

#### Loss of Outlook / Privacy

- Invasion of privacy and loss of outlook from back garden due to new building being 8m from kitchen window and running almost along the entire width of our rear garden.
- Impact of roof access for solar panel maintenance on our privacy.
- Concern over lack of privacy during the construction phase.
- Raising the MUGA would give staff/pupils a direct view into garden and downstairs rooms of 38 Jersey Close.
- Raising ground level of the MUGA/playground would make No. 38 Jersey Close easily accessible to intruders due to our low fence.
- Garden plants at 38 Jersey Close would be at risk of damage from objects thrown over and there would be an unacceptable full clear view into our garden and living area.
- Agreement with Salesian School to use MUGA would exacerbate our loss of privacy.
- Oppose planting of 4 trees along boundary fence with 4 Inglewood on security grounds and the loss of sunlight.
- Children would have a clear view of the balcony on the back of our bedroom at 4 Inglewood which has full width patio doors.
- Proposed school building 5 to 6 metres from my property would block any morning light.
- Concerned about being blinded from reflection from solar panels while looking out of upstairs windows.

#### Amenity

- Request that a 10 to 12 foot open fence is provided to the rear of 4 Inglewood to stop projectiles coming from the school as the existing chicken wire fence is inadequate.
- Ball could be kicked through our window as our house is close to the school fence.
- Concerned about lights on reverse side of building as seen from back of my house being on all night.

#### Health and Safety

- Detrimental impact on health and safety of Jersey Close residents.
- Children safety cycling to school with cars parked on verges and little room to pass.
- Number of children squeezed into small school footprint is not in the interests of children's welfare and development.
- Is a short sighted plan that would not work well for the older pupils planned for the site.
- Dangerous for parents/children to cross the road as they can't see past so many cars.
- Danger crossing the road due to impatient speeding drivers at school pick up times.
- Agreement with Salesian school to also use MUGA area would risk our safety.

#### Procedural Matters

- Very unhappy not to be informed of the application being an immediate neighbour of the school and the lack of a notice at the school gates.
- Concerned application has already been passed given that demolition/construction dates were given in school presentation and newsletter in 2023.

- Proposal is inaccurate in several respects; e.g. eastern boundary does not comprise a row of terraced houses.
- Insulted by lack of availability of SCC staff on notification letter due to someone working part time and the other being away on Jury Service.
- Concerned whether any objections are taken seriously.

Other

- Picture of bus stop is misleading as bus service ceased several years ago.
- Footpath outside 106 Little Green Lane is inadequate as it is narrow and uneven.
- Concern about erection of higher level fencing and Saturday working during the construction phase.
- Concerned that existing and proposed trees would not be maintained.

**Planning considerations**

**Introduction**

30. The guidance on the determination of planning applications contained in the Preamble / Agenda front sheet is expressly incorporated into this report and must be read in conjunction with the following paragraphs.
31. In this case, the statutory development plan for consideration of the application consists of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan 2020 (RLP). The RLP was adopted in July 2020 and sets out the key planning policies which determine the location, scale and timing of new development in the Borough in the period up to 2030.
32. The policies within the RLP replace all of the remaining saved policies from the Runnymede Local Plan 2001 (second alteration). All saved Borough Plan policies not replaced were withdrawn on adoption of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan. A recent review of the local plan has concluded that it will require at least a partial update with work on this formally commencing in September 2025. The Runnymede Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 2021 provides design guidance to supplement policies contained within the RLP.
33. In considering this application the acceptability of the proposed development will be assessed against relevant development plan policies and material considerations. In assessing the application against development plan policy, it will be necessary to determine whether the proposed measures for mitigating any environmental impact of the development are satisfactory. In this case, the main planning considerations are need for the development, existing open space, loss of residential dwelling, design, sustainability and visual appearance, residential amenity, highways and traffic implications, landscape, ecology, flooding and sustainable drainage and archaeology.

**NEED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT**

**Runnymede 2030 Local Plan**

Policy SL1: Health and wellbeing

Policy SD6: Retention of Social & Community Infrastructure

34. Paragraph 99 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 (NPPF) highlights the importance of ensuring that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) are required to take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education. It continues to state that LPAs should give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools through the preparation of plans and decisions on applications.

35. Policy SL1 of the RLP details that the Borough Council are supportive of development that promotes community facilities and takes opportunities to assist people of all ages and backgrounds living, working and relaxing in Runnymede to lead healthy lifestyles and improve quality of life. RLP Policy SD6 seeks to ensure that new facilities should be of an equivalent or better quality than the facilities replaced and designed flexibly to allow for multiple activities.
36. Surrey County Council (SCC) as Education Authority has a statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places in Surrey. Despite a falling birth rate across the county since 2012, demand for school places has continued to increase in some areas of Runnymede, specifically in the more urban areas of Chertsey and Addlestone. This increase stems from inward migration and new housing coming forward.
37. Meadowcroft Infant School is a 1 FE community school for pupils aged 4-7 years, with a published admission number (PAN) of 30 and provides permanent accommodation for up to 90 pupils. The school was rated as "Good" by Ofsted in its last full inspection in November 2021.
38. SCC, in partnership with the governing body of Meadowcroft Community Infant School, is proposing to extend the school's age range, enabling them to become a one-form entry (1FE) primary school for pupils aged 4-11 years. This would enable the school to accommodate 210 pupils.
39. Due to site constraints, playing field space would be sought off-site at St Paul's CofE Primary School, Addlestone, and both schools would enter into a service level agreement (SLA) to formalise the arrangement.
40. The applicant has submitted detailed information on the projected need for additional school places in the area of this school which demonstrates that there are some distinct pockets of demand within Runnymede, mirroring the major towns in the east of the borough, namely New Haw, Addlestone, Chertsey, Englefield Green and Egham (which can be viewed as two areas: Egham and Egham Hythe, as split by the M25). There is less demand to the west of the borough where the terrain is generally more rural.
41. There currently appears to be sufficient school places in the borough to the north of the M3 motorway. The focus of demand has now shifted to the southern Chertsey/Addlestone corridor, where demand is currently forecast to be higher than the number of school places available, particularly at junior level (Years 3 to 6). For the purposes of education place planning, SCC produce pupil projections based on planning areas. Planning areas do not have geographical boundaries but are groups of schools which reflect the local geography, reasonable travel distances and existing pupil movement patterns.
42. Demand for reception school places in the Chertsey planning area is projected to remain fairly steady over the coming years. Year 3 forecasts predict a deficit of places, that presents sustained demand. As it currently stands, the Year 3 demand would have to travel further outside of the planning area for a school place, rather than being able to secure a school place more local to their home.
43. The proposal would provide SCC with the opportunity to reorganise primary places in an area of Chertsey by providing an all-through primary school which would benefit the local community and provide opportunities for siblings in a family to attend the same school. It would also ease the transition made by children when transferring from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2, as pupils would have the opportunity to remain at Meadowcroft School instead of transferring to another school for their junior education, which is likely to be some distance from the home address.
44. Historically, Meadowcroft Community Infant School has had no formal follow-on for junior provision and, as such, pupils have previously been offered places at different schools

across Chertsey, Addlestone, Ottershaw, and beyond, based on wherever Year 3 vacancies existed at the time.

45. In 2014, Meadowcroft became a formal feeder school for St Ann's Heath Junior School to secure a junior pathway for Meadowcroft pupils. St Ann's Heath is over three miles away from Meadowcroft and therefore some distance from the homes of Meadowcroft pupils, who tend to live near the infant school. This does affect parental preference and as a result, Meadowcroft suffers with fluctuating pupil numbers as parents elect to move their children at other points during the school year to avoid having to make a junior transition by securing a place in a local all-through primary school.
46. The proposed change of age range would allow Meadowcroft Infant School to offer junior places. The increase in junior places in the planning area would then match the total number of reception places available. This would improve the sustainability of the school without negatively impacting pupil numbers at other primary schools across Addlestone, Ottershaw and Runnymede.
47. Meadowcroft's first preferences have been affected due to the uncertainty of local junior provision. The school also experiences fluctuating pupil numbers throughout the school year. St Ann's Heath Junior School also has fluctuating numbers due to the uncertainty of pupils transferring across from Meadowcroft. As a result, the school is now operating at two classes in some year groups rather than three.
48. The application states that the proposal would enable Meadowcroft to start providing Key Stage 2 places from "September 2024". The Year 2 class for 2023/24 would transfer into the newly established Year 3 class in September 2024/25, and Key Stage 2 classes would increase incrementally each year as each new reception cohort is admitted. Meadowcroft Infant School would be operating as a full 1FE primary school from September 2027/28 onwards.
49. As a consequence, the application would:
  - Allow pupils to transition through the school from reception year, without the need to apply elsewhere, giving them and their families the reassurance of a continuity of educational provision.
  - Enhance pupils' experiences, enabling higher standards of education to be provided.
  - Enable the school to deliver the curriculum in a continuous and coherent way, putting them in a stronger position to plan for both continuity and progression in learning.
  - Provide the opportunity to build partnerships with pupils, parents and families over a longer period.
  - Enable siblings to remain together during their primary education, rather than parents having to travel to two different schools.
  - Create a bigger, more sustainable school with better financial health.
  - Create more scope for recruitment and retention of staff.
50. The extension of age range at Meadowcroft would mean that infant and junior places in the Chertsey planning area would be matched with one another, creating a more sustainable education landscape. Additional junior school places are required in the Chertsey planning area to meet demand. Meadowcroft is the only infant school in the area and the linked junior school is not located nearby.
51. Having considered the reasons provided by the applicant, Officers are satisfied that the application is consistent with the requirements of RLP Policy SL1 and SD6 and consider that an educational need for this proposal has been demonstrated which is in accordance with the NPPF and can be given great weight in any planning balance.

## **EXISTING OPEN SPACE**

### **Runnymede 2030 Local Plan**

## Policy SL25 - Existing Open Space

52. NPPF paragraph 103 states that existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:
- An assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
  - The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
  - The development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use.
53. Policy SL25 of the RLP sets out that the Council will not permit the loss or displacement of existing open space to other uses unless it can be demonstrated, through up-to-date and robust evidence, that:
- There is a proven surplus of provision and the site is no longer needed, or is unlikely to be required in the future; or
  - The benefit of the development to the community outweighs the harm caused by the loss of the facility; or
  - An alternative facility of an equal quantity and quality or higher standard will be provided in at least an equally convenient and accessible location to serve the same local community. The local accessibility standards highlighted within the most up-to-date Open Space Study at the time of any planning application should be relied upon to support any arguments advanced.
54. The field to the rear of the school and the narrow margin of grass along the eastern site boundary is designated as open space<sup>1</sup> in the form of an outdoor sports facility. Whilst the field is entirely open, the narrow grass margin is largely obstructed by fixed play equipment, trees, planting beds and signage.
55. The proposed new detached classroom block, extension towards the rear of the existing school building and the relocated and extended car park would all be developed outside the designated area of open space. Within the area of open space, a MUGA would be developed on the open field to the rear of the existing school building. New trees, hedgerows and planting beds would be provided to the east of the MUGA with a narrow margin of hedgerow and planting beds immediately to the west. A soft informal play area comprising a seeded amenity area of grass would be provided to the west of the MUGA, beyond a number of raised planting beds and a pleached tree trench would also be provided. Along the eastern site boundary, existing vegetation to the south-west of the proposed MUGA would be retained. A number of plant beds would be provided to the south of the retained area of vegetation beyond which a number of storage units and a caretaker's office are proposed.
56. Sport England has raised no objection to the proposal advising that the proposed development does not fall within either their statutory or non-statutory remit. Whilst some open space would be lost or repurposed as a result of the development, the applicant has stated that playing field space would be sought off-site at St Paul's CofE Primary School, Addlestone, and both schools would enter into a service level agreement (SLA) to formalise the arrangement. Further, Meadowcroft School has an agreement with Salesian Secondary School to share its sporting facilities during the school day. Officers consider that the proposal would result in the provision of better quality outdoor sports facilities which would be available all year round. This would increase the overall opportunities within the site to improve the fitness, health and wellbeing of pupils attending the school. This is in contrast to the existing school field, parts of which become waterlogged and unusable following periods of heavy rainfall.

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<sup>1</sup> Annex 2 of the NPPF 2023 defines Open Space as all open space of public value which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.

57. Taking these factors into account, it is considered that the reduction in the area of open space provision within the application site would be outweighed by the benefits of the proposal to the school community, in view of the identified educational need for the development. The existing sports facilities would also be replaced by better quality provision. For these reasons, Officers consider that the proposed development meets the requirements of national and local development plan policy in relation to existing open space.

## **LOSS OF RESIDENTIAL DWELLING (CARETAKER'S BUNGALOW)**

### **Runnymede 2030 Local Plan**

Policy SL21 - Presumption against loss of residential

58. RLP Policy SL21 states that development proposals should result in no net loss of existing dwellings or land that provides for residential uses, unless a loss can be justified by, inter alia, the development proposal providing a social, community or cultural service or facility which cannot be located within an existing non-residential use.
59. The proposal would result in the demolition of the existing caretaker's accommodation to facilitate the expansion of the school within its own confined site. This would not otherwise be possible if the caretaker's accommodation were retained. The applicant states that the accommodation is not a residential property available on the open market but is effectively tied to accommodation at the school and can only be accessed via the school's main access and is intrinsically part of the school's grounds.
60. Officers consider that as the proposal would facilitate the provision of *facilities of community social or cultural value* (that is additional school places) it accords with the provisions of the development plan and is acceptable in this regard.

