



# **PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT**

**TO:** Planning Committee

**BY:** Head of Development and Building Control

**DATE:** 4<sup>th</sup> August 2026

**DEVELOPMENT:** Part-demolition of existing teaching buildings, MUGAs and all-weather pitch. Construction of replacement 2-storey and 3-storey teaching buildings, flood-lit all-weather pitch and hard surfaced sports courts, with associated access, parking, landscaping and infrastructure.

**SITE:** Steyning Grammar Upper School, Shooting Field, Steyning, West Sussex, BN44 3RX

**WARD:** Steyning and Ashurst

**APPLICATION:** DC/26/0322

**APPLICANT:** **Name:** C/O Agent Mr Matthew Blythin, DHA Planning **Address:** DHA Planning, Eclipse House, Eclipse Park, Sittingbourne Road, Maidstone, Kent ME14 3EN

**REASON FOR INCLUSION ON THE AGENDA:** More than eight persons in different households have made written representations within the consultation period raising material planning considerations that are inconsistent with the recommendation of the Head of Development and Building Control.

**RECOMMENDATION:** To approve planning permission subject to appropriate conditions and completion of the necessary s106 legal agreement within 4 months of the decision of this committee, or such longer period as is required by the Director of Place acting reasonably and properly.

## **1. THE PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT**

1.1. To consider the planning application.

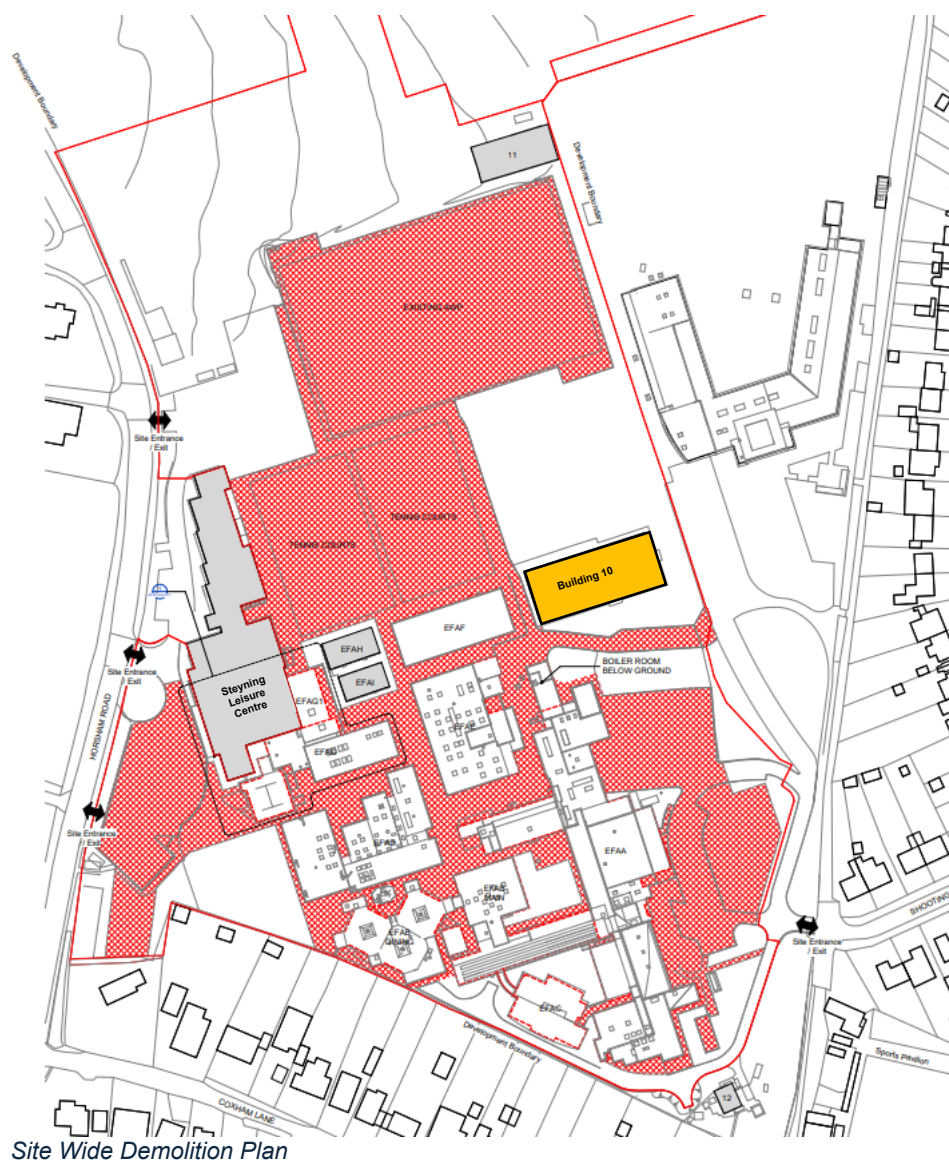
### **DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION**

1.2. The Department for Education (DfE) seeks full planning permission for the proposed redevelopment of this school site. The redevelopment forms part of the DfE's School Rebuilding Programme, having been chosen due to several of the school buildings being in a poor condition and in need of urgent replacement. The intention is for works to commence September 2026, subject to planning permission.

1.3. Steyning Grammar School accommodates pupils aged between 13 and 19 across its three campuses: Towers in Upper Beeding, Rock Road in Storrington, and the application site, Shooting Field, in Steyning. This application seeks to consolidate these three campuses into one at Shooting Field, so the Shooting Field site can accommodate all the school's pupils.

Shooting Field has been chosen due to the site capacity to host the most students, its existing school playing fields, and its connectivity on the local highway network. As consolidated, the school will have a capacity of 2,400 pupils, and 235 staff members.

- 1.4. The proposed redevelopment of the Shooting Field site comprises the part-demolition of existing teaching buildings, MUGAs and all-weather pitch, and construction of replacement 2-storey and 3-storey teaching buildings, flood-lit all-weather pitch and hard surfaced sports courts, with associated access, parking, landscaping and infrastructure.
- 1.5. The buildings that are to be demolished have a Gross Internal Floor Area (GIFA) of 9,553.9m<sup>2</sup> and comprise (as shown below):
  - Partial demolition of existing building (07 – connected to Steyning Leisure centre)
  - Full demolition of all other existing buildings, comprising main school, dining and kitchen, classrooms, wellbeing centre, science block, technology block, art block and sports block (coloured red), except for the current sixth form building (10 – coloured orange)



- 1.6. The proposed new buildings have a GIFA of 1,9776.34m<sup>2</sup> and comprise of four new buildings, as detailed and shown below:

- Building 13 – a two-story L-shaped building located to the north where the MUGAs are currently located, and containing the assembly hall, new drama studio, classrooms, staff offices, staff social area and main reception.
- Building 14 – a three-story L-shaped building located to the north of building 10 and containing the dining hall split into separate dining spaces for Key Stage 3 and 4 by double facing servery, school library, and science and English classrooms.
- Building 15 – a three-story rectangular building in the centre of the southern site area, and containing the sixth form area, including teaching and study spaces, separate dining area, common room and fitness space, and humanities classrooms.
- Building 16 – a three-story building to the east of Steyning Leisure Centre and containing the two sports halls (north hall also for exam sessions), activity studio and associated changing rooms.



*Proposed Whole Site Plan*

- 1.7. The palette of materials comprises of three shades of grey and two shades of red brick. Different accent metals for the windows and doors for each building inspired by the wider Steyning context are also proposed, comprising dark blue, rusty red, dark green, and mustard. Flat bio-solar green roofs with precast hollowcore planks are proposed for all buildings. In combination with air source heat pumps, the solar panel roofing ensures the buildings will have net zero carbon emissions and high levels of environmental sustainability in accordance with BREEAM.

- 1.8. The two existing MUGAs will be demolished and replaced with two three-pitch MUGAs, one in the centre and one in the southwest corner of the site. The existing floodlit 2G pitch will be replaced with a floodlit 2G pitch to the south. A central courtyard area will be provided between buildings 13 and 14, including a Key Stage 4 outdoor dining area and amphitheatre seating area for performance, teaching and STEM garden uses.
- 1.9. Hard and soft landscaping is proposed to limit visual impacts and enhance the site ecology. 9 trees and 3 tree groups are to be removed, with replacement planting to mitigate this loss. Mitigation and enhancement measures are proposed for invertebrates, amphibians, reptiles and birds. As a result of the above, biodiversity net gain beyond 10% will be achieved on-site (42.47% net gain in habitat units and 338.05% net gain in hedgerow units).

#### **Access**

- 1.10. The main vehicular access to the site is to be via Horsham Road to the south with an internal access road connecting to Shooting Field, controlled via gate to restrict its use. As well as staff and pupils, the Shooting Field entrance will be used for deliveries, pedestrian and cycle access to the school site, and available for community access during evenings and the weekend. An additional 60 car parking spaces are proposed for the school, resulting in an overall parking provision of 173 spaces, including nine accessible bays. These spaces will be for the use of staff, sixth form pupils and visitors during school hours and for community use during evenings and weekends. 18 of the spaces will be provided with 'active' Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points and 35 will be provided with 'passive' provision as future demand increases. A total of 138 on-site cycle parking spaces are proposed (120 for pupils, ten for staff and eight for visitors).
- 1.11. No changes are proposed to the existing Steyning Leisure Centre building. The Leisure Centre will be provided with a new car park in the location of the existing coach drop-off and pick-up area. This car park will contain 52 spaces, four of which will be accessible bays, with 6 minibus spaces proposed south of the car park. A new dedicated single access coach pick-up and drop-off facility is proposed by the Horsham Road site access, comprising 10 coach spaces and providing clearer separation from the Leisure Centre car park.
- 1.12. While the number of pupils at the Shooting Field site will increase to accommodate those from the other two campuses, there will be no overall increase in pupil attendance at Steyning Grammar school. To minimise disruption to education, the proposals to be undertaken as a phased delivery with buildings 13, 14 and 16 constructed to the north of the existing buildings on the existing 2G pitch and MUGAs. Once complete, the pupils and staff will decant from the existing buildings onsite and at the Tower. Then the existing buildings will be demolished and building 15, the replacement 3G pitch and MUGAs will be constructed. Following completion, the students will decant from Rock Road, and the development will be complete.

#### **Submission Amendments:**

- 1.13. A pre-application design and review process involving the DfE and their technical advisers took place with subsequent follow-ups with your Council Officers prior to submission of the full application. In response to the statutory and non-statutory consultation comments received following submission, the application package now comprises amendments negotiated by your Officers, updated information, and clarifications of the proposed development. These include:
  - The existing all-weather 2G pitch will be replaced with a new 2G pitch as opposed to a new 3G pitch as proposed at submission. This is in response to Sport England comments on the application.
  - Submission of a Walking Route Audit (WRA) and Cycle Level of Service (CLOs) Assessment, Transport Technical Note (TTN), and Interim School Travel Plan (ISTP), with additional off-site sustainable travel improvements secured. This follows engagement by the applicant with Active Travel England and West Sussex County Council.

- Relocation of the long jump with additional tree planting to Horsham Road frontage, in response to the district landscape architect recommendations.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

- 1.14. Steyning Grammar School (Upper School campus) is in the north of Steyning village as part of a wider site shared with Steyning Leisure Centre and Steyning Church of England Primary School. The school is generally set well back from the highway behind surrounding residential properties in Shooting Field and Coxham Lane. To the west of the school site is Horsham Road. The school is accessed from the north via Brent Road and contains a mix of buildings styles, predominantly in a brick finish and including both pitched and flat roofs. There is a public footpath (PROW 2600) running along the eastern boundary of the school.
- 1.15. Except for the all-weather 2G pitch and surrounding sports fields, the application site (some 6ha) is within the Steyning Built-up Area Boundary (BuAB); this includes the school buildings, two 3 court multi-games (MUGA) pitches, car parking and associated site accesses from Horsham Road and Shooting Fields.
- 1.16. The site is some 0.2 km north of Steyning Town Centre. To the north the site is bounded by the Steyning Bypass (A283). The countryside to the west is in the South Downs National Park. An area north of the site is covered by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO/0140).
- 1.17. A tributary of the River Adur exists along the north site boundary, and an associated strip of land near the playing fields north boundary is in Flood Zone 2 and 3 (river flooding) and at risk of surface water flooding. Otherwise, the application site is in Flood Zone 1.
- 1.18. Steyning Conservation Area is some 100m southwest of the site. The closest designated heritage assets within 200m from the site are Grade II listed: Bayards about 130m west of site; Penns House about 180m southwest of the site; and Staplefields about 100m to the north of site.
- 1.19. The school uses Steyning Leisure Centre as part of a community-use agreement, and the school site is also used by the local scout group and a local youth club. Steyning Town Football Club is nearby.

