



Development Control Committee Schedule 12/06/2019

Item No:	
Application No.	S.16/0043/OUT
Site No.	PP-04401581
Site Address	Land At M5 Junction 13 West Of Stonehouse, Eastington, Gloucestershire,
Town/Parish	Eastington Parish Council
Grid Reference	378047,206562
Application Type	Outline Planning Application
Proposal	5,000 capacity football stadium and other ancillary uses (Use Class D2); two full-sized grass pitches and a goal practice area (Use Class D2); car parking for cars and coaches and highways improvements to the A419 including a signalised site junction and combined cycle/footway. All matters are reserved save for access.
Recommendation	Resolve to Grant Permission
Call in Request	Requested by Planning Manager



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Applicant's Details	Ecotricity Group Limited
Agent's Details	Ecotricity Lion House, Rowcroft, Stroud, Gloucestershire, GL5 3BY
Case Officer	John Chaplin
Application Validated	21.01.2016
	CONSULTEES
Comments Received	Building Control Manager (E) Contaminated Land Officer (E) Archaeology Dept (E) Forest Of Dean District Council Eastington Parish Council Sport England Flood Resilience Land Drainage Arboricultural Officer (E)



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Natural England (E)
Public Rights Of Way Officer
The Environment Agency (E)
Historic England SW
Cotswolds Conservation Board
Mr Nick Small
Stonehouse Town Council
Wales And West Utilities Limited (E)
Berkeley Vale CPRE
CPRE Gloucestershire
Biodiversity Officer
Development Coordination (E)
Department For Communities And Local Government
Environmental Health (E)
Standish Parish Council
Nailsworth Town Council
Contaminated Land Officer (E)
Quedgeley Parish Council(E)
Stroud Town Council
Strategic Planning
Crime Prevention Design Advisor (E)
Highways England
Canal Team (E)
Conservation North Team
Archaeology Dept (E)
Leonard Stanley Parish Council
Sustrans South West
Mr Andrew Lord
Arlingham Parish Council
Mr Nick Small
Wales And West Utilities Limited (E)
Wychavon District Council
Jane Bullows - Sport And Health Development Manager
Gfirst LEP
Football Association
Frampton On Severn Parish Council
Cainscross Parish Council
Cam Parish Council
Dursley Town Council
South Gloucestershire Council
Cotswold Canal Trust (E)
Planning Strategy Manager (E)
Gloucestershire Playing Fields Association (E)
Crime Prevention Design Advisor (E)
Strategic Planning
Severn Trent Water Ltd (E)
SDC Water Resources Engineer



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	Archaeology Dept (E) Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust
Constraints	Eastington Parish Council
	OFFICER'S REPORT

SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is situated to the west of Stroud and Stonehouse and north of the settlement grouping of Alkerton and Eastington adjacent to the junction 13 of the M5 motorway. The site is bisected by the A419 and the M5 which provide three distinct areas.

The first of the three areas is the Northern Area, consisting of 18.9 ha of land immediately to the north of the A419, the western boundary adjoining the M5 Junction 13, the Northern boundary adjoins existing residential properties accessed from Grove Lane, with the final Eastern boundary adjoining agricultural land which forms a wedge between the Northern part of the application site and the existing petrol filling station, hotel and restaurants sited to the North West of the Chipmans Platt roundabout.

This roundabout as well as providing access from the A419 to Grove Lane also now provides the western access to the developing allocated residential and commercial development Land West of Stonehouse now known as Great Oldbury. In addition via its Southern arm it also provides access to Eastington and the village centre of Alkerton.

The second area of the application site, the Western area comprises approx 4.5ha of land situated to the west and south of junction 13 of the M5. This is made up of two meadows with mature hedging. The Stroudwater Highways depot and the A419 which connects with the A38 at Whitminster are located to the north with the River Frome on the Southern boundary. This area is within Flood Zone 3. There is an underpass and river tunnel under the motorway embankment connecting to land to the east of the M5.

The Southern area, land to the south of the A419 is approximately 13.5ha is the third area. With the boundary with the A419 to the North, M5 to the West there are existing residential and an institutional use (William Morris House) to the East. The industrial development at Eastington Trading Estate is located just beyond the south boundary.

The agricultural land immediately south of the Southern area of the application site is edged in blue as being in the applicants control but is not shown within the application red line. This area is shown for illustrative purposes only as a potential position of future canal works as part of the Missing Mile project.

All the land currently has an agricultural use and is relatively flat and low-lying but gently undulates with a slight slope to the south towards the flood plain and River Frome beyond. The agricultural land has predominantly been used as grazing land by cattle and for cutting of hay. These fields generally have well-defined hedgerow boundaries, however, there are



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some gaps within them. Some trees are located within these hedge lines along with a slightly more wooded section adjacent to the M5 junction.

The A419 provides one of the main gateways into this part of the Stroud district. It is currently a single carriageway width with no footpath and the majority being unlit until it reaches the Chipmans Platt roundabout. Grove Lane is a rural lane which provides access to Nupend and Westend before continuing over the M5 to Whitminster and the A38.

The northern part of the application site is bisected by two footpaths running broadly north to south, joining up just north of the southern boundary of this section of the site. The conjoined footpath then crosses the A419 and runs south through the southern section of the site adjoining William Morris House to Westfield Bridge, a bridge over the now filled in canal.

National Cycle Route 45 which connects to Stroud, runs along Grove Lane then south at the roundabout before heading east along the canal/A419 corridor.

No Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens or Listed Buildings are present within the red line application site. However, part of the southern part of the site and the western section are located within the Industrial Heritage Conservation Area (IHCA). The IHCA follows and includes the historic industrial development of the canal, mill sites and associated features for example; Meadow Mill, William Morris House, Westfield Bridge and the former route of the canal.

Listed buildings are located adjacent to the site. This includes Mulgrove, Westend Farm and Grove Farm on Grove Lane, Eastington Grange at Chipmans Platt, Eastington Park and the various buildings including the church at Churchend. There are further Listed buildings in the wider area including at Nupend and Nastend.

There are no landscape or wildlife designations within the application site but the adjacent River Frome is a Key Wildlife Site. The site is located within the Severn Vale landscape character area with the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and escarpment located 2km away. Within 5km are located two internationally important ecological sites; Severn Estuary and Rodborough Common. Other nationally and locally important sites are also present.

THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The application as originally submitted on 21st January 2016 sought outline planning consent, with all matters reserved, apart from access, for the following development:

‘A 5000 capacity football stadium and other ancillary uses (Use Class D2); and up to 41300sq m of B1 floorspace; up to 22,800sq m of B2/B8 floorspace; indoor football playing pitch (use Class D2), other recreational use (use Class D2); Transport Hub (including ancillary parking for cars and coaches, and a drop off point for buses and taxis), with all matters reserved save for access.’

The initial application showed, for illustrative purposes, the northern part of the site as being for what the applicant described as a ‘Green Technology Hub’ which as that particular Use



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Class is not recognised in Regulation was proposed to consist of some 37,300sq m of B1 (Office Use) and 22,800sq m of B2 (Light industry) and B8 (Warehousing and Storage). A Parameter Plan was submitted showing that the heights of the proposed development on this northern portion of the site would be arranged in three parallel areas to the alignment of the A419, ranging from up to 12m high adjacent to the A419, then a band of development up to 12m high with the final band of development being some 6m high nearest to the dwellings in Westend.

The Western area, was described by the applicant as a 'Nature Conservation Area' and as befits its notation was not proposed for any development, however, the illustrative potential realigned canal route was shown as bisecting the area.

The Southern portion of the application site below the A419 was originally proposed as 'The sports hub' including a football stadium with various open training pitches, additional sporting facilities and parking. A new B1 (Office) block of some 5000sq m was also proposed for use by Ecotricity.

Revisions to the initially submitted application

Following discussions and the results of initial statutory consultations the applicants, in September 2016, the submitted scheme was revised ('Further Environmental Information 1' (FEI1)). The revisions included a ramped access footbridge across the A419 between the 'Green technology hub' and the 'Sports Complex' and signalisation of junction 13 of the M5. In addition the applicants proposed improvements to National Cycle route 45. The submitted revisions also included a consideration of employment land requirements and significantly amended transport information. Further revisions to the overall Master plan included removal of the non-football illustrative outdoor sports facilities and replacement with more football training pitches. Additional illustrative designs for the Stadium were also submitted. The B1 offices proposed on the southern site were to be re-sited away from the historic alignment of the former canal.

Further revisions to the submitted scheme and additional information were submitted in March 2017 (FEI2) following further detailed discussions including concerns regarding the highway impact, parking, landscape and ecology.

Following these revisions further considerable dialogue occurred with the applicants and their agents, in particular concerning the acoustic impact on the residents of William Morris College situated at the south east boundary of the southern site of the application. This together with further information required by Highways England resulted in an updated Transport Assessment and a revised Travel Plan being submitted in August 2017 and constituted a further revision (FEI3). The revision also showed a bus, pedestrian and cycle only access from Grove Lane to supplement the main access onto the A419 which was revised to show realigned access arrangements to the southern and northern parcels. In addition the illustrative layout drawings were revised to accord generally with the winner of the applicants design competition, Zaha Hadid Architects.



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The result of the acoustic study submitted by the applicant's agents was judged, by officers and our specialist consultant, unsatisfactory to mitigate the acoustic effects on William Morris House. Officers informed the applicants late in 2017 that, as submitted, the scheme would likely be recommended for refusal on acoustic grounds irrespective of other issues that had not been fully considered at that date.

THE APPLICATION TO BE DETERMINED.

In December 2017 the applicant radically revised the submitted proposal to the scheme now under consideration. Whilst the built development component altered, the application site in terms of the red line and three distinct parcels remained the same totalling some 39.5ha.

The development is now:

'5,000 capacity football stadium and other ancillary uses (Use Class D2); two full-sized grass pitches and a goal practice area (Use Class D2); car parking for cars and coaches and highways improvements to the A419 including a signalised site junction and combined cycle/footway. All matters are reserved save for access.'

The application remains in outline form with only the details of the access submitted. An indicative Masterplan has been submitted, together with key parameters for the development as now envisaged. The Green Technology Hub/employment land and the office space have been removed from the proposal. No development is proposed within the southern section, to the south of the A419 apart from the highway mitigation, including hedge translocation. This area will remain in agricultural use.

The sports hub on the southern parcel was modified in extent and content and moved to occupy the entire northern parcel. The parking area of some 1700 spaces is proposed to include provision for cars, coaches and cycles. The area will also include facilities for disabled users and a local stage bus pick up and drop off points.

The proposal now comprises the following development:

- * A football stadium with a seating capacity for 5000 spectators
- * Two full size grass practice pitches
- * One goal practice area
- * A car park for 1700 vehicles.

The illustrative material submitted shows the proposed stadium as the primarily new build structure on the application site with the applicants' stated intention that it will become the new home for Forest Green Rovers, who are currently based at The New Lawn in Nailsworth. Therefore, within the proposed stadium ancillary facilities are also proposed, namely;

- * Club shop
- * Health and fitness facilities
- * Conference facilities
- * Training and staff offices
- * Changing facilities
- * Function and bar areas.



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The club is seeking to produce a highly sustainable building with Zaha Hadid Architects having been appointed and has provided the indicative designs and visualisation. The building is proposed to be low carbon and low impact, with measures introduced to minimise energy use, water, waste and pollution. The revised Design and Access statement demonstrates in illustrative figures and text form the evolution of the overall innovative wood design, and the measures that are proposed to be incorporated to ensure a sustainable and 'green' building is produced.

These, together with figures showing the overall master plan, illustrative strategic landscaping details and parameter height and illustrative sections through the site, have been submitted to demonstrate the anticipated design that the applicant envisages and how it reacts and relates to the local context.

The proposed stadium is an indicative oval shape, 159m long and 144m wide with an indicative maximum height of 19.5m. The illustrative landscaping has been specifically designed to form a parkland landscape setting to the stadium. For illustrative purposes the potential degree of changes to existing levels in the car park and landscaped areas have also been indicated and this results in generally only modest changes of levels for these areas.

The illustrative landscaping proposals at the northern boundary of the development site adjoining existing houses on Grove Lane show orchard and hedgerow planting and a landscaped bund which provide separation from the car park and main stadium area. On the southern side of the development site adjoining the motorway junction two ponds are proposed with species-rich areas of grassland and parkland. The large areas of landscaping to provide boundary treatment for the stadium are envisaged within the illustrative material. This is produced in part by the trans-planting of existing hedgerows on the site, thus mitigating the overall loss of hedgerow.

The vehicle parking area is shown as being laid out with a significant level of tree planting on the illustrative layouts/visualisations and with further translocation of existing vegetation.

The sole matter not reserved for future applications is access. The main access is to be gained from the A419 with a new signalised junction, including signal controlled pedestrian and cycle crossing. As part of the highway mitigation package it is also proposed to fully dual the A419 from the M5 Junction 13 to Chipmans Platt with a combined footway cycleway on the south side of the A419 which will link to National Cycle Route 45 (NCN45) at Grove Lane. Improvement to the M5 junction roundabout lining are also outlined. A secondary pedestrian, public service vehicle and cyclist entry point only is shown off Grove Lane. The provision of sustainable transport is also part of the proposal with match day transport proposed and, whilst not now proposed, a possible informal park and ride has also been discussed.

Since the revised proposal was submitted in December 2017 and following discussions several submissions of 'Further Environmental Information' (FEIs) have been received. These have included further information and updates on the landscape impact, justification, noise issues and the highway assessment and mitigation (FEI 4-8).



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Additional ecological information has also been submitted with the western area again being proposed as a Nature Conservation Area (FEI 7). The indicative Green Infrastructure Plan and Indicative Concept Masterplan show the whole of the area west of the M5 with further nature conservation enhancements including orchard planting and appropriate ecological management.

Submitted information

The revised scheme was accompanied with a new Environmental Impact Assessment, though this drew on work done previously relating to the previous iterations of the scheme. The EIA now supporting the application has been undertaken in accordance with the 2011 EIA regulations, however, the 2017 regulations contain additional matters which would, had the original application been submitted at a later date, have been required to be assessed in line with those regulations. The applicants have stated that they have in any event assessed additional matters which would have been required under the 2017 regulations.

The Environmental Statement (ES) assesses the likely environmental impacts from the development during its construction and its operation. It also assesses the cumulative impacts from other developments.

The revised Environmental Statement now comprises the following subject areas:

- * Archaeology and Cultural Heritage
- * Ecology and Nature Conservation
- * Flood Risk, Hydrology and Drainage
- * Landscape and Visual Impact
- * Scio-economics
- * Transport and Access
- * Air Quality and Dust
- * Lighting
- * Noise and Vibration
- * Climate Change
- * Major Accident and Disasters
- * Cumulative Effects

Officers are satisfied that the information submitted within the revised Environmental Statement is sufficient to consider the potential environmental impacts of the development.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

2015/1820/EIAS - Proposed mixed use development for a sports and green technology centre, known as "Eco Park" comprising of a sports complex including transport hub with park and ride, green technology hub and nature conservation area. EIA Required – 30 Sept 2015

SITES INSPECTION PANEL

All members of the Development Control Committee were invited on the Sites Inspection Panel (SIP) visit on Tuesday 28th May 2019 with 7 members in attendance. This was a closed meeting for Members and Officers of Stroud District Council to inspect the site and locally important locations.



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Both Ward Councillors were invited with Cllr Stephen Davies attending.

The panel started at Pick Lock and walked along the footpath/former canal towpath and convened on Westfield bridge to identify the Industrial Heritage Conservation Area (IHCA) the former route of the canal, its potential restoration and associated buildings and features. This included views in and out of the Conservation Area.

The position of the site, including the proposed built footprint and other key local identifying features like the A419, M5 and River Frome were noted along with the local landscape character. The local footpath network was also noted.

The position and proximity of the William Morris College was also appreciated.

The panel reconvened at the field entrance adjacent to the layby to the North of the A419 to appreciate the onsite elements, use, levels, vegetation and location etc.

The site was then observed from Grove Lane, noting the Land West of Stonehouse development, the local character of Westend and Nupend and the Listed buildings and their setting and the local views along Grove Lane and the elevated motorway bridge towards Whitminster.

The panel reconvened at Haresfield Beacon to appreciate the wider landscaping setting and the position of the site. This included the view from the Cotswold escapement, the AONB and Cotswold Way and identified the site within the proposed landscape setting including its relationship with nearby landmarks and developments.

REPRESENTATIONS

Statutory Consultees:

January 2016. Original submission

Eastington Parish Council: Object - Conflict with Local Plan, IHCA impact, not sustainable, loss of employment from town centre, landscape impact, benefits over stated. Attached their highways consultant report, questions the data and conclusions.

Stonehouse Town Council: Support but concerns about traffic. Walking and cycling enhancements required.

Moreton Valence Parish Council: Concern about traffic, noise and light pollution.

Arlingham Parish Council: Concern about flooding and traffic concern.

Nailsworth Town Council: No observations.

Standish Parish Council: Object - contrary to Local Plan, traffic, parking, need

Stroud Town Council: Comment - Request a Park and Ride

Cainscross Parish: Object - Contrary to Local Plan, A419 congestion, risk of taking employment out of Stroud.

Leonard Stanley Parish Council: Support but need to get support for the canal restoration, A419 improvements welcome, nature conservation should be enhanced.

Wychavon District Council: No comment

South Glos Council: Concern about strategic highway implications.



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Highways England: Holding objection
Sustrans: Transport proposals lack ambition
Stagecoach: Potential for bus improvements, welcome A419 dualling.
Stagecoach: Ongoing discussion with applicants
GCC Public Rights of Way: Implications for existing footpaths.

Environment Agency: No objections but make comments on the supporting information
GCC Lead Flood Authority: No objections subject to conditions
Severn Trent: No objections subject to conditions
SDC Water Services Engineer: Defer to Lead Flood Authority

Historic England: Some concerns, planning balance required.
County Archaeologist: No objection subject to condition
Cotswold Conservation Board: Potential to have a negative impact on AONB, visible from several viewpoints,

Natural England: No comment but defer to Cotswold Conservation Board on landscape.
Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust: Highlight importance of ecological potential of the area.
CPRE: Objection. Relocation benefits not proven, other sites, Environmental Statement does not support.
Need for landscaping, materials important, needs careful consideration.
Cotswold Canals Trust: Willing to discuss Section 106

Sport England: "Unable to support", need further information
F.A.: General support but needs further information.
Glos Playing Field Assoc: No supporting evidence on need, impact on existing facilities, question management of facilities, question financial viability.
Active Gloucestershire: Support. Welcome opportunity.
Gloucestershire Schools F.A. Support. Welcome opportunity.

Contaminated Land Officer: No objection subject to condition
EHO Noise needs further research, but otherwise recommends condition

GCC Planning: Question ecology, need to respect rights of way.
Gloucestershire Constabulary: Offer advice on crime protection

William Morris House: Concern about access arrangements, noise, lighting, privacy.

Further Environmental Information (FEI 1) Revised Information September 2016

Eastington Parish Council (Highway consultants): Question transport study
Eastington Parish Council (Planning consultants): Neighbourhood Plan in place, contrary to settlement pattern, IHCA harm.
Cainscross Parish Council: Objection: increase in parking, design unsympathetic

Historic England: No further comments
Environment Agency: No further comments



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Sport England: Support
Natural England: No further comments
GCC Planning: Lighting implications on ecology

Highways England: Holding objection
Sport England: No further comments
EHO: Satisfied on lighting

Glos Wildlife Trust: Note surveys undertaken. Opportunities for enhancement. Considerable potential
CPRE: Still unacceptable, case not proven, contrary to Local Plan.
Cotswold Canals Trust: Concern about implications for restoration
SVCC: concern about canal restoration opportunities.

FEI 2 - March 2017

Stroud Town Council: Recommend a Park and Ride.
Sport England: No further comments
Natural England: Question landscape impact not any comment on ecology.
Historic England: Concerns - questions future implications for canal, pitches and car parking will be obtrusive.

FEI 3 - August 2017

Quedgeley Town Council: Agree with Highways England.
Cainscross Parish Council: Concern about traffic congestion.

Highways England: Holding objection
Historic England: No further comments
County Archaeologist: No objection
Sport England: No further comments
Environment Agency: No further comments
Contaminated Land Officer: No objection

Revised scheme Dec 2017 and FEI 4 - May 2018 (Movement of stadium as revised December 2017)

Easington Parish Council: Objection – Contrary to Local Plan and NDP, does not reflect existing character and settlement pattern, cumulative impact with Land west of Stonehouse. Sustainable benefits over-stated. No robust sequential test of alternative sites.

Stroud Town Council: Cycling provision disappointing.
Frampton Parish Council: Object. Contrary to Local Plan, impact on William Morris House, highways.
Arlingham Parish Council: Same capacity stadium, highway concerns.

Historic England: No objection
County Archaeologist: No objection, recommend conditions

Lead Flood Authority: No objection, recommend conditions



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Environment Agency: No objection.

Wales and West Utilities: No adverse comment, show maps of pipelines.

Contaminated Land Officer: No objection, subject to condition.

EHO: Noise still under consideration, otherwise conditions recommended including biomass boiler.

Natural England: No further comments.

Cotswold Canals Trust: Towpath will be a benefit

Sport England: No objection.

Highways Agency: Holding objection.

CPRE: Object, stadium is unnecessary, contrary to Local Plan, large scale building, in isolated countryside.

SDC Building Control Officer: No objection, applications for reserved matters will need to address risks of fire but stadium will be subject to safety at sports grounds requirements as well as the FA's licensing requirements.

FEI 5 22 May 2018 (Travel plan, highway information Transport and biodiversity)

Eastington Parish Council: Object: Capacity at Chipmans Platt roundabout, contrary to NDP, erodes green buffer, noise nuisance, and other sites should be considered, contrary to Local Plan.

Stroud Town Council: No objection.