## **DESIGN, SUSTAINABILITY AND VISUAL APPEARANCE**

### **Runnymede 2030 Local Plan**

Policy SD7: Sustainable Design

Policy SD8: Renewable & Low Carbon Energy

Policy EE1: Townscape and Landscape Quality

61. Paragraph 127 of the NPPF 2023 states that LPAs should support proposals to make more effective use of sites that provide community services such as schools, provided this maintains or improves the quality-of-service provision and access to open space.
62. NPPF paragraph 135 states that planning decisions should ensure that developments, inter alia: a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development; b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping; c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change; and f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being.
63. Policy SD7 of the RLP states that development proposals will be supported where they, inter alia: c) maximise opportunities for passive solar gain and passive cooling through the orientation and layout of development; and g) incorporate sustainable construction and demolition techniques that provide for the efficient use of minerals. RLP Policy SD8 sets out that proposals will be supported for stand-alone and community led renewable, low carbon and decentralised sources of energy, unless any adverse impacts to local amenity or to the built, natural and historic environments cannot be overcome. Policy EE1 of the RLP expects all development proposals to achieve high quality and inclusive design which responds to the local context including the built, natural and historic character of the area while making efficient use of land.

64. The Runnymede Design SPD 2021 requires design standards which include, inter alia: 3) placemaking and creating character, whereby new development should create a positive sense of place that enhances the existing character of the local area, or creates new character, whilst efficiently using land to meet policy objectives; 4) achieving sustainable design, where proposals should deliver sustainable development in terms of their structure, natural environment, movement and buildings; 14) using building heights positively, by justifying the heights of proposed buildings by considering the existing heights and degree of variation in the local context; and 15) designing good buildings, where the whole of new buildings have a coherent design approach and individual building elevations are well composed.
65. The c.0.48 ha site is constrained to the north, east and west by the proximity of two-storey, traditional red brick, pitched roof detached and semi-detached two-storey houses, with private gardens to their rear, and is bounded by Little Green Lane to the south. A perimeter of trees sits around the site. The proposed development would increase the built area of the site by 374 sq m to 1,187 sq m. This would equate to a 46% increase in the built area of the site.

#### *Existing Buildings*

66. The existing school building has a GIA of 624 sq m, arranged across a single storey, with flat roof and elevated section of roof over the hall. Opened in 1972, it is a modular CLASP<sup>2</sup> built construction. The 1970's modular system-built school has a strong visual aesthetic using two distinct colours. Around the base banding, dark blue composite panels have been used to infill alongside the fenestration. Along the top of the facades, a golden yellow composite cladding has been used that creates a strong banding and uniformity across the building. The palette has been used to reflect the building's school function.
67. The building is understood to be a hybrid steel frame and block wall construction. At 51 years old, the building will be of low thermal efficiency and approaching the end of its usable life. Containing a flat roof divided over two levels, the massing consists of two simple forms. Firstly, an elevated 5.5m hall in the middle that contains high level windows on the west, east and south facades and a large, glazed opening to the north, opening out to the playground. The second form contains the rest of the building with a height of 3.65m and wraps the hall element to the south, west and east.
68. To the north façade there is a section of white rendered pre-cast block or similar beside the hall's windows. The building is lacking safe rooftop access and doesn't have edge protection at present. Other miscellaneous items have been installed around the building such as an ariel, wall mounted objects and alarms.
69. The caretaker's bungalow has a GIA of 86 sq m and contains a single pitched roof that runs from east to west. It is single storey, contains three bedrooms and is thought to be over 25 years old. A flat roof outhouse is used for the school's maintenance. There is also an external standalone SEN building, named the 'Daisy Den' which originally housed the school library.

#### *Proposed Detached Classroom Block*

70. The location of the proposed single storey detached block would be to the west of the main building. This building would accommodate the new primary school. It would be located primarily on land currently occupied by the caretaker's bungalow, garden, garage and shed as well as on around 50% of the existing parking area. The external standalone SEN building would also be removed.

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<sup>2</sup> The CLASP (Consortium of Local Authorities Special Programme) was an architectural system of prefabricated steel and concrete panel structures that were implemented by British Rail and local councils across England during the 1960s and 1970s.



71. The trade-off is that the proposed car parking area would be expanded and relocated a short distance towards the south-west corner of the site onto an existing informal grass area. However, a soft informal play area would be provided to the north of the new classroom block. The playground in front of the main building would be retained, albeit covering a slightly smaller area. The proposed MUGA would improve access to open space by providing a year round outdoor recreational facility for pupils.
72. Saw-tooth pitched roofs would provide access to the north light for the four classroom spaces in the single storey detached block. Windows along the western façade would be translucent and obscure views but still maintain natural light. At 6.5m in height, this would be around 1m higher than the proposed extension towards the rear of the main building. However, the overall height of the new building's roof lines would correspond to the existing school building's mixed height massing. The new building would also remain below the height of the surrounding residential housing.
73. Two pitched roofs aligned from east to west would be angled towards the south at a 25 degree pitch and provided with PV panels. The east west alignment would help to ensure that eastern views and light aren't blocked for the neighbouring residential properties. High-level windows would be positioned above the classrooms and central corridor to capture north light and prevent over-heating from over exposure to the sun. The building would have underfloor heating. Natural ventilation with heat recycling (NVHR) would be used in the classroom spaces. The building would be designed to achieve low operational energy rates and would make use of the existing school's boiler for heating and hot water.
74. A canopied space to the front of the new building would provide protected outdoor learning. An array of architectural screens and planting would act as a buffer against views and sounds from the car park. This screening would help to provide privacy for pupil activities. The new building would have a fixed 1.1m parapet wall to allow maintenance access to the PVs and cleaning of the high level windows and roof.
75. The proposed design would tie together the proportions of the new and existing building, using framing to the low portions and a feature band to the upper section and parapet. Complimentary tones and colours would be used in the buff brick, polyester powder coating<sup>3</sup> (PPC) metal finishes, and darker base brick to reference the materiality of the existing building in a high-quality palette.
76. Brick would form the proposed primary material to reflect the immediate residential nature of the schools' surrounding, as well as being a robust and lasting finish. Brick hit and miss patterning would be included in the parapet not only to provide interest and detail but also to reduce the perceived mass of the overall building. Decorative screens would be positioned to control views and disruption between the south façade's external learning space and the car park.

#### *Proposed Rear Extension*

77. The proposed extension towards the rear of the existing school building would represent a more discreet addition to the built area of the site. The extension would match the height and width of the high-level portion of the roofing over the existing hall. The SEN space and store on either side of the hall extension would be to the level of the existing ground floor roof and parapet. As a consequence, there would be no increase in the height of the main building. The extension would protrude outwards by around 4.7m, from around half of the length of the northern elevation of the main building, onto an existing area of hardstanding.

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<sup>3</sup> Polyester Powder Coating, or PPC, is a type of dry coating, rather than a conventional liquid paint. When applied to metal rainscreen as a free flowing, dry powder it provides rainscreen panels with an attractive, durable and high quality finish that lasts.

78. The extension would use low surface temperature (LST) radiant panels and radiators that would be heated by the existing school boiler system. New edge protection would be installed around the existing roof and new extension. The extension would express coordinated banding through the use of vertical timber boarding aligned to match the yellow and blue colour changes on the existing facades. A low-level engineering brick would aid robustness.
79. Of the 7 additional car parking spaces to be provided as part of the new development, 4 of these would have active electric vehicle charging. The other three spaces would be provided with passive electric vehicle charging enabling simple installation and activation of these charging point at a future date. An improved, more spacious, pedestrian entrance would allow access to the cycle and scooter parking shelter. The vehicle entrance's width would be increased to allow for refuse and tender vehicles to access. Video and audio access would control the entrance gates to ensure pupil and site safety and oversight.
80. The proposed landscaping scheme would comprise a range of shrubs, herbaceous plants, trees and hedge planting. This includes the planting of areas of wildflower turf, green walls, amenity grass, growing beds and buffer screening comprising mixed native species and new trees. The landscape would be levelled to the rear of the site around the lawn and MUGA to provide level access for all. All spaces would be accessible to ambulant and non-ambulant pupils and staff.
81. The use of recycled materials at source would be reviewed with the contractor team in the event that the scheme progresses. The applicant is also looking to reuse the large north facing hall windows on the extension if feasible. Separation and collection for recycling would also be explored should the proposal move forward.
82. The existing school is substantially below the recommended overall area for a 1FE primary school with 210 pupils contained in Government guidelines contained in Building Bulletin 103, Area Guidelines for Mainstream School (BB103). This is primarily down to the undersized soft outdoor PE provision. BB103 does however state that if sites do fall below desired areas, then a management plan should be put in place to provide alternative provision that can be provided locally at neighbouring facilities including general community spaces and other primary or secondary schools. In addition to the construction of the proposed MUGA, the school has an agreement in place with Salesian Secondary School around 700m to the north-west to share its sporting facilities during the school day.

#### *Assessment*

83. In view of the above, Officers consider that the proposed development would improve the quality of service provision in the locality by incorporating a new primary school and providing necessary facilities for the expanded school. The proposed new classroom block and extension would function well, add to the overall quality of the area and be visually attractive through the incorporation of good architecture, layout and effective landscaping.
84. Further, the proposed design would complement that of the existing school and the proposed roof heights relate well to the existing building. The proposal would promote the efficient use of land and it is considered that the design of the detached classroom block would create a positive sense of place. The development would be sympathetic to local character, safe, accessible and promote health and wellbeing through the improvement of outdoor recreational facilities and use a layout and orientation designed to maximises opportunities for passive solar gain and cooling. The proposal would consider the potential to use recycled materials at source and reuse large windows within the extension which would help to ensure the more efficient use of minerals. To provide greater certainty that the relevant policy objective would be met, the use of sustainable construction and demolition techniques can be secured by condition.
85. Officers are therefore satisfied that subject to the imposition of a planning condition to secure the development and implementation of a Resource Management Plan, the

proposal is consistent with local development plan policies in respect of design, sustainability and visual appearance, meets the spirit of the Runnymede Design SPD and is acceptable in these respects.

## RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

### Runnymede 2030 Local Plan

Policy EE1 – Townscape and Landscape Quality

Policy EE2 – Environmental Protection.

86. Paragraph 191 of the NPPF 2023 states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. In doing so they should, inter alia: a) mitigate and reduce to a minimum, potential adverse impacts resulting from noise from new development - and avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life; and c) limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity.
87. RLP Policy EE1 states that development proposals will be supported where they ensure no adverse impact on the amenities of occupiers of the development proposed or to neighbouring property or uses. Proposals should also provide an appropriate standard of private amenity space.
88. Policy EE2 of the RLP expects applications for development which may give rise to adverse impacts on air quality to be accompanied by an air quality assessment and where adverse impacts are demonstrated, the policy states that planning permission will only be granted where mitigation measures to reduce impacts to acceptable levels can be secured and implemented. The policy also requires proposals to consider the effects of external noise on outside amenity. In considering measures to avoid, mitigate and reduce noise impacts, proposals will need to consider the basic principles of noise control, including separate noise sources from sensitive receptors, control the noise at source and protect the receptor. RLP Policy EE2 goes on to say that the council expects lighting schemes to be well-designed, focusing on avoiding impact on local amenity and public safety and their prominence within and from the surrounding landscape. Schemes should be designed to industry standards and not exceed the minimum light levels necessary for their purpose and not spill beyond the area intended for illumination. Policy EE2 also sets out that the LPA may place conditions on any permission granted requiring the submission and implementation of a Construction Environmental Management Plan prior to the commencement of development.
89. The application site is located in a residential area and has residential properties in close proximity on the northern, eastern and western boundaries. The school's boundary has a back-to-back fence condition, with the school's fence consisting primarily of a 2m high chain link fence. Neighbouring fencing offers greater heights and privacy ranging from 2-3m around the demise. There is therefore a range of privacy between different neighbours and the school. The proposal involves the provision of new buildings, a building extension and a reorganisation of the open spaces around the school, all of which have the potential to impact upon the amenity of residents in terms of potential noise impact and the proximity of buildings.

#### *Overshadowing / Overbearing / Overlooking*

90. The proposed extension towards the rear of the existing school building would not increase the height of the existing school building and would be approximately 34m from the nearest residential property. Officers therefore consider that any impact on neighbouring residential properties would be negligible.