## 2. INTRODUCTION

### STATUTORY BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

#### RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

The following Policies are relevant to the assessment of this application:

#### **National Planning Policy Framework**

#### **Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF 2015):**

Policy 1 - Strategic Policy: Sustainable Development  
 Policy 2 - Strategic Policy: Strategic Development  
 Policy 3 - Strategic Policy: Development Hierarchy  
 Policy 4 – Strategic Policy: Settlement Expansion  
 Policy 24 - Strategic Policy: Environmental Protection  
 Policy 25 - Strategic Policy: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character  
 Policy 30 - Protected Landscapes  
 Policy 31 - Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity  
 Policy 32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development  
 Policy 33 - Development Principles

Policy 34 - Cultural and Heritage Assets  
Policy 35 - Strategic Policy: Climate Change  
Policy 36 - Strategic Policy: Appropriate Energy Use  
Policy 37 - Sustainable Construction  
Policy 38 - Strategic Policy: Flooding  
Policy 39 - Strategic Policy: Infrastructure Provision  
Policy 40 - Sustainable Transport  
Policy 41 - Parking  
Policy 42 - Strategic Policy: Inclusive Communities  
Policy 43 - Community Facilities, Leisure and Recreation

**Steyping Neighbourhood Development Plan (2019 – 2031):**

Policy SNDP1 – Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity  
Policy SNDP2 – Responsible Environmental Design  
Policy SNDP3 – Contribution to Character  
Policy SNDP4 – Improving our Facilities

**Horsham District Local Plan (2023-40) (Regulation 19):**

Strategic Policy 1: Sustainable Development  
Strategic Policy 2: Development Hierarchy  
Strategic Policy 6: Climate Change  
Strategic Policy 7: Appropriate Energy Use  
Strategic Policy 8: Sustainable Design and Construction  
Strategic Policy 9: Water Neutrality  
Strategic Policy 10: Flooding  
Strategic Policy 11: Environmental Protection  
Strategic Policy 12: Air Quality  
Strategic Policy 13: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character  
Strategic Policy 14: Countryside Protection  
Strategic Policy 16: protected Landscapes  
Strategic Policy 17: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity  
Policy 18: Local Green Space  
Strategic Policy 19: Development Quality  
Strategic Policy 20: Development Principles  
Policy 21: Heritage Assets and Managing Change within the Historic Environment  
Strategic Policy 23: Infrastructure Provision  
Strategic Policy 24: Sustainable Transport  
Policy 25: Parking  
Strategic Policy 27: Inclusive Communities, Health and Wellbeing  
Policy 28: Community Facilities, Leisure and Recreation  
Strategic Policy 29: New Employment

**West Sussex Joint Minerals Local Plan (July 2018)**

**West Sussex Waste Local Plan (2014)**

**South Downs Local Plan (Adopted 2 July 2019 (2014-33))**

Strategic Policy SD4: Landscape Character  
Strategic Policy SD6: Safeguarding Views  
Strategic Policy SD8: Dark Night Skies

Supplementary Planning Guidance:

Planning Obligations and Affordable Housing SPD (2017)  
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule (2017)  
Air Quality and Emissions Mitigation Guidance for Sussex (2020)  
Parking Standards and Transport Contributions Methodology (WSCC 2020)

#### Other Guidance and Planning Advice Notes:

#### **2011 DCLG Policy Statement on Planning for Schools Development**

This national planning policy on schools does not form part of the development plan but helps guide decision-makers and should be read alongside the National Planning Policy Framework. In general terms it seeks to allow schools to expand, adapt and improve their facilities. It states

- *There should be a presumption in favour of the development of state-funded schools, as expressed in the National Planning Policy Framework;*
- *Local authorities should give full weight and thorough consideration to the importance of enabling the development of state-funded school in their planning decisions and*
- *Local authorities should make full use of their planning powers to support state-funded schools applications.*

HDC Sports, Open Space and Recreation Assessment (2014)

HDC Open Space, Sport & Recreation Review (2021)

HDC Playing Pitch Strategy Document FINAL May 2019

HDC Steyning Character Assessment (2019)

HDC Planning Advice Note: Biodiversity and Green infrastructure (2022)

HDC Planning Advice Note: Shaping Development in Horsham District (2025)

Air Quality and Emissions Mitigation Guidance for Sussex (2020)

Steyning Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (HDC, Jan 2018)

The South Downs National Park: View Characterisation and Analysis (LUC, November 2015)

South Downs Partnership Management Plan 2026 - 2031

Sport England Playing Fields Policy and Guidance Document (June 2019 updated April 2024)

Sports England New Playing Fields Planning Guidance (March 2018 updated December 2021)

#### **PLANNING HISTORY**

|                             |                                                                                                                                      |                                         |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| NC/19/0023<br>(WSCC/033/19) | Construction of new single storey replacement teaching building and the demolition of 10 existing temporary teaching buildings.      | Permitted<br>9 <sup>th</sup> May 2019   |
| DC/416/06(ST)               | Proposed artificial turf pitch (ATP) with column mounted floodlighting and fenced enclosure together with associated external works. | Permitted<br>15 <sup>th</sup> June 2006 |

### **3. OUTCOME OF CONSULTATIONS**

- 3.1. Where consultation responses and representations have been summarised, it should be noted that Officers have had consideration of the full comments received, which are available to view on the public file at [horsham.gov.uk/planning/planning-applications/view-and-comment-on-planning-applications](https://horsham.gov.uk/planning/planning-applications/view-and-comment-on-planning-applications).

#### **INTERNAL CONSULTATIONS**

- 3.2. **HDC Tree Officer:** No Objection  
[Summary] No significant arboricultural concerns.
- 3.3. **HDC Biodiversity Net Gain Officer:** No Objection  
[Summary] Outstanding concerns addressed upon submission of Biodiversity Gain Plan.
- 3.4. **HDC Conservation:** No Objection

[Summary] Within wider setting of Bayards but due to adjoining topography and land uses would not result in harm.

3.5. **HDC Environmental Health:** Advice

[Summary] Noise / Lighting / Construction Phase: Comments from agent accepted and recommend conditions.  
Air Quality: No Objection.

3.6. **HDC Landscape Architect:** Comment

[Summary] Satisfied proposals will not give rise to unacceptable landscape and visual effects provided embedded mitigation measures proposals implemented in addition to recommendations being secured.

3.7. **HDC Leisure, Parks and Communities:** No Objection

[Summary] Across the district there is deficiency in 3G pitches but would not support the loss of a 2G pitch that is in use by groups that require this surface to achieve this. Whilst it would be preferable for a hockey pitch to remain available at Steyning throughout the build, given the scale of this rebuilding project and major reconfiguration of the site it is not reasonable to object on these grounds. Support continued engagement to secure community use arrangements for the new leisure facilities the school is building, and to ensure the impact on Steyning Leisure Centre's service offer and user experience is minimised throughout the project.

3.8. **HDC Waste:** No Objection

OUTSIDE AGENCIES

3.9. **Active Travel England:** Support

[Summary] Recommend approval subject to conditions and obligations

3.10. **Archaeology Consultant:** Comment

[Summary] Conditions recommended to secure archaeological investigations and subsequent mitigation

3.11. **Ecology Consultant:** No Objection

[Summary] Subject to conditions

3.12. **NatureSpace Newt Officer:** Comment

[Summary] Satisfied. Recommend CEMP secured.

3.13. **South Downs National Park Authority:** Comment

[Summary] Care be taken to ensure development is not materially more prominent in views from National Park than school currently is. Recommend sensitive approach to lighting.

3.14. **Southern Water:** Comment

[Summary] Reference Southern Water's "A Guide to Tree Planting near water Mains and Sewers".

3.15. **Sport England:** Objection

[Summary] Maintain Objection.

Welcome amendments to secure replacement hockey facilities and lighting as well as security of access/use through a community use agreement. Welcome efforts the agent has undertaken to source alternative playing provision for both hockey clubs during the construction period, even though currently without confirmation that such alternative provision is in place at this time.

Considering this, wish to maintain objection to the application. This is on the basis that it is considered this element of the proposal is capable of meeting some, but not all, parts of the E4 exception in our playing fields policy and paragraph 104 of the NPPF.

E4 exception states: The area of playing field to be lost as a result of the proposed development will be replaced, prior to the commencement of development, by a new area of playing field:

- of equivalent or better quality, and
- of equivalent or greater quantity, and
- in a suitable location, and
- subject to equivalent or better accessibility and management arrangements.

Satisfied the criteria in relation to the qualitative; quantitative; location and accessibility elements of the exception are met, however, the replacement provision cannot be implemented prior to the loss of the existing facility; and the proposed phasing represents a significant risk to the future sustainability of the hockey clubs. Can be flexible over the phasing, but do need certainty that suitable alternative provision is in place to support the clubs over such an extended period of time.

Should the local planning authority be minded to approve the application despite Sport England's objection, then ask following conditions are attached:

- i) Prior to commencement of development on the existing hockey artificial grass pitch (AGP), a temporary hockey impact mitigation scheme be approved;
- ii) Use of the development not commence until a community use agreement approved;
- iii) No development of replacement AGP commence until details of design and layout of replacement AGP.

3.16. **Sussex Police:** No concerns or comments.

3.17. **WSCC Education:** Support

3.18. **WSCC Highways:** No Objection / Comment  
[Summary] Subject to planning conditions.

3.19. **WSCC Lead Local Flood Authority:** No Objection  
[Summary] Subject to conditions

3.20. **WSCC Minerals and Waste:** No Comment.

3.21. **WSCC Rights of Way:** No Objection.

3.22. **WSCC Fire & Rescue:** No Objection.

## PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS

### Representations:

3.23. 38 no. representations have been received from 28 no. addresses (23 no. in objection (10 of which are from outside of the district), 3 no. in Support, and 2 no. commenting), including on behalf of Southwick Hockey Club and South Downs Hockey Club. The reasons for Objecting and the comments are as follows:

### Loss of 2G pitch

- The existing 2G pitch is a valuable community all weather sports facility for hockey, netball, tennis, rugby and football and its loss would have a significant impact to the local community, the school, and the mental and physical health and wellbeing of all those who currently use it.

- Drawings incorrectly label 3G pitch as multi-sport. The replacement 3G pitch is inadequate and would be unsuitable for the above sports.
- There are very few suitable pitches in the wider locality to accommodate hockey matches and the loss of this one would have immediate effects to four established hockey teams.
- There is a four year gap between the loss of the 2G pitch and provision of the new 3G pitch. This temporary period of time without a pitch is significant and would impact many local sports teams, as well as the school.
- The loss of the 2G pitch fails Sport England's Playing Fields Policy, including Exceptions 1, 3 and 4.
- The proposal directly contradicts the district's strategic assessment of need as outlined in Horsham's Local Playing Pitch Strategy 2018-2031.
- Request retention of pitch/like for like or improved provision without a 4 year gap.
- The current 2G pitch is still in good condition and needs no immediate replacement of the surface to continue being used, therefore suggest retaining 2G pitch and building 3G pitch in northern field/away from neighbouring residents.

#### Environmental impacts

- 3G pitches introduce microplastics contamination risks and chemical leachates from rubber infill, which the European Commission has banned from 2031 and restricted the sale of intentionally added microplastics, including rubber crumb infill used in 3G pitches. A 3G is not a sustainable or resilient choice and will impact local environment through contamination.
- Long term inspections and health checks of the trees and hedges should also be implemented and made publicly available so that trees don't deteriorate in the years that follow the project.
- There is a substantial (>100) colony of nesting herring gulls on the roofs of the existing premises. These birds are a persistent noise and nuisance. Given that herring gulls are protected, it is unclear how this will be managed and mitigated.

#### Noise and light pollution

- Environmental Noise Impact Assessment does not sufficiently consider noise impacts outside school hours on weekdays and weekends and disturbance to residential amenity Increase noise and pollution from increased traffic from increased car based trips.
- Inaccuracies in the External Lighting Strategy Report and drawings, including incorrect zone for assessment and insufficient consideration and mitigation of light pollution and light spill to neighbouring residents.
- Request light spill visors specification.
- The lighting design levels will alter and impact the rural character of the site and the design should be to E2 category not E3.

#### Impact to residential amenity

- Impact to residential amenity, including lighting, loss of privacy and noise.
- Request higher fencing to prevent balls going over the top into neighbouring residents' gardens.
- Request additional landscape planting to mitigate light spill and noise pollution along the southern and eastern boundaries of the application site.
- Request acoustic fencing be extended at least to the south-eastern corner of Block 15 to mitigate impact to residents in Coxham Lane.
- The access road to the school car park passes less than 10m to the rear of the gardens and provides a direct vehicle link to Shooting Field. This will disturb residents through noise, light and pollution.
- Introducing a no-dig road is referred to on the drawings, but this will mean raising the height of the current ground levels (as they can't be dug in). This will further affect the privacy into residents' gardens.

#### Highway, traffic and access

- Increased risk to highway users' safety with proposed new main site access.
- There will be increased traffic and parking issues.
- Measures should be introduced to prevent vehicles cutting through to avoid the High Street and the A283 junctions.
- The proposed design of the driveway and the finished ground levels to the rear of our boundaries should be made available and subject to a planning condition so they are controlled.
- The operation of the internal road gate, closure and 'curfew' hours should be covered by a Planning Condition to ensure that the site in future and at all times is operated in accordance with the proposal and so the route does not become a link / transit from Horsham Road to Shooting Field outside of the specific hours of the site operation

#### Design

- Poor design with 13m high buildings sited close to site boundary and would result in loss of privacy to neighbouring, and not sympathetic with edge of settlement and edge of South Downs site location.