Eastington Parish Council: Objection. Unsightly expanse of car parking, loss of hedges, need to re-route footpaths, site selection needs to be re-done (alternative sites) , undermine green buffer for Stonehouse, impact on AONB, impact on listed buildings, impact on IHCA, contrary to Local Plan.

Stroud Town Council: No further comments.

Nailsworth Town Council: Contrary to Local Plan.

Stonehouse Town Council: Impact needs to be quantified and could be mitigated by sustainable transport.

Standish Parish Council: Objection, increase in traffic

Highways England: No objection subject to conditions.

GCC Highways: Acknowledge traffic surveys and revised Traffic Impact Assessment and Travel Plan. No objection subject to condition.

Natural England: No further comments

Historic England: No objection

County Archaeologist: No objection subject to condition

Environment Agency: No objection

Ministry of Defence: No objection.

G First LEP: Support: Landmark design, will promote local economy, training opportunities and links to colleges.

EHO. As previous comments.

Contaminated Land Officer: No objection subject to condition

FEI 6 & 7 August 2018 (Noise, highway impact, ecology)

Eastington Parish Council: objection. Hedgerow retention still not clear, stadium could be re-sited to improve ecology, question acoustic barrier, noise is still an important consideration, loss of biodiversity, contrary to NDP.



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Stonehouse Town Council: Traffic concern. Noise management required for William Morris House.

Standish Parish Council: Remain unconvinced about highway impact.

Forest of Dean District Council: No objection.

Sport England: No comment.

Natural England: No further comments

Historic England: No further comments.

GCC Public rights of Way: Some diversion required.

EHO: WYG consultants (on behalf of SDC) are considering noise

CPRE: Objection, works to A419 will be harmful

FE1 8 December 2018 (Noise, landscape, ecology, sustainability, design, materials, travel plan, concept master plan, supporting information).

Eastington Parish Council: Object: Traffic, Junction 13 will be unsafe, accumulative impact on network, loss of hedging will harm ecology, noise impacts will be significant, contrary to Local Plan, biodiversity/geo-diversity/landscape/historic environment/flooding and efficient land use are all critical. Dualling of the A419 will be harmful; the area is a "green bridge". Concept plan does not show sufficient consideration of bio-diversity, stadium could be better sited elsewhere particularly Cam/Dursley, private sporting venue not for public use, outside settlement boundary, contrary to NDP.

Stonehouse Town Council: Need for sustainable transport measures, canal implications need to be considered, noise must be investigated.

Nailsworth Town Council: Support the position of Eastington Parish Council asking to call in the application to the Secretary of State for the Environment.

Sport England: No further comments

Natural England: No further comments

Environment Agency: No further comments

Historic England: No further comments

County Archaeologist: No further comments

Glos CC Public Rights of Way: Need for some diversions.

Lead Flood Authority: No further comments

EHO: Recommends conditions

Public comments

Approximately 500 responses have been received. Most were to the original submission, with less comment on the revised submission whereby the stadium was moved and employment area deleted. There are more responses of objection than support overall. The issues raised include:

Original submission

Support:

Pressing need for the new stadium, close to West of Stonehouse and nearby settlements, could help canal restoration, existing stadium will provide affordable homes, club will be more efficient with the pitches, boost local economy, help progress in football league, improvement to cycle routes, support youth/ladies teams, promote knowledge/education, help club



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progress, exemplar design, one off opportunity, access to existing stadium is difficult, lack of car parking at existing.

Also received:

470 signed pre-printed cards (some with comments as summarised above) in support.

Neutral:

Opportunity for park and ride, car parking fees important for spill over parking, opportunity to improve Sustrans link, need to improve walking facilities, need links to Stonehouse Station, buffer needed to Grove lane, reed bed would help sewage, low grade agricultural land, disabled spaces needed, commercial space is needed, road signage important.

Objection:

Loss of countryside, loss of agricultural land, M5 junction impact, flooding as site is on lias clay, likely to shift jobs from other areas, traffic lights will impair flows, road network already congested, too much short cutting through Eastington, lack of car parking, AONB impact, sewage problems, should be sited at Javelin Park, poor accident record at M5 and A419, should be used for other sports, "green belt", light pollution, refusal and appeal dismissed for rugby ground elsewhere, will look out of place, archaeology (crossing point in Roman times), archaeology (Roman Villa), impact on business in Stroud and Nailsworth, carbon footprint, section 106 requirements on existing stadium, not necessary, contrary to NDP, existing stadium only 10 years old, set a precedent, contrary to Local Plan, impact on William Morris House, lack of public transport, should be brownfield first, dimensions are questionable, phone coverage inadequate, impact during construction, impact of flashing headlights, danger to horse riders, financial benefits are already in the economy, 3D model is unrepresentational, employment area will be an eyesore, impact of pollution, set a precedent, lead to relocation of Ecotricity Offices, harmful to IHCA, Eastington has its own football club, need to re-open Stonehouse station, cost of parking, litter, loss of dairy land.

Also received:

A petition of 577 signatures in objection.

Revised plans (relocation of stadium north of A419 and deletion of employment area)

Support: Opportunity, green credentials, employment benefit, potential to support canal restoration, benefit to youth teams, social benefit, problems of existing stadium.

Neutral: Consider transport opportunities.

Objection: Traffic, contrary to Local Plan, landscape impact, lack of accessibility, contrary to Eastington NDP, no benefit to economy, set a precedent, pollution, outside settlement limits, noise, accident record, pollution, M5 congestion, litter, nuisance during construction, other sites including Cam/Dursley Station.

NATIONAL AND LOCAL PLANNING POLICIES

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Revised Feb 2019.

Available to view at:



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<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

The NPPF sets out Government planning policy for England and how it should be applied. The Framework sets the context for Policy and planning decision making on development proposals. The NPPF reminds the reader that in accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, applications for planning permission are determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Framework sets out that the bedrock of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. To achieve this objective Paragraph 11 of the Framework requires that decisions on planning applications should be applied with a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision making this means accordance with Section 38(6), namely approving development proposals in accordance with up-to-date development plans without delay.

In circumstances where there are no relevant Development Plan policies or the policies which are important for determining the applications are out-of-date granting permission without delay unless:

- i. The application of policies in this framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed, or
- ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in (the) Framework as a whole”

The policies referred to in i. above are, inter alia of relevance to the application, those within the Framework relating to habitat, sites of special scientific interest, areas of outstanding natural beauty and heritage assets including archaeological interest.

Paragraph 8 of the NPPF sets out the three objective elements to the achievement of sustainable development namely, economic, social and environmental. The application of each of element to the achievement of sustainable development needs to be considered in mutually supportive ways, so that the resulting consideration can secure net gains within each element. Paragraph 9 of the NPPF warns that the three dimensions of sustainable development are not criteria against which every development proposal should be judged but play a role in guiding development to sustainable solutions, within the local context.

The economic dimension requires consideration of how a development proposal would assist in building a strong, responsive and competitive economy.

The social objective seeks to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities by encouraging well designed and safe built environment, with accessible services which reflect current and future need for communities health, social and cultural well being.

The environmental objective seeks development to support the achievement of the protection and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment; Ensuring the prudent use of natural resources, minimising waste and pollution and mitigating and adapting to climate change and a low carbon economy.



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Each of the three objectives will be considered below in the context of the NPPF:

The Economic Objective

Chapter 6 of the NPPF amplifies and expands on the economic aspects of sustainable development. Paragraph 80 advises that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and the need to create conditions in which business can invest, expand and adapt. Paragraph 84 recognises that development in rural areas seeking leisure land uses may occur outside or adjacent to existing settlements. However such proposals will need to ensure the development is sensitive to its surroundings, produces no unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits opportunities to make the development sustainable by improving access. Sites well related to existing settlements 'should be encouraged'.

Chapter 9 of the NPPF at paragraph 108 and subsequent paragraphs sets out how development proposals in term of sustainable transport should be considered. Sustainable transport mode opportunities should be grasped, coupled with the provision of safe and suitable access to the site for all users. Impacts from development on the transport network in terms of capacity, congestion and highway safety can be mitigated.

Paragraph 109 warns that;

'Development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe'.

The following paragraph (110) advises that first priority be given in any development proposal is to cycle and pedestrian movements, then secondly to public transport. The needs of persons with disabilities and reduced mobility also must be addressed. Applications for development should create safe secure and attractive places where conflict between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles is avoided; such places should also make provision for access for deliveries and for the emergency services. Development should be designed to enable re-fuelling provision for plug in and other low emission vehicles.

The Social Objective

Chapter 8 of the NPPF focuses on the social aspects of creating places. Paragraph 91 encourages positive decisions which promote social interaction in a safe and accessible location. Decisions on the social objective should enable and support a healthy lifestyle. The following paragraph (92) sets out what relevant planning decisions should seek to achieve including:

- * Plan positively for the provision of inter alia community facilities, including sports venues, and
- * take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well being for all sections of the community.

The Environmental Objective

The environmental objectives of the NPPF encompass both the design and in particular the sustainability of built structures to contribute to mitigating climate change (Paragraph 124 and Chapter 14 refers) and impact on the natural, and historic environment. Chapter 12 at paragraph 131 dealing with the built environment aspect considers that;



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'In determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area'. However, the same paragraph cautions that designs should fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.

Turning to the sustainable transport aspect of the environmental objective, the NPPF policy for this matter is contained in Chapter 9 of the document. The policy requires that the environmental impact of traffic and transport are identified and taken into account and opportunities to mitigate negative impacts and for net gains are made. Constituent matters to be considered with respect to this application are air quality, noise, opportunities to influence modal split and utilisation of public transport and low emission vehicles.

The NPPF deals at Chapter 15 with the natural environment and requires that planning authorities refuse development which results in loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats. The NPPF encourages within development opportunities the incorporation of biodiversity improvements, in particular ones which can secure a measurable gain.

The NPPF notes that development schemes do not enjoy the presumption in favour of sustainable development where the proposals have a significant effect on a habitat. (Paragraph 177 refers). The environmental effect of development on ground conditions and pollution also form part of the environmental sustainable objective and the need to minimise impact.

A further constituent of the environmental objective of sustainable development is the impact of development on heritage assets and the historic environment. Chapter 16 of the NPPF considers these matters. The Policy advises that development proposals should contain a description of the impact on any heritage asset affected with a level of detail proportional to the importance of the asset. The settings of any identified assets are also required to be considered. Paragraph 193 of the NPPF advises planning authorities on how to consider the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a heritage asset: 'Great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm'. In the case of non-designated heritage assets such as impact on Conservation Areas the policy is clear, Paragraph 197 states; 'The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset'.

Stroud District Local Plan adopted 2015.

The Stroud District Local Plan was adopted in November 2015. This covers the whole District. The Plan is being reviewed and has just completed its consultation on the emerging strategy.

Policies together with the preamble text and associated supplementary planning documents are available to view on the Councils website:

www.stroud.gov.uk/localplan



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Local Plan policies considered for this application include:

CP1 – Presumption in favour of sustainable development.

CP2 – Strategic growth and development locations.

CP3 – Settlement Hierarchy.

CP4 – Place Making.

CP5 – Environmental development principles for strategic growth.

CP6 – Infrastructure and developer contributions.

CP7 – Lifetime communities.

CP11 – New employment development.

CP13 – Demand management and sustainable travel measures.

CP14 – High quality sustainable development.

EI11 – Promoting sport, leisure and recreation.

EI12 – Promoting transport choice and accessibility.

EI13 – Protecting and extending our cycle routes.

EI16 – Provision of public transport facilities.

ES1 – Sustainable construction and design.

ES2 – Renewable or low carbon energy generation.

ES3 – Maintaining quality of life within our environmental limits.

ES4 – Water resources, quality and flood risk.

ES5 – Air quality.

ES6 – Providing for biodiversity and geodiversity.

ES7 – Landscape character.

ES8 – Trees, hedgerows and woodlands.

ES10 – Valuing our historic environment and assets.

ES11 – Maintaining, restoring and regenerating the District's Canals.

ES12 – Better design of places.

The most pertinent elements of the principle policies are highlighted below in the descriptive preambles.

CP1 Presumption In Favour Of Sustainable Development

This is an all-encompassing policy which sets out principles and objectives for every development. It echoes paragraph 8 of the Framework (NPPF). Sustainability is also its key intent.

It rightly makes reference to the need to accord with Local Plan Policies. But then continues where there are no relevant policies that any adverse impacts need to be considered against the benefits.

The policy states:

'When considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. It will always work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.'



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Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Local Plan (and, where relevant, with policies in neighbourhood plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking into account whether:

1. Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or
2. Specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted'.

CP15 A Quality Living Countryside

This applies outside settlements and similarly the adopted Local Plan does not allocate the application site for development. The proposal contravenes this policy. The starting point of the upper case policy emphasises the need to protect the separate character of settlements and the quality of the countryside (including its built and natural heritage). There are a few very stringent exceptions which include enabling development to maintain a heritage asset or involve essential community facilities. The policy continues that development will only be permitted where there is no heritage impact, no excessive encroachment.

The emerging Local Plan strategy does allocate the stadium site for that use but has limited status at this stage.

Policy CP15 states:

'In order to protect the separate identity of settlements and the quality of the countryside (including its built and natural heritage), proposals outside identified settlement development limits will not be permitted except where these principles are complied with:

1. It is essential to the maintenance or enhancement of a sustainable farming or forestry enterprise within the District; and/or
2. It is essential to be located there in order to promote public enjoyment of the countryside and support the rural economy through employment, sport, leisure and tourism; and/or
3. It is a 'rural exception site', where development is appropriate, sustainable, affordable and meets an identified local need; and/or
4. It is demonstrated that the proposal is enabling development, required in order to maintain a heritage asset of acknowledged importance; and/or
5. It is a replacement dwelling; and/or
6. It will involve essential community facilities.

Where development accords with any of the principles listed above, it will only be permitted in the countryside if:

- i) It does not have an adverse impact on heritage assets and their setting;
- ii) It does not lead to excessive encroachment or expansion of development away from the original buildings;
- iii) In the case of proposals to re-use an existing building or buildings, these are appropriately located and capable and worthy of conversion. Any such conversion will involve a building that positively contributes to an established local character and sense of place. In the case of replacement buildings they must bring about environmental improvement; or



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- iv) In the case of extensions to buildings, it does not result in an inappropriate increase in the scale, form or footprint of the original building; or
- v) In the case of replacement dwellings the proposal must bring about environmental improvements and not result in an inappropriate increase in the bulk, scale, form or footprint of the original building; or
- vi) In the case of new buildings for essential community facilities, they cannot be accommodated within the identified settlement development limits or through the re-use or replacement of an existing building'.

E11 Promoting Sport, Leisure And Recreation

This general policy can be considered as being relevant, since it deals with the generality of sports facilities. It requires them to be located respectfully to settlements or meeting a rural need. It also requires that such developments would not harm the character and appearance of the area.

The Policy states:

'Planning applications for new sports, cultural, leisure and recreational facilities, or improvements and extensions to existing facilities will be permitted provided:

1. The proposals are connected to and associated with existing facilities, they are located at a site that relates well to the settlement hierarchy in the District or they are intended to meet specific rural needs that cannot be appropriately met at settlements within the settlement hierarchy
2. The development would not harm the character, appearance and amenities of the area
3. The development can be made readily accessible to adequate bus, cycling and walking links, for the benefit of non-car users
4. Cycle/vehicle access and on-site cycle/vehicle parking would be provided to the adopted standards
5. Adequate access to and between the facilities would be provided for people with disabilities
6. Any biodiversity interest is enhanced by taking opportunities to create a network of multi-functional green spaces, which support the locality's natural and ecological processes
7. It is not subject to any other overriding environmental or other material planning constraints'.

CP14 High Quality Sustainable Development

This is an all-encompassing policy applicable to all development. It has some specific requirement criteria. Criterion 8 requires the retention and enhancement of important landscape and geological features, biodiversity interests including trees, hedgerows and other natural features.

The Policy states:

'High quality development, which protects conserves and enhances the built and natural environment, will be supported. Development will be supported where it achieves the following:

1. Sustainable construction techniques, including facilities for the recycling of water and waste, measures to minimise energy use and maximise renewable energy production



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2. No unacceptable levels of air, noise, water, light or soil pollution or exposure to unacceptable risk from existing or potential sources of pollution. Improvements to soil and water quality will be sought through the remediation of land contamination, the provision of SuDS and the inclusion of measures to help waterbodies to meet good ecological status
3. Adequate water supply, foul drainage and sewage capacity to serve the development and satisfactory provision of other utilities, transport and community infrastructure
4. No increased risk of flooding on or off the site, and inclusion of measures to reduce the causes and impacts of flooding as a consequence of that development
5. An appropriate design and appearance, which is respectful of the surroundings, including the local topography, built environment and heritage
6. Re-use of previously developed land and/or the adaptation of existing buildings that make a positive contribution to the character of the site and surroundings, unless demonstrably unviable
7. No unacceptable adverse effect on the amenities of neighbouring occupants
8. Contribute to the retention and enhancement of important landscape & geological features, biodiversity interests (including trees, hedgerows and other natural features)
9. Contribute to a sense of place both in the buildings and spaces themselves and in the way in which they integrate with their surroundings including appropriate landscaping, biodiversity enhancement, open space and amenity space
10. A design and layout that aims to assist crime prevention and community safety, without compromising other design principles
11. Efficiency in terms of land use, achieving higher development densities in locations that are more accessible by public transport and other non-car modes and where higher densities are compatible with the character of the area and the setting of the development
12. It is not prejudicial to the development of a larger area in a comprehensive manner
13. Safe, convenient and attractive accesses on foot and by cycle and suitable connections with existing footways, bridleway, cycleways, local facilities and public transport
14. It is at a location that is near to essential services and good transport links to services by means other than motor car.

Major development should contribute to the provision for allotments and/or community gardens where there is an identified need.

Development proposals will be required to demonstrate how they have responded to the above criteria through the submission of Design and Access Statements and relevant technical reports. It is important that the applicant provides clear and informative plans, elevations and street scenes and, where required, Masterplans, Development Briefs, Concept Statements and Design Codes to show how these criteria have been taken into account where necessary'.

ES7 Landscape Character

In all locations development proposals should conserve and enhance the special features and diversity of different landscape character types. The site is within the Severn Vale, which does not have AONB status but is nonetheless distinct and well regarded. The Council's Stroud Landscape Assessment notes this is a varied landscape ranging from open plain to more undulating landform towards the limestone escarpment. It is identified as "rich rural lowland", with "dispersed pattern of isolated villages", whereby "the churches act as strong



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foci and landmarks". The document also notes the "need to protect river valley and wetland landscapes" and to control "sporadic development along the major routes".

This policy also mentions the setting of the AONB. "On land that may affect its setting priority will be given to the conservation and enhancement of the conservation and enhancement of the natural and scenic beauty of the landscape". Having said that, the proposal impacts more on the immediate area, the Severn Vale, particularly as the AONB impacts are more on outward views.

The Policy states:

'Within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), or on land that may affect its setting, priority will be given to the conservation and enhancement of the natural and scenic beauty of the landscape whilst taking account of the biodiversity interest and the historic and cultural heritage. Major development will not be permitted unless it is demonstrated to be in the national interest and that there is a lack of alternative sustainable development sites.

In all locations development proposals should conserve or enhance the special features and diversity of the different landscape character types found within the District. Priority will be given to the protection of the quality and diversity of the landscape character. Development will only be permitted if all the following criteria are met:

1. The location, materials, scale and use are sympathetic and complement the landscape character; and
2. Natural features including trees, hedgerows and water features that contribute to the landscape character and setting of the development should be both retained and managed appropriately in the future.

Opportunities for appropriate landscaping will be sought alongside all new development, such that landscape type key characteristics are strengthened.

The Stroud District Landscape Assessment will be used when determining applications for development within rural areas'.

ES10 Valuing Our Historic Environment And Assets

This requires the "conservation and enhancement of the setting of heritage assets", particularly "those elements which contribute to the distinct identity of the District".

The Policy states:

'Stroud District's historic environment will be preserved, protected or enhanced, in accordance with the principles set out below:

1. Any proposals involving a historic asset shall require a description of the heritage asset significance including any contribution made by its setting, and an assessment of the potential impact of the proposal on that significance, using appropriate expertise. This can be a desk based assessment and a field evaluation prior to determination where necessary and should include the Gloucestershire Historic Environment Record.



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2. Proposals and initiatives will be supported which conserve and, where appropriate, enhance the heritage significance and setting of the Districts heritage assets, especially those elements which contribute to the distinct identity of the District. These include:

A. The 68 sites of national archaeological importance (which are designated as Ancient Monuments), any undesignated archaeology of national significance, and the many buildings that are Listed as having special architectural or historic interest

B. The stone, bronze, iron age and roman settlements and remains; the medieval settlements including Berkeley Castle; historic houses; historic parks; gardens and villages

C. The townscapes of the larger towns such as Stroud where the industrial heritage influenced its historic grain, including its street layouts and plot sizes

D. The District's historic market towns and villages, many with designated conservation areas, such as Berkeley, Wotton Under Edge, Minchinhampton, Painswick and Dursley.

3. Proposals will be supported which protect and, where appropriate, enhance the heritage significance and setting of locally identified heritage assets, such as buildings of local architectural or historic interest, locally important archaeological sites and parks and gardens of local interest.

4. Proposals will be supported which protect and, where appropriate, enhance key views and vistas, especially of the spires and towers of historic churches and mills.

5. Any harm or loss would require clear and convincing justification to the relevant decision-maker as to why the heritage interest should be overridden. A full programme of work shall be submitted with the application, together with proposals to mitigate any adverse impact of the proposed development, and where appropriate, be implemented through measures secured by planning condition(s) or through a legal agreement.

A full programme of work shall be submitted with the application, together with proposals to mitigate any adverse impact of the proposed development, and where appropriate, be implemented through measures secured by planning condition(s) or through a legal agreement'.