91. The proposal also involves the demolition of the existing school caretaker's bungalow and ancillary buildings on the western side of the site and its replacement with a new detached school building. The existing bungalow is located approximately 2 metres from the western boundary of the school and has a maximum height of 4.5 metres. The proposal would involve a longer building along the western boundary at a distance of 1.8 metres from the site boundary. This building would rise to 4.65 metres in height closest to the boundary and a maximum of 6.10 metres where the roof lights and PV panels would be located centrally within the roof.
92. However, the massing's pitched roof elements would be aligned along the west to east axis which would help to ensure that eastern views and light would not be blocked for the neighbouring residential properties in Jersey Close. Further, anti-glare and low reflectance finishes would be applied to the PV panels. These are often dark in colour with very low reflectance value to ensure they are at maximum efficiency to absorb light.
93. The proposed new detached school building would be located just over 8m from the rear elevation of the nearest residential properties in Jersey Close. Whilst the outlook from these residential properties would change as a flank wall would now extend along the rear boundary, this would be partially screened by existing fencing, existing vegetation above the height of the fence and the raised parapet of height similar to that of the existing bungalow.
94. The parapet wall would be of brick construction with "hit and miss" brick pattern in a lighter coloured brickwork. This would help to minimise the impact and avoid a solid brick façade. Windows along the western façade of the proposed school building would be translucent so views into and out of the classrooms would be obscured but light would still be able to penetrate.
95. A number of representations have been received raising concerns over a loss of privacy and outlook from the proposed development. The construction phase would be temporary with any short term loss of privacy and outlook tempered by the existing boundary screening. The roof access for maintenance would only be used sporadically with any impacts considered to be limited and short lived. Extensive planted buffer zones have been proposed in the Landscaping strategy that would grow to approximately 5m in height to provide neighbours with greater levels of privacy.
96. The application proposes the planting of several tree along the northern school boundary with No. 38 Jersey Close. Despite the proposal to raise the ground level to the rear of the school, this would help to block views into the property. Finally, the original proposals to plant trees along the eastern school boundary with No. 4 Inglewood have been revised to address concerns in relation to security and the loss of sunlight. Consequently, the proposed tree planting on the property boundary has been removed and would be replaced with tree planting set back approximately 8 to 10 metres from the school boundary with No. 4 Inglewood.
97. In view of the above considerations, Officers are satisfied that the application would not have an unacceptable impact upon the amenity of neighbouring residential properties in respect of overshadowing, overbearing or overlooking.

#### Air Quality

98. The application is not supported by an air quality assessment. However, the proposed demolition of the caretaker's bungalow and ancillary buildings and construction of the expanded school has the potential to result in adverse dust impacts and cause nuisance to occupiers of the existing school building and neighbouring properties. In order to ensure that the any dust emissions are suitably controlled, mitigated and reduced to acceptable levels, Officers consider that a condition should be imposed requiring a Dust Management Plan to be submitted and approved in writing prior to the commencement of the development.

## Noise

99. Officers consider that the proposed development would involve four main forms of noise generation. Firstly, the increase in the number of pupils at the site (intensity of use), secondly the potential increase in car movements as a result of the expansion, thirdly the operation of fixed plant and equipment and finally, construction noise.
100. The proposal would result in a large increase in pupil numbers and an alternative layout of outdoor play space provision and building locations. Despite this, it is considered that the intensity in the use of the site should be viewed in context i.e. the site is an existing school with peak levels of noise being centred on certain parts of the day namely before and after school and during lunch and break times. The applicant states that the school would manage staggered playtime periods and noise levels to overcome neighbours' concerns. The proposed extensive planted buffer zones would help to dampen sound given that they would grow to around 5m in height. Further, background noise from the proximity of the M25 motorway would help to mitigate the impact of any disturbance. As such, given the intermittent nature of the noise generation, it is considered that the proposal would not have a marked detrimental impact on the amenities of neighbouring properties by virtue of the increase in pupils.
101. The evaluation is supported by an Acoustics Assessment submitted by the applicant. This explains that assuming the number of children playing outside increases in direct proportion to the increase in the number of pupils, there would be around 2.3 times the number of pupils using the outdoor play areas. This corresponds to around a 4 dB(A) increase in playground noise levels at these times. Based on the understanding that the outdoor play areas would be used for a total of up to 3 hours per day, time-averaging the additional 4 dB(A) for 180 minutes over the full daytime period would correspond to a change in the overall daytime  $L_{Aeq,16hrs}$  noise level of less than 2 dB(A).
102. To put this in perspective, the assessment states that it is commonly accepted that a change of less than 3 dB(A) is not perceptible under normal conditions. The applicant therefore predicts that there would be no significant noise impact to residents from the additional pupils playing outside due to the proposed expansion of the school.
103. With regard to the potential increase in car movements, the applicant understands that the majority of pupils currently travel to the school on foot or by car. The noise impact from pedestrians is considered to be negligible in this context. Assuming that the number of cars increases in direct proportion to the increase in the number of pupils, the Acoustics Assessment finds that there would be around 2.3 times the number of cars dropping off or collecting pupils at the start and end of the school day. This corresponds to around a 4 dB(A) increase in traffic noise levels at these times.
104. Based on observations from staff at the school, pick up and drop off tends to last around 30 minutes in the morning, and around 60 minutes in the afternoon. Time-averaging the additional 4 dB(A) for 90 minutes over the daytime period, the assessment points out that this corresponds to a change in the overall daytime  $L_{Aeq,16hrs}$  noise level of less than 1 dB(A). As this represents a change of less than 3dB(A), the applicant finds that the increase in noise is not likely to be perceptible under normal conditions. Further, Officers note that any impacts could be reduced further by the development and implementation of a School Travel Plan.
105. In relation to the operation of fixed plant and equipment, the Acoustics Assessment sets out a series of typical measures that can be used to control environmental noise from all fixed plant and equipment which would only operate during school hours. It recommends that the combined rating level from all fixed plant and equipment should not exceed 46 dB  $L_{Ar, 1hr}$  during the daytime at the nearest residential dwelling. Finally, Officers consider that the impact from construction noise would be a short term impact which would be for a

temporary period and could be adequately controlled by the imposition of a planning condition.

106. The Borough Council Environmental Health Officer (EHO) has reviewed the application. The EHO's only concern is that the MUGA is going to be located closer to residential premises than the existing playground. The EHO therefore recommends the imposition of a planning condition to prevent the use of the MUGA outside of the extended school day.
107. Subject to the imposition of conditions to control the use of the MUGA, restrict the level of noise emitted from all fixed plant, equipment and machinery and require the submission of a Construction Noise Management Plan (CNMP) for written approval prior to the commencement of the development, Officers are satisfied that the proposal would avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life in accordance with Government policy and accord with the requirements of the development plan in this respect.

#### *Lighting*

108. The applicant has submitted an external lighting layout plan that illustrates the low wattage and lux levels proposed. This includes lighting on the building frontage which would be wall mounted, under the canopy, on the caretaker's office, bin store, new sheds, car parking area, maintenance route, MUGA and walkways. The western maintenance route which is closest to adjoining properties would have an average level of 13 lux. These lights could also be set-up to be manually turned on to further minimise impact after school hours. The MUGA would have some low lux lighting (including emergency lighting) around the doorways only, to aid visibility in lower daylight conditions. There would be no associated flood-lighting or similar installed on the MUGA.
109. A representation has been received raising concern about lights on the western side of new school building being on all night given the proximity of the proposed building to the rear of properties on Jersey Close. Officers are satisfied that subject to the imposition of conditions to ensure that lighting is angled downwards, designed to avoid light spill, takes account of the impact on bats and any nocturnal species, and that the proposed lighting on the maintenance route to the west of the new school building is designed to be manually operated to minimise the impact outside school hours, the impact of lighting on local amenity, neighbouring properties and public safety can be limited or avoided in accordance with national and local development plan policy on light pollution.

#### *Odour, Light, Vibration and/or Noise*

110. A Thames Water Sewage Pumping Station lies around 15m to the west of the western boundary of the application site and approximately 17m from the western elevation of the proposed new detached classroom block. Thames Water has advised that as the development is situated within 20m of a pumping station, it is contrary to best practice contained in Thames Water's Codes for Adoption. Thames Water has commented that this is likely to impact periodically on the amenity of those that would occupy the new development in terms of odour, light, vibration and/or noise and has requested that an Informative be included to this effect should the County Planning Authority (CPA) be minded to grant planning permission.
111. The applicant argues that there are two existing residential properties which are directly neighbouring and at a closer proximity to the pumping station than the proposed new school building (with Officers noting that the nearest property is 2m to the north of the pumping station). Further, the existing school caretaker's bungalow is around 16.5m from the pumping station's closest point and is already within the 20m best practice guidance boundary referred to by Thames Water. The proposed school building would be around 14.6m from the pumping station's closest point and would only be marginally closer than the caretaker's bungalow that would be demolished.

112. The applicant continues by saying that it is important to point out that a 2.5-3m high boundary condition exists between the school and the residential gardens to the west meaning that the pumping station is totally obscured from the school. A maintenance route is proposed to the west of the new school building with minimal window openings to the south-west corner preventing noise issues from the pumping station. Staff car parking would remain to the south of the new school building which isn't classed as a residing amenity space. The applicant adds that no prior complaints of noise, vibration or odour were raised as nuisances from the pumping station by school staff, caretaker's residence or by residents during the public consultation.
113. The applicant's response has been shared with Thames Water who has reviewed the information provided by the applicant and responded by saying that they have no comments to make at this time. Officers are therefore satisfied that the proximity of the proposed detached school building to the pumping station is unlikely to have a detrimental impact on future occupiers of the building and that an Informative can be added to the decision if planning permission is granted.

*Other General Amenity Concerns*

114. Representations have been received raising concerns in relation to the impact on residential amenity. Proposed tree and hedgerow planting along the school boundary would help to prevent access by any intruders and minimise the risk of objects being thrown or balls being kicked over the fence into neighbouring properties. Further, the proposed MUGA would be fully enclosed by fencing and netting.
115. Whilst some impacts on residential amenity may be experienced as a result of the proposed expansion of the school, for the reasons outlined above, Officers are satisfied that such impacts would be limited and that any detrimental impact would not be of any significance to warrant refusal on these grounds.

## **HIGHWAYS AND TRAFFIC IMPLICATIONS**

### **Runnymede 2030 Local Plan**

Policy SD3: Active & Sustainable Travel

Policy SD4: Highway Design Considerations

116. Paragraph 108 of the NPPF requires that transport issues be considered from the earliest stages of development proposals so that: a) the potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed; b) opportunities from existing transport infrastructure are realised in relation to scale, location or density; c) opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued; d) the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified, assessed and taken into account; and e) patterns of movement, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes, and contribute to making high quality places.
117. Paragraph 114 of the NPPF states that in assessing specific applications for development, it should be ensured that, inter alia: a) appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be – or have been – taken up, given the type of development and its location; b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users; and d) any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree.
118. Paragraph 115 of the NPPF sets out that development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe. Paragraph 116 of the NPPF adds that within this context, applications for development should, inter alia: (b) address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes

of transport; (c) create places that are safe, secure and attractive which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles; and e) be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.

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119. RLP Policy SD3 states that development will be supported which will enhance the accessibility and connectivity between people and places by active and sustainable forms of travel. This will be achieved by, amongst other measures, requiring development proposals which generate significant traffic movements to submit and implement Travel Plans demonstrating how active and sustainable travel options have been considered and how they will be delivered as well as the remedial actions to be taken should monitoring reveal that Travel Plan targets have been missed.
  120. Policy SD4 of the RLP states that the Council will support development proposals which maintain or enhance the efficient and safe operation of the highway network, and which take account of the needs of all highway users for safe access, egress and servicing arrangements. Development proposals which generate significant traffic movements must be accompanied by a Transport Assessment or Transport Statement which considers the impact of the proposal on the highway network and identifies the measures to mitigate impacts to acceptable levels. Relevant design and parking standards for vehicle and cycle parking within development proposals will be assessed against the Council's current adopted guidance. Policy SD7 of the RLP supports development proposals where they incorporate electrical vehicle charging points in accordance with guidance issued by SCC.
  121. The application site is located on Little Green Lane which is a single carriageway residential road connecting the A320 Guildford Road to the west with Bittams Lane to the east. The applicant has submitted a Transport Statement (TS), Parking Management Plan and Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) in support of the application. The TS explains that there are good levels of footway provision surrounding the site, Green Lane to the north has a shared footway / cycleway on the southern side of the road and National Cycleway 223 can be found to the west of the site.
  122. The TS explains that the site has a moderate level of accessibility by public transport. According to the County Council's website, the 557 bus service serves Little Green Lane with an hourly service albeit only between 0938 and 1338 hours on Monday to Friday between Addlestone and Chertsey / Shepperton, and between 0900 and 1411 hours in the opposite direction. However, a number of other bus services serve Guildford Road. Chertsey Railway Station is approximately 26 minutes on foot or a 7 minute cycle ride from the application site.
  123. The applicant recognises that pick up and drop off associated with the school means that parents park on adjoining residential roads. To address this issue, the Parking Management Plan identifies a number of "park and stride areas" which are zones within neighbouring roads where park and stride locations are identified which are within easy walking distance of the school, but avoid areas where there are double yellow lines, restricted parking zones or dropped kerbs providing access to residential properties. Additionally, the area immediately outside the school marked with "keep clear" markings where stopping is restricted during morning and afternoon peaks to allow for the free flow of traffic would be extended. The Parking Management Plan explains in detail how these zones would be communicated to parents through various means such as online, school notice boards and school newsletters.
  124. The school would operate with staggered drop-off / pick-up times due to breakfast club / after school enrichment activities and clubs. This would help to spread the demand for arrivals/departures during the morning and afternoon. A number of pupils are also likely to car share with other pupils or their siblings. Further, pupil numbers would increase gradually by 30 pupils per annum meaning the school would not reach its full capacity until 2026/27.