#### Other

- Steyning Athletic Club have not been consulted.

### 3.24. Support on the following grounds:

#### Highway Improvements

- The change in the main entrance to the school to the Horsham Roadside of the site is logical, subject to sufficient measures to ensure highway safety is maintained and planning condition to ensure gate prevents onsite road from becoming a cut through,
- Creating a new safe cycling and walking route for students and the public from the Football Club entrance to the site to the Leisure Centre is supported and should be open as much as possible subject to school security (see Priority 2.1 in the Local Walking & Cycling Plan for Steyning, Bramber and Beeding)
- Request introducing comprehensive traffic calming measures on the Horsham Road, so this becomes a safe route for walking and cycling. This is vital to the success of the new school development. (see Priority 3.1 in the Local Walking & Cycling Plan for Steyning, Bramber and Beeding))

#### Community use

- Dual use of the Sports Hall and Swimming Pool on the school site has been a major benefit to the local community. The continuation of this is welcomed subject to planning conditions limiting hours of use and lighting to mitigate impacts to neighbours.

### 3.25. Parish Comments:

#### **Steyning Parish Council:** No Objection

[Summary May 2026] Support amended plan and inclusion of 2G all-weather pitch.

[Summary April 2026] Objection – concerned about loss of sports amenity, namely AstroTurf pitch, and apparent divergence in terms of proposed future community use management between School and adjacent Sports Centre, which removes use of sports hall amenity from the sports centre control and places it under School lettings which may render the sports centre unviable with loss of amenity (swimming pool).

Propose an astroturf or equivalent pitch be incorporated into plans (using part of existing and extensive grass playing area, even if installation initially unfunded, whilst SPC pursues potential match funding options through Sport England), and that SPC be part of conversation concerning Community Use Agreement.

Propose West Sussex County Council explore options for reprofiling of road layout adjacent to new main school access on Horsham Road to improve pedestrian safety (there will be considerably more pupils using very narrow pathway next to very busy road) and moving bus

stops to again deal with safety concerns. With consideration of traffic management measures.

3.26. Member Comments:

Councillor Finnegan:

03/04/2026: Scheme in general is excellent and single site school with improved academic environment and some sports facilities is really welcomed. Sustainability aspect of these new buildings is also exemplary. However, concerned about consistency with HDC Playing Pitch Strategy and Sport England recommendations as application involves removal of astro pitch - so removing outdoor hockey as a much-needed sport offering. Feel that there should be a way for hockey to still be offered at school and community (such as better drainage for grass rugby pitches thus retaining an astro). Loss of astro would be detrimental to hockey in the south of our district. Also concerned about safety of pedestrians walking on pavement on Horsham Road as it is extremely narrow. A wider footpath and lights alternating single lane traffic could alleviate this. Would like further discussions held with Steyning PC as a major stakeholder of the leisure centre to ensure a clear strategy discussed/agreed in parallel regarding community use.

24/06/2026: Still concerned about students walking on Horsham Road - it gets very narrow. Hedge thinning would help but not solve the issue.

4. **HOW THE PROPOSED COURSE OF ACTION WILL PROMOTE HUMAN RIGHTS**

- 4.1. The application has been considered having regard to Article 1 of the First Protocol of the Human Rights Act 1998, which sets out a person's rights to the peaceful enjoyment of property and Article 8 of the same Act, which sets out their rights in respect to private and family life and for the home. Officers consider that the proposal would not be contrary to the provisions of the above Articles.
- 4.2. The application has also been considered in accordance with Horsham District Council's public sector equality duty, which seeks to prevent unlawful discrimination, to promote equality of opportunity and to foster good relations between people in a diverse community, in accordance with Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. In this case, the proposal is not anticipated to have any potential impact from an equality perspective.

5. **HOW THE PROPOSAL WILL HELP TO REDUCE CRIME AND DISORDER**

- 5.1. It is not considered that the development would be likely to have any significant impact on crime and disorder.

6. **PLANNING ASSESSMENT**

**Main Material Considerations**

- 6.1. The main considerations in relation to this application are its:
- Acceptability in principle; and
  - Acceptability in terms of design and impact upon local environment; and
  - Potential impact upon local amenity; and
  - Safe vehicular and pedestrian access to the site and impact on the highway network; and
  - Drainage/flooding and ecology interests.

**Principle of Development**

- 6.2. The provisions of Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) Policies 42 and 43 are relevant to this application. Policy 43 supports provision of new or improved community facilities, where particularly where they meet the identified needs of local communities as

indicated in relevant studies. Steyning Neighbourhood Development Plan (SDNP) Policy SNDP4 supports development proposals which provide improved essential infrastructure to serve the community.

- 6.3. Paragraph 100a of the national planning policy (the NPPF) instructs decision-makers to give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools and post-16 facilities through decisions on planning applications.
- 6.4. The Planning School Places 2025 document prepared by West Sussex County Council indicates that in recent years Steyning Grammar School has been operating either close to or over full capacity. Additionally, the document notes that the pupil population across the district (and therefore at Steyning Grammar School) will increase, based on the housing allocations in the adopted and emerging Local Plan. There is clearly a need to ensure that pupil capacity is not reduced at the school. The proposals would ensure the consolidation and improvement of accommodation of an appropriate standard and the evidenced capacity need for school pupils.
- 6.5. The north end of site is located outside of Steyning Built Up Area Boundary (BUAB) where development is more tightly controlled. HDPF Policy 26 states that outside BUAB's, the rural character and undeveloped nature of the countryside will be protected against inappropriate development, with regard given to scale and activity level of a development. Policy 43(2) specifically supports the development of new facilities located outside BUABs where the location is practicable and relates well to an existing settlement.
- 6.6. In the proposed site redevelopment, the northern end of the site is put over to sport provision well-related to the redeveloped school buildings, the built form of which is focused to the southern end of the site in proximity to the built-up area of Steyning, immediately to the south and east and in an area with moderate levels of movement and activity. As such, whilst proposals do extend the built form of the school north of the Steyning BUAB there is judged compliance with HDPF Policy 26 and 43(2) as the site is not an unsuitable location for the proposed facilities, and the intention to consolidate the three school campuses would naturally (for practical and sustainable purposes) require the facilities, which are for the primary benefit the pupils of the school, to be located within the school grounds.

#### Sports provision at the Shooting Field school site.

- 6.7. Part of the proposed development is to be on land currently used as informally marked out grass playing pitches, whilst the proposals (as amended) seek to re-provide the 2G artificial pitch on another part of the site, albeit with approximately 4 years between the loss of the existing artificial pitch and the completion of the new. NPPF Paragraph 104 states that sports land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:
  - a) they have been assessed as being surplus to requirements; or
  - b) they would be replaced by equivalent or better provision, in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
  - c) the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the need for which would clearly outweigh the loss.
- 6.8. Several representations have raised concern at the loss of the existing artificial pitch on the site. The sports provision at Shooting Field School site is first and foremost a school facility and must best meet their needs for recreational use, PE and school matches. The School has agreed temporary use of the adjacent Steyning Football Club pitch during construction to help meet their own need. The existing artificial pitch at the School site is hired by 2 x local hockey clubs - Southwick Hockey Club and South Downs Hockey Club - as their home pitch, where the clubs also have access to the school changing rooms. How each club operates is set out below (as per each club website).

*Southwick Hockey Club (SHC):*

- 6.9. SHC functions with two men's teams and two women's teams. The club train once a week during the season (from September to March/April) and league matches are played on a Saturday. Training is held on a Thursday, 7-8pm for women and 8-9pm for men. SHC moved to Steyning when their home pitch at Shoreham Academy was changed to a 3G pitch, moving to Portslade and then Steyning. SHC is affiliated to England Hockey and play in the Southeast Area (Marlets) division.

*South Downs Hockey Club (SDHC):*

- 6.10. SDHC functions with two competitive women's teams, and a mixed adult social team. The club train twice a week during the season and league matches are played on a Saturday. Training is held on a Wednesday evening from 7pm-8pm for women. Training takes place at Lancing College and home matches are played in Steyning. SDHC is affiliated to England Hockey and play in the Southeast Area (Marlets) division.
- 6.11. The Horsham District playing pitch strategy (2019) is out of date now but that does not distract from the fact that the Shooting Field school site is used for community sport by these two community hockey clubs.
- 6.12. In accordance with the NPPF, Sport England has a statutory responsibility to ensure development does not lead to the loss of any land used as playing fields, and if it does will only be acceptable if it falls within one of its five exceptions categories. Having reviewed the proposals, Sport England confirm in their view, the proposal does not meet the below exception test of the Sport England Playing Fields Policy (E5) and, in their judgement, paragraph 104 of the NPPF.

*E5 - The proposed development is for an indoor or outdoor facility for sport, the provision of which would be of sufficient benefit to the development of sport as to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss, or prejudice to the use, of the area of playing field.*

- 6.13. Sport England, in summary, have advised a proposal that involves the loss of any hockey capacity at the school, would be unacceptable unless full compensatory mitigation is identified and fully secured in advance of any loss of existing facilities in accordance with their policy. It has further added that there is no evidence to suggest that additional sports hall space as proposed would outweigh the harm caused by the loss.

*The Proposal and its Impact on the playing field.*

- 6.14. The existing playing field on the Shooting Field school site comprises two separate areas of playing field. The northernmost playing field accommodates athletics including a 400m running track; an artificial cricket wicket; mini-soccer and junior football pitches and rugby pitches. The southernmost playing field comprises a fine turf cricket pitch; rugby and football pitches; an artificial hockey pitch; as well as 2no. 3-court hardsurface MUGAs.
- 6.15. From a sporting perspective, the proposal, as it was originally submitted, would have resulted in the loss of the sand-based artificial hockey pitch; and playing field area on the southernmost section; the replacement of the 2no. MUGAs; provision of a new 3G rubber crumb Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) with sports lighting and additional sports hall provision (2no. four-court sports halls).

*Amended Proposals*

- 6.16. Your Officers and the applicant have sought to address the concerns raised by Sport England, these being the proposed all-weather artificial pitch surface; resultant loss of hockey capacity; and loss of playing field/natural turf pitches. Taking each in turn, below.

*Loss of pitches:*

6.17. Sport England queried why the development would not be able to accommodate a rugby pitch in the existing location, and size of buffer for the cricket square. As the applicant has now demonstrated in the proposed Winter/Summer Sport Provision plans, the development would still be able to accommodate a rugby pitch, albeit in a new location on the north playing field. There has simply been reconfiguration of pitch locations to accommodate the full existing winter sports provision. In respect to cricket, the school has confirmed that the cricket pitch is used for school practice only, and that 3no. wickets is sufficient to meet their needs, replacing the existing cricket offering on site. The cricket square will have a 45.75m outfield which is the minimum required for senior cricket. Considering the above and accounting for the two fields on the school site, there is no loss of pitches as a result of the proposed development.

6.18. In response, Sport England notes the proposed pitch layouts and the relocation of the rugby pitch to the north site to ensure that there is no net loss of pitch provision. Sport England welcomes further consideration on the proposed cricket offer, but notes the pitch and boundaries still look extremely tight with little run/off area and question the usefulness of a 3no. wicket natural turf pitch. Your Officers note these are advisory comments by Sport England; the school has confirmed the cricket offer satisfies their needs and is exclusive to their use. Your Officers also note the English Cricket Board has raised no comment in consultation by Sport England.

*All weather artificial (hockey) pitch surface:*

6.19. The proposals have been amended to provide a hockey compliant 2G artificial surface (Gen2 sand dressed surface) instead of a 3G rubber crumb football compliant artificial surface as originally proposed (which is limited to football and rugby and not suitable for hockey). The proposed lighting levels have been reviewed, and it is proposed to provide the flood lighting at 350 lux level. The necessary light spill modelling has been undertaken, which confirms that even with this increase in lux levels, the light spill impact on neighbouring occupiers will remain minimal with a minimum average value of 0.71lux. The facilities and furniture currently available for the existing all-weather pitch will be reused (as requested by England Hockey).

6.20. In response to this, Sport England confirms that England Hockey (EH) is satisfied that a 2G sand-based Gen2 pitch is suitable for the level at which the hockey clubs play. This will provide the school with a multi-sport surface and so offers greater flexibility for different sports, maximising the use of the pitch. In relation to sports lighting, EH sets out that 350 lux level is the minimum requirement for hockey. The dimmable lights would reduce the lux levels and therefore running costs when other sports are using the pitch, so are suitable sports lighting for hockey. EH also welcomes a robust Community Use Agreement to be put in place for both community hockey clubs - Southwick HC and South Downs HC.