ES11 Maintaining, Restoring And Regenerating The District's Canal

This very specific policy encourages the restoration of the canal.

It has other relevance too, in terms of the impact of the stadium. "All developments must respect their (the canal's) character, setting, biodiversity and historic value as well as improving and enhancing views along and from the canals".

Development on the route of, or adjacent to, the Stroudwater Navigation, the Thames and Severn Canal or the Gloucester & Sharpness Canal must not prevent the improvement, reconstruction, restoration or continued use of the canals or towpaths.

All developments adjacent to the canals must respect their character, setting, biodiversity and historic value as well as have regard to improving and enhancing views along and from the canals. Environmental improvements to any canal's appearance will include enhancement of its historic and biodiversity value.

In assessing any proposals for development along or in the vicinity of any of the Districts three canals, the Council will have regard to any relevant adopted design guidance.



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Eastington Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan.

The second component of the Development Plan is the adopted Eastington Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan (October 2016). Policies in an NDP are required to be consistent with the NPPF and the adopted Local Plan.

The Plan covers the whole of Eastington Parish in which the development site wholly lies. The NDP overall seeks within its policies to encourage sustainable development and supports the principle of the presumption in favour of sustainable development (Policy EP1). The development site is considered, in line with the Local Plan policies, to be within the open countryside where there is a presumption against development.

Policy EP2 of the Plan requires that development proposals should respect the natural environment and protect and enhance biodiversity.

Policy EP3 mirroring a similar policy in the Local Plan supports the continued restoration of the canal.

Policy EP4 of the Plan sets out further details including design, biodiversity, amenity and heritage that development is required to address.

Policy EP8 requires that development proposals should encourage sustainable means of transport.

The re-routing of existing rights of way caused by development should in terms of Policy EP9 be designed as part of landscaped corridors, but ideally should be protected.

This application should also be considered against:

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Section 66(1) & Section 72(1).

The Stroud District Landscape Assessment S.P.G. (November 2000)

The application site is situated within the Frome River Valley and in part the lowland plain portion of the general area characterised by the document as rolling agricultural plain. This categorisation forms one of the most extensive landscape types within the District.

The Frome valley sub classification is defined by gentle and subtle convex slopes to form a shallow valley that traverses the landscape from east to west and the lowland plain an expansive area of relatively flat land. The built portion of the site is situated on the latter area. The landscape pattern is formed by the river with its damper conditions, and permanent unimproved wet pasture and meadows. The transport routes of the A419 and M5 dissect this lowland landscape.

The document notes that the 'flat and relatively open nature of the rolling agricultural plain and the visibility of this landscape from the AONB make it particularly susceptible to inappropriate development. The document notes that this landscape is under pressure from the expansion of existing settlements.

The document also notes that the distinctive patterns of field enclosure and their geographical distribution are sensitive to changes in land use, reducing the amount of pasture land, hedgerows, and trees. It is particularly noted that 'it is important to retain the pastoral river valley qualities of the River Frome, as there are few landscapes of this nature within the Stroud District'.

A Heritage Strategy for Stroud District (SPA February 2018)



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This Supplementary Planning Advice (SPA) does not set out detailed policy or guidance to supplement the detailed policy contained within the adopted local plan, but seeks to highlight the value and significance of the Districts heritage and the benefits of positive management but supports the adopted Local Plan. The supporting heritage management plan utilising the SPA's objectives and priorities to assist in achieving targeted action.

The document notes that local distinctiveness including within Conservation Areas has been eroded by inter alia economic pressures and standard design, leading to an acceptance of 'normal' design.

The objectives of the SPA are:

- 1 To maximise the contribution that the historic environment makes to the character of the District, its economic well-being, and the quality of life of its communities;
- 2 To identify ways to positively address the issues and pressures that are facing our heritage assets;
- 3 To maximise opportunities for the historic environment to help deliver the District Council's wider corporate objectives, including those of the Local Plan.

The three objectives are all concerned about properly valuing the Historic environment and assets.

The SPA sets out three priorities to assist the Council to capitalise on the historic environment and assets as follows:

- * Exploiting our rich heritage and our high quality historic environment as part of the District's USP and 'place branding'. (Place branding is about communicating and managing the identity and perception of a place).
- * Encouraging all kinds of new development in all parts of the District to use our historic environment as a stimulus to high quality, imaginative design, which carries our distinctive local identity into the 21st century.
- * Nurturing creative and cultural industries, which are a distinctive feature of Stroud District's economy: encouraging existing cross-fertilisation with our heritage and boosting mutual benefits for our historic environment, with particular focus on the re-use of industrial heritage.

The application site's red line adjoins and includes a small area of the Industrial Heritage Conservation Area (IHCA), though the proposed built development footprint is sited some distance from that boundary. The IHCA stretches some 15 miles across the middle of the District, with an area of some 6.7 square kms, tracing the watercourses of the Stroud Valleys, from Framilode on the Severn estuary to Sapperton in the East.

The IHCA is currently assessed as "at Risk" in Historic England's Heritage at risk register and the Council has committed, within the SPA, to the positive management of the District's heritage deemed at risk. The analysis of the material issues section of this report considers the Heritage impact of the development in the context of this and other relevant policies and documents identified and described in this section.

The Industrial Heritage Conservation Area Statement and Design Guide (Supplementary Planning Advice [SPA] November 2008)

The SPA, responding to the designation of Conservation Area in September 1987, and to subsequent extensions in the period 1989 to 2008 considers the whole of the IHCA.



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The SPA characterises the area in which the proposed development is situated as being; 'A fertile, flood prone land within the lower Frome Corridor distinguished by its open rolling landscape'

The area has scattered rural communities which grew from their medieval cores. The IHCA statement notes that the green spaces along the IHCA are as important to its character as the built environment, being the context for the heritage assets but assisting in and understanding of the co-existence of agriculture and industry. The IHCA's spine is a green corridor.

The SPA sets out some key issues of particular relevance to the determination of the development proposed:

'The loss of legibility of historic settlement patterns; particularly the erosion of visual distinction and physical separation between settlement groups and mill complexes.

Loss of local distinctiveness; ... through the proliferation of new build which fails to observe local characteristics and hence has a watering down effect on the distinctiveness of the IHCA's built environment'.

Industrial Heritage Conservation Area Design Guide (SPA November 2008)

This document provides practical design guidance for use in the IHCA and is based on previously published Management proposals for the IHCA issued in 2008. The design guide is used to interpret and apply Local Plan and National Planning Policy.

The document notes the importance of the IHCA as a precious resource and notes that not just the canal side but the wider Conservation Area must be 'boosted' not degraded by new development; noting that if the quality of design is high and this is matched by quality of execution, construction and sustainability and will stand the test of time it will enrich the area. (paragraph 2.7 refers)

The IHCA design guide, building on the paragraph cited above, notes that the question posed by the challenge set out above is 'do the buildings and spaces show excellence in design, and contribute to local character and distinctiveness with the prospect of becoming part of the architectural heritage?'

At Chapter 6 of the SPA issues of scale and new development are considered. In particular at PDG 2 the guide notes that; 'The full impact of large developments or individual bulky/tall buildings on long range views and the setting of existing historic buildings will be a consideration when assessing proposals for development. Particular attention will be given to the effect that such proposals would have on the transition between built form and rural land, especially on the fringes of historic mill sites and small settlement groups. Development which would cause harm to this aspect of the IHCA will not normally be permitted.'

Paragraph 6.16 notes that the integration of new large buildings into the Conservation Area requires careful consideration. The commentary notes that such buildings cannot be hidden but are likely to become 'The landmarks of the future'.

Notwithstanding the desire to achieve local distinctiveness within the Conservation Area the design guide acknowledges the problems with detailing large modern buildings with details taken from smaller historic structures and that this may not be successful, noting at



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Paragraph 7.32 that; 'New big buildings in the Conservation Area may be particularly suited to modern design.'

Stroud District Local Plan Review Emerging Strategy Paper (November 2018)

Following the publication and consultation on the issues and options document, the Council in late 2018, published for consultation, an emerging strategy paper to take forward the review of the adopted Local Plan. This document has now completed its consultation and a final draft plan is proposed to be published in the autumn of 2019. Whilst this document does comprise a material consideration, given the current stage of consideration the weight to be afforded to it is very limited.

The application site is situated within the area defined as Stonehouse within the Stonehouse cluster. The strategy notes that the principal physical constraint is the floodplain along the Frome valley and notes that the preferred direction of growth from a landscape sensitivity perspective is to the west and/or to the north of the settlement. The document considers that land within the application site either side of the A419 between the Chipmans Platt roundabout and the M5 junction 13 contains potential sites for development. The strategy identifies 10ha for employment, canal and open space (PS20a) and 18ha for sports stadium and community uses (PS20b). Although the employment uses are clearly identified with the canal uses, the map in error shows site PS20a as north of the A419 and consequently the stadium is shown to the south of the A419. The intention of the Emerging Strategy was to show the employment and canal uses to the south of the A419 and the stadium site to the north of the A419.

These are shown as potential sites for inclusion within the draft local plan. As a result of public consultation on the Emerging Strategy during winter 2018, site PS20a received 39 supporting representations and 9 objecting representations. Site PS20b received 39 supporting representations and 10 objecting representations.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

MAIN ISSUES

- * Principle of development
- * Highways
- * Landscape And Visual Impact
- * Ecology
- * Trees
- * Design
- * Heritage
- * Residential Amenity
- * Noise
- * Lighting
- * Air Quality
- * Contaminated Land
- * Drainage
- * Agricultural Land
- * Public Sector Equality Duty
- * Obligations



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* Planning Balance And Conclusion

THE PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that the determination of a planning application should be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Local Plan has been adopted and full weight should be given to its contents, in accordance with paragraphs 11 and 12 of the NPPF. There is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (Para 10 NPPF) as applied locally through the policies contained within the Local Plan. Consequently, decision makers should approve proposals that accord with the Local Plan without delay, but should refuse proposed development that conflicts with the Local Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Parish of Eastington has an adopted Neighbourhood Development Plan dating from October 2016. Policies in an adopted NDP are in accordance with the adopted Local Plan. The NDP mirrors the policies in the Local Plan with a presumption against development outside settlement boundaries or the allocated Land West of Stonehouse site.

The application now before the committee has been agreed by the applicant to be contrary to the policies of an up to date plan (email dated 11/01/19 from D Vince to LPA). The application as originally submitted including the employment site was similarly contrary to Development Plan policy.

The amended scheme now shows development only on the northern side of the A419, to include a repositioned football stadium, additional training pitches, with associated car parking, footway/cycleway and transport improvements.

The site is located in the countryside outside the defined settlement limits. To promote sustainable development and protect the quality of the countryside, the separate identify of settlement and avoid coalescence, development is restricted unless it meets the criteria outlined in Policy CP15.

Policy CP15 does allow for sport, leisure and tourism facilities where this protects the quality of the countryside and promotes public enjoyment of the countryside. In this case, whilst suitably designed and located sports pitches may achieve these objectives, it is clear that the character and nature of the development proposed would not be designed to protect the countryside or to promote public enjoyment of the countryside. It would involve a major sports complex which would be incompatible with protecting the countryside.

Whilst the applicant's planning consultant comments regarding the need are noted, the benefits of the scheme and the lack of alternative sites are material considerations that carry weight, however, these do not mean the proposal is in accordance with the Local Plan.

The Local Plan does provide a policy mechanism to support sports facilities with Policy EI11 supporting planning applications for new sports, cultural, leisure and recreational facilities subject to satisfying specific criteria including regard to the settlement hierarchy. In terms of



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overall locational criteria, whilst the new facilities would not be geographically connected to or associated with existing facilities, there is intended to be a functional relationship with the existing FGR stadium in that the new facility would replace and improve upon an existing facility, serving and extending the existing catchment. It is also noted that the training pitches will allow the FGR 1st team and possibly the women's, reserves and youth sections to also train within Stroud District rather than their current training facilities at Chippenham, Wiltshire etc. The club's need is addressed below but the provision of a new high quality facility will have a significant and positive social benefit for the club.

Whilst the site is currently separated from Stonehouse and so does not currently relate well to the settlement hierarchy, the site is adjacent to land allocated for mixed use development (Land West of Stonehouse) which is currently under construction and so, once this development has been completed, it will relate reasonably well to this part of Stonehouse which will contain a local centre and local recreational and community facilities. The separate identity of settlement is not significantly affected.

The supporting information also seeks to gain support from the current shortfall of playing pitches. Whilst our latest Playing Pitch Strategy which will be published shortly is likely to continue to highlight this shortage, particularly with population growth and rapidly expansion in women's football, it is not clear how the scheme addresses the wider sporting need with no clear current community use/accessibility. Whilst it is understood that the primary use will be for FGR and an appropriate management of the pitch and facilities is required, a scheme of structured community engagement/use is required and can be agreed via condition or S106.

The development will fundamentally change the character and appearance of the site itself and to this extent at least will affect the existing character and appearance of the site. Whilst it is accepted that there is potential to develop the site in a positive way, through an architecturally landmark building within a parkland setting, these design matters are reserved at this stage for future consideration, however, the parameters are controlled by the conditions or S106. In terms of public amenity, the development will change the current open land crossed by part of the rural footpath network but the intended uses would enhance sport and recreation facilities both within the local area and within the wider District, where there is an identified shortage of playing pitches in Stonehouse cluster and wider district.

New sports, leisure and recreational facilities should be readily accessible to bus, cycling and walking links. Whilst at some distance from the nearest town centre of Stonehouse, the site is located adjacent to the A419, a major movement corridor in the District, which benefits from regular bus services. Walking and cycling routes to Stonehouse and other destinations are proposed to be enhanced by the provision of a combined footway/cycleway along the south side of the A419. Proposals also involve an extension to local bus services to serve the scheme on match days and options for new proposals for public transport on non match days have been discussed. The supporting statement makes clear that the detailed design of the scheme will provide suitable access and facilities for people with disabilities.

The proposals include the retention of the majority of trees and hedgerows within the site and significant indicative planting is proposed both within the site and around the perimeter. Ecological enhancements have also been proposed as part of the scheme.



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The existing FGR Stadium at the New Lawn, Nailsworth is designated as protected outdoor play space. Policy ES13 allows for the replacement of facilities, provided that there is a net benefit to the community in terms of the quality, availability and accessibility of open space or recreational opportunities. Whilst the consideration of the redevelopment of the existing New Lawn is subject to a separate application, the proposal shows an intention for this development to entirely replace these facilities. The proposed larger and purpose built all-seater stadium with training pitches is superior to the existing provision. Clearly there will be a loss to residents of Nailsworth in terms of access to existing local facilities but the new facilities are likely to be more accessible to a wider catchment within Stroud District and beyond.

The redevelopment of the New Lawn site is currently subject of an undetermined outline planning application for residential use (S.18/0815/OUT). The consideration of this is separate from this new replacement stadium and cannot progress until the new stadium issue has been addressed.

The site is also featured in the Stroud District Local Plan Review, Emerging Strategy Paper dated November 2018 (Site ref: PS20 a & b). This has been published and consulted upon with the detailed analysis of all responses being used to inform the preparation of the draft Plan. The site has been identified as a potential site for a sports stadium, employment, open space and employment uses. However, the weight at this stage to be accorded to this document as a material planning consideration is very limited (Paras 48 & 49 of the NPPF refers to the weighting to be afforded to emerging Plans).

The Need

The proposal seeks a replacement sports facility for Forest Green Rovers football club (FGR) who are currently based at the New Lawn in Forest Green, Nailsworth. This was built when the club was playing in Conference. The applicant has outlined the club's progress up the leagues and that the current stadium and site are a restriction on the future, given the club's ambition to grow and progress further.

The crowd size has increased from 800 in 2010 to an average of 1753 in 2016/17 season. Promotion to League 2 also saw a further raise above the 3000. The team have been in the League 2 promotion playoffs for the last 2 years and are seeking to eventually play in the Championship. The playoff semi final this season had a reported attendance of 4,492. The existing facilities whilst they were built to replace the previous ground 'the Lawn' it does not have much potential to be redeveloped. The Nailsworth site has a restricted size and only provides match day pitch. The practise and training facilities all currently have to be off site. The need for seating and shelter as well as improved hospitality space is also noted and would be difficult to achieve at the existing site. This will increase with the growth and progress of all the teams at the club.

The existing onsite parking and access are also greatly restricted. The onsite car park is limited to approx 150 spaces and whilst a Park and Ride from Renishaws is available for some of the matches this is not an ideal situation. The restricted nature of Tinkley Lane directs traffic through Nailsworth. The local streets in the Forest Green area experience



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significant congestion and parking issues on match days with fans seeking to park close to the stadium. Parking restrictions on the Springhill/Nympsfield Road up to the ground are also sometimes imposed to help manage the situation. The existing location is also not ideal to encourage greater use of cycling or other sustainable forms of public transport due to the gradient and limited space for bus provision.

The applicant has also provided a comparison of the proposed new stadium to the existing stadium at the New Lawn as follows:

	New Lawns	Proposed stadium
Total Fan Capacity	5,011	5,000
Potential expansion#	0	5,000
Seated Fan Capacity	2,020	5,000
Hospitality Space sq m	865	1,785
Spectator Viewing Area sq m	2,500	4,900
Overall interior area sq m	5,000	9,200
On site parking	150 cars + adj school	1700
Sustainable transport	options limited	greater potential in travel plan

(# Any proposal to extend the submitted development to accommodate additional spectators would require a new planning application accompanied by a transport study as well as other relevant studies.)

A new stadium is also an opportunity to embed sustainability into the construction and fabric of the building. This reflects the ethos that is advocated and encouraged at the club and would be easier with a new stadium than a simple upgrading or redevelopment of the existing restricted site.

A cutting edge wooden design would allow sustainable options to be built into the design approach. This includes the provision of a choice of sustainable transport options including cycling and bus and train connections.

The applicant also outlines a social benefit; *'The decision to move rather than simply upgrading or renovating the existing New Lawn stadium is driven by the desire to build a stronger community base. The new ECO Stadium will help to bring together the junior, ladies and men's team strengthening bonds between the different branches of the club'*.

Easington Parish Council has raised concerns about the justification and site selection and suggest a sequential test (NPPF Para 86) should be carried out. As the agent has highlighted, the sequential test required by Para 86 of the revised NPPF relates to town centre uses. Whilst these can have a sport element they refer to more intensive sports activities like bowling and fitness centres. Due to the size of the stadium and/or training pitches this makes it difficult to find a town centre location and none within the nearby towns is evident.

Sport England aim that proposed facilities are fit for purpose and their guidance simply seeks a search with the proposed scale of development and the location of proposed users to



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insure easy access. However, whilst there is not a policy requirement for a formal sequential test, the applicant has looked at alternatives during the selection process with the starting point being the existing site. As addressed above, the restricted nature of the Nailsworth site means the do nothing or the redevelopment of the New Lawn options are not viable to allow the successful future expansion of the ground given the clubs ambition to progress up the Football League.

The location of current season ticket holders has been mapped and a desire for a location within a 10km search area from the existing site outlined. Sensitive locations like existing built up areas, the AONB, and wildlife sites were annotated to help narrow down the selection process with alternatives including employment land at Oldends Lane, Aston Down and Javelin Park considered. It is not evident that any of the alternative sites would be available or suitable to be able to provide a preferable site. They do not appear to be of an appropriate size, form or character which could mitigate the impacts. The proposed site is also near and connected to Stonehouse and the Stroud Valleys, the largest centres of population within the district.

Alternative positions near to Junction 13 have also been considered, with the previous version of the scheme with the stadium to the south of the A419 discounted due to the proximity and harm to the Conservation Area and adjacent neighbours.

A possible Cam/Dursley option has been highlighted by Eastington Parish. Whilst a railway station on the main Gloucester to Bristol line is available this option does not provide a positive access options for the major population areas of the district where current fans are located and was not within the core search area.

The possibility of a ground share with Gloucester City has been raised but with the location differences and the club's need for its own facilities and room to grow and progress it is accepted that this is not a viable long term alternative.

Eastington Parish Council has questioned the local association with their Parish and CPRE have suggested a site nearer Nailsworth would provide a better local connection. Whilst it is acknowledged that FGR does not have a direct relationship with Eastington, the club has a strong and long history and local connection to the district being the highest position in the league and having a wider influence and catchment area than just the Nailsworth/Forest Green area.

A large number of support and objection comments have been received raising the move away from Nailsworth as an issue. Whilst the name of the club current does reflect the location of the ground and the history of the club, the community interest and fan base does extend beyond this part of Nailsworth. There is also no planning consideration or reason why the name and historical geographical location of the club should affect a decision of the proposed location of a new stadium. This would be a decision for the club and their supporters and it is noted that support for a move has also been received from the Forest Green Supporters Club.



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Given the above Officers therefore accept the applicant has carried out the necessary site search and looked at possible alternatives.

Conclusion

The Local Plan and NDP has been adopted therefore full weight should be given to them and the policies contained within in accordance with paragraphs 11 and 12 of the NPPF. There is a presumption in favour of sustainable development as applied locally through the policies contained within the Local Plan. Consequently, decision-makers in line with S38(6) should approve proposals that accord with the Local Plan without delay, but should refuse proposed development that conflicts with the Local Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The principle of additional sport and recreation facilities within the District is supported by the Local Plan and a policy mechanism is also explicit within the Plan to allow for the replacement and if necessary relocation of existing sports facilities provided that certain criteria can be met. To that extent the proposals are in general accordance.

However, the site in question is identified as countryside within the Local Plan and whilst sport and recreation uses can be compatible with rural locations, in this case the nature and scale of the development, involving a large built stadium development with associated parking and hard landscaped circulation areas, is not compatible with the objective and detailed principles of Policy CP15 to protect the quality of the countryside. Similarly the site does is not within an allocation or defined boundary of a settlement within the settlement hierarchy detailed in Policy CP15 and NDP Policy EP1.