125. The associated CTMP explains in some detail how construction traffic would be managed to avoid unnecessary congestion or noise and disturbance. The construction period is anticipated to last for 12 months. Working compounds in connection with the construction would be accommodated on site, and vehicle routing associated with construction would be guided towards routes which avoid any unnecessary use of residential streets.
126. The TS explains that the school's expansion would be expected to result in the following additional trips on the local highway network:
- AM peak (0800-0900 hrs): 62 additional staff/pupil vehicles
  - Inter peak (1500-1600 hrs): 41 additional pupil vehicles
  - PM peak (1700-1800 hrs): 11 additional staff/pupil vehicles
127. As traffic modelling has demonstrated that the surrounding roads have capacity to accommodate parking for a minimum of 111 and 119 cars during the morning and afternoon school peak periods respectively, the applicant states that an increase of a maximum of 62 vehicles parking during the peak periods can be satisfactorily accommodated.
128. Whilst the applicant acknowledges that vehicles turning right from Little Green Lane into Guildford Road may experience delays of up to 54 seconds in the 'future year with development' scenario in the AM peak, delays of 44 seconds are already observed for this movement in the 2027 future year scenario. Therefore, the applicant considers that the proposal would not significantly worsen vehicle delay at this junction.
129. The applicant proposes several off-site highway improvements in support of the application. These measures, which have been subject to a Road Safety Audit, comprise:
- Change of speed limit to 20mph zone with new speed limit signs;
  - School Keep Clear markings to be extended across existing vehicle access /cross over;
  - Two new pedestrian crossings on raised tables with tactile paving on Little Green Lane, located to the east and west of the site;
  - Implementation of double yellow lines at the Little Green Lane junction with Merrylands; and
  - Installation of replacement uniform bollards in proximity to the site.
130. As part of this package, the CHA has asked the applicant to install a 'Copenhagen' crossing across the site access junction to give non-motorised road users priority over vehicles. New asphalt footways with tactile paving would be constructed on the northern and southern sides of the proposed raised table crossings. On the north side of the westernmost crossing, the existing grass verge would require excavation works in order to construct the footpath. The proposed works also include additional drainage infrastructure, new signage, measures to limit inappropriate parking in close proximity to the school, the relocation of a lamp column and the regular maintenance of existing vegetation around the crossing points to ensure visibility is not impeded.
131. The applicant proposes to provide 7 additional parking spaces which would increase the total number of spaces to 15. This would match the proposed number of full-time equivalent members of staff. A delivery/drop off area would also be provided. Surrey's parking guidance<sup>4</sup> recommend that the number of parking spaces for schools should be based on an individual assessment or justification with provision made to cater for operational requirements only (staff and visitors). The Runnymede Parking Guidance SPD recommends that the number of spaces provided for schools should be based on a case by case assessment linked to a transport assessment / travel plan. In view of the space constraints within the application site and the availability of on-street parking spaces in

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<sup>4</sup> Vehicular, Electric Vehicle and Cycle Parking Guidance for New Development, Surrey County Council, February 2023

proximity to the school, the proposed number of spaces is considered satisfactory in this case.

132. The application proposes to equip 4 of the 7 proposed additional car parking spaces with active electric vehicle charging sockets and 3 with passive electric vehicle charging points. This approach is consistent with the latest parking guidance produced by SCC. Further, a secure covered shelter containing 29 bicycle parking spaces, including 1 accessible bay, and 16 parking spaces for scooters is also proposed. These measures would help to promote more sustainable travel choices in accordance with existing policy.
133. A significant proportion of the representations received have objected to the application due to concerns in relation to traffic and parking. There are fears that the proposal will result in increased waiting times and grid lock during school drop-off and pick-up times due to the narrowness of the Little Green Lane, existing on-street parking, poorly parked vehicles by parents, displacement resident parking, restricted visibility and parking areas for parents being inadequate.
134. Representations have also been submitted challenging the proposed Parking Management Plan claiming that it includes Park and Stride Areas in private parking areas belonging to numbers 1 to 10 Jersey Close and across the drive of 93 Littleton Lane. A further representation has claimed that all spaces in Jersey Close are privately owned and other representations have expressed concern about parent parking on green verges including on Bittams Lane and Jersey Close which causes environmental damage.
135. Officers accept that the submitted Parking Management Plan is not fully reflective of the actual parking situation around the site. However, the County Highway Authority (CHA) has advised that they are satisfied that there would still be sufficient on-street parking spaces available elsewhere despite the need to remove numbers 1 to 10 Jersey Close from the recommended park and stride areas, which they confirm are on private land not maintained by the County Council. They have advised that they would welcome an updated Parking Management Plan to form part of the School Travel Plan. Officers are satisfied that the submission of an amended Parking Management Plan which addresses the anomalies that have been identified can be secured by condition.
136. The CHA has assessed the application on safety, capacity and policy grounds and has raised no objection to the application. This is subject to the imposition of 6 conditions in order to ensure that highway safety is not compromised, other highway users are not inconvenienced and to promote sustainable transport. These require the submission and approval of an updated CTMP prior to the commencement of the development, the provision of secure parking for bicycles, scooters and electric vehicle (EV) bikes, the layout of space within the site for vehicles to park and turn so that they may enter and leave the site in forward gear, the provision of at least 50% of parking spaces with electric vehicle charging points, the submission and approval of a School Travel Plan (to include an amended Parking Management Plan) and details of the off-site highway works to be submitted for written approval.
137. A further representation has been received from an immediate neighbour of the school claiming that the off-site highway works, in respect of the raised speed table and the excavation of the grass verge to provide an asphalt footway to the north of the westernmost of the proposed raised speed tables, would be likely to result in surface water flowing into their property in periods of intense rainfall. This is cited as being due to the severity of the existing situation during periods of intense rainfall and the drainage infrastructure on Bittams Lane, to which surface water run-off from Little Green Lane flows into, already being partially blocked and not properly maintained.
138. The LLFA has advised that they have some concerns with the inclusion of raised tables within this very sensitive area. The CHA has confirmed that in the event that the applicant is unable to demonstrate that the proposed off-site highway works would not increase the risk of surface water flooding off-site, an alternative solution could be found which would

make the development acceptable in terms of highway safety. As a consequence, the proposed condition relating to the off-site highway works would need to require the applicant to demonstrate that the proposed works would not increase the risk of surface water flooding off-site. The LLFA has agreed that they would be satisfied with this approach.

139. In view of the above assessment, Officers are satisfied that subject to the imposition of a number of planning conditions, the proposed development is acceptable in respect of highways, traffic and access considerations and complies with national and local development plan policy requirements in these respects.

## LANDSCAPE

### Runnymede 2030 Local Plan

#### Policy EE1: Townscape and Landscape Quality

140. Paragraph 135 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should ensure that developments are visually attractive as a result of appropriate and effective landscaping. NPPF paragraph 136 sets out that trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change. It adds that planning decisions should ensure that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments, that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly planted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible. Applicants and planning authorities should work with highways officers and tree officers to ensure that the right trees are planted in the right places, and solutions are found that are compatible with highways standards and the needs of different users.
141. RLP Policy EE1 explains that development proposals will be supported where they: create attractive and resilient places which make a positive contribution to the Boroughs landscape setting and which will endure in the long term; and contribute to and enhance the quality of the landscape setting through high quality and inclusive hard and soft landscaping schemes. This will be demonstrated and implemented through an appropriate landscaping strategy which takes account of existing and proposed townscape/landscape character and features.
142. The external areas of the school would be reconfigured. At the front of the school, the existing hard play area would be replaced with a new artificial grass area including artificial grass mounds together with landscaping and a series of storage buildings. Areas of fixed play equipment and landscaped areas would extend along the eastern boundary. The northern boundary would contain landscaping and hedging and a lawned area.
143. The applicant has submitted a Post Development Habitat Plan, Landscape Planting Plan, Soil Plan and Landscape Maintenance and Management Plan (LMMP) in support of the application. The existing Field Maple hedge along the southern boundary of the application site would be retained. The proposal includes the planting of 226m of new hedgerow along the full length of the eastern and northern site boundaries, the northern and southern sections of the western site boundary, along the western and eastern boundaries of the proposed MUGA (which would also be planted with climbers) and, in a number of areas in front of the existing school building. Planting beds are proposed in a number of locations within the site. These would include a number of raised planting beds close to the eastern site boundary and to the west of the soft informal play area proposed in the north-west corner of the site. Grass areas would be provided as part of the soft informal play area and near to the eastern site boundary.
144. A number of trees are located within the application site and along the site's boundaries. A Tree Survey and a Tree Constraints Plan have been submitted in support of the application. The survey has assessed thirty-eight trees and three tree groups. All trees and tree groups have been found to fall within tree Category B (trees of moderate quality and value) and Category C (trees of low quality or value) with no trees falling within Category A

(trees of high quality and value). Only one tree (T4 English oak) was classified as Category U (trees unsuitable for retention). The more significant trees are located outside of the site, especially along Little Green Lane comprising a collection of oak trees. These, together with the trees covered by the TPO beyond the rear boundary of the site, are the most visible features. The applicant points out that the Tree Constraints Plan confirms that the development can take place without unacceptable incursion into the root protection areas (RPAs).

145. The proposal would involve the loss of 18 trees whose removal is supported by the results of the Tree Survey. This would be compensated for by the provision of 50 replacement trees on-site, 34 of which would comprise 'pleached' trees to maximise the efficient use of space. A further 125 small trees would be planted off-site in order to achieve an overall net-gain in biodiversity.
146. All planting and soil operations within RPAs would be undertaken by hand, using hand tools only to minimise root damage and under the supervision of an arborist. Should any significant roots be encountered, these would be left undamaged and plants locally adjusted accordingly.
147. The proposed LMMP relates to both existing and proposed planting areas. It would cover a period of 5 years which would provide an initial period of time for the proposed planting and the creation of new habitats to mature and develop. After 5 years, the management plan would be reviewed and updated where necessary, ensuring the long term objectives and ongoing management / maintenance of the site in consultation with SCC and appointed consultants. The document outlines the maintenance operations, management objectives, responsibilities, schedule of operations, timetable for implementation and programme of management prescriptions for the existing and proposed landscape areas. The Plan provides a working document for use by an appointed Landscape Management Contractor, written as guidance for the establishment, ongoing management and upkeep of the planted areas following the completion of the building and new planting works.
148. The County Landscape Officer (CLO) has advised that the proposed LMMP is generally a 'very sound' document. The CLO has raised no objection to the application subject to the County Arboricultural Officer being satisfied with the proposal and suggested the imposition of a planning condition to secure the implementation of the landscape planting scheme in accordance with the proposed details. The CLO has queried the proposals for irrigation included within the LMMP and advised Officers to liaise with the County Arboricultural Officer (CAO).
149. Some of the species proposed in the original planting scheme have been amended in response to initial advice provided by the CAO. The CAO has reviewed the revised planting and landscaping proposals including the arrangements for management and aftercare contained within LMMP and has no objection to the proposed layout or species choices within the planting scheme. The CAO believes that the landscape maintenance and management proposals contained within the LMMP are sufficient. However, the CAO has recommended the imposition of a planning condition requiring the submission of an Arboricultural Method Statement to secure adequate protection for retained trees.
150. Subject to the imposition of conditions, Officers are satisfied that the proposal seeks to retain existing trees wherever possible, the proposed number of additional trees would be acceptable given the constraints within the application site, the proposed tree species would be appropriate for their location, the proposed hard and soft landscaping would help to make the development visually attractive and enhance the quality of the landscape setting, and that the application incorporates long term maintenance in accordance with the NPPF and RLP Policy EE1. For these reasons, the proposal is considered acceptable on landscape quality grounds.

## ECOLOGY

## Runnymede 2030 Local Plan

Policy SD7: Sustainable Design

Policy EE9: Biodiversity, Geodiversity and Nature Conservation

Policy EE11: Green Infrastructure

151. NPPF paragraph 180 states that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by, inter alia: (b) recognising the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services including trees; and (d) minimising the impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.
152. Paragraph 186 of the NPPF states that when determining planning applications, LPAs should, inter alia, apply the following principles: (a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort compensated for, then planning permission should be refused; and, d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity.
153. Policy SD7 of the RLP states that development proposals will be supported where they protect existing biodiversity and include opportunities to achieve net gains in biodiversity as well as greening of the urban environment. RLP Policy EE9 seeks net gains in biodiversity, through creation/expansion, restoration, enhancement and management of habitats and features to improve the status of priority habitats and species. Policy EE11 of the RLP seeks to avoid further habitat fragmentation of green infrastructure by encouraging development proposals which restore, maintain and enhance habitat connectivity. The policy promotes development that contributes towards the delivery of a high quality multi-functional green infrastructure network by requiring proposals to provide and make enhancements to on-site green infrastructure assets. Policy EE11 also seeks to ensure the effectiveness of TPOs to protect significant trees and encourages the proper care and maintenance of trees.
154. The applicant has submitted a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA), Bat Survey Report and Biodiversity Net-Gain Assessment Technical Note (BNG Technical Note) in support of the application. The PEA has evaluated the following conservation sites, habitats and species (receptors) as being subject to potential adverse effects in the absence of mitigation and/or further survey or assessment work:
- NERC<sup>5</sup> Section 41 (s.41) Hedgerows;
  - Invertebrates; and
  - Non-native invasive species (species listed in Section 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)).
155. Mitigation<sup>6</sup> and compensation<sup>7</sup> measures discussed in the PEA include the following:
- Vegetation clearance undertaken outside of the bird nesting season or an inspection carried out by an appropriately qualified ecologist;
  - Enhancement of retained habitats and compensation for unavoidable habitat loss to deliver overall net gain, and
  - Provision of a Construction Environmental Management Plan and Landscape Biodiversity Management Plan to ensure protective mitigation and habitat creation/enhancement measures.