*(Temporary) Loss for hockey capacity:*

6.21. The applicant has responded that the construction phasing, and the proposed design of the proposals, has been carefully considered to ensure limited disruption to the operations of Steyning Grammar School, which will remain open and operational whilst the new school is built. They acknowledge Sport England's concerns regarding the construction phasing of the proposals, which would result in a temporary period of approximately 4 years when the artificial pitch is not available for use. However, this phasing is an unavoidable result of the requirements of the wider scheme, and above all else, this is a school replacement scheme that needs to minimise disruption on school pupils and teaching. The DfE has been in direct contact with Lancing College which has two 2G sports pitches that could potentially be hired out during this temporary period. Ongoing discussions have confirmed that Lancing College could accommodate use of the pitch on select weekday evenings for training purposes (usually a Thursday). The DfE have stated that will continue to work with the clubs affected during this period to help try and find alternative provision during the build particularly for Saturday match days where currently there appears to be no local pitches available.

- 6.22. In response, Sport England and EH maintain that a 'like for like' replacement, i.e. a full-sized, hockey-compliant sand-dressed AGP must be available to the clubs prior to the loss of the existing facility. Southwick Hockey Club and South Down Hockey Club are both established clubs with strong community roots and have been identified through Hockey's Southeast Futures as priority clubs for junior development and participation growth. Removal of the home pitch without appropriate replacement during the 4 year construction phasing of the proposals would severely impact the ability of the clubs to train and host matches, and places at risk the sustainability of both clubs. Any temporary access to alternative pitches should be located within a geographically appropriate catchment to serve the affected clubs.
- 6.23. In summary on the amendments made therefore, Sport England still considers that the application, even as amended, does not address the primary issue relating to the loss of the sand-based artificial hockey pitch without compensation. Sport England maintain an objection on this basis.
- 6.24. In response, your own Officers note that this planning application seeks to demonstrate compliance with Paragraph 104(c) of the NPPF. In this context, it is important to be clear as to the policy test. As is well established through case law and appeal decisions, Paragraph 104 does not require the applicant to demonstrate that all displaced users can be accommodated within existing provision, nor does it require like-for-like replacement of a hockey facility in all circumstances. Instead, the policy allows for the loss of existing sports provision where the benefits of the development clearly outweigh the loss of the facility. This reflects the need to consider proposals in the round, having regard to both mitigation and overall planning benefits.
- 6.25. In this case, your Officers consider there are several material planning considerations to take account of, when considering the proposals for this school redevelopment. These are:
- 6.26. Firstly, the proposals include the provision of new indoor sports provision that can be used year-round by the school, as well as the wider community for hire outside of school hours, with the configuration of the sports building meaning half of the building could be opened up out of hours. This new sports hall will include 2no. 4-court halls, activity studio and associated changing facilities which can be used for a variety of sports including basketball and indoor cricket and is designed to Sport England standards. This will replace the existing 1-court gymnasium and 4-court sports hall, which has no run-off and does not meet standards. The proposals further incorporate changing facilities for both indoor and outdoor sports use. This is judged by your Officers to be a significant quantity and quality upgrade and benefit of the proposals.
- 6.27. Secondly, the sports provision at Shooting Field School site is first and foremost a school facility and must best meet their needs for recreational use, PE and school matches. The school reports that the PE department have consistently encouraged pupils to play hockey; however, the uptake has been extremely limited to none, with most pupils opting to partake in rugby and football instead. The applicant also reports interest registered with the school for a new 3G pitch, which includes Steyning Town Football Club and other local clubs. Your Officers note that the Football Foundation (FF) on behalf of the FA supported the application as originally submitted, subject to full design specifications for then proposed 3G pitch and sports lighting. As acknowledged by Sport England, the FF added that as Horsham District does not have an up-to-date Playing Pitch Strategy and, therefore, demand for 11x11 sized 3G pitches was calculated using the FA Training Ratio Model. The FF considers there is a current shortfall of 4.5no. 11v11 3G pitches in Horsham district based on their modelling. Evidently, in addressing one community sporting need, it is at the expense of others (as a rubber crumb 3G offer would also have benefited rugby).
- 6.28. Thirdly, given the Council's playing pitch strategy (2019) is out of date now and no review is imminent (and the Council's Open Space, Sport and Recreation Review (June 2021) did not update the need for 3G facilities), the proposals have been considered having regard to the

District Council's 2014 Sport, Open Space and Recreation Assessment (SOSRA), and the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy (the 'Sport Strategy') which is a 5-year development strategy published in 2016. The 2014 SOSRA undertook analysis of all existing facilities within the Horsham District and identified any deficiencies in provision. The Council's Leisure Services team is satisfied the proposed arrangements to share the facilities between the school and external groups would enable the facilities to be used to their maximum potential thereby making this a viable and sustainable proposition, resulting in a good level of public benefit. The completion of a Community Use Agreement will also provide certainty that clubs and community groups would have fair use of the new facilities.

- 6.29. Fourthly, the applicant has committed to a Community Use Agreement (CUA) in support of the planning application to secure a level of certainty to the Council and local community that the proposed facilities will be available for wider use (i.e. beyond just being used for the school's pupils and staff). Whilst precise management details are not fixed at present, a CUA would secure the principal arrangements and timetabling for community use of the facilities for local sports clubs, organisations and casual users. As the sports hall will no longer be attached to the leisure centre, it no longer makes practical sense for all lettings to be managed via the leisure centre. However, the school and the leisure centre will continue to liaise closely with one another to arrange and manage bookings for the sports hall. Submission of a completed CUA will be secured by condition (condition 17).
- 6.30. Fifthly, it is also material that the hockey clubs do not control the freehold of the site. The continued existence of the clubs are therefore not secured and subject to constraints beyond the planning process. In this context, the DfE is continuing to engage with stakeholders to a coordinated and deliverable strategy to manage access to pitches for training and seasons over the construction period for the clubs, whilst delivering on enhanced and more accessible sport provision in its place. This includes engagement with the Council's Leisure team.
- 6.31. At the time of writing, as the result of this engagement so far, Southdown HC may have secured space at a nearby school (Lancing College), as they are a much smaller club so only have limited requirements. Southwick HC continue to struggle as their number of teams and activity levels are greater, but there may need to be more flexibility on timings for training particularly. All the closer sites in Brighton, Worthing and Angmering are not proving suitable.
- 6.32. It is for that reason that the condition suggested by Sport England for a temporary hockey impact mitigation scheme to be agreed and implemented would not meet the planning tests of reasonableness to imposing a condition. The district council is currently without confirmation that alternative playing provision for both hockey clubs during the construction period will be in place at the required time so, with no known solution available for the applicant to satisfy the requirement of such condition, the Council would knowingly issue a permission that the applicant may be unable to implement if the Sport England condition was to be applied.

#### Summary on Matters of Principle

- 6.33. The proposals would provide for a range of high-quality education facilities for use by pupils, and the wider public. Subject to phased implementation and the CUA, the facilities will be capable of fulfilling the aspirations of the school to improve facilities for the benefit of their staff and pupils; as well as enabling (post completion of the site redevelopment), use by most external clubs and societies that currently use facilities within the school grounds and wider site (whilst acknowledging the 4 year loss of the 2G pitch and the community use impacts arising from this). In addition, the proposed 2G pitch which will be made available for public use, contributes to meeting a leisure need identified in the 2014 SOSRA.
- 6.34. Given these particular circumstances and whilst having regard to the Sport England Objection, taking consideration of the test of NPPF paragraph 104c); the proposed scheme's compliance with HDPF Policies 42 and 43 and SNDP Policy 4; and the instruction on local

authorities at NPPF paragraph 100a and the Ministerial Statement on Schools to ensure sufficient choice of school places be available, your Officers judge the broad principle of the school redevelopment to be acceptable, having account of the NPPF paragraph 11 presumption in favour to school expansion/improvement set out in the Ministerial Statement. This is subject to an appropriate assessment of all benefits of the development, and full consideration of the impacts of the proposals on heritage, landscape, ecology, the surrounding highway network, and neighbouring amenity as set out in the following paragraphs.

## **Landscape Impact and Design**

### Masterplan Concept

- 6.35. The NPPF and HDPF policies 32 and 33 promote development that is of a high-quality design, which amongst other things, should provide a functional and accessible environment of a scale, massing, and appearance that relates sympathetically with surroundings. SDNP Policy 3 similarly seeks development positively contributes to Steyning's character. SDNP Policy 1 supports development which protect and enhance green infrastructure.
- 6.36. The applicants have submitted a comprehensive Design and Access Statement that sets out the design parameters against which the proposed site redevelopment masterplan emerged, with consideration to the DfE requirements and other stakeholders. This includes the locations of facilities across the wider school site, having regard to usability for the community where practicable and appropriate; consideration of noise, traffic, congestion and overlooking; and taking account of the following components: built form; building line height; access and public and private space. A key issue for the school site is management of public and private space for security.
- 6.37. The existing school buildings predominately comprise brick two storey flat roofed structures that are disjointly sprawled across the site, unable to accommodate the full number of enrolled pupils, inefficiently using the space of the site, and most notably in a poor condition.
- 6.38. Four new building blocks are proposed, one 2-storey and the three 3-storey. They are flat roofed rectangular or L-shaped blocks. The design consolidates the number of buildings on site to provide sufficient accommodation for all pupils and make more efficient use of the site. The large flat-roofed, block nature of the proposed buildings are in keeping with the existing school-built form and that of Steyning Leisure Centre.
- 6.39. The new buildings will be located to the north of the existing school buildings, where the school's MUGAs and 2G pitch are currently located. This location has been largely chosen to minimise disruptions to pupils as it allows teaching to continue in the existing buildings until, they can decant into the new blocks. The blocks have been laid out around a central courtyard and the new replacement MUGAs and 2G pitch, which Officers consider creates a functional, comfortable and legible layout.
- 6.40. The most northern part of the wider school site remains as existing and dedicated to sport without the need for lighting or having an impact on the adjacent woodland which is welcomed by the Council's Landscape Architect. 2.7m high acoustic fencing is proposed along the west boundary of the all-weather pitch and up against an internal access road; the spec/appearance of the acoustic fence is acceptable to the Council's Landscape Architect. Once the landscape detailed scheme is finalised, the necessary Landscape Management and Monitoring Plan secured by condition be reviewed, with clear indication of maintenance responsibilities. This is particularly relevant around the leisure centre.

### Landscape Character and Visual Impact

- 6.41. The applicant's own Landscape and Visual Appraisal supports the application, and has considered the likely effects of the proposed redevelopment, establishing the baseline, identifying landscape and visual receptors, and assessing effects with embedded mitigation. Upon review, the methodology applied to the appraisal and the conclusions of the report are generally concurred with by the Council's Landscape Architect.
- 6.42. Landscape effects are concluded to be principally localised. The greatest change is confined to the site where new built form extends further north while remaining inset from the A283 bypass. At the site scale this is judged as a moderate/minor neutral effect, reflecting a balance between slight increases in perceptible built extent and improvements to frontage and materiality of the existing development. For the surrounding character areas, D1 Amberley to Steyning Farmlands and J3 Arun to Adur Scarp Footslopes, the magnitude of change is low and effects are assessed as moderate/minor adverse, with the South Downs National Park experiencing a very low magnitude of change and moderate/minor adverse effect due to sensitivity rather than scale of change. Visual effects are similarly concentrated near the site.
- 6.43. Of the 20 viewpoints surveyed, the highest levels of change arise in proximity where receptors are most exposed. This includes viewpoint 2 on the approach to Steyning along Horsham Road. Elsewhere, visibility rapidly diminishes with distance, intervening vegetation and topography, and long-range elevated views from the South Downs show the site occupying a very small proportion of expansive panoramas. Overall, where effects are predicted they are generally adverse, but their geographic extent is restrained and most long-distance views are not materially affected.
- 6.44. Mitigation is integral to the scheme, including retention and reinforcement of boundary vegetation (with a tree buffer to the Steyning Bypass); sensitive massing and siting (with taller blocks kept associated with existing development); and setback of buildings to strengthen site edges and improve on-site legibility and character. These measures reduce prominence at year 1 and secure further reduction in effects over time as planting matures.
- 6.45. A key mitigation to the height of the new buildings on the approach south to Steyning along Horsham Road, is that all buildings will have flat roofs and the most northern building (13) will be two storey to provide a stepped increase in built form and massing, with the objective being to ensure building 13 is not visible above the site boundary vegetation.
- 6.46. On this point, it is noted that the applicant's appraisal concludes on viewpoint 2 that proposed buildings will be visible above hedgerows generating Moderate adverse effects in the short term, reducing to Moderate/Minor with planting (new tree planting is proposed as tree strategy mitigation). Following negotiation, the applicant has relocated the long jump within the school site to allow for additional tree planting to be delivered along Horsham Road as further mitigation to the findings of viewpoint 2, as requested by the Council's Landscape Architect. This additional mitigation, alongside the proposed material palette, green roofscapes, siting and massing of the buildings, would secure an outcome closer to minor adverse than moderate; a level that would not amount to unacceptable harm.