Whilst the landscape impact and mitigation of the proposals is addressed below, the principle of development has the potential to fundamentally change the character and appearance of the site itself and have adverse effects in landscape terms within the immediate vicinity of the site.

This is not to say that the development has no merit and the detailed proposals have the scope and ambition to create an attractive development. However, if the proposals are taken as a whole they are considered to be contrary to the Local Plan and the NDP for Eastington and the planning application should be refused, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

As discussed above, the need for a modern fit for purpose FGR stadium to meet football league standards, the potential lack of alternative more suitable locations and the nature and scale and sustainability of the proposals themselves are relevant material considerations to consider within the planning balance which is addressed below.

HIGHWAYS

The application has been the subject of considerable pre and post application discussion with both GCC Highways as the County Highway Authority and Highways England. Whilst this included the previous versions, with the application being significantly varied in December 2017 the following comments relate to the current revised proposal with the principle



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development to the north of the A419. Whilst the application is submitted in outline, access has been submitted for consideration.

Overall, GCC Highways and Highways England consider that the proposal will have effects on capacity of the network but they are not so severe as to warrant a recommendation that planning permission should be withheld on highway grounds.

Proposed Site Access

The proposed access to the site is from the A419. This access comprises a new three arm signalised junction onto the A419, which is also proposed to be dualled from the motorway junction to the Chipmans Platt roundabout. The junction provides two full lanes on each arm of the A419 through the junction and a long left turn filter lane from the west and a flared two lane right turn facility from the east. The details of the junction also provide facilities for cyclists and pedestrians to cross over the dualled A419. These are provided over the eastern arm of the junction to meet desire lines. A previous iteration of the scheme showed a footbridge which has now been deleted. The site access provides a full right turn lane and a 2 full left turn lanes from the site. GCC as the Local Highway Authority have concluded from the submitted modelling and safety audit that the detailed design of the site access will operate within absolute capacity, i.e. all arms under 100% saturated, in all scenarios.

The Highway Authority note that the usage of the site access arm on the A419 will be occasional, meaning that for the majority of the time the A419 will be afforded a continuous green signal and comprise two full lanes in each direction. This represents a significant improvement to the current situation on this stretch of road, between Junction 13 and Chipmans Platt to the benefit of capacity during network peak times.

Chipmans Platt Roundabout

Improvements to Chipmans Platt are already underway by virtue of an approved GCC scheme. This is part of the G-First LEP funded A419 improvement scheme. This will provide greater capacity on the network, particularly at key junctions and assist with the delivery of housing growth, including the Land West of Stonehouse development.

The impact of this proposed development on the roundabout will result in the junction exceeding capacity, although limited to one arm, with the increase in queuing ranging from six to ten vehicles on Saturday evening peaks and weekday PM evening peaks. This queue will increase by 15 vehicles in the Saturday afternoon peak in 2021 and 30 vehicles in 2031. The Highway Authority do not consider this to be a “severe” impact requiring mitigation, particularly considering that this will be an infrequent occurrence which will occur outside network peak periods.

A419/A38 Roundabout

Predicted traffic flows have been modelled and this junction will continue to operate within capacity in all of the assessment scenarios for future years with the development in place.

Grove Lane

The proposed scheme shows an indicative design layout proposing a new one way entrance for buses only taken from Grove Lane. This maybe gated when not in use and be controlled



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by Automatic Number Plate Recognition to accommodate buses bringing supporters to the stadium. Pedestrian and Cycle access to Grove Lane is also outlined.

The results of the modelling undertaken by the applicants and their consideration by the Highway Authority are that this new junction will operate within practical capacity at all times. The junction of Grove Lane with the new estate road to Land West of Stonehouse (Great Oldbury) will result in the junction exceeding practical capacity with the proposed and approved development in the area, although this is limited to one arm in each development scenario with an increase in queuing of between five and ten vehicles. The Highway Authority considers this acceptable given the frequency at which the junction will experience these conditions.

Downton Road Signals

This junction is considered, utilising the modelling undertaken as part of the application, as currently presented within practical capacity in the 2021 and 2031 Saturday and Weekday arrivals peaks. The A419 W and Downton Road arms will exceed 90% saturation but remain below absolute capacity in the 2021 and 2031 Saturday departures peak. GCC Highways consider that this is acceptable, particularly considering that this will occur in only one of the network peaks and on an infrequent basis. As a consequence the Highway Authority raises no objection.

Horsetrough Roundabout

The impact of the development will result in the junction exceeding practical capacity although this is limited to the A419 West in the Saturday evening peak in 2021 and 2031, with queuing increases of 17 and 37 vehicles. The Highways Officer considers this as acceptable, particularly as it will occur at only one of the network peaks and on an infrequent basis.

Sainsbury's and Dudbridge Hill Roundabouts

The impact of the development on these two traffic junctions was also modelled at the request of SDC and GCC. The result of that work demonstrates that the predicted level of flows on match days for a 5000 capacity stadium will remain lower than the equivalent weekday PM peak. As a result the GCC Highways do not feel it would be reasonable to request any mitigation at these locations.

M5 and Junction 13

Mitigation measures include the dualling of the A419 between the M5 junction and the Chipmans Platt roundabout and changes to the white lining and signing at M5 J13 have been proposed. These will allow greater capacity at the motorway junction by allowing both lanes of the northbound and southbound off slips to be used to travel east towards Stonehouse.

In undertaking their impact assessment of the revised scheme on the strategic highway network, Highways England have accounted for both the development of the proposed stadium and the residential development Land West of Stonehouse which is currently under construction. As above, the already agreed highway improvements (including A419 Chipmans Platt roundabout, M5 slip improvements) have also been assessed within the modelling.



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Highways England are satisfied that subject to a football event management plan being submitted as part of any reserved matters application to ensure that procedures and measures are put in place to minimise disruption, maintain safety and to ensure that there are sufficient facilities and working practises to effectively manage the situation within the site the proposals are satisfactory. This includes consideration at reserved matters stage of the internal layout and the potential and any mitigation if required to avoid generating a blockage to the A419 which could result in the queues back to the M5 junction.

With the revised and reduced nature of the development now under consideration, Highways England are satisfied that the modelling demonstrates that with the proposed mitigation and highway improvements, the proposal will not generate a severe impact on the strategic road network (SRN). Therefore, Highways England have no objection subject conditions.

B4008 Standish

B4008 which runs north from Stonehouse, through Standish towards Hardwicke and Gloucester. With the improvements proposed to M5 J13 and the A419 corridor it is unlikely a significant amount of traffic would divert and seek to use the B4008. The applicant's highways consultant has outlined that a full capacity FGRFC match is predicted to result in a maximum increase of 82 vehicles on the B4008 within Stonehouse on a Saturday afternoon after the game. The majority of this traffic is expected to originate within Stonehouse, with very little impact on the B4008 past Standish. The benefits of junction and roundabout improvements and the proposed dualling will remain as a positive to the local network.

Laybys

The introduction of the new signalised access along with the proposed duelling of the A419 as described above will result in the removal of the two existing laybys. These laybys are considered by the Highway Authority to be of importance, a well used facility along a freight route where the Local Transport Plan supports such provision along such routes.

The applicants have proposed replacement layby facilities on the West side of the M5, between Junction 13 and the A38 roundabout. This includes enlarging the existing layby and providing a new layby on the opposite side of the road. The size of these new facilities has been based on layby surveys to ensure that it is capable of accommodating the demand. The constraints of the existing highway layout and the limited width of the highway land have resulted in the design not meeting all the design standards. However, as the facilities are similar to the standard of the existing laybys east of the M5 junction and a Road Safety Audit has been carried out, GCC Highways are satisfied that the proposed replacement laybys facilities are acceptable.

Traffic Impact Summary

GCC Highways have considered the modelled predicted impacts on the non strategic network. To provide a robust assessment based upon realistic scenarios, the impact of the proposed development has been assessed in the Saturday arrivals, Saturday departures, and Tuesday arrivals peaks. These scenarios are outside of typical network peaks. The development will add negligible traffic to the network during typical network peaks. The



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impact assessed is for a full 5,000 capacity event but it is noted that events will only occur circa thirty times per year, and not all will be at full capacity.

There will be increases in congestion for some arms of the junctions assessed. The traffic modelling does indicate that journey times on the A419 corridor between the A38 and Horsetrough roundabout could increase by up to around 1 minute 26 seconds during Saturday match arrival and departure periods any only 44 seconds during weekday evening match arrivals. However, these impacts are not considered to fall into the severe category which would represent sufficient grounds for an arguable case to be made for a refusal of the application on highway impact grounds.

The impact on the strategic network is considered by Highways England to be acceptable and insufficient to merit a recommendation for refusal. Without such a recommendation, a refusal on highway grounds based on the impact of the scheme on the M5 junction 13 would be difficult to argue.

The Highway Authority cogently point out that 'fans' travelling to matches are used to some congestion occurring, a matter common to the vast number of grounds for football league clubs in the country. These events are well advertised and other road users have the opportunity to make their trips outside these sporadic events.

The impacts at match days should also be considered in the context of the mitigation measures proposed which will for periods outside match days mark a significant improvement in capacity on the A419 for example between the M5 and Chipmans Platt.

The relocation of the stadium from the New Lawn will also produce significant improvements in highway capacity and residential amenity at Forest Green.

Road Safety

GCC Highways have considered the personal injury collisions data submitted for the A419 corridor, Grove Lane and Junction 13 to ascertain whether the corridor is a particular accident 'hot spot'. For the five year study period there were no recorded collisions along the A419 site frontage. Elsewhere on the corridor there were six collisions resulting in serious injury. However, the Highway Authority notes that a study of these occurrences does not highlight failures of the existing road layout or design, but were user error. The overall collision rate when assessed against the national average is below national average. The Highway Authority on this issue considers that *'The available evidence demonstrates that there is no existing road safety issue that precludes development of the site'*.

Parking provision

The indicative material submitted as part of the proposal shows 1700 car parking spaces compared to the onsite parking at the New Lawn of just 150 cars. The car parking deficit at the New Lawn stadium results on match days in considerable traffic congestion in the neighbouring residential area. The proposed new stadium will remove this problematical issue. The County Highway Authority acknowledge that *'there are clear constraints to the*



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vehicular accessibility of the current stadium with a local road network which is not designed to accommodate high volumes of traffic' with a licensed capacity of 5000.

GCC Highway considers based upon trip generation rates that demand will be some 1694 spaces. This represents a worst case scenario of a full stadium (at 5000 capacity). The level of parking shown for illustrative purposes is 1700 spaces which GCC consider provides the right balance between over provision and the likelihood of over-spill parking occurring on nearby roads as is the case with the current stadium to the detriment of residents. It is potentially possible that the level of 1700 spaces may be reduced over time subject to the utilisation of the match day public transport arrangements outlined below. The provision for electric vehicle charging has also been put forward and can be required via condition.

The number of car parking spaces was arrived at by the applicants utilising the following assumptions which are supported by the GCC Highway:

16% supporters (home and away) travel by bus or coach

4% home supporters walk or cycle

80% supporters travel by car

10% cars are lifts or taxis, so do not park

Car occupancy is 2.2, based on observations at the New Lawn

These assumptions produce a total of 1694 spaces which the applicant rounded up to 1700.

Details of a car park management plan will be required to be produced prior to first use of the stadium.

Sustainable transport modes

The proposal also seeks to encourage the take up of opportunities for sustainable modes of travel where reasonable. This is supported by both national guidance and as part of the adopted development plan policies which aimed at improving sustainable transport links.

Bus and public transport provision and covered cycle storage with 100 spaces have been outlined. A travel plan to maximise opportunity is proposed and controlled via condition.

Walking and Cycling

The revised scheme proposes to provide links to routes for pedestrians and cyclists from Stroud, Stonehouse and the surrounding area.

The proposed works for pedestrians and cyclists comprise:

* The creation of a new footway/cycleway to the south of the A419 carriageway, connecting to Chipmans Platt, the southern part of Stonehouse and the canal towpath.

* Pedestrian crossing of the A419 within the traffic controlled junction serving as the main access.

* Pedestrian and cycle access from Grove Lane including additional footway and crossing points.

* Cycle parking with easy access to the Stadium

* Vehicle free area adjacent to the stadium during matches

* Dropped kerbs and tactile paving at appropriate locations throughout the stadium site.



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In addition for cyclists the submitted proposals comprise works to enhance National Cycle Route 45. In the vicinity of the site this route runs along Grove Lane to the north, and to the south of Chipmans Platt along the canal/A419/railway corridor. This offers a route for both pedestrians and cyclists to Stonehouse, Stroud and beyond which largely does not utilise the A419 or other roads.

The submitted proposal comprises a series of off site improvements to this route comprising:

- * Resurfacing and/or repairing a number of sections.
- * Directing water away from the route.
- * Removing encroaching vegetation.
- * Replacing offset barriers with bollards, which benefit cyclists.
- * Renewing markings and providing additional signage.

The above pedestrian and cycling works can be delivered by a pre-commencement condition.

The Highway Authority support the proposals for enhancement of cycling and pedestrian facilities commenting that the proposed development has taken up the opportunity for enhancement of existing facilities where reasonable to do so and marks a substantial improvement on the clubs present stadium where topography militates against cycling and walking for some groups.

The internal layout has been reserved for future consideration. This will include the route of the two public footpaths that cross the site. With the parkland setting and green infrastructure these routes can be integrated into and retained within a proposed layout. For safety reasons during the construction phase, footpaths may have to be temporary closed. The applicant would need to address this with the PROW team at GCC beforehand. An increased use of the footpath is likely but the majority of the impact is limited to match days.

Non Match Informal Park & Ride

During the application, the applicant has discussed positively the opportunity of using some of the parking at the stadium on non match days. However, this has not come forward as a formal commitment and part of the proposal.

Stagecoach, the local bus provider supports the concept and considers there is potential to utilise this opportunity using the Service 66 which, with the completion of the spine road through Land West of Stonehouse (Great Oldbury) can connect the stadium site via the Grove Lane access, to Stroud, Stonehouse and Gloucester with a half hourly service. Similarly, Service 61 between Stroud, Stonehouse and Dursley can stop within the stadium area and provide a service with a 20 minute frequency.

Such a service would not be expected to attract additional traffic on the A419 corridor, the aim being to attract drivers who wished to go to Stonehouse, Stroud, Gloucester or Dursley, in particular their railway stations to utilise an area where there is parking rather than having to search for restricted on-street parking or utilise existing car parks with very restricted capacity.

The bus company also indicated that in the longer term there is potential for the site to act as a stop on long distance coach services a move that Officers support.



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It is considered by Officers that this could be an opportunity to provide significant sustainable gain. Whilst this is currently not part of the submitted proposal and can therefore not be given weight, it could be an option considered in the future.

Match day arrangements

The applicant has undertaken considerable work to produce an attractive match day public transport offering in addition to the normal arrangements of scheduled service routes outlined in the previous section. The proposals put forward by the applicant are, like the normal day proposals supported by the bus company Stagecoach who have confirmed their support by letter.

The site proposals incorporate a dedicated bus/coach entrance. Within the site there are indicative details which propose dedicated parking for public buses/vehicles, sited conveniently for fans to use.

The bus only access will enable buses to enter the site without joining car traffic at the principal access point on the A419. At the end of a match, three buses can wait within dedicated bays for the return journey to Stonehouse, Stroud and Nailsworth. These buses will leave the site before any private vehicles are released making the use of this service very advantageous to fans. The adoption of these proposals will also provide a considerable advantage to the town centres of Stonehouse, Stroud and Nailsworth by boosting their economies with fans and their families who will no doubt take advantage of the food and beverage retailing offers in those centres and for Saturday afternoon matches the retail offer before and after matches.

To encourage this switch of mode the applicants are proposing to set the price point for the match day bus tickets to less than the intended car parking charge (currently £7) for a family travelling to the match. Applicants for match tickets on line will be given the opportunity to purchase these match day transportation tickets at the time of booking.

The bus company have confirmed that as demand for this service increases they are able to supply additional buses at short notice. In addition the club has proposed that both at pick up points and setting down at the stadium stewards will be on hand to ensure an orderly arrangement. The applicants and Stagecoach have identified potential pick up points. There is also potential that if these arrangements prove popular for them to be expanded, with some expectation that the amount of parking at the stadium in the future could be reduced.

Information on bus services for each match, including connections with trains and buses from outlying areas will be provided through the FGR website. Stagecoach also has a phone 'App' which provides real time information which will be publicised on the FGR website.

The details of these arrangements have to be fully worked out and provision for the delivery will be enshrined as part of the S106 or appropriately worded condition, which can also build in some flexibility about pick up and set down points, charges and supply of seats etc.

Conclusion on Highway/sustainable transport issue



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Officers of SDC and the Highway Authority consider that the proposals for match day and non match day transport arrangements are sustainable and together with the proposals set out in the outline travel plan offer considerable sustainable advantages over the current arrangements at the New Lawns, Nailsworth site.

The changes to the cycling and pedestrian facilities in the area facilitated by the proposals contribute meaningfully to local facilities and are considered to be a positive aspect of the application.

It is the Officers considered view that the arrangements contained within the proposal for highway changes and public transport provision, subject to control by suggested planning conditions and S106, have the effect of making the submitted scheme a sustainable location in terms of Development Plan policies and the NPPF.

The highway changes to provide access and the impact of the proposed land use on the existing road network, including public safety have been rigorously tested and it is the Officer's view that there is insufficient evidence to support any recommendation on this issue other than for approval.

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT

Chapter 10 of Environmental Statement and accompanying LVIA address the Landscape and Visual impact of the revised proposed scheme. The LVIA assessed the indicative parameters of the revised scheme as outlined in the building height parameter plan, the land use parameter plan, the indicative Green Infrastructure Plan, site plan and sections. The Concept Plan and D&A also informed the assessment. The assessment was carried out with reference to the Landscape Institute's Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd Edition, 2013 as well as Natural England Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Institute Advice Notes.

The assessment identified the existing landscape and visual context, then evaluated the sensitivity of the landscape and visual receptors. The nature/magnitude of the effects likely to result from the proposed development are assessed with a final assessment of the overall significance including the mitigation and enhancement proposed. A cumulative assess with other nearby developments is also addressed.

The Local Plan deals with the Landscape and Visual Impact of development. This is a key consideration with the strategic and core policies SO5, CP4 and CP14 seeking to protect the distinctive landscape qualities. Local Plan Policy ES7 - Landscape Character is of particular relevance but is supported by other Policies ES8 - Trees, EI11 - Promoting sport, leisure and recreation. These seek to conserve or enhance the special features and diversity of the different landscape character types of the district. It only permits development that is sympathetic and complements the landscape character including any natural features like trees and hedgerows.

The application site is located on agricultural land adjacent to the M5 Junction 13. The landscape assessment for Gloucestershire County identifies the site within the Berkeley Vale with the National Character Assessment places the site in the Severn and Avon Vales. The



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Severn Vale is generally regarded as the lower slopes of the Cotswold Hills and the shorelines of the Severn. Such lowland landscapes have often not been favoured by nationally recognised designations. However the Vale has a very discernible character and history, which should not be undervalued. It also has a complex interaction with the Wolds.

The more detailed Stroud District Landscape Assessment (2000) places the site within the 'Rolling Agricultural Plain' character area. This places it between the 'Escarpment Foot Slopes' and 'Lowland Plain' with 'The Frome River Valley' immediately to the south. This area being a transition that embraces the diversity of landscape character from the open and exposed plateaux landscapes of the Cotswolds and the sheltered valleys in the scarp face, to the flat expansive landscapes of the Severn Estuary. The flat and relatively open nature along with the visibility from the AONB make this landscape area particularly susceptible and sensitive to inappropriate development which is highlighted in the Landscape Assessment and the Cotswold Conservation Board position regarding the setting of the AONB.

To aid assessment visualisations have been provided for selected viewpoints showing the scale and extent of the primarily above ground-built form of the stadium. These predicted wireframe views have been used to show the view of the proposed development within the site context.

Due to the high profile of the application and the concern raised by consultees, SLR landscape consultants were appointed to review the submitted documents on behalf of the Council. Following the review further clarification regarding the impact on the setting of the AONB, the valued landscape assessment and impact on the site's character area and clarification regarding methodology and definitions has been submitted (FEI 4).

A range of viewpoints were defined through a process of desk top research and on-site survey in consultation with SDC Officers. Whilst viewpoints/viewing areas were chosen, these were representative and it is acknowledged that views can vary along a footpath e.g. Cotswold Way. Officers have long familiarity with all these viewpoints; however, they were specifically walked/visited to gauge impact of this particular proposal.

Selsley Common

This is traversed by the Cotswold Way as well as several other more minor footpaths. It is readily accessible being an open common with several parking areas close and almost at the same level.

The outlook does vary along the edge of the Common's plateau offering different focal points. The subsidiary footpaths are also varied in aspects due to their topography. The southern end is more dominated by the spread and merger of Middleyard, Kings Stanley and Leonard Stanley. At the northern end there is more of a sense of openness and landscape domination.

From the varying aspects, the broad swath of the Frome Valley and the Severn Vale are evident. The Forest of Dean terminates the skyline which means it is an expansive view in terms of width and depth. Consequently the proposal should be 'lost' within this landscape. However, Doverow Hill does push the eye towards the site but West of Stonehouse and



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Stroudwater/Oldends Lane industrial area intervene. The proposal would appear comparatively very small scale from here and seen in such context it would not be obtrusive or prominent. At such a shallow angle tree planting will be effective on the boundary.

Coaley Peak

This again traversed by the Cotswold Way and is easily accessed for all users with good public parking virtually at the viewpoint. Hence it is a highly valued viewpoint.

Again viewpoints here vary. The northern end the aspect is confined by a copse of trees cascading down Frocester Hill. The central and southern end offer wider aspects including towards the north. The signage erected by the County Council shows the visible skyline which includes the Brecon Beacons.