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<sup>5</sup> As defined under Section 41 (England) of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006.

<sup>6</sup> Mitigation are measures required in order to reduce the severity and magnitude of identified effects to an acceptable level.

<sup>7</sup> Compensation is required where effects cannot be fully mitigated.

156. The PEA is accompanied by a Bat Survey Report which details the results of a dusk bat survey of Building B2 (caretaker's bungalow). The survey details the building as having negligible suitability for bats. Further, a Bat Emergence Survey identified that there were no bats emerging or returning from the building.
157. With regard to Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirements, a preliminary assessment of habitats was undertaken in parallel within the PEA and BNG constraints and opportunities have been identified. In summary, the assessment identified key BNG receptors, namely native species hedgerows to ideally be retained and enhanced, with opportunities to create and enhance grassland areas around proposed new buildings, and to manage retained hedgerows.
158. Opportunities for ecological enhancements includes the management of retained habitats, suitable native planting to be included in the landscape scheme and the provision of bat boxes, bird boxes, loggers for insects and hibernaculum habitats for the benefit of common reptiles, amphibians and hedgehogs.
159. In conclusion, the PEA finds that there are no significant ecological constraints to the proposed development and that with appropriate mitigation measures and additional survey/assessment, the ecological receptors identified would not be adversely affected by the proposed development.
160. The BNG Technical Note has been submitted to identify the change in habitat value and make recommendations to deliver no net loss or a net-gain if practical. Based on calculations undertaken using Natural England's latest Metric (v4.0), the Technical Note finds that under the submitted landscaping proposals, which are intended to maximise on-site biodiversity, there would be a net loss of 18.37% in habitat areas, and a net gain of 48.27% in habitat lengths.
161. In order to compensate for this loss, the applicant's landscaping proposals would utilise an off-site mitigation area to achieve a measurable net gain in biodiversity of at least 1%. The applicant has identified an off-site mitigation area within Runnymede to deliver the biodiversity units required to provide a minimum biodiversity net-gain of 1% overall. This is located at Almnors Farm Smallholding 110 Almnors Road in Lyne which is located just under 2km to the north-west of the application site.
162. The loss in habitat units would be compensated for by a gain of 9.23% at the off-site mitigation area, resulting in an overall biodiversity net gain of 3.63%. This would be achieved by planting 125 small trees off-site at Almnors Farm Smallholding. The applicant points out that as there was no mandatory target for BNG provision when the planning application was submitted in November 2023, it is only necessary to provide a net-gain in order to comply with planning policy requirements. As a consequence, the applicant explains that the calculations demonstrate that a net-gain in biodiversity would be achieved overall.
163. The BNG Technical Note explains that the proposed development does not satisfy the metric's 'trading rules' where one habitat is traded for another. The loss of a pond is the cause of this, as ponds can only be replaced with other lake habitats, or habitats of higher distinctiveness (the intrinsic value of a habitat).
164. The pond on-site has an area of less than 1 sq m, for which the metric calculates a contribution of 0.00 habitat units. Given its insignificant contribution to the overall biodiversity of the site and the lack of biological records of amphibians in the surrounding area, the applicant considers this habitat to be of negligible value, and therefore argues that the trading rule failure should be disregarded.
165. The County Ecology Officer (CEO) is content with the results of the Bat Survey Report and Bat Emergence Survey and has no concerns in relation to protected species. With regard

to BNG, the CEO accepts the reasons given in the BNG Technical Note for disregarding the loss of a pond and is satisfied that sufficient detail has been provided to demonstrate that a net gain in biodiversity is achievable for the proposed development. As a consequence, the CEO has raised no objection to the application subject to a condition requiring the submission of a detailed Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) for the on-site and off-site habitats.

166. Having assessed the merits of the application in ecological terms, Officers are satisfied that subject to the imposition of a condition, the applicant has demonstrated that the proposal would enhance the natural and local environment through the proposals for habitat creation and the overall provision of a net gain in biodiversity through the provision of new on-site planting and compensatory tree provision off-site. Further, the proposal seeks to protect the remaining biodiversity on-site and existing significant trees nearby, and opportunities to improve biodiversity on site have been included and integrated as part of the design. For these reasons, the application is considered to comply with the relevant national and local planning policies in relation to ecological matters.

## **FLOODING AND SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE**

### **Runnymede 2030 Local Plan**

#### **Policy EE13 - Managing Flood Risk**

167. Paragraph 165 of the NPPF states that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk. Where development is necessary in such areas, the development should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere. NPPF paragraph 173 sets out that in determining planning applications, LPAs should ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere and that where appropriate, applications should be supported by a site specific flood-risk assessment. RLP Policy EE13 states that new development will be guided to areas of low flood risk from all sources of flooding.
168. The Environment Agency's (EA) Flood Map for Planning indicates that the site is located in Flood Zone 1 where there is a low probability of flooding from rivers and the sea. The nearest area within Flood Zone 2 (medium risk of flooding) is located approximately 50m north-west of the application site boundary at its closest point. The application site also lies within groundwater Source Protection Zone 3 and an indicative area of flooding which are locations that may be prone to surface water flooding.
169. The applicant has submitted a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) in support of the application. The FRA finds that the fluvial and groundwater flood risk is negligible based on information derived from published data sources.
170. The pluvial risk of flooding was found to be low to moderate, with a 75-year event likely to have some impact on the northern portion and south-west corner of the site with levels of up to 1.0m being recorded. The areas affected and depths recorded generally increase across the 200-year and 1000-year event (albeit still with a maximum 1.0m depth noted).
171. The FRA explains that there are two areas within the application site that comprise soft landscaping. These areas are at slightly reduced levels relative to the main school building and surrounding hardstanding areas in the centre and south / south-east of the site. Therefore, these two areas of soft landscaping are more vulnerable to surface water flooding.
172. According to the assessment, the application site may become affected by secondary effects during extreme local flood and rainfall events, as potentially seen in the north and south-west corner of the site. Whilst the potential for an on-site incident is considered low, the applicant anticipates that in such an event, flooding would be localised. Based on the flood return data, flood waters should generally flow within the site, although there may be

some flow to the north from the northern portion and potentially off-site in the south-west corner (direction not clear) during a 1000-year return period.

173. The FRA states that the flood risk in these areas is generally lower than on site, Therefore the off-site impact will be low although it may have secondary or additive influences on the adjacent flood risk in these directions. The off-site risk to the south-east was found to be higher during the 1000-year return period, and that could potentially impact the site.
174. In terms of local infrastructure and flood defences, the FRA finds that flooding from reservoirs is unlikely and no flood defences or areas noted to benefit from flood defences are recorded within 1km of the site. Flooding records held by Thames Water indicate that there have been no incidents of flooding around the site area due to surcharging public sewers. No historic flood events were found to have been recorded on the application site with the nearest such event having been recorded 82m north of the site in 2002/03 due to a 'channel capacity exceedance' along Green Lane. All the historic flood events recorded within 1km of the site were fluvial in nature.
175. The FRA notes that the residential property at 93 Little Green Lane, which neighbours the south-west corner of the school, suffered external surface water flooding on more than one occasion between 2020 and 2022. Based on an Investigation Report prepared by SCC, the applicant understands that the flooding resulted from accumulated rainfall unable to enter the highway drainage system and there was no significant input from elsewhere. The local highway gully beside the low spot outside No. 93 reportedly accepted very little water before becoming overwhelmed. The report noted that the grassed area immediately east of No. 93 within the school ground (inside the site boundary) also flooded.
176. The gullies on Little Green Lane drain into a Thames Water owned surface water sewer beneath the carriageway, which drains eastwards towards Little Green Lane's junction with Bittams Lane and outfalls into a ditch slightly north on the east side of Bittams Lane. This ditch was found to be obstructed in two places during the local authority's site visit on 4th November 2022. The obstructions were preventing the free drainage of the surface water sewers discharging into the ditch, with consequent impact on the highway gullies, thereby increasing the flood risk to the highway and adjacent properties. Standing water within the sewer would reduce capacity again increasing the risk of the system being overwhelmed.
177. Further gullies in the area, including one outside the school, were also found to be obstructed by silt, leaf litter and other debris. The report notes that No. 93 is at low-medium risk of pluvial flooding due to the location of the property (in a natural depression). Therefore, even if all drainage is fully functioning, flooding may still occur if sufficient rain should fall to overwhelm the capacity of the highway drainage, the surface water sewers or the downstream watercourses they discharge into.
178. The FRA explains that areas of the school at an elevation of 19.70m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) or above would not be impacted by the most extreme pluvial flood events. The proposed new detached classroom block located on the western portion of the site would have a finished floor level (FFL) of 19.75m AOD, which would be above the maximum extent of the most extreme pluvial flood events (1000-year return). Further, the proposed extension towards the rear of the main school building would have a FFL of 19.95m AOD and is therefore not considered to be at risk. As the development would be designed in accordance with current guidance for surface water management, the FRA states the proposal would provide a significant betterment over the existing situation with integrated storage capacity and regulated discharge which would reduce the potential risk from Pluvial (and Fluvial) events.
179. The application is supported by a Sustainable Drainage Strategy. This sets out that the surface water sewers and SuDS systems on site would be sized to withstand flooding during a 1:100 year storm event + 40% allowance for climate change. The undeveloped areas of the site would drain via underground pipework as existing. The new detached



classroom block would drain through new rainwater pipes and connect into the underground network. The new MUGA and car park would drain via the downwards infiltration media which would comprise both a permeable ground material and permeable paving. Following water treatment through these SuDS elements, the drainage would be connected into the underground network. As Thames Water would require a reduction in run-off from the existing capacity of the outfall pipe that would discharge from the existing site, the applicant is proposing a lower run-off rate which would be a third lower than the minimum existing rate.

180. The Sustainable Drainage Strategy proposes several sustainable drainage system (SuDS) features to manage surface water on the site which would improve water quality and quantity for the surface water run-off. Given the high groundwater table present, these are generally designed to store water during periods of heavy and/or prolonged rainfall and regulate discharge to levels that can be accommodated by the local drainage infrastructure. The proposed SuDS features comprise:
- Permeable paving in the car parking areas to allow infiltration through the surface and storage beneath the sub-base prior to discharge to the existing sewer.
  - The provision of a large attenuation tank beneath the proposed MUGA in the northern area of the site. This would have a storage capacity of 145 cubic metres with the surface water generated eventually being discharged to the existing sewers via a flow control restricting the discharge rate to 10.0 litres per second (l/s).
  - The establishment of perimeter drainage along the northern boundary, main school entrance on the southern boundary and threshold drainage<sup>8</sup> to the proposed new structures to reduce surface water flooding risks and secondary impacts. The proposed gravel drain at the bottom of the site would facilitate drainage into the ground and allow storage at the lowest section of the site.
  - A rainwater harvesting tank is proposed on the caretaker's shed at the request of the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) to allow for teaching opportunities on-site. However, this would not be used as an attenuation feature onsite and would mitigate minimal rainwater run-off.
181. The strategy points out that a proportion of the surface water drainage system would be within the root protection zone of multiple existing trees. To ensure trees are protected from damage, all excavation beneath the crown spread of the tree would be undertaken using hand tools only, working around the tree roots to prevent damage or injury to the tree root. No tree root with a diameter greater than 25mm would be severed unless supervised by a competent arboriculturist. Suitable ground protection would be used within root protection zones to prevent compaction of the ground, long-term damage to the soil structure, the tree roots and the health of the tree. Topsoil would be reinstated around the base once the work has been completed.
182. The Sustainable Drainage Strategy details the required maintenance approach to all aspects of the proposed surface water drainage system, and how important this would be to its ongoing functionality. The maintenance plan covers inspections at defined intervals of the proposed gullies, rainwater downpipes, gutters, hoppers, channel drains, catchpits, permeable pavement, attenuation tank, rainwater harvesting tank and gravel trench and the clearance of any debris or sediment build-up. With the proposed drainage system in place, the FRA concludes that the residual flood risk would be negligible.
183. In relation to groundwater, the application site is situated within Source Protection Zone (SPZ) 3 which comprises the total area needed to support the abstraction or discharge from the protected groundwater source. As the proposed use of the land does not include potentially contaminating development or the storage of potentially contaminating

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<sup>8</sup> Threshold drains are used for drainage systems that are situated at the edges of pavements where it meets a doorway or the bottom of a garden path as it meets the road.

substances, EA standing advice<sup>9</sup> confirms that there is no need for them to be consulted and Officers are satisfied that the application would not pose a risk to groundwater quality or the quality of drinking water.