#### South Downs National Park setting

- 6.47. The school site lies to the east of the South Downs National Park, within the setting of this sensitive protected landscape. The District Council has a statutory duty to consider the Purposes of the National Park when making its determination and to further those purposes under the Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act 2023, these being; to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage and to promote opportunities for the public understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of their areas).
- 6.48. The proposals include floodlighting to sports pitches to which the National Park Authority encourages a sensitive approval to lighting that conforms to the recommended standards

with consideration given to the Park's Internal Dark Night Skies Reserve and dark night skies. On this, relocation of the flood-lit artificial pitch will reduce light spill currently experienced on the countryside further north. Lighting from the 2G pitch floodlights and lighting conditions to control hours of use and light spill have been addressed in the submitted Lighting Impact Report, which the district Environmental Health Officer has reviewed and is satisfied impacts relating to light spill would comply with recognised standards and be appropriately managed in the context of a E2 designation on the outskirts of Steyning (relatively dark outer suburban location).

- 6.49. With the above conclusions on lighting, and for the landscape appraisal and associated viewpoints previously explained to the resultant impacts to the South Downs landscape character area and visually, Officers are satisfied the prominence of the proposals will not result in adverse impacts to National Park setting and, based on the master planning of built form scale and mass and vegetation screening, would not be materially more prominent in views from the National Park than the existing school complex, as advised by the National Park Authority.
- 6.50. It has also therefore been evidenced that alternative provision of a floodlit artificial pitch to the northmost part of the site within the existing playing fields (as proposed by Steyning Parish Council in their comments on this application), would extend development and external lighting further into the countryside, adjacent to the National Park to the detriment of its special qualities, and was ruled out for these reasons.
- 6.51. In conclusion on matters pertaining to the National Park, it has been evidenced sufficient regard has been given to furthering the purposes of the National Park and its qualities with consideration given to relevant policies in the South Downs Local Plan (2019) and Partnership Management Plan 2026 - 31; so, the decision-making duties in regard to the national park are fulfilled.

### Trees

- 6.52. The Applicants have submitted an Arboricultural Survey and updated Arboricultural Method Statement including Tree Protection Plan (arbtech, June 2026), and Ground Level Tree Assessment (MKA Ecology Ltd., February 2026).
- 6.53. The site redevelopment would require removal of 9 trees and 3 tree/hedgerow groups, and crown lifting of large mature trees to facilitate access. These are of low / moderate quality (predominately Category C or U with 3 no. Category B) trees located where the new MUGAs and 2G pitch are proposed and /or within the proposed onsite road access to the service yard and bin store. All other trees and groups will be retained and protected during construction through tree protection fencing. There will be limited incursions into the root protection areas (RPA) of retained or neighbouring trees, and where this does occur a cellular confinement system or other no-dig engineering system shall be implemented to ensure minimal impact. This is detailed on the submitted Tree Protection Plan and in the Arboricultural Method Statement. The Council's Tree Officer has confirmed that the specialist above ground engineering proposed within the minimum recommended root protection areas of trees T36 and T37 is within the tolerance threshold (20% of unsurfaced Root protection area) designated within the BS5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – recommendations. Thereby, the Tree Officer raises no significant concerns in respect of impacts on tree rooting from the proposed no-dig construction, at the proximity proposed and the height clearance requirement that this incurs. The Leyland Cypress (T36) will require branch removal/pruning. It is unlikely that these works will lead to a rapid decline of the tree.
- 6.54. To mitigate the tree loss and enhance the ecology of the site, replacement and additional tree and hedgerow planting is proposed throughout the site, including along the west

boundary with Horsham Road and to maintain screening to adjacent properties. Imposing of conditions would ensure these outcomes.

#### Detailed Design and Appearance

- 6.55. The built character of the surrounding area is primarily residential, with an assorted mix of post war style architecture, of a mix palette of materials with primarily red or painted white brick, or part rendered or clad elevations under pitched or hipped tile roofs in the immediate site vicinity. More widely and within Steyning's conservation area, flint is also a building material.
- 6.56. The palette of materials comprises of three shades of grey (light grey – bromo homemade, dark grey – pagus grey black and extra light grey – lima) and two shades of red brick (medium red – first quality multi and dark red – selected dark). This is congruent with surrounding built character. Different accent metals for the windows and doors for each building inspired by the wider Steyning context are also proposed comprising dark blue, rusty red, dark green, and mustard. Officers consider that this will provide a high-quality design finish that is attractive and welcoming and reflects the local built character and the school's history in Steyning.
- 6.57. WSCC Fire services and HDC Waste services are satisfied with the logistics of the site layout, given the building under crofts allows for the required distances and compliance with safety requirements. Whilst the Council's Landscape Architect recommends securing a Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan, your Officers do not consider it for the district council to intervene in how school maintains its own landscaping (beyond securing the necessary planting mitigation via condition).

#### Summary on Landscape and Design

- 6.58. Overall, Officers advise that the masterplan of the site redevelopment and its detailed design are of a suitable quality to assimilate into the settlement edge context and townscape qualities, in accordance with HDPF policies 30, 32 and 33 and relevant Steyning neighbourhood plan policies. While some localised adverse effects are unavoidable, principally where new development replaces or extends beyond existing on-site elements, and provided the embedded mitigation is implemented and maintained, the wider landscape character and visual amenity harm arising would be minor / modest at most and would not have an unacceptable impact, including upon the setting of the South Downs National Park.

### **Heritage**

#### Below ground

- 6.59. The Applicant has submitted a Desk Based Assessment and Project Specification for an Archaeological Evaluation, which evidences the site has moderate potential for the prehistoric, early medieval and medieval periods, which may have been impacted by the previous site development, and recommends archaeological field evaluation. The Council's Archaeology Consultant concurs with this approach to ascertain any necessary mitigation measures and recommends condition.

#### Above ground

- 6.60. The applicant's submitted Heritage Statement evidences the nearest listed building (Bayards some 175m from the site) and its setting will not be impacted. The HDC Conservation Officer agrees that due to the adjoining topography and land uses, the proposals would not result in harm to an appreciation of its significance and raises no objection.

- 6.61. The Conservation Officer notes the inclusion of additional planting along the west site boundary with Horsham Road and as well as the staggered building heights from the north aid the transition from the rural surroundings into Steyning's Conservation Area, with no consequential harm resultant.

**Residential Amenity:**

- 6.62. HDPF Policies 32 and 33 seek to avoid unacceptable harm to the amenity of occupiers/users of nearby property and land. SNDP Policy 3 requires development to respect the amenity of properties.
- 6.63. Steyning Church of England Primary School is near east of the proposed buildings, sharing a common boundary with the application site. The applicant has modelled sunlight tracking and no loss of light throughout the year to either education buildings is identified. Given this, the proposed separation distances between buildings, boundary treatment, and noting the consistent educational uses, no adverse impacts are envisaged.
- 6.64. The site borders the rear gardens of residential dwellings along Coxham Lane to the south and Shooting Field to the east. Currently school buildings are located closest to the school boundary with the Coxham Lane dwellings. This is proposed to change to the main car parking area for the site. In the case of the Shooting Field dwelling boundaries, this is currently the school parking area which is proposed to continue in the south with the addition of the 2G pitch. In both cases, given the proposed distances of the new school buildings, impacts to residential amenity with regards to overlooking, loss of privacy or loss of light, would not be unacceptable in nature.

Construction Phase

- 6.65. The impact upon neighbouring amenity from construction and demolition activities would be temporary in nature and typical of a redevelopment scheme of this scale and kind. Subject to mitigation measures such as dust suppression and restricted hours of vehicular movements proposed as part of a Construction Environmental Management Plan, construction/demolition related activities thus unlikely to result in any unacceptable impact on amenity.

Lighting

- 6.66. Lighting from the 2G pitch floodlights and lighting conditions to control hours of use and light spill across the site redevelopment have been addressed in the submitted Lighting Impact Report (Method Consulting External Lighting Strategy Report, June 2026), which the district Environmental Health Officer (EHO) has reviewed.
- 6.67. The south and north car parks are proposed to be lit, as well as some internal circulation areas in the school campus. All lighting, other than that deemed essential lighting will be turned off between the hours of 10pm – 7am (curfew hours) and when not in use. The south MUGA will not be floodlit to minimise impact. The north MUGA will be lit but light spill would be contained by the proposed buildings, as evidenced by lux level plans accompanying the application, which detail the light spill during both pre- and post-curfew hours.
- 6.68. Column top mounted fittings to the new artificial pitch will be positioned to minimise light spill into the surrounding area and fitted with external visor accessories to control and reduce light spill. Floodlighting for the artificial pitch and MUGA are switched off between these times. The use of nationally recognised guidelines and standards (the Sport England Artificial Sports Lighting Guidelines 2021 relating to pitch installations and ILP Guidance Note 01/21) to assess light spill and impacts on neighbouring residential properties is welcomed. The lux level plans demonstrate light spill to neighbouring properties is minimal, with values of less

than 3.3lux during the pre-curfew periods, reducing to less than 0.1lux for post curfew periods. This surpasses guidance which limits 10lux pre curfew and 2lux post curfew.

- 6.69. From EHO review, the pre-curfew lighting levels if appropriately managed are not judged a concern. Given the potential E2 designation on the outskirts of Steyning (relatively dark outer suburban location) as advocated by the district EHO, the post curfew lighting levels may however be closer to acceptable lighting levels than as predicated under the current E3 designation (as advocated by the applicant). Therefore, to ensure amenities of nearby residents are protected, it is recommended the external sports facilities only be used between the following hours, outside of which all lighting and/or floodlighting introduced in support of, or associated with, the external sports facilities shall be non-illuminated and switched off:

Monday to Thursday – 09:00am to 21:00pm of the same day

Fridays – 09:00am to 22:00pm of the same day

Saturdays – 09:00am to 17:00pm of the same day

Sundays and recognised Public Holidays – 10:00am to 16:00pm of the same day

### Noise

- 6.70. The application is an established school, with a range of on-site sporting activities, so the redevelopment would not result in any change to this character. The Noise Impact Assessment provided with the planning application has assessed the impact of noise from new external planting installations and relocated sports facilities. As the final detail of the proposed plant is not known at this stage, the report adopts a precautionary approach by setting an upper noise limit that future fixed plant should not exceed in any external areas.
- 6.71. The noise impact on the neighbouring properties resultant of the relocated pitches has been fully assessed, and a 2.7-metre-high timber acoustic fence is proposed to the east of the artificial surface pitch and hours of use are to be limited. With this mitigation, the noise levels on nearby receptors are recognised acceptable threshold (the Sport England recommended limit of 50 dB). The assessment findings are not disputed by the Council's Environmental Health Officer, with resultant noise for surrounding sensitive areas that may be noticeable but would not be intrusive, and therefore acceptable.
- 6.72. Nonetheless, given the differences between the existing pitches and the proposed scheme, the redevelopment would give rise to different effects. The applicant has agreed to the Council's Environmental Health recommendation that no live or recorded amplified music or sound (including use of public address systems) be placed on the school site including the 2G pitch, unless prior agreed by the local planning authority via a scheme of noise control, would be beneficial in minimising any impacts of the proposal on the surrounding area, and is to be secured by planning condition (condition 8).

### Air Quality

- 6.73. Following negotiations, the applicant has provided an Air Quality Assessment (Rev C 10<sup>th</sup> June 2026), which includes an emissions mitigation statement alongside a damage cost calculation, with the mitigation measures for the proposed development in line with the Sussex Air (2021) Air Quality and Emissions Mitigation Guidance for Sussex. The cost of the mitigation far exceeds the damage cost, and the District Air Quality Officer accepts the conclusions of the report and the provided mitigation measures.

### Summary on Amenity

- 6.74. The Council's Environmental Health has fully reviewed this proposal, and (subject to conditions) are content with the noise mitigation proposed, as well as impact of the proposed floodlighting. Whilst the proposed development will increase the level and frequency of activity on site, no significant amenity issues that currently exist on site would be exacerbated

by the new facilities that would justify refusal of this application. With the inclusion of conditions to control hours of use of the sports pitches and the use of floodlighting, and the noise management plan, identified amenity impacts can satisfactorily be mitigated to acceptable levels. Overall, in the context of an established school, and considering the separation of the built form from neighbouring properties, potential impacts upon amenity would not be adverse and therefore consistent with HDPF Policy 33.

**Highways Impacts:**

- 6.75. The application is supported by a Transport Assessment, Travel Plan, and Construction Management Plan, all updated in the application lifetime in response to comments from the Local Highway Authority (WSCC) and Active Travel England.
- 6.76. It is evident that Steyning Grammar School has an existing significant number of pupils and staff, and resultant travel demands. Most existing pupils and staff are based at the Shooting Field campus. The proposals seek to consolidate the school's various satellite sites to a single site on the Shooting Field campus. This will increase activity at the Shooting Field site but will decrease activity at other locations.