In the foreground, Coaley village appears well contained and soft in the landscape. Greenfields predominate the view. Eastington village is readily discernible and behind the West of Stonehouse development and its adjacent industrial area. The application site lies largely behind all these developments - it would appear against buildings. Moreover from here it would appear small and inconsequential. Again from this distance tree planting would be helpful to break up its form.

Cam Long Down/Cam Peak

Again this offers expansive views across the width of the Vale towards the Forest of Dean and edge of the Brecon Beacons. It is also a 360 degree viewpoint with views looking in the other direction towards the Cotswolds. Much of Dursley is within a fold in the hills but Cam is more prominent.

Views towards the application site are again at multiple points in this vicinity. From Long Down itself, the Cotswold Way offers clear views. This is slightly curving due to the alignment of the hill. The lack of vegetation means that there are views towards the application site for much of its length. There is also an aspect from the north west face of Cam Peak.

Long Down and Cam Peak are particularly important because they offer views of the escarpment as well as the Vale, because they are "outliers". This interaction between the escarpment and Vale is a very distinctive characteristic of this part of the Cotswolds AONB. Other neighbours "outliers" are also visible.

The sporadic development around Ashmead, Far Green, Hamshill and Green Street dominates much of the foreground, which detracts from the natural landscape. This impact lessens as one moves towards the north part of the Long Down. Coaley village is again discernible but appears unobtrusive amongst the surrounding fields. Eastington is readily identifiable beyond and appears more regimented. The West of Stonehouse development and Stroudwater Industrial also feature. Against this context the proposal would not appear obtrusive. Also at approximately 4 miles away it would appear small.

Eastington Claypits

This is crossed by the A38 and several footpaths. Although it is only a short rise there are significant views along the Frome Valley.



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This is outside the AONB and there are several other developments as well as the roads which partly detract from the pastoral quality of the countryside.

The site is visible from an oblique aspect which obviously tempers potential impact. Consequently there will be a very slight impact and the new landscaping will be important from here to break up the presence of the stadium.

Eastington village ridge

Beside Swallowcroft, at the eastern edge of the main village, there is a sandstone ridge which is crossed by a network of footpaths. There is a notable southern aspect, which is photographed in the SDC Landscape Assessment 2000. There is a potential glimpse towards the application site. Although only the upper element of the roofscape of the stadium is likely to be visible, and will be seen against the surrounding residential development, so it should not be harmful.

Thames and Severn Way

This is important as a national recognised footpath and is very well used. West of the slightly sprawling Meadow Mill complex and the car parking there are views towards the application site. The impact should be eased by the new planting but the roofline of the stadium will be visible and slightly detracting.

The old (Westfield) bridge on the canal

This is on a linear footpath. It is currently at the end of the canal. There are westward views across the adjacent meadows towards the application site. In spite of the adjacent roads there is a sense of tranquillity and an informal, rustic scattering of boundary hedges and trees. There is a gentle undulation towards the north (development site) which attracts the eye. The fields are also perceived as stretching into the distance. There is a sense of openness and pastoral simplicity.

The stadium and parking will be close and there will be some visibility and perception across the fields given the 19.5m maximum height. It is not possible that the landscaping will be a fully effective screen. However, whilst visible the water meadows character remains, distinctive from the development footprint of the application site.

Doverow Hill

Here the line of escarpment re-forms after being fragmented by the broad Frome Valley but it almost feels like an "outlier" protruding into the valley. There is a network of well used footpaths which traverse the hill. Surprisingly the Cotswold Way chooses to bypass the hill. The footpaths are accessible to Stonehouse residents being so close to the town and the 2005 Stonehouse Design Guide quite rightly stresses the importance of views to/from this hill. The views mainly feature Stonehouse town which then merge into the industrial area and the West of Stonehouse development. Seen directly in this context the proposal would not be harmful.

Maiden Hill

The escarpment is firmly re-established here. It is an open hill top before the start of Standish Woods, which prevents views. It is close for Randwick and Cashes Green residents and accessible to roads. The Cotswold Way traverses the top and there are offshoot paths in



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alternative directions. Views are widespread across a wide angle from Ebley and along the Frome across into the Severn Vale. Views towards the application site are again dominated by Stonehouse, the industrial area and the West of Stonehouse development. The proposal will be seen in this context and will not appear harmful.

Haresfield Beacon

There are two viewing areas, on adjoining promontories that extend from the Wold plateau into the Vale. The Cotswold Way again takes in these viewing areas. The precipitous lane connecting Haresfield village to Edge/Whiteshill runs along the plateau with parking opportunities close to both viewing areas. Consequently this is very accessible countryside. Both promontories have views towards the application site. Shortwood, which is the easterly one has a slightly less wide outlook due to the alignment of the escarpment. The western one, Haresfield Beacon, not only has a wider vision but is also more aligned towards the application site, being slightly further west.

Both viewing areas offer spectacular views across the Vale. These are some of the best viewpoints of the dramatic Stroud landscape. As well as the wide expanse of the Vale, the Haresfield promontory shows the curving of the escarpment as well as the initial slopes rising out of the Vale to steepen towards the plateau. Looking away from Gloucester, the aspects are landscape dominated as development is less apparent, with Stonehouse partly shielded by the curve of Doverow Hill.

These are very sensitive views. Whilst the application site is three miles away, it would be discernible. New planting will ease the form of the stadium and could obscure much of the parking. However, it will take at least ten years before it is significant. The roofscape of the stadium will be still visible; however, its timber structure should offer a naturalised colour which will to some extent blend with the landscape.

Given the visibility here, and the importance of the viewpoint, the proposal could have some detriment, albeit in the medium term very limited. The proposed design, materials and potential for some tall specimen trees on the boundary are all critical.

Overton Hill, Fretherne/Arlingham

This is a sandstone ridge. The Vale is seen across the horizon which is terminated by the escarpment. The application site would be visible, however it would be seen against the West of Stonehouse development and the industrial area.

Around Westend

These are both close range and contained views. The stadium would be visible. The parking would be perceptible and the tranquillity will be impaired on occasions. However, the views are influenced by the major roads and buildings. The viewing areas are often from such urban contexts and the views themselves include such manmade structures. Planting would offer some benefit to soften and break up the form of development but that will take 10-15 years to ease this viewpoint.

M5 roundabout



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This is an elevated viewpoint. Although the environs are very 'urban', there are landscape orientated views to site especially in winter. The surrounding new planting will be important.

Wye Valley/Forest of Dean

The LVIA identifies a viewpoint at Pleasant Stile, near Littledean. In addition Blaize Bailey and Popes Hill have also been identified and visited by Officers. However, these are approximately seven miles away and the structures will appear diminutive.

The LVIA in its conclusions, acknowledged the significant adverse effects on a small area of the landscape affect nearby receptors located in the immediate area surrounding the site. With the siting, design and parkland setting, the landscaping will help the scheme assimilate into the landscape. Whilst the stadium will be visible its presents will be as a memorable landmark feature at this gateway location, minimising adverse effects but maximise longer term benefits to the landscape and visual environment.

An indicative planting arrangement has been submitted with the proposed indicative layout and the LVIA and Design and Access statement envisages a parkland planting concept. There is some validity in this using the stadium as a focal point to evoke the place of a country estate. However, there is also potentially a need for some tall specimens on the northern boundary to break up the scale of the building. This is not necessarily incompatible with a parkland concept as tall specimens can give a sense of depth and distance. Orchard planting is also proposed along this northern edge. This too is often seen in conjunction with parkland. It also re-establishes this historic vegetation in the area, particularly if it includes 'heritage specimens'.

Planting is also shown amongst the lines of car parking and will have an important role in reducing the prominence and reflections from parked vehicles. This could look overly regimented and formal from the escarpment and moreover could actually accentuate the car parking. Some more mixed informal planting with sufficient space to flourish and robust species with a mix of colours and textures may all be beneficial. These will be assessed within the detailed landscaping scheme which is controlled via condition.

Trees within the application site are fairly sparse and the proposal does not result in any significant loss in terms of individual specimens or coverage. Some hedges will be lost, however, 1,300m would be translocated and there is an overall increase from 3,200m currently to approx. 5,000m on completion. The mature hedgerow along the south edge of the site (along the A419) is being retained and can be reinforced as this has some screening benefit.

The shape of the application site is helpful too. It has some irregular boundaries and with a potential layout able to break up the form/scale, including of the car parking area, the scheme thus avoid the perception of overly large blocks of development and a regimented appearance. There is also more scope for boundary planting of the corners too, which mimics a Vale planting pattern.

The additional tree, shrub and hedge planting would be beneficial. The site is currently comprised of fairly bland fields and there is opportunity for more coverage but also different



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colours, heights and textures is welcome. Landscape architects normally assume that 15 years is required for landscaping to mature. It is hoped here with a favourable microclimate, good stock, favourable soil and safeguarded /maintained planting areas that this may be slightly better. It would also be advantageous for the boundary planting including the bund to take place as early as possible. The time it takes for planting to mature has to be appreciated and will vary the impact in the short to longer term. It also has to be appreciated that the boundary planting will not be so effective in winter, as preferences will be towards deciduous specimens.

The training pitches are positioned to the south and east of the stadium in the indicative layout in the submitted concept plan. Due to their nature they would be perceived as 'development' from the elevated views and may be perceived to enlarge the site area, however, they do push the stadium further away from the sensitive views from the south. The access/approach road is relatively short which can be curving and softened by planting. There are other hard surfaces around the stadium but they would use subdued materials. Several SuDS ponds and features are also necessary and with the design including ecological enhancements and a naturalised design they would not have an adverse effect on the landscape setting.

Paragraph 170 of the NPPF seeks to protect and enhance 'valued landscapes'. The concept of 'valued landscapes' has been the subject of much argument in numerous appeal cases including in the district at Mankley Fields where the Inspector (and High Court) considered the value had to demonstrate some physical attributes rather than just popularity. Further assessment of the landscape value has been undertaken and on balance the site and surrounding area has been assessed as being mainly a landscape of 'local community' value and importance. It would therefore be difficult to defend a classification as a valued landscape for purposes of NPPF para 170.

The A419 is being widened which will have an impact on the vicinity. However, this is perceived in the context of the M5, its junction roundabout and the existing A419 infrastructure. From most of the distant AONB views it would not be evident.

AONB and its setting

The Cotswolds is the largest AONB in England. In our District it tends to follow the Cotswold escarpment. The closest the designation gets to the application site is approximately 2km where it encroaches onto the lower slopes of the escarpment at Stroud Green near Standish and Horsemarling Farm. The Cotswold way also follows along the escarpment and whilst the site is not within the AONB the development would be visible from the Cotswold escarpment.

Policy ES7 states that within the Cotswolds AONB or on land that may affect its setting, priority will be given to the conservation and enhancement of the natural and scenic beauty of the landscape whilst taking account of the biodiversity interest and historic and cultural heritage. Therefore, the setting of the AONB is also a fundamental consideration. This is supported by Paragraph 172 of the NPPF which states great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and that they have the highest status of protection.



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Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000 also states that in exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land in an area of outstanding natural beauty, a relevant authority shall have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The Cotswold Conservation Board has published the Cotswold AONB Management Plan 2018-2023. One of its core policies aims to deliver a consistent, co-ordinated and landscape led approach to the Cotswolds ANOB. Policy CE1 promotes conservation of the landscape, whilst CE3 notes the distinctiveness of the AONB. Policy CE11 on major development highlights the setting of the AONB. This is supported by the Board's Position statements on Setting of the AONB and Tranquillity and Dark Skies.

The Eastington NDP (Policies EP2, EP4 and EP9) similarly supports the protection of the natural environment, and respect local distinctiveness, character and footpaths and only supports new development does not impact on the setting of the Cotswold AONB.

The site has very limited visibility from the Cotswold hinterland the main 'high wold' area. Given this separation distance and the context it is considered that the scheme will not significantly harm the special qualities of the AONB itself. Cotswold Conservation Board whilst highlighting the need to consider the impact on the setting of the Cotswolds AONB during the original submission, has not raised objection to the submitted revised proposal. Natural England has also not raised a concern.

Land outside the designation and how it is viewed in the context and backdrop of the AONB needs careful consideration. Due to the distance from the AONB and the presents of other developments between, e.g. Oldends Lane Business Park and Land West of Stonehouse, significant adverse impacts will not occur. A localised character will be affected but this is not significant in its impacts on the landscape character area as a whole and therefore on the setting of the AONB. The tranquillity of land within the AONB will also be relative unaffected by the proposal. Some sky glow will be experience but limited in occurrence and given the wider light in the area is also unlikely to be significant.

The Wye Valley AONB, is located approximately 19km to the west. This does include some of the fringes of the Forest of Dean, but the Severn Vale is largely outside the formal designation. There is some limited visibility towards the application site but with the distance it is considered the proposal will not cause significant harm.

Night time

The stadium floodlighting does have the potential to produce considerable glare and sky glow and the lighting impact is addressed in the lighting section of this report. The landscape impact of the proposed light also has to be considered and provides a slight different assessment approach. To assess the landscape and visual effects at night it is essential to consider an assessment of the wider night time context and sources of light beyond the site.

In addition to the stadium, the parking areas also have the potential to generate their own spillage and glare. Lights within the access roads and parking are envisaged at up to 4m in



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the car park, up to 8m on the internal road and 10m columns for the highway lights. Passing cars too will contribute.

The proposal will increase the level of light on the site compared to the current use as agricultural fields. This will have a localised impact with the mitigation including integrating the design, screens and the type of lights all affecting how the light will be viewed and contained.

In the wider area, including the AONB, the stadium is predicted to be the most notable sources of new light. Most of the impact will be at times of intensive use, typically evening matches, which are few. Outside these times, the levels should be more limited to low level lighting which is less perceptible. There are considerable other sources of lighting in the vicinity, which is very evident in many of the viewpoints. This context includes Stonehouse, including, Dairy Crest and Oldend Lane, Stroudwater Business Park and also the nearby Cullimore's site.

A lighting strategy needs to be conditioned to control the number of occasions for the use of such intensive lighting and the actual details of the lighting, including potential hooding/directing etc. This will be assessed and whilst it can mitigate the impact to a degree the adverse impact has to be weighted in the planning balance.

Conclusion/Overall Landscape Impacts

The LVIA concludes that the extent of the significant landscape and visual effects, taking into account the context and submitted mitigation can be summarised as occurring up to approximately 250m from the development. This reduces over time as the landscaping develops. It is acknowledged that the site will be visible and whilst a definitive boundary to the impact is hard to define, this impact will generally be less and will further diminish with distance. Officers consider this will result in a lesser degree of impact on the wider area. With the embedded landscaping and mitigation, the significant landscape impact will remain localised and limited with the local landscape character areas as a whole, including the IHCA, not being significantly affected. The assessment of landscape sensitivity carried out for the Local Plan Review 2016 (Land Parcel ref: St05) supports this and outlines a relatively limited geographic extent of significant landscape and visual impact.

The local landscape character will be affected with the proposed stadium being visible. However, other built development is visible for example at Meadow Mill and Oldends Lane and it is considered that a genuinely distinctive landmark building would be easier to accept.

The proposal would not harm any definable 'valued landscapes' as set out in paragraph 170 of the NPPF.

The integrated nature of the pitch lighting and possible mitigation including the limits on the full use of the lighting does reduce harm from floodlight pollution. However, the impact on night skies particularly in winter does have to be considered and weighed up in the planning balance.



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With the curved form, materials and landscaping, the proposed stadium has the potential to integrate into the landscape reducing the prominence from various viewpoints. The car parking could well have been a potential problem from elevated views, however, the landscaping and layout will be important to break up its form. The stadium will be seen in the context of other developments like the Land West of Stonehouse, Oldends/Stroudwater Business Park and Stonehouse town and would therefore not look innocuous. It is therefore considered that the stadium will have limited impact, easing over time as the maturing vegetation.

There is potential to create an amalgamation of development sprawling over a wide area resulting in the loss of the gap between Stonehouse and the M5. However, the West of Stonehouse development is broken up by open spaces and tree avenues so will not look unwieldy from elevated view or shorter range Vale views. The boundary hedges and proposed planting throughout the site along with the curved form of the indicative design can/will soften the expanse of built development from both the Vale and elevated views.

The cumulative visual impact with the M5 is also a potential further impact. However, the carriageway is recessed in a cutting and there is some intervening tree cover which helps soften the roundabout and slip roads. The landscape planting here would also be effective in minimising the impact. The additional impact of the A419 is also softened by the retention/translocation of the roadside hedgerow.

Equally important are the choice of materials. Oldends/Stroudwater Business Park stands out from the escarpment because of its light colour and large structures. Land West of Stonehouse has grey and brown roofing which is more readily absorbed into landscaped views. It also has a variety of juxtapositions which avoid drawing the eye along long avenues. In this respect too, the proposed curved roof and oval shape of the stadium will help.

In terms of the AONB and its setting, Officers feel that the most sensitive viewpoint is Haresfield Beacon where the application site is visible across open ground from these well used promontories. The separation distance is noted along with the potential to mitigate with the planting, layout, design and form.

Whilst in outline form with only an indicative parameters submitted it has to be noted that the mitigation opportunities will be required via conditions where full details will be submitted for consideration.

The overall proposal has a moderate impact on the localised landscape within the Vale and a limited impact on the setting of the AONB. These adverse impacts will need to be weighed up in the planning balance.

ECOLOGY

The Government's approach to biodiversity dates back to the June 2011 White Paper 'The Natural Choice - Securing the Value of Nature', which heralded a mission to promote biodiversity. This led to the publication of Biodiversity 2020. One of the key aims is to: 'guide development to the best locations, encourage greener design and enable development to



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enhance natural networks'. It also seeks the planning system to retain the protection and improvement of the natural environment as a core objective.

This is confirmed in the NPPF paragraph 175 where in the first instance the preference is the avoidance of harm through site selection. Loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitat should be refused unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and suitable compensation is provided. Development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments should be encouraged, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity.

Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, 'places a duty on all public authorities in England and Wales to have regard, in the exercise of their functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity.' A key purpose of this duty is to embed consideration of biodiversity as an integral part of policy and decision making throughout the public sector, which should be seeking to make a significant contribution to the achievement of the commitments made by government in its Biodiversity 2020 strategy.

The NPPG advises Local Planning Authorities 'should consider the opportunities that individual development proposals may provide to enhance biodiversity and contribute to wildlife and habitat connectivity in the wider area.' The NPPG continues; 'Biodiversity enhancement in and around development should be led by a local understanding of ecological networks, and should seek to include; habitat restoration, re-creation and expansion; improved links between existing sites; buffering of existing important sites; new biodiversity features within development and securing management for long term enhancement.'

Nationally protected species are safeguarded under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 safeguards European Protected Species and internationally designated habitats, it requires Local Planning Authorities to exercise their functions (including the determination of planning applications) so as to secure compliance with the requirements of the relevant Directives.

Local Plan Policy ES6 (Providing for biodiversity and geodiversity) continues this approach being divided into three parts. The first refers to the protection of sites of European importance, like the Severn Estuary SPA, SAC and Ramsar and Rodborough Common SAC. Nationally important sites, SSSIs, are highlighted for protection too, unless development is in the national interest. Local Key Wildlife Sites are also afforded protection unless the benefits outweigh the ecological value or compensatory measures are provided. The second part requires all new development to conserve and enhance the natural environment. It stresses the importance of considering wildlife movement. A precautionary approach should be taken with development and if warranted compensatory measures are provided. The third part of the policy highlights the need to respect protected species. The value of biodiversity to the Landscape Character is also reflected in Local Plan Policy ES7.



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The Gloucestershire Local Nature Partnership looks at the strategic value of habitats, which are mapped where they are particularly worthy of retention, on the Gloucestershire Nature Map. The Frome river corridor is highlighted as important 'wet grassland'.

The Eastington NDP Policies EP2, EP4 and EP4 promote biodiversity.

Extensive surveys have been ongoing on the application site and surrounding area since 2015 to identify protected species and their habitats and the ecological baseline. In addition to the ecological mitigation and enhancements outlined in Chapter 8 of the submitted revised ES, an indicative Green Infrastructure plan and Further Nature Conservation Enhancements on land West of M5 a Nature Conservation Area has also been submitted. The aim is to enhance the biodiversity of the site and increase ecological connectivity with the wider area reducing habitat fragmentation.

Nearby sites designated for ecology and nature conservation have been identified. These include international designated sites, the Severn Estuary SPA, SAC and Ramsar and Rodborough Common SAC within 5/6km of the site and the Cotswold Beech Woods SAC is just over 10km away. Nationally important sites (SSSIs) including Rodborough Common, Frampton Pools, Selsley Common, Minchinhampton Common. 18 nearby Key Wildlife Sites and Conservation Road Verges including along the A419 are also noted. With these sites identified and the distance, separation and nature of the use not adding additional recreational pressure or resulting in direct habitat loss, the effects are not considered to be significant. However, a precautionary approach has been taken and mitigation outlined below.

The River Frome is located 400m away with the A419 between the proposed development footprint and the river. There is one permanently flowing water course, the Selbrook, in the North West corner of the site.

The majority of the site is grassland mostly 'agriculturally improved species poor' with small areas of semi-improved grassland. These are surrounded and divided by mature hedgerows made up of a mixed indigenous species. These are considered important due to species richness under the criteria listed in the 1997 Hedgerow Regulations. Furthermore they are also important for a range of species e.g. foraging of bats, birds and invertebrates. To address the loss of grassland areas the landscaping will use native local provenance grassland wild flower meadow on the areas of the site.

In the indicative layout, the stadium has been sited to minimise hedgerow loss. There are currently 3,200m of hedgerows, of which 1,900m will be retained. The majority of the remainder will be translocated elsewhere on the site. These will be supplemented with other species to expand their length to 5,000m. Thereafter a management regime should maintain them at an appropriate height and thickness. The site entrance has also been located to avoid significant tree loss, but does result in one mature ash being lost. An oak and hawthorn tree will also be lost in the construction of the car park. However, significant tree planting has been indicated with appropriate native species such as oak, field maple, lime, ash being used to create a parkland setting. This includes orchards which are priority habitat in both in Gloucestershire and nationally and would further provide enhanced biodiversity once they



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develop. This is also a traditional land use as encouraged by NDP Policy APE2. These continue on from a historic orchard which is evidenced in the adjacent residential properties.