184. Thames Water has raised no objection in respect of surface water drainage provided the applicant follows the sequential approach to the disposal of surface water. No views have been received from Affinity Water. The LLFA has reviewed the submitted FRA and Sustainable Drainage Strategy. They have advised that the applicant has considered the surface water flood risk to and from the site and suggested appropriate mitigation measures to inform the planning application. The LLFA has suggested the imposition of a planning condition to ensure the drainage system is installed in accordance with the Sustainable Drainage Strategy. This suggestion is supported by Officers.
185. Although the LLFA are content with the overarching principles, they consider that as the combination of attenuating sub-base and created storage would provide over 180 cubic metres of storage, there would appear to be scope to reduce the proposed discharge rate of 10l/s for the smaller rainfall events. During the detailed design, the LLFA advise that whilst attenuation for peak storm events cannot be increased, there should be consideration for utilising a complex flow control that reduces the discharge off-site for the small rainfall events. This would enable the proposed attenuation to be maximised enabling more of the available storage to be used during more frequent smaller rainfall events. Further, the LLFA point out that including additional sustainable drainage elements such as SuDS planters and rain gardens can provide educational as well as amenity, biodiversity and water quality benefits. Officers consider that it would be appropriate to include these points as an informative.
186. As referred to in paragraphs 137 and 138 above, a representation has been received from an immediate neighbour of the school expressing concern that the proposed off-site highway works would almost certainly result in their property being flooded. The LLFA has been consulted and do have concerns regarding the proposed off-site highway works given the sensitivity of the area. During a discussion between the LLFA, CHA and CPA, the CHA advised that alternatives to raised tables were available if necessary to bring down the speed of traffic. As a consequence, it was agreed that the LLFA's concern could be overcome by imposing a condition requiring details of the off-site highway works to be submitted and approved in writing. The submitted details would need to demonstrate that the proposed off-site highway works would not result in an increase in the risk of surface water flooding off-site.
187. Concerns regarding the impact of the development on surface water drainage have been raised in a significant number of the representations received. Whilst it is acknowledged that the local area is sensitive to surface water flooding during periods of heavy rainfall, Officers are satisfied that the application would not only ensure that there would be no increase in surface water flooding off-site but that there would be an improvement in the existing situation.
188. A representation has been received claiming that the application is based on the published EA flood map which needs updating to reflect the new flood depth of 500mm predicted by the EA in Green Lane. The representation adds that further assessment is therefore required and if it is found that the application site is located in Flood Zones 2 or 3, then the development is not appropriate as it would not meet the sequential test. In response, the LLFA has advised that the mapped flood risk is not the only source of information they review when making assessments under their consultee role. They also look at highway 'wetspots' and their flooding enquiries for the area to get a better understanding of the overall flood risk. The LLFA add that the published data is the best available data and is the correct information that an applicant should include.

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<sup>9</sup> When to Consult the Environment Agency, External Consultation Checklist, Version 3.3, Environment Agency, August 2017

189. Having considered the impact of the proposed development on flooding and sustainable drainage, together with the mitigation strategy proposed by the applicant, Officers are satisfied that the proposed development would not be located in an area with the highest risk of flooding. Further, the application is supported by a site specific Flood Risk Assessment and a Sustainable Drainage Strategy Report. Subject to the imposition of conditions, the proposal would ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere. For these reasons, the proposal meets the requirements of national and local planning policies in relation to flooding and surface water drainage.

## ARCHAEOLOGY

190. Paragraph 200 of the NPPF states that where a site on which a development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interests, LPAs should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.
191. RLP Policy EE3 states that development that affects Runnymede's heritage assets should be designed to protect, conserve and enhance the significance and value of these assets and their settings in accordance with national legislation, policy and guidance and any supplementary planning documents which the council may produce. Policy EE7 of the RLP sets out that development that adversely affects the physical survival, setting or overall heritage significance of any element of a Scheduled Monument or County Sites of Archaeological Importance or their settings will be resisted. An archaeological assessment, and where appropriate the results of a site evaluation (and, should remains have been identified, an accompanying archaeological mitigation strategy) will be required to accompany a planning application for:
- Proposals for development on sites which affect, or have the potential to affect, Scheduled Monuments;
  - Proposals for development on sites which affect, or have the potential to affect, County Sites of Archaeological Importance (CSAI) or Areas of High Archaeological Potential (AHAP); and
  - Proposals for development on all other sites which exceed 0.4ha in size.
192. The application site is not located within close vicinity to a Scheduled Monument, CSAI or AHAP. The closest AHAP is situated 335m to the north-east on the opposite side of the M25 motorway and the closest CSAI is situated 1,000m to the south-east. However, as the application site covers an area of 0.48 hectares, a Desk Based Archaeological Assessment has been submitted in support of the application.
193. The submitted Archaeological Assessment found that there were no heritage assets within the application site area itself and no new heritage assets were identified as part of the assessment work. However, the Assessment states that the evidence examined as part of the assessment indicates that the archaeological potential, whilst uncertain in view of the limited previous archaeological work in the vicinity, is probably good for the prehistoric period and moderate to low for other periods.
194. The Assessment explains that the areas of the proposed development are sited within areas of the school that appear to have remained as open areas, surfaced with asphalt (or similar) or left as vegetated areas, mainly under grass. This would suggest that the underlying sub-strata will have remained largely undisturbed and may therefore still preserve in situ archaeological deposits. The groundworks associated with the proposed redevelopment will have a high impact on any potential undisturbed deposits.
195. The Assessment therefore recommends that in view of the size of the area, and in line with current planning policy, the site should be subject to an Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation in order to test the archaeological potential. The form and character of this work would need to be defined in a Written Scheme of Investigation submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority.

196. The County Archaeological Officer (CAO) agrees with the conclusions of the Archaeological Assessment as a programme of trial trench evaluation would enable the identification of any buried remains that may be present and allow suitable mitigation measures to be devised if necessary. The CAO therefore advises that a condition should be imposed in order to secure the initial archaeological investigation and any subsequent mitigation work that may be required.
197. Officers agree that such a condition should be imposed in order to ensure no harm would be caused to potential archaeological remains within the application site and that such remains should be recorded and conserved appropriately. Officers are satisfied that subject to the imposition of a planning condition, the application complies with development plan policy requirements in relation to heritage.

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### ***Human Rights Implications***

198. The Human Rights Act Guidance for Interpretation, contained in the Preamble to the Agenda is expressly incorporated into this report and must be read in conjunction with the following paragraph.
199. In this case, it is the Officers view that the scale of any impact is not considered sufficient to engage Article 6 or Article 1 of Protocol 1 and any impacts can be mitigated by condition. As such, this proposal is not considered to interfere with any Convention right.
200. The CPA is required by section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to the need to eliminate conduct prohibited by the Act, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between people with protected characteristics and people who do not. The level of 'due regard' considered sufficient in any particular context depends on the facts.
201. In this case, the CPA has considered its duty under the Equality Act 2010 and concludes that this application does not give rise to any considerations on equality.

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### ***Conclusion***

202. The application seeks to expand the one-form entry infant school for pupils aged 4-7 years into a one form entry primary school for pupils aged 4-11 years. This would increase the capacity of the school from 90 to 210 pupils. To accommodate the increase in pupils, the application proposes an extension (c.96 sq m GIA) towards the rear of the main school building and the construction of a new detached single-storey classroom block (400 sq m GIA) to the west of the main school, following the demolition of the existing caretaker's bungalow and ancillary buildings. The application also proposes an alteration to the parking layout and changes to the external layout of the school including the development of a MUGA to the rear of the site.
203. The applicant has submitted detailed information on the projected need for additional school places in the area around Addlestone and Chertsey. The demand for school places in this area is currently forecast to be higher than the number of school places available, particularly at junior level. This demonstrates that there is an educational need for the proposed development.
204. The field to the rear of the school and the narrow margin of grass along the eastern site boundary is designated as open space. Although some open space would be lost or repurposed as a result of the proposed MUGA, storage units, caretaker's office and landscaping, Sport England has raised no objection to the proposal and playing field space would be sought off-site at St Paul's CofE Primary School in Addlestone. Officers consider that the reduction in open space would be outweighed by the benefits of the proposal to the school community, in view of the identified need for the development, and

the replacement of the existing sports facilities with better quality provision which would be available all year round.

205. The proposed demolition of the caretaker's bungalow would result in the loss of a residential dwelling. This is considered to be justified by the need to provide facilities of community, social or cultural value in the form of additional school places by enabling the school to expand within its own confined site.
206. Officers consider that the application would promote the efficient use of land and improve the quality of service provision in the locality. The proposed new classroom block and extension would add to the overall quality of the area, complement the design of the existing school and be visually attractive through the incorporation of good architecture, layout and effective landscaping. Further, the development would be sympathetic to local character, safe, accessible and promote health and wellbeing through the improvement of outdoor recreational facilities and use a layout and orientation designed to maximises opportunities for passive solar gain and cooling.
207. The proposed development has been carefully designed to minimise any impacts in terms of overshadowing, overbearing and overlooking. Whilst some impacts on residential amenity may be experienced, Officers are satisfied that such impacts would be limited and subject to the imposition of conditions, any detrimental impact in terms of air quality, lighting and noise would not be significant.
208. Through the provision of off-site highway works and measures to promote more sustainable travel choices which can be secured by condition, the impacts on highways, traffic and access can be satisfactorily addressed and opportunities to promote walking, cycling / scooting, and the use of electric vehicles by staff, can be realised.
209. The application would result in the loss of 18 trees. However, subject to conditions, the proposed development would be appropriately landscaped, landscaping would be appropriately maintained, retained trees would be appropriately protected and ecology and biodiversity features would be protected and enhanced. Further, through the provision of on-site planting and the planting of an additional 125 small trees off-site, the applicant has demonstrated that the proposal would result in a net-gain in biodiversity in accordance with the relevant policy requirements.
210. In relation to flooding and sustainable drainage, subject to the imposition of conditions to secure the implementation and ongoing maintenance of the sustainable drainage system proposed by the applicant, and to ensure that the proposed off-site highway works would not increase flood risk off-site, the proposal would be acceptable in respect of flooding and sustainable drainage and would not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.
211. Subject to a condition to ensure no harm would be caused to potential archaeological remains within the application site and that any such remains would be recorded and conserved appropriately, Officers are content that the impact of the development on the historic environment would be acceptable.
212. Weighing these factors together, it is considered that the proposal would provide a number of benefits for the locality through the provision of additional school places for which there is a demonstrable need. Officers are satisfied that any adverse impacts can be satisfactorily mitigated through the imposition of planning conditions. For these reasons, Officers consider that the proposal is in accordance national policy and the local development plan and that planning permission should be granted subject to conditions.

### ***Recommendation***

It is recommended that pursuant to Regulation 3 of The Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992, the Committee grants planning permission for application ref: RU.23/1759 subject to the recommended planning conditions.

## Conditions

**IMPORTANT: CONDITION NUMBERS 4, 5, 8, 11, 17, 18, 20 and 22 MUST BE DISCHARGED PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE DEVELOPMENT**

**THERE ARE OTHER CONDITIONS REQUIRING SCHEMES TO BE APPROVED PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF CERTAIN OPERATIONS**

## Plans and Drawings

1. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in all respects in accordance with the following plans/drawings:

Drawing No. SJA TCP 23447-011 Tree Constraints Plan dated September 2023

Drawing No. SUR001-LOC-ZZ-00-DR-L-03025 Typical Tree Pit Detail dated 17 July 2023

Drawing No. SUR001-PEV-XX-00-DR-A-9020 rev P01 Existing Plan 00 - Ground Floor dated 24 October 2023

Drawing No. SUR001-PEV-XX-R1-DR-A-9021 rev P01 Existing Plan R1 - Roof Plan dated 24 October 2023

Drawing No. SUR001-PEV-XX-XX-DR-A-9000 rev P01 Location Plan dated 24 October 2023

Drawing No. SUR001-PEV-XX-XX-DR-A-9010 rev P01 Existing Site Block Plan dated 24 October 2023

Drawing No. SUR001-PEV-XX-XX-DR-A-9011 rev P01 Demolition Site Plan dated 24 October 2023

Drawing No. SUR001-PEV-XX-XX-DR-A-9050 rev P01 Existing External Elevations dated 24 October 2023

Drawing No. SUR001-PEV-XX-XX-DR-A-9060 rev P01 Existing Site Sections dated 24 October 2023

Drawing No. SUR001-PEV-XX-XX-DR-A-9055 rev P01 Proposed External Elevations - Existing Building dated 24 October 2023

Drawing No. SUR001-PEV-XX-XX-DR-A-9065 rev P01 Existing Section - Existing Building dated 24 October 2023

Drawing No. SUR001-PEV-XX-XX-DR-A-9066 rev P01 Proposed Section - Existing Building dated 24 October 2023

Drawing No. SUR001-PEV-XX-XX-DR-A-9067 rev P01 Proposed Section - New Building dated 24 October 2023

Drawing No. SUR001-PEV-XX-XX-DR-A-9070 rev P01 Proposed Caretaker's Office - Floor Plan, Elevations and Sections dated 24 October 2023

Drawing No. SUR001-PEV-XX-XX-DR-A-9071 rev P01 Caretaker's Store - Floor Plan, Elevations and Sections dated 24 October 2023

Drawing No. SUR001-PEV-XX-XX-DR-A-9072 rev P01 Bin Store and General Stores - Floor Plan and Elevations dated 24 October 2023