Access

- 6.77. HDPF Policies 40 and 41 promote development that provides safe and adequate access, suitable for all users. The site currently has two large vehicular accesses onto Horsham Road and a smaller access onto Shooting Field. The proposal will retain access onto Horsham Road and reconfigure Shooting Field as entry and exit (with both the Shooting Field and Horsham Road accesses gated). This will make Horsham Road the primary vehicular access to the staff car park.
- 6.78. To support this, the Horsham Road accesses will be reduced in size to create two more clearly defined accesses. The northern access will provide access to a separate visitor and coach parking area to the northwest of the new school blocks near to the proposed school reception at Block 13. This will also provide parking for community use of the school fields. The southern Horsham Road access will be modified into a more standard bell mouth and provide access to the Leisure Centre parking, school mini-bus parking, and the link road to the main school car parking which connects to the Shooting Field exit. Tracking has been provided for typical, regular delivery vehicles to the leisure centre. These drawings demonstrate an ability for these vehicles to turn within the site. No dedicated drop-off and pick-up area is included in the proposed development as per existing arrangements; such activity would continue informally on-street in and around the existing school site.
- 6.79. The submission drawings include swept path analysis for the new access arrangements and demonstrate larger vehicles, including service vehicles for the school and leisure centre, can safely enter and exit the site. At LHA request, a Stage One Road Safety Audit has now been provided. This raises several problems all of which have been positively addressed by the Designer. There remains a need for the RSA Response to be agreed but this can be done directly between the Designer and the LHA.
- 6.80. Both accesses will continue to offer pedestrian and cycling access. Primary access for walking and cycling is from Shooting Field to the east via existing residential roads that all have footways. These are residential roads with 30mph speed limits so can support on-carriageway cycling. Pedestrian access is possible from Horsham Road, but the existing footway is narrow and there is limited scope to improve this without narrowing the carriageway. Nonetheless, as part of the Horsham Road vehicle access changes, a new section of footway will be provided along the Horsham Road frontage with dropped kerbs and tactile paving at the access to the Leisure Centre. A condition is recommended to ensure the footway and any associated dropped crossing points at the vehicular accesses are secured.

- 6.81. WSCC Highways is satisfied that the proposal will not result in an adverse impact in highway safety at the site. Your Officers concur that the proposed access arrangements will be provided safety for all highway users in accordance with HDPF Policies 40 and 41.

#### Parking

- 6.82. There are currently 113 parking spaces across the site. The development proposes to increase the provision to 173 car parking spaces for the school, including 9 accessible bays. 18 of the parking spaces will be provided with 'active' Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points. These spaces will be for the use of staff, sixth form pupils and visitors during school hours and for community use during evenings and weekends. A further 6 minibus spaces are proposed to the south of the new Leisure Centre car park. The parking spaces will be predominately located in the south of the site, with the visitor and community use parking to the northwest of the built school area.
- 6.83. The submitted Transport Assessment explains that the additional parking spaces are to accommodate the students from the other two sites and future need identified in the baseline travel survey data. The additional spaces will also reduce potential overspill parking on residential roads does not occur. WSCC Highways advises whilst the additional parking is not required by WSCC Parking Guidance, it will be required to ensure that overflow demands do not then impact upon the surrounding highway network.
- 6.84. 130 cycle store spaces are proposed, of which 10 will be for staff. Both cycle stores will be located near the Shooting Field entrance. A further eight Sheffield cycle stands will be located to the west of Building 13, at the frontage of the main reception area, for visitor use. This is a significant increase on current cycle parking facilities.
- 6.85. 52 car parking spaces are proposed for the existing Leisure Centre, by the southern Horsham Road access. This formalises and separates the car parking provision for the leisure centre, which is currently shared by the school bus drop off/pick up area and school car parking, providing improved safety and security.

#### Trip Generation, Trip Attraction and Travel Plan

- 6.86. Both ATE and the LHA are satisfied updated submitted transport evidence now provides a more representative assessment of trip generation, with the principal pedestrian and cycle route corridors to be utilised. The submitted Transport Assessment details existing and proposed trip generation and mode shares for pupils. Trips by staff are to remain largely unchanged so these are not included. Both show significant percentages of pupils travelling by walking and by bus. This is due to the wide catchment of Steyning Grammar there are many school buses as well as pupils using public services.
- 6.87. The mode share for car-based trips of pupils is also proposed to remain the same, although as there will be an increase in the number of pupils attending at the Shooting Field site, the number of vehicle trips will increase overall. There are currently 220 pupils travelling by car to the existing site and 329 are expected as part of the proposal, resulting in an estimated increase of 180 two-way trips in the school AM peak and 160 additional two-way trips in the school PM peak.
- 6.88. This increase in traffic at the application site does not represent an overall increase in trips on the local highway network, but a redistribution, as pupils change from going to the satellite locations to a single site. The proposals would therefore have a positive impact at some locations albeit the use of the Shooting Field site will be more intense. The submitted Transport Assessment demonstrates that the local highway network can accommodate these additional trips without resultant severe highway impacts.

#### Sustainable Travel

- 6.89. The submission of the “Walking Route Audit (WRA) and Cycle Level of Service (CLOs) Assessment, Transport Technical Note (TTN), and Interim School Travel Plan (ISTP) serves as an audit of principal routes from the proposed development, and has allowed the applicant to outline a package of infrastructure measures which would primarily improve the pedestrian environment surrounding the proposed development as well as some improvements for cyclists. WSCC are satisfied it is a comprehensive review of local walking and cycling routes and ATE has stated its appreciation to the efforts undertaken by the applicant to identify active travel improvements, using these tools.

#### *Off-site Walking/Cycling Improvements*

- 6.90. Whilst several improvements have been identified in WRA and CLOs Assessment, the LHA and ATE’s focus is on securing improvements for Route 1 (Shooting Field) and Route 4 (High Street via Breach Close) as these offer the greatest benefit. Schemes of improvements for these routes including the works identified below are considered reasonable and proportionate to the overall impact of the development:

Route 1 (Shooting Field) • Clearance of vegetation encroachment on footways where necessary; • Provision of tactile paving and dropped kerbs at the junction with Toomey Road (to the east of the junction); and • Provision of a pedestrian crossing within proximity of the bus stops on Shooting Field, comprising dropped kerbs with tactile paving. To provide safe pedestrian crossing points, parking restrictions will be required at the crossing locations to allow pedestrian visibility.

Route 4 (High Street via Breach Close) • Additional lighting and vegetation maintenance along Footpath STE-2600; and • Provision of dropped kerbs and tactile paving on Breach Close at the junction with Tanyard Lane.

- 6.91. Additional measures are recommended by ATE to both Routes, including additional street lighting; introduction of uncontrolled crossing with islands, and dropped kerbs with tactile paving; and introduction of a 20mph speed limit along Shooting Field incorporating accompanying physical traffic calming measures. The presumption is that ATE consider these measures necessary, but these are works that WSCC note would be challenging to deliver, as explained below.
- 6.92. The street lighting is existing, and it would be unreasonable to expect to deliver significant improvements to this given the existing baseline situation; there are not going to be a significant of trips within hours of darkness in association with this proposal. There has been no assessment/feasibility design of what is achievable in terms of additional traffic calming (some of which may require statutory consultation) or what actual traffic speeds are presently and whether a signed 20mph speed limit (which also require statutory consultation) would offer any further speed reduction. Considering the required statutory consultation, it would not be appropriate to secure these works by condition. The road and junction widths are not going to permit the installation of traffic islands. Again, the width and anticipated traffic flows on these roads are unlikely to require or benefit from the installation of traffic islands. WSCC would take the view that dropped kerb/tactile paving would be appropriate without traffic islands.
- 6.93. These measures are recommendations and ultimately, ATE advice is that securing the existing identified package of Routes 1 and 4 alone would ensure compliance with NPPF paragraphs 109, 115 and 117, noting the delivery of off-site works is within the remit of West Sussex County Council so recommended conditions would secure appropriate design, alignment and commitment to delivery.

#### *Public Transport*

- 6.94. There are existing public bus stops on Horsham Road in the immediate vicinity of the school. The applicant was unable to secure an arrangement with the operator, Compass Bus, to enable on-site boarding and alighting for the Route 100 bus. Therefore, improvements to the bus stops on Horsham Road must be secured via condition with WSCC, with an improvement of facilities in line with LTN 1/24, and a formalised crossing with dropped kerbs and tactile paving. The Applicant has confirmed a scheme of bus stop improvements are to be provided for the northbound stop. This is to comprise an increase to the hardstanding waiting area along with suitable dropped crossing points. Details for a suitable scheme should be secured by condition.

- *Cycle Parking and Trip-End Facilities*

- 6.95. ATE considers on-site cycle parking provision still unresolved as the applicant's current offering of 120 cycle parking spaces as part of a pupil cycle store would be less than the number of targeted pupils who would cycle to the school. WSCC is content with the 120-space provision when set against LHA standards. In agreeing a way forward, ATE suggest the provision of additional capacity is provided where the existing demand for cycle parking reaches 80% of the delivered spaces, through drawing submission showing the location and specification of a second cycle hub, within the School Travel Plan.

Travel Plan

- 6.96. An updated Interim School Travel Plan (TP) has been submitted and includes some targets to increase walking and cycling amongst pupils, and car sharing, bus use, and cycling for staff. These targets appear modest but given the location of the school and large rural catchment, these may well be challenging to achieve. The TP contents are generally accepted by both WSCC and ATE, and as part of periodical review progress towards the targets can be assessed. WSCC confirms a requirement to secure the TP by condition.

Construction Phase

- 6.97. Any construction traffic would be limited for a temporary period and would access and egress the site via Horsham Road, with all vehicles using the Steyning bypass and heading south down Horsham Road to minimise construction traffic and highway safety impacts to school users and residents. The LHA judges this is appropriate to control construction/demolition traffic and recommends the development proceeds in accordance with the submitted Construction Management plan (rev 07) dated 13th April 2026.

Summary on Highway Matters

- 6.98. The wider impact on the local road network regarding an increase in traffic movements and pressure on highway capacity resulting from the predicted increase in the Shooting Field site users has been assessed. A suite of sustainable travel improvements is now proposed in some mitigation of this, and these have the support of ATE.
- 6.99. WSCC Local Highway Authority have confirmed that the proposals would not result in a 'severe' impact on the local road network and that there would be no unacceptable impact on road safety. This leads your Officers to conclude that no unacceptable harm arises from a highway perspective, and that a refusal on highways grounds cannot be justified (in accordance with NPPF paragraph 116).

**Ecology:**

- 6.100. HDPF Policy 31 supports development maintain or enhance green infrastructure and requires development to contribute to biodiversity enhancement.

- 6.101. The existing site ecology comprises modified grassland, scattered trees, woodland and hardstanding with potential to provide suitable habitats for reptiles, foraging and roosting bats, breeding birds and hedgehogs. The Applicants have submitted a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) (Geosphere Environmental Jan 2023), Bat Presence and Absence Surveys (Brindle & Green Ltd Oct 2025), Site Survey Technical Note (MKA Ecology Ltd Dec 2025), and Ground Level Tree Assessment (MKA Ecology Ltd Feb 2026).
- 6.102. This evidence has demonstrated that, with appropriate mitigations in place (including vegetation clearance under ecological clerk supervision and retention of trees with bat roost suitability (the existing buildings having no evidence of roosting bats and negligible potential) and a wildlife sensitive lighting scheme), the proposal would not result in harm to local ecology, including Great Crested Newts (subject to mitigations set out in the applicant's submissions). In addition to the proposed BNG contributions, biodiversity enhancements are recommended, including native species planting, new areas of natural habitat, and inclusions of log piles and bird / bat boxes. The Council's Ecologist and Newt Officer support the implementation of the applicant's submitted Construction Ecological Management Plan (MKA Ecology, May 2026).
- 6.103. The Council's Ecological Consultant is satisfied the applicant's evidence is sufficient ecological information available for determination of this application and raises no objection subject to planning conditions to secure the identified mitigations and enhancements required necessary (these being; regulatory action in accordance with ecological appraisal recommendations; precautionary method statement for reptiles and mobile protected and priority species; biodiversity enhancement strategy; and wildlife sensitive lighting design scheme). Accordingly, the proposals accord with HDPF Policy 31.

**Water Neutrality:**

- 6.104. A 2021 Position Statement from Natural England identified that it could not be concluded with the required degree of certainty that new development in the Sussex North Water Supply Zone would not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the Arun Valley SAC, SPA and Ramsar sites. Therefore, and to comply with the legal duties set out in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (known as the Habitat Regulations), all new development since has been required to demonstrate water neutrality.
- 6.105. On 31<sup>st</sup> October 2025 Natural England formally withdrew the 2021 Position Statement, citing a package of measures that they were satisfied would safeguard the Arun Valley sites. Principal amongst these measures is a reduction in the Southern Water abstraction licence 'by March 2026'. However, given the licence change has not yet taken place Horsham District Council, as competent authority under the Habitats Regulations, cannot yet be certain that new development will not result in adverse impacts on the Arun Valley sites.
- 6.106. To ensure development can come forward as water neutral in the meantime, the Council has agreed with Natural England to use the significant water savings made by Southern Water in 2024/25 through their programme of leakage reduction (amongst other measures). This has generated some 3,240,000 litres per day of water savings that can now be attributed to new development without increasing water abstraction in the Arun Valley beyond baseline. These savings were previously to be used to launch the Sussex North Water Certification Scheme (SNWCS), however following the withdrawal statement SNWCS will no longer be launching. Natural England standing advice dated 10 November 2025 raises no objection to using these savings to enable development to come forward. The standing advice clarifies that it functions as Natural England's formal response pursuant to Regulation 63(3) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 to all relevant planning applications which seek to achieve water neutrality using the above Southern Water savings.
- 6.107. Officers have undertaken an Appropriate Assessment which demonstrates that while there would be an increase in pupils and staff at the Shooting Field school site, there is no overall

net increase in the schools capacity as the use of the other two sites by pupils and staff would cease and any future use of those sites would be subject to separate water neutrality considerations.