Reptiles (slow worms and grass snakes) will be translocated and a hibernacula and enhanced reptile habitat will be provided post development which will provide extra hibernation opportunities to enhance the population on site following construction. The proposed ponds will provide Great Crest Newts and other amphibian habitat opportunities but also be an integrated part of the sustainable drainage scheme (SuDS). Appropriate management of the landscaping will be required to provide benefits for reptiles and amphibians including the lower hedge ground flora. Various bird boxes have also been outlined.

No bat roosts were identified, however, a further bat survey will be required to be undertaken on the trees that are proposed to be removed. The surveys did indicate that there is a significant movement of a variety of species across the site. To mitigate this, the scheme seeks to avoid the majority of the mature trees with hedgerows being translocated or replaced. Lighting is another main threat to bats. Lighting is not proposed for the training pitches, but will be used for the stadium and potentially the car park, footpaths and roads. As winter is hibernation time, the most likely conflict with the use will be during spring and autumn nights. A bat corridor along the bund to the north of the site is proposed with double densely planted hedges which facilitates low flying. This can be sited appropriately to work with the ponds, trees and species rich grassland. The orchards to the north also complement this pattern of movement for birds and bats with the parkland setting provide opportunity for foraging. The A419 and Canal corridors are also maintained. Bat boxes and night roosts have also been outlined.

Two badger setts have been identified and therefore badger mitigation is also outlined.

The roadside verge south of the A419 will be translocated along with the hedgerow to allow space for the duelling. This is part of a Conservation Road Verge and will be enhanced in its new location. It will take between 3-5 years for the hedge to recover, however providing the translocation is successful it will establish quicker than a new replacement hedge and provides greater diversity and continuity with the existing hedge habitat.

Further land is dedicated to nature conservation with 4.6ha of land to the west of the M5 now proposed as part of the revised scheme to be actively managed as a nature conservation area. This is proposed to be managing as floodplain grassland/wet woodland. Indicative tree planting including an orchard area, enhanced hedgerows planting and bat enhancements have also been identified.

During consideration of one of the nearby reserved matters applications for Land West of Stonehouse, Members were particularly interested in the proposed Bluebell mitigation. The proposed hedgerow translocation will address this issue on this proposal with any blubs in the hedgerow likely to be moved along with the large hedge species. The remnant woodland area will be managed to remove scrub and allow ground flora like native Bluebells to regenerate.



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Implementation of the ecological enhancements along with post development monitoring and management has been proposed and can be controlled via condition. This includes the various specific method statements for various ecological elements. Interpretation boards to explain the mitigation and enhancements have also been suggested and are encouraged to educate and inform visitors. The lighting scheme for the site also needs to consider ecological implementation and this is also controlled via condition.

The surface water drainage proposes surface attenuation ponds which will be integrated into and have multiple benefits for biodiversity and the landscape. This will be covered by the recommended drainage conditions. All the training pitches are envisaged to have internal watering and drainage to avoid potential contamination of the Frome.

Temporary disturbance and/or loss of breeding habitat are possible during construction phase but the construction environmental management plan (CEMP) and various ecological method statements will help mitigate the impact on local wildlife. This will include but not limited to avoid silt in watercourse, control of lighting, hedge translocation and the protection of reptiles and Badgers etc.

The proposal also needs to be considered accumulatively with the Land West of Stonehouse development and the canal restoration. The former is balanced with development offset by its own mitigation and dedicated open spaces and tree planting. There is some gap between the built parts of this proposal, giving scope for boundary buffer planting. The canal restoration will create a new ecosystem. Foraging, movement and habitat will be enabled. It will be an opportunity to help this site with additional landscaping and wildlife corridors being continued and enhanced.

The Council's Biodiversity Officer welcomes the habitat enhancements and considers that proposals have the potential to significantly improve the site for wildlife in the longer term.

Conclusion

The species and habitats have been surveyed, using the appropriate methodology and seasonality, not just on the application site but also the surroundings. Adjacent designations have been considered in terms of the contribution, or not, the site makes to their particular species.

The biggest challenge to biodiversity is perhaps during construction. Pollution, noise, movement/disturbance will all have to be managed ecologically, in the right season and in the right methodology. A condition is warranted to oversee this process.

The biggest effects are the loss of vegetation and some grassland. In particular this will impair the movement of wildlife across the site and potential foraging. Various mitigation measures are proposed on the site itself. The new trees, hedges, grassland, ponds, orchards, will all have to be managed to contribute to the best practical ecological standards.

The effects are greatest in the short term, particularly the loss of habitat and the breeding opportunities, which could have knock on effects of the ecosystem for a while thereafter.



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Such an impact is significantly adverse in the short term eventually becoming neutral in the longer term. This needs to be weighed up in the planning balance.

TREES

As addressed above the existing site is made up agricultural fields which are surrounded by hedgerows with the ecological implications also addressed in depth in the ecology section of the report. Whilst limited the majority of the significant trees on site are located within these hedgerows which the indicative layout has sought to integrate as much a possible into the proposal.

The site entrance has been located to avoid/reduce tree loss; however, one mature ash will be lost. An oak and hawthorn trees will also be lost in the construction of the car park shown on the indicative layout.

The dualling of the A419 will result in the loss of 9 trees including some mature oaks. It is suggested that two along with the hedge could be translocated with details to be approved via the proposed conditions.

Whilst the proposal cannot retain all the existing trees and hedgerow, it is proposed that the scheme will provide a parkland setting with significant tree planting indicated on the Indicative Concept Masterplan (Dec 2018), green infrastructure parameter plan and supporting statements (e.g. Landscape and Ecology Report – Summary (Dec 2018)) surrounding the proposed stadium and further additional orchard planting. Whilst the final details have not yet been submitted specimen trees have been proposed with an indicative mix of native species like Silver Birch, English Oak, Wild Cherry, Field Maple and Hornbeam. Further consideration during the detailed design phases regarding the appropriateness of particular trees in specific locations e.g. use in public realm and parking areas etc will be required.

The submitted tree and hedgerow balance plan (Dec 2017) indicates that approx. 500 new trees will be planted, approx. 1900m of existing hedgerow retained, approx 1300m of hedgerow translocated with approx 600m of new hedgerow proposed with a further approx 1200m hedge planting on the proposed bund.

The Council's Senior Arboriculture Officer has raised no objection subject to conditions. These include the landscaping details, tree protection and translocation.

DESIGN

Local Plan Policy CP14 High Quality Sustainable Development requires an appropriate design and appearance, which is respectful of the surroundings, including the local topography, built environment and heritage. Sustainable design is also promoted. Local Plan Policy ES12 Better design of places, in short requires high quality successful places.

The NPPF gives much greater coverage and emphasis to design than its predecessor. It begins in the opening sentence of paragraph 124: 'The creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve.' This is continued in paragraph 127: 'developments are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping.'



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The Eastington Neighbourhood Plan 2016 Policy EP4 Siting and design of new development also requires development to demonstrate a high standard of design that respects and reinforces local distinctiveness and character through attention to matters of scale, density, massing, height, landscaping, layout, materials and access.

The Conservation Area SPD raises caution about the impact of tall and bulky buildings in its policies PDG2 and 3 where it comments on the height and massing which are highly pertinent to the design. It states that there should be a design rationale behind the scheme and it should be based on an evaluation of the impact that a particular arrangement of buildings and spaces will have on the character and sense of place. The Conservation Area design guide also makes reference to detailing with PDG24 stating 'The scale, proportions and detailing must be appropriate to the particular context.'

With the application being submitted in outline form, the indicative design of the stadium cannot be given significant weight. However, the planning justification for the proposal does place great emphasis on the quality of the iconic design. To facilitate this and require the Reserved Matters to substantial accord with the current submission, the delivery of the essential elements of the design can be required/controlled via a suitable clause within planning conditions or a planning S106.

The initial submission was in the form of a perspective. Whilst this gave an impression, it did not show all the detailed characteristics of the design. Officers requested cross sections and a sample elevation to complete the understanding, which have now been produced.

The proposal shows the stadium with a curved form with sweeping flowing corners which avoids any harsh lines. Such a softer design approach is followed in its indicative siting at a diagonal (rather than parallel) to the M5 and A419. This is also complemented in the indicative pattern of landscaping which softens and provides the setting for these flowing curving lines.

The footprint of the stadium has been minimised around the dimensions of a top class football pitch. The 'stands' start close to the pitch which then gives the stadium an intimate feel.

The height has been confirmed to have a maximum height of 19.5m with the roof dropping in the middle. This gives an undulating roofline which empathises with the curved form. Collectively this gives a soft almost naturalistic appearance. The illustrative slab height for the stadium has been submitted which allows consideration of its full height.

Many football stadiums use cladding around the walls. This may well be a technique to hide the underside of stairs, but one which can look unsightly. Such cladding can look harsh and dishonest, hiding the internal fabric. The other potential design flaw would have been an angular structure deriving from the shape of the pitch. Such a rectangular box shape would have looked very harsh in such a setting. The indicative design is very different. The sides would not be clad but left exposed as an open structure which alleviates the bulk of the walling. It clearly shows how it is constructed, and is a legible design with form following



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function. The various supporting beams also give an intriguing naturalistic pattern. There are various elements to the structure. Large and outwardly projecting vertical louvers are on the upper floors and more horizontal cross members below. The submitted cross section shows other structure deeper inside. This repeated along the circumference of the stadium encourages the eye to follow. The result is harmonious as the various elements balance. The outwardly projecting louvers compliment the curves in the footprint and also the undulating nature of the roof.

The design does look like a sports stadium, which means that it will be read, understood and appreciated as such. Consequently it is a legible design, whereby its function is inherent in its structure. It represents in Officers' view, potential as an iconic symbol to generate local pride. As outline above, the realisation of this can be facilitated by conditions or S106.

Materials

Indicative details of the proposed materials have also been submitted. It is proposed that the walling would be a timber construction. This would give an appealing shade and complement the natural line of the building. It is not intended to let the timber 'silver' but would retain its colour. The roof will be a transparent material. This will be perceived as 'light and airy' and will sympathise with the open nature of the walling and curving nature of the roof. These materials are intrinsic to the quality of the design.

In the public interest to ensure the delivery of the significantly positive design, precise samples of the materials can be approved via conditions with the illustrative design also being controlled and followed at reserved matters stage.

The indicative materials chosen for the stadium have been considered by SDC's Building Control Officer who is of the view that they are appropriate and the stadium is capable of gaining the necessary licence for football grounds given under other legislation. He notes that the finished design should incorporate features to allow any future expansion of seating capacity.

Sustainable Design

Local Plan Policy ES1 promotes sustainable design, by energy efficiency, the use of renewable energy minimisation of waste, conserving water, efficiency in materials, adaptability of design, and climate change resilience.

The design statement emphasises the use of timber walling as a natural low carbon material. There is also reference to the potential use of heat pumps and combined heat and power, as well as the minimisation of energy. Such details can and should be included in the reserved matters submission and conditions are suggested to this effect.

Conclusion



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The design is 'legible' as a football stadium. Its line and form is eye catching. Its means of construction is understandable and therefore easy to appreciate. The choice of materials is critical to compliment its shape.

This is a bold contemporary design, which is not based on the vernacular; however such a style would not accommodate a football stadium. Similarly to try to introduce some vernacular elements could have led to tokenism or patronising features which would have dampened the impetus of the design. Rather the form follows its function. It is a design which shows integrity as structural elements feature. It is a quality design, whereby the shape, structure and materials all harmonise. It is potentially a distinctive iconic landmark of regional and national significance.

This quality of design (including landscaping) is critical to reduce impacts on the surrounding landscape, the Severn Vale and the setting of the AONB. This is particularly important bearing in mind its height and prominence.

The Design Statement promotes the scheme to 'provide a landmark stadium' and 'extremely high quality'. The revised NPPF makes a vitally important point at paragraph 130 in this respect. "Local planning authorities should also seek to ensure that the quality of approved development is not materially diminished between permission and completion as a result of changes to the permitted scheme". A clause in the S106 or planning condition is therefore proposed for the indicative submitted details to set the standard for the reserved matters submission/implementation avoiding the 'dumbing down' of 'value engineering'.

HERITAGE

The Council has statutory obligations in respect of heritage assets. Section 66(1) of the Act requires that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest, and in particular, listed buildings. Section 72 of the 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act requires that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area.

The relevant section of the NPPF is contained within Chapter 16 which focuses on conserving and enhancing the historic environment. This seeks a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment. The significance of any heritage assets affected need to be determined and great weight should be given to the conservation of a designated heritage asset. The level of harm and justification also needs to be assessed with Paragraph 196 outlining that less than substantial harm should be weighted against the public benefits. Opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and those that preserve the setting and make a positive contribution should be treated favourably.

Heritage is particularly considered by Local Plan Policy ES10 Valuing our historic environment and assets. This requires description of the heritage assets, its significance, its setting and to carry out an assessment of the impact of the proposal. Proposals will be supported where they conserve and where appropriate enhance the heritage significance and setting of the Districts heritage assets. ES10 requires that any harm or loss would



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require 'clear and convincing' justification. This provides a similar protection to that provided by the NPPF where the harm is less than substantial.

Similarly NDP Policy EP4 seeks to respect the character, appearance and setting of the Listed buildings and the Conservation Area.

Historic England guidance including GPA 2 – Managing Significance, GPA3 - The Setting of Heritage Assets is also relevant along with The Industrial Heritage Conservation Area Management Proposals SPD (November 2008) and A Heritage Strategy for Stroud District SPA (2018).

The application has been supported by the submission of a Heritage Assessment including geophysical survey and Evaluation trial trenching across the Redline Boundary of the site.

The red line of the application fall partly within the Industrial Heritage Conservation Area (IHCA). This is located to the south of the parcel of the site to the south of the A419. Following the submission of the revised scheme in December 2017 the proposed development footprint is not located within the defined conservation area.

With the development footprint no longer within the Conservation Area it is the impact on the setting which requires the greatest assessment. Given the rural and undulating nature of the surrounding land, the extent and buffer that represent the setting of the conservation area is debatable. The agent has outlined that setting comprises the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced, but also notes that parts of setting may or may not contribute to the significance of the heritage asset. The Historic England guidance on the setting of Heritage Assets GPA3 is also of use.

Conservation Area and its Setting

The Industrial Heritage Conservation Area (IHCA) was designated 1987 and extended in 1989. It was conceived as a linear Conservation Area, following the valleys of the River Frome and the Nailsworth Stream. In addition to these watercourses, the course of the IHCA follows the various transport infrastructures, which developed over the 18th and 19th centuries including the Stroudwater Canals. These were the 'arteries' of the locality and represented a new era in the industrial basis of the Stroud Valleys.

The IHCA was designed to preserve not only the 'set pieces' of the significant mill sites, but also the infrastructure and the context of Stroud's industrial legacy. The form, the patterns of development and settlement, and the transport links embody the social, economic and cultural history. Therefore, the IHCA represents the preservation of more than just the buildings.

In November 2008, the Council adopted a Conservation Area Management Plan SPD. The document was produced in response to the particularly complex development pressures that the Industrial Heritage Conservation Area (in particular the canals corridor) is facing, and has been subject to for some years. The Management Plan provides policy guidance relating to the management of development within the IHCA, and lays out guidelines and procedures



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that developers are expected to follow during the submission of applications affecting the character, setting or historic interest of the Conservation Area.

The SPD provides an extensive Conservation Area character appraisal. This part of the IHCA is made up of the 'Fromebridge to Chipmans Platt' and 'Newtown and Chipmans Platt' character areas with the 'Meadow Mill, Eastington' character area immediately adjacent. This part of the IHCA has a mainly green character and setting and whilst there is canal related development these principally comprise of isolated structures like locks and the mill sites, which provide rhythmically punctuation along the Conservation Area's length. The importance of the green space to the rural character of this part of the Conservation Area has to be appreciated along with the visual setting it provides. An awareness of the sound and some visibility of the motorway and to some degree the A419 has to be acknowledged but the rural character of the area prevails.

With the stadium now set away from the Conservation Area and with the A419 between, views from the IHCA to the development footprint of the application site are limited. However, there are still points within the IHCA, for example Westfield Bridge, where the development, including the upper parts of the 19.5 tall proposed wooden stadium, will be visible and form part of the experience of this northern section of the Conservation Area. It has to be acknowledged that this would be a change however it is not considered this would engender harm to the experience of the historic values within the Conservation Area. The green character and open undeveloped space adjacent to the canal would be retained and with the drop in gradient the canal features, locks, Westfield Bridge etc will still be perceived in their own right, distinctive from the application site.

The stadium would not appear particularly prominent in views and whilst it will be partly visible the potential outstanding design and high quality materials will be an attractive and a distinctive landmark.

It is also not evident that the proposed scheme would interrupt any key views to or including significant wider features, for example church spires.

The extensive car parking has the potential to appear obtrusive as such colours and textures are generally out of place in the rural landscape. However, the retention of the boundary hedging and new planting should obscure much of the car parking and pitches. This also will be perceived as adjacent to the A419 and the M5, which many would interpret as a barrier to the Conservation Area and a very different context to the pastoral line of the (former) canal.

The landscaping and hedging does have the potential to soften and screen but the seasonal nature with structures being more evident during the winter when native deciduous vegetation have less cover is also appreciated.

Views into the Conservation Area from the north are also not significantly affected. With the topography dropping down to the River Frome and intervening fields and hedging, the Conservation Area is currently not overly visible when viewed from the north including from Grove Lane. The M5 is an existing prominent feature that draws attention and whilst the



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proposed stadium will also be prominent in these views it will not detract from the experience of the Conservation Area as it is not seen within these views.

There is no significant cultural, evidential, historic or communal association between the development footprint and the IHCA. The site has had ongoing use as agricultural fields, originally part of an extensive holding stretching north and westwards from the application site. The canal was created with no significant relationship to the farming operation or their owners. The A419 also now forms a major physical division, due to its considerable width and seemingly perpetual stream of traffic.

Chipmans Platt and Meadow Mill are good examples of a 'Stroudwater enclave/mill', being fairly isolated in the countryside but with a strong connection to the canal in their history and function. The proposal would be set away from these enclaves and would not subsume or overly dominate them allowing their canal related historic context and settlement pattern to remain. The development will introduce some noise but this will be limited in occurrence and heard against the backdrop of the existing motorway and road noise. It is therefore felt that the sense of tranquillity and isolation, which is a part of their significance, is not impinged on to any significant extent.

Whilst the background of the M5 is noted, the water meadows and the fields to the south of the A419 are being retained, therefore, the experience of the naturalistic landscape and existing degree of tranquillity are maintained and the contribution that this part of the site makes to the distinctive character and appearance of the Industrial Heritage Conservation Area would not be lost. Retaining these fields in agricultural use does not need consent and whilst they are in the red line area the approved plans make it clear that this outline consent does not include this part of the site for built development i.e. no stadium or associated parking or other infrastructure etc..

The Council's Conservation Officer and Historic England concur with the above assessment and whilst acknowledging the stadium will be visible have not raised objection or highlighted specific harm to the Conservation Area or its setting.

The Strategic Assessment of Land Availability (SALA) Review 2017, which will be used to inform the current Local Plan Review also similarly does not identify any significant heritage constraints for this site (ref: EAS 007). Whilst this cannot be given significant weight it does provide useful contextual and background information which concurs with the above assessment.

It is therefore concluded that the proposal would not harm the architectural or historic significance of the IHCA, itself or through change to its setting.

Listed Buildings and their settings

A number of Listed buildings are located adjacent and/or near the site. These include Grove Farmhouse, Westend Farmhouse and Mulgrove along Grove Lane, Eastington Grange at Chipmans Platt, Eastington Park and the various buildings including the church at Churchend. There are further Listed buildings in the wider area including at Nupend and Nastend which have been detailed in the submitted assessment.



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The submitted heritage assessment outlines that the development proposals would not significantly harm the architectural or historical significance of any of these assets.

The Fromebridge, Meadow Mill, Nupend, Nastend and Churchend group of assets are set well away from the application site with vegetation and other development between, therefore the proposals would not harm their significance.

The medieval settlement of Westend lies immediately adjacent to the northern boundary of the site and includes the Grade II listed Grove Farmhouse, the Westend Farm complex, and Mulgrove. Whilst the change of use of the fields to parking, and the stadium would be visible from certain angles and in glimpsed views, it is considered that due to separation and lack of primary views, the immediate settings of Westend Farm and Mulgrove would not be unduly impacted and no harm would be done to their special interest.

Grove Farm would be more affected, being set nearest to the stadium. It is a handsome building, very typical of a Vale Farmhouse, and lies within a generous garden with surrounding paddocks and orchards. The primary elevation faces away from the stadium site, therefore there would be no unacceptable impact on views out from any of the principle rooms. Key views of the house could still be appreciated in isolation without the development intruding. Views of the stadium would be unavoidable on the approach to the house from the road, however there are sufficient garden grounds to allow the standalone quality of the building to still be appreciated on arrival.

There is no doubt that its wider agricultural setting of Grove Farm would be directly impacted and this could be deemed to erode some of its significance as a former farmstead, so causing harm to its special interest; however, the harm is deemed to be less than substantial in terms of the Framework, therefore, as per paragraph 196, the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposals.

Archaeology

The below ground remains of a Roman Villa (known as the 'Whitminster Villa') have been identified to the south of the A419. The Villa has been damaged by ploughing and robbing and whilst not of the highest quality and significance, it still may contribute to the understanding of the Roman period in the region. This asset is within the application site, however, following the significant revision in December 2017 which moved the stadium to the north side, no development footprint apart from ecological and highway mitigation is proposed South of the A419; consequently the impacts would be on the setting only.