Drawing No. SUR001-PEV-XX-XX-DR-A-9090 rev P01 Existing Block & Proposed Extension Axo dated 24 October 2023

Drawing No. SUR001-PEV-XX-XX-DR-A-9091 rev P01 New Block Axo dated 24 October 2023

Drawing No. SUR001-PEV-XX-XX-DR-A-9025 rev P01 Existing Caretaker House & Garage Elevations & Plans dated 24 October 2023

- Drawing No. SUR001-PEV-XX-XX-DR-A-9073 rev P01 Bike Rack - Plan and Elevations dated 24 October 2023
- Drawing No. SUR001-PEV-XX-XX-DR-A-9056 rev P02 Proposed External Elevations - New Building dated 17 April 2024
- Drawing No. SUR001-LOC-ZZ-00-DR-L-03024 rev F Landscape Planting Plan dated 18 April 2024
- Drawing No. SUR001-LOC-ZZ-00-DR-L-03026 rev A Soil Plan dated 17 April 2024
- Drawing No. SUR001-PEV-XX-XX-DR-E-0801 rev P02 External Lighting Layout - Lux Plots dated 5 November 2024
- Drawing No. SUR001-PEV-XX-00-DR-C-1120 rev P05 Proposed Contour and Levels Plan dated 4 November 2024
- Drawing No. SUR001-PEV-XX-00-DR-C-0520 rev P03 Overview Drainage Drawing dated 4 November 2024
- Drawing No. SUR001-PEV-XX-XX-DR-A-9012 rev P02 Proposed Site Block Plan dated 4 November 2024
- Drawing No. SUR001-PEV-XX-XX-DR-A-9080 rev P02 Existing & Proposed Street Frontage Elevations dated 4 November 2024
- Drawing No. SUR001-PEV-XX-00-DR-C-0700 rev P05 Pavement Plan dated 4 November 2024
- Drawing No. SUR001-PEV-XX-00-DR-A-9040 rev P02 Proposed Plan 00 - Ground Floor dated 4 November 2024
- Drawing No. SUR001-PEV-XX-XX-DR-A-9061 rev P03 Proposed Site Sections dated 4 November 2024

**Reason**

For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning and to ensure the permission is implemented in accordance with the terms of the application and to enable the County Planning Authority to exercise planning control over the development so as to minimise its impact on the local community, public amenity and the local environment in accordance with Policies EE1 and EE2 of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan 2020.

**Commencement**

- 2. The development to which this permission relates shall be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

**Reason**

To comply with Section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51(1) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

**Construction**

- 3. All operations and activities related to the construction of the development (including demolition) hereby permitted shall only be carried out between the hours of 0800 and 1800 Monday to Friday and 0800 to 1300 on Saturday unless prior written consent is provided by the County Planning Authority in respect of any heavy or wide loads. Notwithstanding the above, there shall be no HGV movements to or from the application site related to the construction of the development between the hours of 0800 - 0900 and 1500 - 1600 Monday to Friday, nor shall the contractor permit any Heavy Goods Vehicles associated with the development at the site to be laid up or waiting in Little Green Lane, Inglewood, Jersey Close, Merrylands, Ferndale Close, Gordon Drive, Gordon Close, Ferndale Avenue, Lowther Close, Hillcrest Avenue, Waverley Drive, Lyndhurst Way, Sandalwood Avenue, Bittams Lane, Crosslands, Green Lane, Elm Tree Close, Willow Close, Green Lane Close and Bretlands Road during these times.

No operations and activities related to the construction of the development hereby permitted shall be carried out at any time on Sunday or any Public, Bank, or National Holiday.

### **Reason**

To enable the County Planning Authority to exercise planning control over the development, mitigate the potential impacts of the development on the transport network and safeguard the amenities of occupiers of neighbouring properties or uses in accordance with paragraphs 108, 114 and 191 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 and Policy EE1 of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan 2020.

### **Design, Sustainability and Visual Appearance**

4. **Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted**, including demolition works, a Resource Management Plan (RMP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. The RMP shall include detailed measures to demonstrate the following:
  - a) that opportunities for the re-use and recycling of construction and demolition waste on-site are maximised.
  - b) that waste generated during the construction of the development is limited to the minimum quantity necessary.
  - c) that on-site facilities to manage the waste arising during the operation of the development of an appropriate type and scale have been considered as part of the development.
  - d) that integrated storage to facilitate the reuse and recycling of waste is incorporated in the development.

The development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

### **Reason**

To safeguard the local environment by incorporating sustainable construction and demolition techniques that provide for the efficient use minerals, encourage the re-use of construction and demolition waste at source or its separation and collection for recycling and incorporate measures for the storage of segregated waste in accordance with Policy SD7 of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan 2020. The imposition of a pre-commencement condition to secure the submission of a Resource Management Plan is required in order to ensure the efficient use of minerals during construction and that waste is minimised during the construction and demolition phases of the development.

### **Residential Amenity**

5. **Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted**, including demolition works, a Construction Noise Management Plan (CNMP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. The CNMP shall include, but not be limited to:
  - a) Noise limits at noise sensitive receptors.
  - b) Noise impact assessment.
  - c) Noise avoidance, mitigation or reduction measures.

The approved CNMP shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

### **Reason**



To enable the County Planning Authority to exercise planning control over the development and safeguard the local environment by preventing existing development from being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of noise pollution in accordance with paragraph 180 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 and Policy EE2 of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan 2020. The imposition of a pre-commencement condition to secure the submission of a CNMP is required to ensure the effective control of noise throughout the demolition and construction phases of the development in view of the close proximity of staff and pupils attending the school and neighbouring properties.

6. The Rating Level, L<sub>Ar,Tr</sub>, of the noise emitted from all plant, equipment and machinery associated with the application site shall not exceed the existing representative LA<sub>90</sub> background sound level at any time by more than +5 dB(A) at the nearest noise sensitive receptors (residential or noise sensitive building). The assessment shall be conducted in accordance with the current version of British Standard (BS): 4142:2014+A1:2019 Methods for Rating and Assessing Industrial and Commercial Sound.

The existing representative LA<sub>90</sub> background sound level shall be determined by measurement that shall be sufficient to characterise the environment. The representative level should be justified following guidance contained within the current version of BS: 4142:2014+A1:2019 and agreed with the County Planning Authority.

#### **Reason**

To enable the County Planning Authority to exercise planning control over the development and to safeguard the environment, local amenity and other noise sensitive receptors during the operational phase of the development in accordance with paragraph 180 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 and Policy EE2 of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan 2020.

7. The use of the multi-use games area (MUGA) shall be limited for the sole use of the school, only take place during normal school hours between 0800 and 1730 hours Monday to Friday and shall not be used for community purposes.

#### **Reason**

To reduce to a minimum the potential adverse impacts resulting from noise, including the adverse impact on the amenities of occupiers of neighbouring property, and to comply with the terms of the application in accordance with paragraph 91 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 and Policy EE1 of the Runnymede Borough 2030 Local Plan 2020.

8. **Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted**, including demolition works, a Dust Management Plan (DMP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. The DMP shall identify the risk of dust emissions associated with the demolition, earthworks, construction and track-out phases of the development and include details of a suitable management and mitigation strategy to ensure that any adverse effects are controlled and reduced. The approved DMP shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

#### **Reason**

To mitigate and reduce the impact of dust emissions on air quality to acceptable levels in accordance with paragraph 192 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 and Policy EE2 of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan 2020. The imposition of a pre-commencement condition for a Dust Management Plan is required in order to protect the amenity of nearby residents and users of the application site from any adverse impacts on air quality during the demolition and construction phases of the development.

9. No external lighting shall be installed as part of the development hereby permitted other than that shown on Drawing No. SUR001-PEV-XX-XX-DR-E-0801 rev P02 External Lighting Layout - Lux Plots dated 5 November 2024. The installation and operation of lighting in association with the development shall be carried out in accordance with the details shown on Drawing No. SUR001-PEV-XX-XX-DR-E-0801 rev P02 External Lighting Layout - Lux Plots dated 5 November 2024 and take account of the impact on bats and other nocturnal species based on the advice contained in paragraph 4.2.2 of the Bat Survey Report, V1.0 dated August 2024.

All external lighting shall be directed downwards onto the ground or other surfaces in the horizontal plane and orientated away from the boundary to focus light into the site in order to avoid any upward glare of light from the external lighting installed, and to minimise light spill outside the boundary of the site.

#### **Reason**

To enable the County Planning Authority to exercise planning control over the development and to limit or avoid the impact of light pollution from artificial light on wildlife, local amenity and public safety in accordance with paragraph 191 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 and Policy EE2 of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan 2020.

10. The proposed lighting on the maintenance route to the west of the new detached school building, as shown on Drawing No. SUR001-PEV-XX-XX-DR-E-0801 rev P02 External Lighting Layout - Lux Plots dated 5 November 2024, shall be manually operated and switched off outside of normal school hours between 0800 and 1730 hours Monday to Friday unless required for the carrying out of maintenance or emergency operations for safety and security purposes.

#### **Reason**

To enable the County Planning Authority to exercise planning control over the development and to limit or avoid the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity and public safety in accordance with paragraph 191 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 and Policy EE2 of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan 2020.

#### **Highways and Traffic Implications**

11. **Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted**, including demolition works, a Construction Transport Management Plan (CTMP) in general accordance with the submitted Construction Traffic Management Plan version 0.2 dated October 2023 shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. The CTMP shall 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) heavy goods vehicle deliveries and hours of operation
  - g) vehicle routing
  - h) temporary parking suspensions on Little Green Lane
  - i) measures to prevent the deposit of materials on the highway.

The approved CTMP shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

#### **Reason**

To effectively mitigate the impact of the development on the transport network in terms of capacity, congestion and safety, and maintain the efficient and safe operation of the highway network taking into account the needs of all highways users in accordance with paragraph 114 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 and Policy SD4 of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan 2020. The imposition of a pre-commencement condition to secure the submission of a CTMP is recommended by the County Highway Authority to ensure that the public highway can continue to be used safely and without any unnecessary inconvenience to other highway users during the demolition and construction phases of the development.

12. Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted, facilities for the secure, lit and covered parking of a total of 29 (twenty-nine) bicycles, including 1 (one) space with a charging point for an electric vehicle (EV) bicycle, and 16 (sixteen) scooters shall be provided within the site in accordance with a scheme to be submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. The approved facilities and charging point shall thereafter be retained and maintained for their designated purpose.

#### **Reason**

In the interests of ensuring that the development promotes sustainable transport modes, does not prejudice highway safety or cause inconvenience to other highway users and gives priority to cycle movements within the development in accordance with paragraphs 114 and 116 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 and Policy SD4 of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan 2020.

13. Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted, space shall be laid out within the site in accordance with approved Drawing No. SUR001-PEV-XX-XX-DR-A-9012 rev P02 Proposed Site Block Plan dated 4 November 2024 for vehicles to be parked and to turn so that they may enter and leave the site in forward gear. The parking and turning areas shall thereafter be retained and maintained for their designated purpose.

#### **Reason**

In the interests of ensuring that the development should not prejudice highway safety or cause inconvenience to other highway users and maintains the efficient and safe operation of the highway network taking account of the needs of all highway users in accordance with paragraph 114 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 and Policy SD4 of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan 2020.

14. Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted, at least 50% of the additional parking spaces shall be provided with a fast-charge socket (current minimum requirements - 7kw Mode 3 with Type 2 connector - 230v AC 32 Amp single phase dedicated supply) in accordance with a scheme to be submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. The approved charging points shall thereafter be retained and maintained for use in connection with the development.

#### **Reason**

To enable the charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations in accordance with paragraph 116 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 and Policy SD7 of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan 2020.

15. Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted, a School Travel Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. The submitted Plan shall include details of measures to promote sustainable modes of transport, provisions for the maintenance, monitoring and review of the impact of the

Plan and its further development and an updated Parking Management Plan to discourage parent parking on green verges, privately owned parking spaces, in areas to be painted with double yellow lines and across residents' driveways. The approved Travel Plan shall be implemented and monitored in accordance with the approved details.

### **Reason**

In order that the development should not prejudice highway safety nor cause inconvenience to other highway users and encourages active and sustainable travel options in accordance with paragraphs 114 and 117 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 and Policy SD3 of the Runnymede Borough 2030 Local Plan 2020.

16. Within 6 months of the commencement of the development hereby permitted, details of the off-site highway works shall be submitted to the County Planning Authority for approval in writing. The submitted details shall demonstrate:
- a) that the proposed highway works including any raised tables and excavation works on the existing grass verge would not increase the risk of flooding off-site.
  - b) measures to manage and control root pruning and disruption to Tree 36 (English Oak), as shown on Drawing No. SJA TCP 23447-011 Tree Constraints Plan dated September 2023, during the carrying out of excavation works within the Root Protection Area of the tree.

The approved highway works shall be implemented prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted.

### **Reason**

To effectively mitigate the impact of the development on the transport network in terms of capacity and congestion, maintain the efficient and safe operation of the highway network, ensure that the environmental impacts of transport infrastructure are identified, assessed and taken into account and any adverse effects are avoided or mitigated in accordance with paragraphs 108 and 114 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 and Policies SD4 and SD5 of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan 2020.