- 6.108. Accordingly, Officers consider that the proposed development will not have an Adverse Effect on the Integrity of the Arun Valley Site, either alone or in combination with other plan and projects, thereby complying with Regulations 63 and 70 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, HDPF Policy 31, and paragraph 193 of the NPPF.

#### **Drainage and Flood Risk:**

- 6.109. The Applicants have submitted a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment and allied Drainage Strategy evidence, which reflects the most up to date Environment Agency flood risk mapping (May 2026). The developable area of built form of the site is at low risk of flooding (Zone 1). The drainage strategy is to slow the rate of surface water flow and discharge through sustainable urban drainage; the new buildings will have green roofs, which will provide initial water storage, and hardstanding around the school buildings will have permeable surfacing, which will then discharge at a controlled rate into the site network. Rainwater harvesting is also proposed and where feasible, runoff from impermeable areas will be routed onto landscaped areas. This approach restricts runoff to greenfield-equivalent rates, and accounts for extreme rainfall events including climate change. A connection to the existing drainage system at the connection point in Shooting Field is proposed for foul drainage.
- 6.110. In response to issues raised by the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), the applicant has clarified drainage calculations/specifications and provided a detailed scheme of foul and surface water drainage. This is now to the satisfaction of the LLFA, who raises no objection subject to completion of the approved drainage strategy, with no unacceptable impacts on the water environment are envisaged. The applicant has reviewed the public sewer records and confirm no public sewers are located within the site, so proposed landscaping would not affect any of Southern Water's public apparatus. Officers are satisfied the proposed development will not result in an increase in flood risk on or off site now or in the future in accordance with HDPF Policy 38.

#### **Other Matters:**

##### Climate Change:

- 6.111. HDPF Policies 35, 36 and 37 require development mitigates to the impacts of climate change through measures including improved energy efficiency, reducing flood risk, reducing water consumption, improving biodiversity, and promoting sustainable transport modes; reflective of NPPF Chapter 14. SDNP Policy 2 requires development take account of the environmental impact.
- 6.112. The submitted Energy Statement details the sustainable design measures to reduce energy use. This includes prioritising natural ventilation and reducing reliance on mechanical means; use of ground source heat pumps; installation of highly energy efficient lighting and intelligent controls to reduce energy consumption; and solar panels which will achieve a 119% reduction in regulated and unregulated CO2 emissions. Therefore, the scheme accords with relevant HDPF policies.

#### **Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG):**

- 6.113. SDNP Policy 1 supports development proposals which result in BNG. Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021) mandates that every development must achieve at least a 10% BNG, unless the development qualifies as exempt under the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024, and that every planning permission granted for the development of land

in England shall be deemed to have been granted subject to the condition that development may not be begun unless a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority and the planning authority has approved the Plan.

- 6.114. The Biodiversity Gain Plan must show how the development will achieve the required minimum 10% BNG using the statutory biodiversity metric tool and must demonstrate how the habitats will be managed and maintained for 30 years, starting from the date the development is completed. Off-site gains (on unregistered sites) and significant on-site enhancements will be secured over this period by way of a Legal Agreement.
- 6.115. The Applicant has submitted a Biodiversity Metric which demonstrates a 42.47% net gain is achievable by way of onsite biodiversity gains. A legal agreement has been drafted to secure the maintenance and monitoring of the significant onsite biodiversity gains for the required 30 years.

#### **S106 Agreement:**

- 6.116. Drafting has begun on the legal agreement to secure a travel plan monitoring fee and the onsite Biodiversity Net Gain.

#### COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)

Horsham District Council has adopted a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule which took effect on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2017. It is considered that this development constitutes CIL liable development.

| Use Description | Proposed  | Existing                | Net Gain        |
|-----------------|-----------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| Non-residential | 19,776.34 | 12,576.3                | 10,222.4        |
|                 |           | <b>Total Gain</b>       | <b>10,222.4</b> |
|                 |           | <b>Total Demolition</b> | <b>9,553.9</b>  |

Please note that the above figures will be reviewed by the CIL Team prior to issuing a CIL Liability Notice and may therefore change. Exemptions and/or reliefs may be applied for up until the commencement of a chargeable development. If planning permission is granted, a CIL Liability Notice will be issued thereafter. CIL payments are payable on commencement of development.

#### **Conclusions and Planning Balance:**

- 6.117. The principle of the proposed school redevelopment is established through the existing use of the site for purposes of education and compliance with HDPF Policies 42 and 43. Your Officers consider the proposals provide for a modern, fit-for-purpose and energy efficient school that would have a pleasant and welcoming appearance, the implementation of which is phased to reduce disruption to the education of existing pupils, to meet the teachers and pupil educational needs, and is beneficial for the wider community.
- 6.118. An assessment of harm and impact has been made within this report which concludes that (subject to conditions), no unacceptable harm would arise regarding highway capacity or safety, trees, ecology, nor drainage. Impact to neighbouring amenity particularly associated with noise and light intrusion would not amount to significant harm and can be mitigated to a satisfactory level through details secured by condition. Some harm (albeit minor) is identified regarding visual impact in the landscape but concluded that, with the additional planting mitigation now secured, the harm identified would not result in unacceptable effect on the Landscape Character Area and visual impact.

- 6.119. To establish whether development as a whole is acceptable in planning terms, the decision maker must be satisfied that the level of any harm identified is outweighed by the benefits the development would bring. The benefits of the proposed development have been outlined within this report, which explains that the school (including its pupils and staff) will be the primary beneficiaries of the facilities, with an additional benefit offered to the wider public by the proposed shared use of the facilities for clubs, organisations and individuals post completion of the development via a Community Use Agreement.
- 6.120. In their assessment of the proposals, Sport England maintain their Objection to the loss of any hockey capacity at the school without full compensatory mitigation. Your Officers acknowledge this Objection from a statutory consultee and the significant weight to be afforded to it, and the representations received by those who play hockey for the two clubs, but judge the overall benefits that the development will bring to the wider community (including the future education needs of 2,400 young people), to outweigh that harm in favour of the proposed development based on a 'flat balance' of harms vs benefits.
- 6.121. In overall conclusion, and in applying Government instruction on decision-makers to place **great weight** under NPPF paragraph 100a to the need to create, expand or alter schools and post-16 facilities and in applying the **planning presumption in favour** of developing state-funded schools as dictated by the *Ministerial Planning for Schools Development: Statement*, the proposal must be assessed in the round, having regard as part of the overall weighted planning balance, to both the impact of a temporary 4 year loss of a hockey pitch whilst securing enhanced and more accessible sport provision in its place (post completion of the development), and the substantial benefits delivered by the school redevelopment itself; which is a significant material consideration which weighs decisively in favour of the development in the view of your Officers.
- 6.122. Accordingly, your Officers judge there to be no conflict with NPPF paragraph 104; and even if conflict was found, the planning presumption to approve would continue to apply and to weigh in favour of approval, and therefore the proposal is recommended for approval subject to the conditions set out below.

## 7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1. To approve planning permission subject to the completion of a s106 agreement and the following conditions.

### Conditions:

#### 1 List of Approved Plans

- 2 Regulatory (Time) Condition:** The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

#### **3 Pre-Commencement Condition:**

- i) No development shall take place until a programme of archaeological work has been secured in accordance with a Written Scheme of Archaeological Investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- ii) The development hereby permitted shall not be commenced until the archaeological site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition [i] and that provision for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition has been secured and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing.

Reason: As this matter is fundamental as the site is of archaeological significance and it is important that it is recorded by excavation before it is destroyed by development in accordance with Policy 34 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 4 Pre-commencement Condition:** No development shall take place, including any works of demolition, until a Construction Environmental Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the approved Plan shall be implemented and adhered to throughout the entire construction period. During site clearance, preparation and construction the dust and Air Emission Mitigation measures described in Appendix D of the Air Quality Assessment report (Aval Consulting Group, June 2026) shall be adopted. The Plan shall provide details as appropriate but not necessarily be restricted to the following matters:

- Description of management responsibilities;
- Details regarding noise mitigation measures to be deployed including identification of sensitive receptors and ongoing monitoring;
- the method of access and routing of vehicles during construction,
- the parking of vehicles by site operatives and visitors,
- the loading and unloading of plant, materials and waste,
- the storage of plant and materials used in construction of the development,
- the erection and maintenance of security hoarding,
- the provision of wheel washing facilities and other works required to mitigate the impact of construction upon the public highway (including the provision of temporary Traffic Regulation Orders),
- Details of public engagement both prior to and during construction works.
- Details of the hours of works and other measures to mitigate the impact of construction on the amenity of the area and safety of the highway network
- Provision of wheel washing facilities and other works required to mitigate the impact of construction upon the public highway (including the provision of temporary Traffic Regulation Orders)

Reason: As this matter is fundamental to consider the potential impacts on the amenity of nearby occupiers during construction and in the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policies 33 and 40 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015)

- 5 Pre-commencement Condition:** No development shall take place, including any works of demolition, until a Precautionary Method Statement for reptiles and mobile protected and Priority species has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. This will contain precautionary mitigation measures and/or works to reduce potential impacts to reptiles and mobile protected and Priority species during the construction phase. The measures and/works shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved details and shall be retained in that manner thereafter.

Reason: To conserve protected and Priority species and allow the Local Planning Authority to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (as amended) in accordance with Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and SNDP1 of Steyning Neighbourhood Development Plan (2022).

- 6 Pre-Commencement Condition:** No development shall commence until full details of underground services, including locations, dimensions and depths of all service facilities and required ground excavations, have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing. The submitted details shall be coordinated with the landscape proposals and Arboricultural Method Statement. The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: As this matter is fundamental to the acceptable delivery of this permission, to ensure the underground services do not conflict with satisfactory landscaping in the interests of amenity in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and SNDP1 of Steyning Neighbourhood Development Plan (2022).

- 7 Pre-commencement (slab level) Condition:** Prior to any works above slab level, a Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy for protected and Priority or threatened species, prepared by a suitably qualified ecologist, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The content of the Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy shall include the following: a) Purpose and conservation objectives for the proposed enhancement measures; b) detailed designs or product descriptions to achieve stated objectives; c) locations of proposed enhancement measures by appropriate maps and plans (where relevant); d) persons responsible for implementing the enhancement measures; and e) details of initial aftercare and long-term maintenance (where relevant). The works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details shall be retained in that manner thereafter.

Reason: To enhance protected and Priority species & habitats and allow the Local Planning Authority to discharge its duties under paragraph 187d of NPPF 2024 and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (as amended) in accordance with Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and SNDP1 of Steyning Neighbourhood Development Plan (2022).

- 8 Pre-Occupation Condition:** No playing of live or recorded amplified music or other amplified sound, including use of public address systems, shall be permitted on the site until a scheme of noise control has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be written by a suitably qualified person and shall include but not be limited to;
- i. A plan of all locations at which fixed or mobile external loudspeakers are to be sited, including for large events;
  - ii. Details relating to the number of occasions in any 12 month period when fixed or mobile external loudspeakers are to be employed;
  - iii. Details of management responsibilities during use of the external loudspeakers;
  - iv. Details of proposed control measures, including monitoring, that will be implemented to ensure noise and disturbance to local residents is managed and minimised;
  - v. Details of a complaint recording and management plan.

The scheme shall not rely on BS4142 as the metric for compliance and must take due account of the bass frequency characteristics and the likely resulting noise levels within adjoining or close by residential properties. The approved scheme shall thereafter be maintained and adhered to for the duration of the use hereby permitted.

Reason: To ensure the protection of the amenities of nearby residents and in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 9 Pre-Occupation Condition:** Prior to use/ occupation of the development hereby approved, a lighting design strategy for biodiversity in accordance with Guidance Note 08/23 (Institute of Lighting Professionals) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The strategy shall:

a) identify those areas/features on site that are particularly sensitive for bats and that are likely to cause disturbance in or around their breeding sites and resting places or along important routes used to access key areas of their territory, for example, for foraging; and

b) show how and where external lighting will be installed so that it can be clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent the above species using their territory or having access to their breeding sites and resting places.

All external lighting shall be installed in accordance with the specifications and locations set out in the scheme and maintained thereafter in accordance with the scheme. Under no circumstances should any other external lighting be installed without prior consent from the local planning authority.

Reason: To allow the Local Planning Authority to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (as amended) and Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework ) in accordance with Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and SNDP1 of Steyning Neighbourhood Development Plan (2022).