There will be some views across the A419 even when the new planting is mature, but the M5 and other structures mean this is not an unadulterated landscape. There may well have been a historic connection between the Villa and the development footprint but that has been brutalised by the A419. Consequently the proposal would not be harmful. The County Archaeologist has raised no objection to this conclusion.

Roman field systems, important hedgerows and ridge and furrow earthworks also survive within the application site. Whilst the majority is near the Villa to the south these do extend to



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the north of the A419 and are affected by the development footprint. The proposal does involve the loss of some very long established hedgerows. Some of the hedges are historic and depict some of the cultivation patterns from the medieval period, perhaps as part of a manorial operation. Whilst it is a shame these will be affected they are of low heritage significance and they are not felt to be distinctive enough or particularly extensive to be significant. As suggested by the County Archaeologist it would be sufficient that these are recorded with a Written Scheme of Investigation being approved by condition.

Overall Heritage Balance

As noted above the scheme whilst visible from the IHCA it does not affect the special architectural or historic significance of the IHCA, itself or through change to its setting. The loss of the archaeological field system is of low significance and can be mitigated by further recording. The setting of nearby Grade II Listed farmhouses will experience a less than substantial level of harm.

Paragraph 196 of the NPPF states that harm which is less than substantial 'should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal'. This heritage balance is applied before the wider planning balance is carried out.

The scheme will provide an economic benefit during both the construction phase and operation. This includes the investment to build a state-of-the-art stadium, the construction jobs and activity. The operational employment will be maintained with a slight increase compared to the existing at the New Lawn. The social benefits are hard to quantify but include the support of a local football club within the district, provision of high quality facilities with a landmark design and embedded sustainable technologies. Environmental benefits include the ecological enhancements and positive landscape management. Network improvements provide benefits for walkers, cyclist and highway users.

It is considered that the less than substantial harm is outweighed by these benefits. Therefore, there is no significant heritage constraint to the development.

Canal Restoration

Policy ES11 seeks to encourage the restoration and functional improvements of the District's canals, protecting the route and character seeking reasonably related financial contributions towards related canal and towpath restoration or improvements. NDP Policy EP3 also supports the continued restoration of the canal.

As addressed above it is concluded that the scheme will not cause significant harm to the Conservation Area. It is therefore considered that a contribution towards the canal restoration could not be justified.

Whilst within the red line the historic route of the canal, located to the southern end of the parcel of land south of the A419 is not affected by the revised position of the built development which is all to the north of the A419. The proposed development therefore does not prevent the reconstruction or restoration of the uninterrupted route of this part of the canal, retaining the historic link between various parts of the IHCA along its length.



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Positive and meaningful discussions can/have taken place between the applicant, the canal company and SDC's canal team to restore the canal route to allow passage by water and the Missing Mile, these are separate from the consideration of this planning application and should not be given weight in its determination.

Cumulative effects

The cumulative, in-combination effects on the heritage environment from other developments also has to be considered. These include Land West of Stonehouse, Westend and the Missing Mile. These developments are either small or relatively unconstrained in landscape and heritage terms. With the position and restricted/if any inter-visibility it is concluded that there is unlikely to be a greater harm on the nearby heritage assets including those greatest affect by the current proposal.

RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

Local Plan Policy CP1 (Presumption in favour of sustainable development) seeks to maintain the social and environmental conditions in the area. Further detail of this are provided in Policy ES3 (Maintaining quality of life within our Environmental Limits) which highlights the various impediments to amenity and seeks to prevent an unacceptable level of noise, general disturbance, smell, fumes, loss of light or sunlight, loss of privacy or an overbearing effect. Policy CP14 (High quality sustainable development) also does not support unacceptable levels of air, noise, water, and light or soil pollution.

NPPF Paragraphs 91 and 92 respect health and wellbeing, whilst paragraph 8 defines sustainability as having a social role.

The SDC Residential Design Guide SPG advocates the full consideration of layout/design and the impact on local residents and outlines a guidance of 25m between facing windows in residential areas to address amenity issues.

The nearest residential properties are located along and bordering Grove Lane to the north of the site. Further properties and residential accommodation at William Morris House and nearby dwellings at Chipmans Platt are set further away from the indicative position of the proposed stadium towards the M5. The hotel and new properties to the east are also noted along with further residential properties at Nupend, Nastend and Churchend which are set slightly further away. With the gently undulating landscape there is potential for disturbance to carry. Similarly, the surrounding area is currently largely open with low level/sparse field boundaries, meaning nuisance has the potential to be perceptible. However, the M5 and A419 do generate significant background noise and are significant barriers/features within the landscape.

Potential issues are likely during the construction period. To ensure reasonable amenity during the construction phases, a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) condition is proposed. Such a condition is typical for major projects and will require the consideration of construction methods and their impact on local residents. This will include details on working hours to influence noise and disturbance from machinery including vibration from heavy plant. This can also ensure sufficient onsite construction compound and parking is provide for contractors.



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Once in operation disturbance, noise and various nuisances could arise from car/vehicle parking, car/vehicle access, crowds, movement of people, noise from loud speaker/PA, any emergency vehicles, lighting glare, and lighting spillage. As with any new building privacy, loss of sunlight/daylight, shadowing and overbearing implications also need to be considered.

Whilst in outline the indicative layout shows the proposal sufficiently distanced from the edge of the application site so that privacy is unlikely to be significantly impaired. This will be considered at reserved matter stage and whilst the main purpose is to provide good views of the playing pitch any design will need to address any high level views out of the stadium. Similarly, the indicative layout shows the stadium distanced from the nearest dwellings to avoid significant overbearing or shadowing implications. Whilst the stadium will be visible the impact on available sunlight/daylight is unlikely to be materially significantly reduced.

The layout shows potential for significant new planting and with the landscaping bund these help increase distance and decrease the proximity to the nearest neighbours.

The Environmental Health team have no objections and with a mixture of distance and intervening landscaping and planting it is considered that any significant impacts on local residents are mitigated. However, there will still be some amenity impact and whilst this should be limited it still has to be considered in the planning balance.

This current application seeks a stadium with a 5,000 capacity limit. It is also an occasional uses with restrictions on the nature and hours of use so residents will not be subjected to a permanent constant impact. The applicant has outlined that the design of the structure will be flexible to accommodate an increase in capacity to 10,000 in the future. A higher capacity or alternative more frequent use could potentially lead to a greater nuisance levels, and this impact would have to be re-considered in any subsequent planning application.

The Environmental Protection Manager has highlighted the potential for anti-social behaviour issues e.g. car stereos, littering, donutting etc in the car park area, particularly in the late evening and overnight. This can be controlled via appropriate management of the car parking areas, robustly protecting them outside the permitted opening hours of the development.

ACOUSTIC IMPACT

The revised application moved the stadium and the associated development to the northern side of the A419 to the east of Junction 13 of the M5. The siting of the stadium is proposed to immediately adjoin that junction.

Prior to the very significant revision of the application the acoustic impacts of the stadium and associated development were assessed by the applicants. The results of that study undertaken by specialist consultants outlined that the impact on nearby residential occupiers was likely to be acceptable subject to appropriate planning conditions. However, the impact on the residents and users of William Morris House was identified as unacceptable. William Morris House is a long standing facility where adults suffering from severe autistic disorders receive care. It is well established that persons suffering from the severe forms of autism are susceptible to considerable stress when they are subjected to unexpected and unexplained



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noise events, such as cheers that emanate from sporting events, when for example a goal is scored or a player is sent off. Such stress results in disruptive behaviour and considerable stress to residents and potential risk to carers.

The original siting of the stadium produced a comprehensive medical study from consultants acting for the operators of William Morris House outlining the medical impacts of the operation of a stadium as originally sited. Officers of SDC recognised that the impacts were severe and the applicants response submitted via their acoustic consultants did not sufficiently mitigate that impact as their solution included the need for the windows at William Morris House to be closed when a match was being played. This remedy was unacceptable as it is a principle that the polluter deals with impacts and secondly, and practically, the onus for mitigation was placed on the management of the facility; in warm weather this is unreasonable and in any event the time taken to close all windows is time away from providing care. As a result Officers of SDC indicated that the application as originally submitted was unacceptable on acoustic grounds and informed the applicant's agents that if the scheme was not reconsidered then a reason for refusal would be justified on acoustic impact grounds given the presence of this long-standing facility.

The revised proposals were also accompanied by a detailed acoustic impact report as part of the suite of documents received. The effects of noise associated with the scheme as now proposed have been assessed by specialist acoustic consultants, Hoare Lea for the applicants, and presented within Chapter 15 of the revised submitted Environmental Statement, a stand-alone report submitted by Hoare Lea in December 2018, which responded to SDC's consultant's earlier concerns. An appendix to the report included a draft Noise Operational Management Plan.

The noise assessment was reviewed by WYG Environment Planning Transport Ltd, our specialist acoustic consultants, with respect to the methodology used, including consideration of baseline data, predictions of noise-generating sources and the selection of sensitive properties likely to be affected by the development proposals as shown on the current revised matters layout. The assessment also included SDC's consultants meeting with the applicant's acoustic consultants and considering the consultation responses from agents acting for William Morris House. The agents for William Morris House submitted further material setting out their continued objection to the proposals now before committee.

The SDC acoustic consultant confirmed that the revised recommended planning conditions will adequately control the noise impact.

The principle sources of noise associated with the scheme are related to the construction phase, operational noise associated with sports events (including the potential for crowd noise, amplified speech and music), as well as road traffic noise. A number of noise-sensitive properties have been identified surrounding the development site including existing residential properties at Westend, and Chipmans Platt, as well as William Morris College.

Throughout the consultation process, a number of clarifications have been sought regarding the use of William Morris College, and additional baseline monitoring has been undertaken to inform the noise assessment process. An additional representation dated 18th January 2019



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has been received on behalf of William Morris College which identifies that residents of the College are considered to be highly sensitive to sudden changes in noise levels.

Whilst there has been some discussion with our consultant, it is understood that external areas to the north of William Morris College are not routinely used as amenity space by students at the college, this being a car park area and used to access workshop buildings on the site. As such the key considerations with respect to operational noise are the effects of noise within internal spaces of the College that face the proposed scheme.

Therefore, whilst the revised outline scheme presents a more favourable indicative layout and design, a number of controls remain required to control noise associated with the scheme at existing residential properties, as well as a William Morris College with respect to construction noise and vibration, building services plant, operational noise from sports events and amplified speech and music. It is expected that these controls will also protect the external areas of the College to the south.

The car parking and manoeuvring will inevitably generate some noise. Similarly disturbance will arise from traffic access on the A419. However, the most effected areas are away from nearby dwellings. Also the perception is often exacerbated by movements being visible. There will also be some general disturbance from the noise of those outside the stadium whether going in/out or milling around. The proposed landscaping should give some help towards easing the perception of disturbance and this is considered to be not overly significant at the adjacent dwellings.

Core Policy CP14 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan requires that where there is a proposal for high quality sustainable development that the development shall produce no unacceptable levels of, inter alia, noise pollution should occur. In a similar fashion the adopted Eastington NDP, also requires that new development should respect the amenities of neighbouring properties (Policy EP4).

It is also relevant to note that the NPPF requires planning authorities to consider whether unacceptable development can be made acceptable through the use of conditions. In this case Officers advised by professionally technically qualified advisors are content that the suggested conditions together with restrictions of the use of the development to exclude music concerts etc are appropriate, proportional, enforceable and necessary (Regulation 122(2) of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 Tests) so that the acoustic impact is, if appropriately controlled, policy compliant and effective in mitigating any significant harm to local residents. Whilst controlled via the conditions the level of additional noise and disturbance still should be applied in the planning balance.

LIGHTING

Core Policy CP14 (High Quality Sustainable Development) seeks high quality developments and only supports development where it achieves no unacceptable level of lighting. Ecological and landscape policies are also relevant but are addressed elsewhere in the report.



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With the existing rural location/setting, the existing use of the site provides no significant artificial lighting sources. The surrounding area does, however, provide some external sources of light including the adjacent motorway, William Morris House car park and the other nearby buildings with sky glow experienced predominantly from nearby settlements e.g. Stonehouse and Eastington. These are noted but generally the surrounding area is relatively dark and the proposed scheme will introduce light into an area that is generally an unlit environment.

With the outline nature of the application the detailed design of the lighting scheme has not yet been developed. Therefore, at this stage the principle of lighting has to be considered with the worst case environmental effect of the artificial lighting having to be assessed. The details of the lighting scheme for all areas of the site can be controlled via condition requiring the details to be submitted and approved. This would encourage discussion with the applicant to consider the design to mitigate any wider glare or unnecessary lighting. This also allows a well-integrated lighting strategy to be developed as the detailed design develops. Modern LED lights provide a more directed output of light towards the required area and further control mechanisms can be considered and included in the light strategy eg dimmable lights, low level options, shielding/screening, active controls based on movement etc. and management of the site to deactivating lighting when not required.

A lighting assessment was undertaken by the applicant's lighting consultant for the original Eco-Park submission. This was reviewed by the Council's lighting consultant with an entirely new lighting impact assessment carried out and submitted. Whilst the revisions to the scheme have removed the employment element and relocated the stadium, the issues of lighting from the stadium and associated parking and highway works remain similar.

The illustrative design of the stadium outlines that the provision for lighting of the main playing pitch will provide the possibility for lighting units/fittings to be integrated into the structure of the stadium, rather than the more traditional separate lighting towers. These are required to meet Football League 2 floodlight specifications to illuminate the playing surface.

With the indicative integrated design, the built structure of the stands would therefore help minimise the wider glare with limited direct views of the lights from outside the stadium with the enclosed nature of the lighting. The positioning and directing of the light fittings downwards also further reduces the possibility of light spillage.

From a lighting and sustainability point of view the stadium and other onsite lights have the potential to be controlled to allow different settings for different usage requirements, reducing the potential occasions that the full lighting is turned on. The illustrative design also shows potential to maximise natural light in other areas of the stadium design. The illustrated design anticipates the use of natural materials (timber) in the stadium structure and with the use of non-reflective, muted colours and textures and a parkland landscape setting will reduce the risk of reflection or glare from the built structure.

The majority of the football fixtures take place during daytime at the weekend when lighting if required is unlikely to have an adverse impact. Mid-week and evening fixtures are more likely to require lighting. However, the number of occasions proposed is limited with the applicant



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considering currently only anticipating some six per season. The lighting scheme will also require the proposed hours of light to be submitted and approved.

Even with mitigation, positioning and directing of the lights etc sky glow will still be created with the reflection of light back from surfaces and the upward radiation of light. The greatest contributor to sky glow will be the proposed stadium. Whilst it is unlikely that this can be fully reduced in the detailed design, the primary method of mitigating the impact of sky glow is via the limits on the activity time period. When the stadium is not being used the main stadium lighting does not need to be turned on and the created sky glow will be reduced.

It has been outlined that recessed lighting behind the exterior face of the stadium structure will allow functional lighting of the exterior of the building. This is indicative but an architecture silhouette has shown on the submitted visualisations. There is no need for this to be illuminated all the time but specific details including a lighting curfew can be agreed via the lighting strategy.

It is not expected that lighting will be provided for the training pitches; this has been removed with the revised submission and the submitted details confirm that this is not currently proposed. The lighting strategy condition will retain control over any future plans when any additional impact of newly proposed lighting for these training pitches could be considered.

An indicative bund and landscaping has been shown to the north of the proposed stadium. This will be maintained as a dark corridor for use by light sensitive bats; similarly the area to the south of the A419 will remain undeveloped not affecting the canal ecological corridor. The detailed ecological implications along with the impact on the wider landscape setting are addressed in other sections of the report.

Car parks and footpath/public realm areas also have the potential for external lighting including streetlights and/or low level lighting to provide safe movement and access for crowds/users on match days/events.

Highway lighting is currently provided at the Chipmans Platt roundabout but it is also proposed to convert the current unlit single carriageway from the M5 to a dual carriageway as part of the development. It is anticipated that this will be lit but the details of this lighting have not yet been provided. The Local Highway Authority are able to add highway lighting without submitting a planning application and it is considered that any highway lighting columns will generally be a modern LED design which will direct light onto the road surface and be designed to reduce wider spillage.

The impact of lighting on the nearby neighbouring residents also has to be considered. The indicative layout shows the lit areas set away from the neighbours with the bund and dark corridor between the site and the nearest neighbours on Grove Lane. It is not anticipated that the scheme will lead to direct lighting of the wider area or neighbouring land with the detailed lighting design being addressed in the detailed lighting strategy which can mitigate any impact and direct light spillage. However, as outlined above the wider sky glow is unlikely to be further reduced and whilst it has to be acknowledged that it will have an impact and be evident to nearby residents, the harm is addressed by limiting the length and number of



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occasions the stadium is lit during hours of darkness. As outlined above, the impact of sky glow has to be weighted in the planning balance of the scheme.

There is the potential for temporary lighting during the construction phase of the development. This has the potential to impact on local residents but will be limited to operational hours with the majority of the impact during the winter months. Whilst this is only for a temporary period during the construction phase and can be mitigated to a degree by the construction method statement, the locally significant impact does have to be acknowledged.

Lighting is a requirement of the scheme and whilst an appropriate detailed lighting strategy can be considered at a later date, the proposed stadium will still introduce lighting and sky glow into an area that is currently predominately dark in character. Mitigation can be integrated into the design but the impact of lighting and in particularly sky glow during evening matches does have to be considered in the planning balance.

AIR QUALITY AND DUST

The legislation and the standards emanating from statute are set out within the Environment Act 1995 including the National Air Quality Strategy, and subsequent regulations and standards. The European Directive 2008/50/EC contains standards for pollutants and are adopted in to English law via the various environmental protection legislation and air quality regulations. Planning Policy recognises that air quality is a material matter for consideration as part of the development management process. The NPPF at Para 170(e) considers that preventing unacceptable levels of air pollution emanating from new development and wherever possible to improve local environmental conditions should be sought. The adopted Stroud District Local Plan Policy ES5 Air Quality seeks to protect areas where there is poor air quality with Policies CP14 and ES3 protecting against unacceptable levels of smell, fumes and environmental pollution to water, land or air.

The EIA documents submitted in December 2017 at Chapter 13 considers the effects on air quality and the creation of dust of the revised scheme. Whilst the scheme is not located within or near a declared Air Quality Management Area, the submitted documents identify that during the construction phase the area may potentially be affected by fugitive dust emissions. The principle of appropriate mitigation measure has been proposed and will be required via a planning condition requiring a Dust Management Plan to be agreed and implemented as part of the construction phase.

In terms of the operational phase, the assessed effect on air quality of the use of the development is judged not to exceed the relevant air quality objectives. The development, when it becomes operational, will have a negligible effect on annual nitrogen dioxide at the modelled receptors.

The assessment considers that no operational phase mitigation is required but instead good practice enhancement measures, to reduce the effects of emissions on receptors such as design, will ensure that air quality effects are minimised. In addition the use of match day and non match day travel plans will assist in this to influence modal split, together with the indicative landscaping being provided as part of the overall scheme.



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However, the odour from cooking fumes that emanate either from the catering facilities at the stadium or from potential catering vans parked within the curtilage has the potential to cause detriment to nearby residential and institutional occupiers. To control this potential it is proposed to produce a planning condition which will control this matter with respect to the catering function within the stadium building. However, the control of burger style van emissions is beyond the control of planning as the stationing of such vehicles on private land, not parked for in excess of 28 days, constitutes a temporary use of land and falls outside planning control. In this situation environmental legalisation would be the enforcement regime.

SDC's Environment Health team have not found reason to object to the scheme in terms of air quality, dust or odour.

CONTAMINATED LAND

Delivery Policy ES3 (Maintaining Quality of Life within our Environmental Limits) outlines that permission will not be granted to any development which would be likely to lead to an adverse effect on contaminated land where there is a risk to human health or the environment. Core Policy CP14 (High Quality Sustainable Development) also requires improvements to soil and water quality through the remediation of land contamination. Paragraphs 178-179 of the NPPF 2.1 (Feb 2109) also similarly outlines that planning decisions should ensure a site is suitable for its proposed use and take account of any risks arising from contamination.

A preliminary geo-environmental assessment (RSK Paul Walton Associates Ref: 660670 Rev02 dated 20th October 2015) has been submitted with the original submission back in 2016. This provided an initial review of the ground conditions and potential contaminative land uses on or near the site.

As the site has remained as undeveloped agricultural land sources of onsite contaminant are limited and the assessment concludes the risk is moderate/low. The main risk is from made up land including infill materials of the former canal to the south and filled historic ponds to the northeast. Other more limited onsite sources including any demolition materials associated with old structures and any fly-tipped material that may be present. With the rural location any off site sources of contamination are limited with distance to any industrial or commercial sites including the petrol filling station. The nearest landfill site is a sufficient distance away on the other side of the River Frome which provides a further mitigating barrier. The submitted assessment recommends further investigations of the infill material, intrusive site investigation and ground gas monitoring.

The Council's Senior Contaminated Land Officer has reviewed the submitted assessment and concurs with the recommendations of the report that the risks from the infill material need to be investigated further. Whilst the revised proposal has moved the built development to the north of the site, north of the A419, away from the filled canal route the need for further investigation is still required. The Senior Contaminated Land Officer is satisfied that this can be adequately dealt with via a condition which requires a scheme to deal with the risk associated with site contamination including the recommended site investigations and gas monitoring to be submitted and approved and work to be carried out and validated.



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Subject to the above, the contamination and the remediation issue is considered acceptable.

DRAINAGE

Local Plan Policy ES4 Water resources, quality and flood risk seeks to management water quality and looks to guide development away from areas at flood risk and incorporate appropriate Sustainable Drainage measures (SuDS). This seeks to maximise opportunities to reduce flood risk and surface water runoff and also not increase flood risk elsewhere. This is guided by the District's Strategic Flood Risk Assessments (SFRA 1 and 2). This remains consistent with the latest revision of the NPPF (Feb 2019) at Paragraphs 163-165.