### **Landscape**

17. **Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted**, including demolition works, an updated detailed Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. The AMS shall include:
- a) evidence that the paths and parking bays can be constructed without loss of tree roots over 25mm.
  - b) profile plans with heights showing the batters and soil build up within the RPAs of retained trees requiring above soil surfacing.
  - c) measures to mitigate the impact on Tree 24 (Norway Maple) to ensure that any over dig into the root protection area is avoided and any harm to roots encountered is avoided or minimised with all work to take place under the direct supervision of an approved arboricultural consultant.

The development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved AMS.

### **Reason**

To ensure the retention and long term health of retained trees in order to ensure that the proposed development contributes to the quality of the landscape setting in accordance with

paragraph 136 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 and Policy EE1 of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan 2020. The imposition of a pre-commencement condition to secure the submission of an Arboricultural Method Statement is required in order to prevent retained trees from being lost or damaged during demolition and construction works.

18. **Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted**, including demolition works, Tree Protective Fencing shall be erected around retained trees to protect them during construction and prevent incursions into their root protection areas in accordance with the details shown in Appendix 4 (Drawing No. SJA TPP 23447-041 Tree Protection Plan dated October 2023) of the Arboricultural Implications Report ref: SJA air 23447-01 dated October 2023.

#### **Reason**

To ensure the retention and long term health of retained trees in order to ensure that the proposed development contributes to the quality of the landscape setting in accordance with paragraph 136 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 and Policy EE1 of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan 2020. The imposition of a pre-commencement condition to secure the erection of tree protective fencing is required to ensure that existing trees on site are protected during the demolition and construction phases of the development.

19. The development hereby permitted shall be implemented in accordance with the Landscape Maintenance and Management Plan, Studio Loci, dated April 2024 and Drawing Nos. SUR001-LOC-ZZ-00-DR-L-03024 rev F Landscape Planting Plan dated 18 April 2024 and SUR001-LOC-ZZ-00-DR-L-03026 rev A Soil Plan dated 17 April 2024. The permitted landscape planting scheme shall be implemented in the first available planting season following the substantial completion of the development and retained as such thereafter.

#### **Reason**

To ensure that the development is visually attractive as a result of appropriate and effective landscaping, sympathetic to the Borough's landscape setting and contributes to and enhances the public realm in accordance with paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 and Policy EE1 of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan 2020.

#### **Ecology**

20. **Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted**, including demolition works, a detailed Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) for both the on-site, and off-site habitats at Almnerns Farm Smallholding, 110 Almnerns Road, Lyne, Surrey shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. The LEMP shall include:
- a) habitat specifications (planting lists) and precise management prescriptions demonstrating how habitats will reach 'good' condition.
  - b) clear referencing of the condition criteria for each habitat.
  - c) an updated habitat baseline for Almnerns Farm as the number of hedgerows in the off-site mitigation area is inconsistent between the Biodiversity Metric 4.0 - Calculation Tool v3 dated 23 September 2024 and the Biodiversity Net Gain Baseline Report for Almnerns Farm Smallholding V1, AIDash, dated 16 August 2024.
  - d) details of the management and maintenance of the proposed off-site provisions for a 30 year period.

The development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

**Reason**

To ensure that the benefits of the proposed planting scheme are realised, compensation for the loss of biodiversity on-site is provided, net-gains for biodiversity are delivered and habitats are maintained in accordance with paragraph 186 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 and Policies SD7 and EE9 of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan 2020. The imposition of a pre-commencement condition for a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan is recommended by the County Ecology Officer to ensure the delivery of the new planting on and off-site to the required standard, the achievement of an overall net-gain in biodiversity and provision for the long-term management and maintenance of the new habitat.

**Flooding and Sustainable Drainage**

21. Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted, the drainage system shall be installed in accordance with the approved Sustainable Drainage Strategy Report, Issue P02, Pick Everard dated 29 September 2023 including the measures stipulated in Section 4.4 to avoid damage to trees on site when undertaking excavation work beneath the crown spread of any trees.

**Reason**

To enable the County Planning Authority to exercise planning control over the development, ensure the development does not increase flood risk elsewhere and that flood risk is managed over the lifetime of the development in accordance with paragraph 165 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 and Policy EE13 of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan 2020.

**Archaeology**

22. **Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted**, including demolition works, a Written Scheme of Investigation shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. The development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

**Reason**

To prevent loss or damage of any buried archaeological remains in accordance with Policy EE7 of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan 2020. The imposition of a pre-commencement condition for a Written Scheme of Investigation is recommended by the County Archaeological Officer to ensure there would be no significant adverse impact on built heritage of special interest.

**Informatives**

1. The permission hereby granted shall not be construed as authority to carry out any works (including Stats connections/diversions required by the development itself or the associated highway works) on the highway or any works that may affect a drainage channel/culvert or water course. The applicant is advised that a permit and, potentially, a Section 278 agreement must 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 (including Stats connections/diversions required by the development itself or the associated highway works) on the highway will require a permit and an application will need to be submitted to the 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/permits-and-licences/traffic-management-permit-scheme>. The applicant is also advised that Consent may be

required under Section 23 of the Land Drainage Act 1991. Please see [www.surreycc.gov.uk/people-and-community/emergency-planning-and-community-safety/flooding-advice](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/people-and-community/emergency-planning-and-community-safety/flooding-advice).

2. 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.
3. The developer is reminded that it is an offence to allow materials to be carried from the site and deposited on or damage the highway from uncleaned wheels or badly loaded vehicles. The County Highway Authority will seek, wherever possible, to recover any expenses incurred in clearing, cleaning or repairing highway surfaces and prosecute persistent offenders. (Highways Act 1980 Sections 131, 148, 149).
4. It is the responsibility of the developer to ensure that the electricity supply is sufficient to meet future demands and that any power balancing technology is in place if required. Electric Vehicle Charging Points shall be provided in accordance with the Surrey County Council [Electric Vehicle and Cycle Parking Guidance for New Development, Surrey County Council, February 2023](#). Where undercover parking areas (multi-storey car parks, basement or undercroft parking) are proposed, the developer and Local Planning Authority should liaise with Building Control Teams and the Local Fire Service to understand any additional requirements. If an active connection costs on average more than £3,600 to install, the developer must provide cabling (defined as a 'cabled route' within the 2022 Building Regulations) and two formal quotes from the distribution network operator showing this.
5. The developer is expected to ensure the safe operation of all construction traffic to prevent unnecessary disturbance, obstruction and inconvenience to other highway users. Care should be taken to ensure that the waiting, parking, loading and unloading of construction vehicles does not hinder the free flow of any carriageway, footway, bridleway, footpath, cycle route, right of way or private driveway or entrance. The developer is also expected to require their contractors to sign up to the "Considerate Constructors Scheme" Code of Practice, ([www.ccscheme.org.uk](http://www.ccscheme.org.uk)) and to follow this throughout the period of construction within the site and adjacent areas such as the adjoining public highway and other areas of public realm.
6. If proposed works result in infiltration of surface water to ground within a Source Protection Zone the Environment Agency will require proof of surface water treatment to achieve water quality standards.
7. Where the developer proposes to discharge to a public sewer, prior approval from Thames Water Developer Services will be required. Please refer to Thames Water's website should you require further information.  
<https://www.thameswater.co.uk/developers/larger-scale-developments/planning-your-development/workingnear-our-pipes>
8. The proposed development is located within 20m of a Thames Water Sewage Pumping Station and this is contrary to best practice set out in Codes for Adoption (<https://www.thameswater.co.uk/developers/larger-scale-developments/sewers-and-wastewater/adopting-asewer>). Future occupiers of the development should be made aware that they could periodically experience adverse amenity impacts from the pumping station in the form of odour; light; vibration and/or noise.

9. The applicant is reminded that, under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended (Section 1), it is an offence to remove, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or is being built. Planning consent for a development does not provide a defence against prosecution under this Act.
10. All of the proposed arboricultural works and mitigation shall be in accordance with British Standards 3998:2010 and 5837:2012.
11. Where new trees are to be supplied with a distinct crown, the supply, planting and maintenance of such trees shall be in general accordance with British Standard BS 8545:2014 Trees: From nursery to independence in the landscape - Recommendations.
12. The irrigation requirements for newly planted trees should reflect the moisture holding capacity of the soil and the guidance on watering contained in Section 11.3 and Appendix G of British Standard BS: 8545:2014.
13. Growing media used for the soft landscaping should not contain peat.
14. Procurement of planting stock is recommended from a supplier who is a member of the Plant Healthy Certification Scheme (or equivalent).
15. Biosecurity is very important to minimise the risks of pests and diseases being imported into the UK and introduced into the environment. It is recommended that all trees grown abroad, but purchased for transplanting, shall spend at least one full growing season on a UK nursery and be subjected to a pest and disease control programme. Evidence of this control programme, together with an audit trail of when imported trees entered the UK, their origin and the length of time they have been in the nursery should be requested before the commencement of any tree planting. If this information is not available, alternative tree sources should be used. The applicant is advised to consult the relevant UK Government agencies such as the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) and the Forestry Commission for current guidance, Plant Passport requirements and plant movement restrictions. Quality Assurance Schemes followed by nurseries (such as the Plant Healthy Certification Scheme) should also be investigated when researching suppliers. For larger planting schemes, the applicant may wish to consider engaging a suitably qualified professional to oversee tree / plant specification and planting.
16. The applicant's attention is drawn to the advice of the Lead Local Flood Authority who consider that as over 180 cubic metres of storage capacity would be provided overall, there would be scope to reduce the proposed discharge rate of 10l/s for the smaller rainfall events. Whilst attenuation for peak storm events cannot be increased, during the detailed design, consideration should be given to utilising a complex flow control that reduces the discharge off-site for the small rainfall events. This would enable the proposed attenuation to be maximised enabling more or the available storage to be used during more frequent smaller rainfall events.
17. The applicant's attention is drawn to the advice of the Lead Local Flood Authority who point out that including additional sustainable drainage elements such as SuDS planters and rain gardens can provide educational as well as amenity, biodiversity and water quality benefits.
18. Cadent Gas Ltd own and operate the gas infrastructure within the area of your development. There may be a legal interest (easements and other rights) in the land that restrict activity in proximity to Cadent assets in private land. The applicant must



ensure that the proposed works do not infringe on legal rights of access and or restrictive covenants that exist. If buildings or structures are proposed directly above the apparatus the development may only take place following diversion of the apparatus. The applicant should apply online to have apparatus diverted in advance of any works, by visiting [cadentgas.com/diversions](http://cadentgas.com/diversions) Prior to carrying out works, including the construction of access points, please register on [www.linessearchbeforeudig.co.uk](http://www.linessearchbeforeudig.co.uk) to submit details of the planned works for review, ensuring requirements are adhered to.

19. The attention of the applicant is drawn to the requirements of Sections 7 and 8 of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 and to Department for Children, Schools and Families Building Bulletin 102 'Designing for disabled children and children with Special Educational Needs' published in 2008 and Department of Education Building Bulletin 104 'Area guidelines for SEND and alternative provision' December 2015, or any prescribed document replacing these notes.
20. This planning permission relates only to the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and must not be taken to imply or be construed as an approval under the Building Regulations 2000 or for the purposes of any other statutory provision whatsoever.
21. In determining this application, the County Planning Authority has worked positively and proactively with the applicant by: entering into pre-application discussions; scoping of the application; assessing the proposals against relevant Development Plan policies and the National Planning Policy Framework including its associated planning practice guidance and European Regulations, providing feedback to the applicant where appropriate. Further, the County Planning Authority has: identified all material considerations; forwarded consultation responses to the applicant; considered representations from interested parties; liaised with consultees and the applicant to resolve identified issues and determined the application within the timeframe agreed with the applicant. Issues of concern have been raised with the applicant including impacts of and on flooding, landscape, residential amenity, ecology and trees and addressed through negotiation and acceptable amendments to the proposals. The applicant has also been given advance sight of the draft planning conditions. This approach has been in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 38 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023.

**Contact David Maxwell**

**Tel. no. 07814 284982**

### ***Background papers***

The deposited application documents and plans, including those amending or clarifying the proposal, and responses to consultations and representations received, as referred to in the report and included in the application file.

For this application, the deposited application documents and plans, are available to view on our [online register](#). The representations received are publicly available to view on the district/borough planning register.

The Runnymede Borough Council planning register entry for this application can be found under application reference RU.23/1759.

### ***Other documents***

The following were also referred to in the preparation of this report:

### ***Government Guidance***

[National Planning Policy Framework](#)  
[Planning Practice Guidance](#)

### ***The Development Plan***

[Runnymede 2030 Local Plan 2020](#)

### ***Other Documents***

[Runnymede Design Supplementary Planning Document, Runnymede Borough Council, July 2021](#)

[Building Bulletin 103, Area Guidelines for Mainstream Schools, Department for Education, June 2014](#)

[Vehicular, Electric Vehicle and Cycle Parking Guidance for New Developments, Surrey County Council, February 2023](#)

[Runnymede Parking Guidance Supplementary Planning Document, Runnymede Borough Council, November 2022](#)

[Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006](#)

[Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 \(as amended\)](#)

British Standard (BS): 4142:2014+A1:2019 Methods for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound, 30 June 2019

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