**10 Pre-occupation Condition:**

i) No part of the development shall be first occupied in Phase 1 until the temporary car parking arrangements have been provided in accordance with the Construction Management Plan ref. SRP1121-BAM-XX-XX-T-X-0403.

ii) No part of the development shall be first occupied in Phase 2 until the car (including 52 re-provided spaces for the leisure centre, 9 disabled parking, and 18 active and 35 passive EV spaces), minibus, and coach parking and turning areas have been provided in accordance with the approved plans. The car parking spaces permitted shall thereafter be retained as such for their designated use.

Reason: To secure adequate car parking for the proposed use and to avoid excessive overflow parking occurring on-street in accordance with Policies 40 and 41 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and SNDP4 of Steyning Neighbourhood Development Plan (2022).

**11 Pre-occupation Condition:**

i) No part of the development shall be first occupied in Phase 1 until temporary cycle storage is provided in accordance with details to be submitted to and agreed by the local planning authority.

ii) No part of the development shall be first occupied in Phase 2 until the cycle parking has been provided in accordance with plans and details submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The cycle parking spaces permitted shall thereafter be retained as such for their designated use.

Reason: To encourage access by cycling to the school in accordance with Policies 40 and 41 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and SNDP4 of Steyning Neighbourhood Development Plan (2022).

**12 Pre-occupation Condition:**

i) Phase 1 of the development shall not be first occupied until the northern access arrangements including the visibility splays, as shown on drawing number H-02 revision P3 Appendix of the Transport Assessment dated February 2026 has been constructed.

ii) Phase 2 of the development shall not be first occupied until the southern access arrangements, including the visibility splays, as shown on drawing number H-01 revision P4 Appendix of the Transport Assessment dated February 2026 has been constructed.

Reason: In the interests of road safety in accordance with Policies 40 and 41 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and SNDP4 of Steyning Neighbourhood Development Plan (2022).

- 13 Pre-occupation Condition:** No part of the development shall be first occupied until a length of footway has been constructed on the east side of Horsham Road between the proposed southern and northern vehicular accesses serving the development, along with appropriate pedestrian dropped kerbs and tactile paving at the proposed development accesses, in accordance with plans and details submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To safely accommodate pedestrian movements in accordance with Policies 40 and 41 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and SNDP4 of Steyning Neighbourhood Development Plan (2022).

- 14 Pre-occupation Condition:** No part of the development shall be first occupied until a scheme of improvements have been constructed to the northbound Horsham Road bus stop opposite the development site along with suitable pedestrian dropped kerb crossings in accordance with plans and details submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To safely accommodate pedestrian movements and those users of the local bus service in accordance with Policies 40 and 41 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and SNDP4 of Steyning Neighbourhood Development Plan (2022).

- 15 Pre-occupation Condition:** No part of the development shall be first occupied until schemes of walking improvements have been constructed to walking routes 1 and 4 as identified in the approved Walking Route Audit and Cycle Level of Service Assessment dated June 2026 in accordance with plans and details submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To provide improved pedestrian walking routes to the development site in accordance with Policies 40 and 41 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and SNDP4 of Steyning Neighbourhood Development Plan (2022).

- 16 Pre- Occupation Condition:** Upon first occupation of the development, the approved Travel Plan shall be implemented. The Travel Plan shall thereafter be monitored and reviewed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To encourage the uptake of sustainable modes of transport amongst pupils and staff in accordance with Policies 40 and 41 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and SNDP4 of Steyning Neighbourhood Development Plan (2022).

- 17 Pre-Occupation Condition:** Use of the sports facilities shall not commence until a community use agreement prepared in consultation with Sport England has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and a copy of the completed approved agreement has been provided to the Local Planning Authority. The agreement shall apply to the sports hall; hockey artificial grass pitch (AGP); natural turf playing field/pitches and the 2no. Multi-Use Games Areas (MUGAs) and include details of pricing policy, hours of use, access by noneducational establishment users, management responsibilities and a mechanism for review. The development shall not be used otherwise than in strict compliance with the approved agreement.

Reason: To secure well managed safe community access to the sports facility/facilities, to ensure sufficient benefit to the development of sport in accordance with NPPF and

Policy 39 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and SNDP4 of Steyning Neighbourhood Development Plan (2022).

- 18 Pre-Occupation Condition:** No development of the replacement hockey artificial grass pitch (AGP) shall commence until details of the design and layout of the replacement AGP have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority after consultation with Sport England. The AGP shall not be constructed other than in accordance with the approved details and meets FIH regulations.

Reason: To ensure the development is fit for purpose and sustainable in accordance with NPPF and Policy 39 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and SNDP4 of Steyning Neighbourhood Development Plan (2022).

- 19 Pre-Occupation Condition:** Prior to the first occupation of any part of the development hereby permitted, full details of all hard and soft landscape works shall have been submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include plans and measures addressing the following:

- Details of all trees and planting that are existing, retained and removed
- Planting and seeding plans, including a schedule specifying plant numbers, sizes, densities and species in Latin names. Boundary trees and those more prominent to public views are to be planted within a range of 25-30cm girth to 20-18cm girth.
- Coordination of planting plans with ecological mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures set out in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report by Geosphere Environmental, dated January 2023 and MKA Ecology Technical Note, January 2026.
- Hard and soft written specifications (NBS compliant) including ground preparation, cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment
- Tree pit and staking/underground guying details, including details for sloping ground and position of root barriers if required
- Details of all hard surfacing materials and finishes, including layout, colour, size, texture, coursing and levels
- Details of all boundary treatments - such as walls, fencing and railings - including location, type, heights and materials
- Details of minor artefacts and structures – such as bin stores, cycle stores, street furniture, play equipment and signage – including location, size, colour and specification
- Details of existing and proposed levels for all external earthworks associated with the landscape proposals – such as SuDS, play areas, retaining walls, banking etc - including cross sections where necessary.

The approved landscape scheme shall be fully implemented in accordance with the approved details within the first planting season following the first occupation of any part of the development. Unless otherwise agreed as part of the approved landscaping, no trees or hedges on the site shall be wilfully damaged or uprooted, felled/removed, topped or lopped without the previous written consent of the Local Planning Authority until 5 years after completion of the development. Any proposed planting, which within a period of 5 years, dies, is removed, or becomes seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory development that is sympathetic to the landscape and townscape character and built form of the surroundings, and South Downs National Park setting qualities in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policies 30 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and SNDP1 and SNDP3 of Steyning Neighbourhood Development Plan (2022).

- 20 Pre-Occupation Condition:** Upon completion of the surface water drainage system, including any SuDS features, and prior to the first occupation of the development; a survey and report from an independent surveyor shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The survey and report shall demonstrate that the surface water drainage system has been constructed in accordance with the details approved pursuant to condition 1. Where necessary, details of corrective works to be carried out along with a timetable for their completion, shall be included for approval in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Any corrective works required shall be carried out in accordance with the approved timetable and subsequently re-surveyed with the findings submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the development achieves a high standard of sustainability and ensure the flood risk is adequately addressed and not increased in accordance with NPPF and Policy 38 in the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and SNDP2 and SNDP4 of Steyning Neighbourhood Development Plan (2022).

- 21 Pre-Occupation Condition:** No part of the development hereby permitted shall be occupied until the Applicant has implemented the measures incorporated within the approved Aval Consulting Group's Air Quality Assessment (Rev C) dated 10<sup>th</sup> June 2026. The Applicant shall thereafter monitor, report and subsequently revise the travel plan as specified within the approved document.

Reason: To mitigate the impact of the development on air quality within the district and to sustain compliance with and contribute towards EU limit values or national objectives for pollutants in accordance with Policies 24 & 41 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and SNDP2 of Steyning Neighbourhood Development Plan (2022).

- 22 Pre-Occupation Condition:** No internally and/or externally located plant, machinery equipment or building services plant shall be operated to ensure the rating level of noise emitted from the proposed building services plant is no greater than LAeq, 30 mins 60 dB in any external area accessible to students or members of the public. The scheme as approved by the Local Planning Authority shall be fully installed prior to first operation of the plant and shall be retained as such thereafter.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of the properties affected and in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 23 Regulatory Condition:** All development shall be constructed in accordance with the submitted and approved Flood Risk Assessment (dated 16/02/2026 and inclusive of supplementary report B1641/2/LB/NG dated 01st May 2026), unless otherwise first approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the flood risk is adequately addressed and not increased in accordance with NPPF and Policy 38 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and SNDP2 of Steyning Neighbourhood Development Plan (2022).

- 24 Regulatory Condition:** All mitigation measures and/or works shall be carried out in accordance with the details contained in the Construction Ecological Management Plan (MKA Ecology, May 2026), Ground Level Tree Assessment (MKA Ecology Ltd., February 2026), Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Technical Summary Note (MKA Ecology Ltd., December 2025), Bat Presence and Absence Surveys (Brindle & Green Ltd, October 2025) and Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Geosphere Environmental, January 2023), as already submitted with the planning application and agreed in principle with the local planning authority prior to determination.

This may include the appointment of an appropriately competent person e.g. an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) to provide on-site ecological expertise during construction. The appointed person shall undertake all activities, and works shall be carried out, in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To conserve protected and Priority species and allow the Local Planning Authority to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (as amended) ) in accordance with Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and SNDP1 of Steyning Neighbourhood Development Plan (2022).

**25 Regulatory Condition:** The external sports facilities hereby approved shall only be used between the following hours:

- Monday to Thursday – 09:00am to 21:00pm of the same day
- Fridays – 09:00am to 22:00pm of the same day
- Saturdays – 09:00am to 17:00pm of the same day
- Sundays and recognised Public Holidays – 10:00am to 16:00pm of the same day

Outside of those same hours all lighting and/or floodlighting introduced in support of, or associated with, the external sports facilities shall be non-illuminated and switched off.

Reason: To ensure the protection of the amenities of nearby residents and in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

**26 Regulatory Condition** All works of demolition, construction, and ancillary activities, including deliveries and dispatch, shall be restricted to 08:00-18:00 hours on Monday to Friday, from 08:00 to 13:00 hours on Saturdays and at no time on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of the locality and in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

**27 Regulatory Condition:** All works shall be executed in full accordance with the submitted Arboricultural Impact Assessment/Method Statement and accompanying Tree Protection drawings [37463641\_AMS01 Arboricultural Method Statement dated 23 June 2026 by arbtech; 37463641\_AIA01\_01 Overview; Sheet 1; Sheet 2 Arboricultural Impact Assessment; 37463641\_TPP01\_01 June 2026 Overview; Sheet 1; Sheet 2 Tree Protection Plan]

Reason: To ensure the successful and satisfactory protection of important trees, shrubs and hedges on the site in accordance with Policies 30 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and SNDP1 and SNDP3 of Steyning Neighbourhood Development Plan (2022).

**28 Regulatory Condition:** The materials to be used in the development hereby permitted shall strictly accord with those indicated on the application form and approved plans and allied Design and Access Statement unless otherwise agreed in writing prior to slab level by the local planning authority

Reason: To enable the Local Planning Authority to control the development in detail in the interests of visual amenity and landscape character and setting of the South Downs National Park in accordance with Policies 30 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and SNDP3 of Steyning Neighbourhood Development Plan (2022).

**29 Regulatory Condition:** Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), No external lighting or floodlighting shall be erected, installed or introduced in support of, or in association with the development hereby approved, other than that shown on the approved plans or lighting scheme as approved by condition imposed on this decision notice. All such lighting shall be maintained in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of the locality and in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and SNDP3 of Steyning Neighbourhood Development Plan (2022).

### **Biodiversity Net Gain Condition**

Paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 states that planning

permission is deemed to have been granted subject to the "biodiversity gain condition" which means development granted by this notice must not begin unless:

- (a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
- (b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if one is required in respect of this permission is Horsham District Council.

This permission will require the submission and approval of Biodiversity Gain Plans before development is begun.

#### **Phased development**

The permission which has been granted has the effect of requiring or permitting the development to proceed in phases. The modifications in respect of the biodiversity gain condition which are set out in Part 2 of the Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (Modifications and Amendments) (England) Regulations 2024 apply.

The development cannot begin before an overall biodiversity gain plan

(<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain#para58>), and a phase biodiversity gain plan

(<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain#para60>) have been submitted to and approved

by the planning authority. Before every phase of development has begun a Phase Biodiversity Gain Plan must have been submitted to and approved by the planning authority. For guidance on the contents of the Biodiversity Gain Plans that must be submitted and agreed by

the Council prior to the commencement of the consented development please see the link: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/submit-a-biodiversity-gain-plan>

#### **Statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements**

There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply. These can be found at Paragraph: 003 Reference ID: 74-003-20240214 of the Planning Practice Guidance, which can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain>

#### **Irreplaceable habitat**

If the onsite habitat includes irreplaceable habitat (within the meaning of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024) there are additional requirements for the content and approval of Biodiversity Gain Plans.

8.1. This report has not been prepared with the support of artificial intelligence tools.