Similarly, the NDP seeks to direct development away from the areas of highest flood risk. Policy EP2 seeks incorporation of SuDS and does not supports developments within 8m of all watercourses.

The proposed developed footprint has now been restricted to the area north of the A419 and east of the M5 motorway. This area is within the Environment Agency's Flood Zone 1 and therefore at low risk of fluvial flooding.

With the existing use as agriculture, the proposed scheme will increase the impermeable area and as such does have to potential of increase surface water runoff. The indicative details look to embed mitigation and propose sustainable drainage (SuDS) as part of the proposal. Whilst in outline form, indicative details have been provided in the drainage strategy within the ES and submitted FRA. These propose a mix of swales, infiltration basins and modular storage. New attenuation ponds are clearly shown on the indicative masterplan within the parkland setting of the site and provide both a drainage and ecological enhancement.

The drainage engineer at GCC as the LLFA has highlighted that the site is shown on the Risk of Flooding from Surface Water map as there is a risk of surface water build up behind the A419. The applicant states that there is a blocked culvert under the A419 although the location and connectivity of this is unknown. Any proposal to utilise this culvert would require confirmation of its condition and connectivity, adequate to drain the site efficiently.

The applicant maintains their proposal to infiltrate surface water (subject to satisfactory infiltration rates testing) although it should be noted that infiltration may be impeded in this area. However, further options to drain surface water include via controlled outlet to the water course (The Selbrook) on the western boundary of the site and the culvert identified by the applicant under the A419 would be possible. The site is of sufficient size to be able to accommodate ponds/storage of surface water on site to avoid an increase in flood risk elsewhere should need to attenuate a storm event.

The LLFA retains no objection to this outline application subject to the conditions requiring the details drainage scheme and its management and maintenance to be approved.



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With the active management and increase surface drainage storage on site it is considered that with the integrate ecological benefits, the scheme will have a net drainage benefit, it will not be at greater risk of flooding and will not increase the risk elsewhere.

Mitigation during the construction phases to avoid uncontrolled sediment runoff and other construction related pollution can also be controlled via condition.

AGRICULTURAL LAND

Both national guidance and local planning policy seeks to encourage an effective use of land by guiding development away from the best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land. Paragraph 170 of NPPF supported by Paragraph 024-25 of the NPPG seeks to protect valued soils and recognises the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land. Where development is necessary areas of poorer quality land should be used in preference to that of a higher quality.

Agricultural land within Grades 1, 2 and subgrade 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification is considered the best and most versatile agricultural land. This is land which is most flexible, productive and efficient in response to inputs and can be best used to address future needs.

The agent has outlined that the Agricultural Land Classification shows the site as undifferentiated Grade 3. The Natural England Post 1988 ALC survey did not survey this specific site but the adjacent land is classified as subgrade 3b, 'moderate' quality agricultural land. The clay within the soil increases the proneness of water logging which limits the quality to 3b. It is also evident that the fields have only been used for glazing and hay cutting.

A proportion of the land within the application site will remain undeveloped with natural conservation area and agricultural land to the south of the A419 as well as the landscaping and open space/parkland setting. With the indicative proposed cross section the levels of the stadium and surrounding area will involve some excavation. With the size of the site and nature of the proposal there appears to be potential to reuse and retain as much as possible of the soil on site. The landscaped bund is expected to be around 10m wide at the base rising to 2m in height.

Whilst highlighting the issue of soil management Natural England have raised no objection. No detailed information relating to the soil management have been developed at this outline stage but a soil resource management plan can be required as part of the conditions. With the appropriate mitigation during the construction and management phases and the scheme not resulting in the loss of the highest quality agricultural land or a significant site area, the impact is not considered to be significant to warrant refusal.

PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 sets out the Public Sector Equality Duty ('PSED'). Consideration of equality matters are a material consideration in planning matters and should be an integral part of a local authority's decision making.

The PSED requires public authorities to have "due regard" to:



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- The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the EqA 2010 (section 149(1)(a)).
- The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it (section 149(1)(b)). This involves having due regard to the needs to:
 - remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
 - take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it (section 149(4)); and
 - encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

Members are asked to note that due regard in this sense means that there must be real thought applied to the PSED.

With the outline nature of the application detail designs have not been submitted apart from the access arrangements, however, key parameters and indicative information has been provided.

The access arrangement provides an inclusive environment which seeks to maximise connectivity. The local topography allows for gentle slopes across the site with access arrangements not limited to steps. Good quality detailing of the public space will allow all users to have access to the main concourses area around the stadium and then easy access to move around the site to the other pitches and areas of the site. Provision for pedestrians within the access are also suitable for buggies/prams and wheelchairs. Cycle provision and bus connection facilities can be designed to accommodate all age groups. These provide benefit to all making a safer more controlled environment. Dedicated disabled parking bays have also been outlined.

The new stadium will also allow improvements in the provision compared to the existing ground with greater facilities available to cater for a greater number of spectators including those with disabilities. As a cultural/sporting venue the improved facilities will also have beneficial impacts compared to the restricted existing ground and will provide a new high quality facility for all spectators/visitors including those with protected characteristics. The applicant also outlines the need and benefit for the development to integrate the community at the club and will centralise operations and whilst the training pitches will primarily be for the men's 1st team it is anticipated that the women's and youth section will benefit from the centralise hub of the on-site facilities which is not currently possible at the existing ground.

The design and access statement outlines that the detailed design will consider automatic doors, flush floor levels/ step free circulation and slip resistant materials to facilitate wheelchairs and other users. The circulation space within the proposed stadium building will seek to remove unnecessary physical barriers allowing passing space with other users to the benefit of all.



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The proposal has a low level of relevance or neutral direct impact on gender, sexual orientation, race or religion. Whilst no provision is made for differing groups or beliefs they are not excluded from the wider improvements and accessibility for all.

The scheme will provide additional employment opportunities. Whilst it is anticipated existing staff will have the option to transfer to the new location there would be a negative impact by moving out of Nailsworth e.g. reducing the walking option.

In relation to the application of the criterion of removing or minimising disadvantages this is relevant due to the concerns raised by William Morris College in relation to the impact of noise on its residents who suffer from severe autism.

In terms of the approach that members should take, the High Court has set out the following general principles about complying with the due regard requirement as follows:

- There should be a proper analysis of all the relevant material and an appreciation of the duty to have due regard.
- Regard should be had to the duty to have due regard before, and at the time, a particular [decision is made]. It should not be a "box-ticking" exercise but should instead be a process integrated in the decision-making process.
- The duty is a continuing one.
- The duty is non-delegable and will always remain the responsibility of the body subject to the duty.
- The duty to have due regard should be exercised with rigour and an open mind.
- The duty should be reconsidered if new information comes to light and adequate records should be kept of the consideration and decision-making processes undertaken in order to demonstrate that the equality duties have been undertaken conscientiously. If the relevant general equality duty is not mentioned, it does not mean that the duty has not been performed, however it is good practice to refer to the duty and any considerations under it to avoid future legal challenge.

There has been a clear application and consideration of the Public Sector Equality Duty throughout this application. Members will note that in the original application on the southern parcel of land the acoustic study submitted by the applicant's agents was judged by officers and specialist consultant to be insufficient to mitigate the impact on persons with a protected characteristic, which in this case is disability. The applicant was informed that the likelihood was that the application would be recommended for refusal on that basis. This was because of the impact on residents and users of William Morris House being identified as unacceptable. It is well established that persons suffering from the severe forms of autism are susceptible to considerable stress as a result of noise.

This consideration continued with the new revision submitted by the applicant which moved the entire sports hub to the northern parcel of land.

Officers have considered the noise impact and any mitigation in the section entitled "Acoustic Impact" above. Officers, advised by professionally technically qualified advisors, have carefully taken into account all of the representations made by the planning consultants engaged by William Morris College. Based on the advice received, officers are content that



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the suggested conditions together with restrictions of the use of the development to exclude music concerts etc will be effective in mitigating any significant harm to local residents, and in particular, those with the protected characteristic of disability.

Members are advised that Officers have had due regard to the Council's Public Sector Equality Duty arising from the potential impact of this application on persons with protected characteristics and set out their conclusion for members in this report. The conclusion is that appropriate conditions will be sufficient to mitigate any disadvantage due to the impact of noise on the residents of William Morris College.

The mitigation and indicative design are not intended to give favourable treatment to any particular affected group but are required to make the scheme acceptable in planning terms. These will be controlled via the conditions/reserved matters and in addition by Building Regulations.

The management and operation of the stadium e.g. staff training, induction loops and personalised equipment will be the responsibility of the applicant. Similarly, the choice to remain solely a vegan food outlet would also be beyond the control of the planning system.

PLANNING OBLIGATIONS

A planning obligation may be required to control the impact of a development particularly in circumstances where the desired restrictions go beyond the scope of planning conditions. In accordance with Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the local authority will enter into a legal agreement with the applicant (including anyone else who has a legal interest in the land) to secure planning obligations.

Paragraph 56 of the NPPF says local planning authorities should consider whether otherwise unacceptable development could be made acceptable through the use of conditions or planning obligations. Planning obligations should only be used where it is not possible to address unacceptable impacts through a planning condition. Paragraph 56 advises obligations should only be sought where they meet all of the following tests:

- necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms
- directly related to the development; and
- fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

These tests reflect Regulation 122 of the CIL Regulations.

The Council's Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) sets out in principle what kinds of planning applications will require planning obligations and in broad terms how monies will be spent on projects related to the proposed development.

In addition to the controls outlined in the planning conditions the following Heads of Term for the legal agreement are proposed:

- Closure of existing ground 'The New Lawn'
- Travel plan
- Local sourcing



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The applicant has committed to source materials and labour from within the local area where possible. This has been offered as a clause within the legal agreement. Whilst this is a positive and can be encouraged for both the construction and operational phases the extent that this will be affective has not yet been demonstrated. Therefore whilst positive with the uncertainties this element should not be given significant weight.

PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSION

The application as varied by the submission of significant revisions in December 2017 remains contrary to Development Plan relating to development in the countryside outside settlement boundaries. With this acknowledged, consideration of the material considerations is needed and due regard to the planning balance is required.

The primary policy objection to the scheme is its location outside the defined settlement limits. Whilst the scheme is in a countryside location it is located between the large mixed use Local Plan allocation Land West of Stonehouse and the M5. This is not an isolated location and the indicative proposed design, landscaping and planting will help integrate the scheme into the surrounding landscape.

The scheme also seeks to provide significant sustainable benefits. These are embedded into the indicative building design and materials with its timber structure. The scheme also outlines the use of sustainable technologies and design making it energy efficient and low carbon both in its construction and operation.

In so far as highway matters are concerned, Highways England has no objections, subject to mitigation and GCC Highways has also confirmed that the proposed access to the site is acceptable. The scheme provides duelling of this section of the A419 including improvements to the M5 J13 junction which provide wider benefits of increased capacity on non-match days including the majority of the weekday rush hour peaks. Off-site cycle and pedestrian connections and improvements are proposed along with a travel plan to encourage a modal shift to more sustainable modes of transport including match day buses from town centre locations.

A priority for buses is provided on site with space outlined for coaches and services buses along with a dedicated bus entrance from Grove Lane. Electric vehicle charging and cycle storage have all been addressed with the level of car parking spaces considered appropriate to effectively address the need but also provide aspiration to encourage sustainable travel.

The adoption of sustainable transport management measures and proposed mitigation will ensure that the impacts on the local and strategic highway network are further mitigated to the satisfaction of the responsible authorities. It can therefore overall be concluded that the proposed development can be satisfactorily accommodated on the transport network.

The NPPF requires sustainable development, and as part of this, development should aim to minimise adverse effects on the local environment, which includes neighbouring properties and local residents. The proposed development should not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of the surrounding land and buildings, in relation to privacy, overshadowing, wind



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and microclimate. Given the indicative layout of the development, and the characteristics of the site's location in relation to the siting and proximity of surrounding development the proposed built form is on the whole not considered to be overbearing.

The proposed development, owing to its indicative scale and potential design, does have the potential to cause disruption and noise during the construction phase. A commensurate construction period will be required but it is noted that there is no proposed built form on the indicative layout in very close proximity to neighbouring properties, however, it will be important to that the site is managed both responsibly and sensitively. This can be achieved via an appropriate phasing of the work along with professional and considerate contractors. The use of appropriate construction management plans will also ensure that the impact during construction works are minimised.

The number of residential neighbours to the new stadium site is limited and the majority are sited at some distance from the facility and whilst there will be an impact, this can be greatly mitigated with the design of the new build scheme which is not possible at the New Lawn. The properties on Grove Lane will experience the greatest impact being the closest to the proposed site with a degree of disturbance. Their outlook will change but with the mitigation of the bund and landscaping the harm is reduced.

The special case of William Morris College is also appreciated. The proposed re-positioning of the stadium in the December 2017 does reduce the impact and whilst it will still have an effect this is not materially significant adverse with the mitigation required to meet the controls in the suggested planning conditions.

The lighting from the scheme will also have an impact, the primary source being the sky glow from the stadium itself. Whilst direct light spillage can be mitigated this sky glow is harder to control, however, the harm is limited by the low number of occasions the stadium will be used at night.

The development would result in 'less than substantial harm' to the agricultural setting of the Grade II listed buildings. The historic field patterns will also be affected. However, it is considered that the public benefits outweigh the less than substantial harm to the heritage assets.

The scheme will also have biodiversity benefits. These include the mitigation of harm during the construction phases. Habitat improvement and creation at the stadium parcel of land north of the A419 and the nature conservation area to the west of the M5 is also proposed. This includes the landscaping with the parkland setting, the translocation and improving hedgerow, landscaped bund and orchard, pond features and tree planting. The appropriate ongoing management will also be of benefit.

The erection of the stadium will produce significant economic benefit, creating jobs and generating economic activity during the construction phase, in particular, local jobs and training where possible, secured via a suggested planning condition agreed with the applicant.



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The operational phase will also provide ongoing economic benefits both at the site and the surrounding area. The building of the dualled section of the A419 will, on non-match days increase road capacity in the area between Junction 13 of the M5 and Chipmans Platt and be of benefit to other road users reducing congestion and work time lost. The mitigation measures for cyclists and walkers again will benefit non-match day users of the local network.

The match day proposals for public transport will provide the stadium with a sustainable transport option and is a notable positive for the scheme. This has the potential over time to reduce the demand for parking on match days and the use of private vehicles as the arrangements for transport to and from the ground are likely, because of pricing policy, to prove popular to supporters offering a considerable financial advantage over the use of private vehicles parking at the stadium. The match day public transport arrangements suggested will also be likely to benefit the economies of Stonehouse, Stroud and Nailsworth. Picking up and dropping off points for fans in these town centres will be likely to generate trade both in retail sales and food and drink, which are not present at the club's present location, where retail and food outlets in the Forest Green area apart from within the New Lawn stadium are not readily available or accessible. The match day transport arrangements will also require more stewards than at the New Lawn, increasing employment.

The expansion of the food and beverage offer at the new stadium will have several positive economic benefits. Firstly it will increase the numbers of catering and allied staff employed over present New Lawn totals. Customers will be served more quickly adding to potential revenue. The expansion of the areas given over to sales will increase the volume of raw materials required. This will be of benefit to local suppliers as the applicants now have a policy to source not only labour but supplies, insofar as available, locally and the applicants have confirmed will continue.

The scheme will also generate non-economic benefits. The design of the proposal is such that it will produce a nationally recognised and unique structure, which has the potential to become a very well recognised icon for the District as a whole. It is very difficult to ascribe a monetary value for this benefit. The only similar type developments that can be considered analogous are stadiums in this country and abroad where the presence of the building attracts tourism in their own right. It is not unrealistic to see that once the stadium is built to the illustrative design it may be added, along with among others, the Cotswold Way, arts events and the Severn Estuary to the attractions of the District. The completed stadium with its utilisation of sustainable materials and sustainable building technology will also act as a model for future developments nationwide and potentially beyond. Potentially another source of boosting the Districts 'brand' recognition.

The proposed development will allow the club to enter a new era, with a purpose built stadium, with training facilities centrally located and presenting a 'modern image', encouraging staff and players alike to aim high. The proposal stadium will elevate the football ambitions to another level, increase the support base and has the potential to make FGR financially viable going forward. The new stadium has the potential to be a sustainable home for FGR into the future, allowing them to compete at a higher level and make progress on the



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pitch. This has the potential to some degree to encourage greater participation including the women's and youth sections of the club.

The strength of feelings for and against the move from Nailsworth and the new stadium are appreciated and Officers have considered all the planning merits and negatives of the scheme when coming to their recommendation. The history of the club is important and it is appreciated that for some Nailsworth will always be the spiritual home given the great matches/memories, community beginnings and the various ups and downs of the past. However, the future of the club is the young players and supporters and the improved facilities and opportunities the proposal will provide. This can only be an asset to the wider area and the District.

Extensive discussions have taken place with the applicant regarding the possible community engagement potential of the scheme. Whilst acknowledging the engagement and work the football club already does including its youth education programme, the new stadium would be an opportunity to maximise this as the ambition of the club grows. Whilst no firm commitment has been made a draft condition has been included to agree the details at a later date. Without full details it is hard to quantify the weight this should be given. However, the condition does put the onus on the applicant to agree a programme of community engagement and therefore a degree of community benefit should be given some positive weight.

Finally the benefit of the new stadium will be considerable on the residents in Forest Green who are presently adversely affected by the club with its increased popularity. In particular on match days when they have restricted access to their homes in addition to noise nuisance and general disturbance to the quiet enjoyment of their homes.

Conclusion

The scheme provides significant benefits within the three-pronged sustainable development test in the NPPF (Paragraph 8):

1. Economic - The application produces considerable benefits to the local economy during the construction and operation including branding/tourism benefit.
2. Social - The proposed stadium will produce significant social benefits including providing a 21st Century home to a well-established football league club which is likely to add to its support and potential success and more generally add to the social cohesiveness in the District as well as encouraging increased interest and participation in football; The effect of the stadium will add to local road capacity on non-match days, positively encourage modal split changes on match days and to potentially to a degree on non-match days; Reduce the effects the existing stadium has on residential amenity in that area by reason of noise, air quality and congestion from traffic and not introduce significant effects at the new location.
3. Environmental - The new stadium will constitute a state-of-the-art facility which incorporates low carbon technology which is adapted to deal with climate change challenges. Ecological enhancements including the nature conservation area, extensive planting and specific wildlife enhancements and management have also been proposed.



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The analysis of the planning balance demonstrates that there are significant positive effects, economic, non-economic, sustainability and social and environmental benefits. However, Officers have also identified some negative effects including noise and impact on William Morris College and other local residents, lighting and sky glow, match day highway impact and the effects on the local landscape and heritage assets.

In considering the weight to be applied to the above benefits, Officers have placed considerable weight on the deliverability of those positive effects. It is therefore important that those positive effects are delivered and the Council keeps control of those matters. Officers recognise that planning conditions are the most normal manner for delivery to be controlled at outline stage, with so much detail of design, construction, landscaping and operational matters still to be determined. However, in the case of this particular development the positive elements identified are crucial to the planning balance and delivering the proposal and in order to prevent 'dumbing down' of the outline illustrative concept and secure the delivery of those positive elements Officers preference is that the required elements should be included within a S106 agreement.

However, the applicant considers that the recommended planning conditions will achieve the necessary result and Officers are prepared to recommend that course of action though recognising it is not ideal to ensure that 'dumbing down' does not occur and the positive balance is retained.

Turning to the negative impacts, the match day highway impact effects are considered not to be sufficient to justify a 'highway' reason for refusal but mitigation will provide public benefit during the normal peak hours.

The detriment to the landscape is localised and whilst sky glow will be experience this is mitigated by the limitation of occasions. The impact on the setting of nearby Listed buildings is less than substantial and outweighed in the heritage public benefit balance. Whilst these matters are both material, they are more than marginal but less than significantly adverse with the proposed mitigation reducing the harm.

Negative impacts have also been considered in terms of residential amenity of local residents. This includes noise and disturbance with specific reference to William Morris College and the impact of lighting including sky glow. Whilst there is potential for harm this is mitigated by the proposed conditions include the construction management and the operational noise controls. These impacts, whilst acknowledged with the mitigation are not considered significantly adverse.

Similarly to achieving positive effects, the proposed mitigation needs to be dealt with as part of a S106 and the recommended conditions. This includes implementation and details of the match day public transport arrangements and travel plan, implementation of illustrative design, landscaping, siting, and materials to generally be observed in subsequent reserved matters applications and the other environmental controls on the use, lighting, odour and noise etc..



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In reviewing the planning balance and subject to putting in place effective measures to ensure the delivery of those benefits and effective mitigation, Officers consider that the planning balance produces net material benefits and reduces the adverse effects.

It is apparent from the above narrative that the proposals would represent a new landmark scheme within the local area. In order to deliver the high quality scheme, the conditions and legal agreement will ensure that the design of the development balances the desire to act a landmark development, whilst at the same time being respectful and compatible with the sensitive surrounding uses, including nearby heritage assets. The proposed development does give rise to a conflict with the development plan, however, on balance the benefits that the proposals will deliver are considered to outweigh the negatives. It is therefore this positive planning balance which is a material consideration that justifies, in this specific case, a departure from the development plan.

RECOMMENDATION

Due to the above, subject to no contrary direction or call-in request from the DCLG, that Committee **resolve to grant** the Planning Manager authority to determine the application and grant outline planning permission upon completion of a satisfactory legal agreement and subject to the recommended planning conditions.

Subject to the following conditions:

1. Applications for approval of the Reserved Matters must be made to the Local Planning Authority before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission. The development hereby permitted must be begun not later than the expiration of 2 years from the final approval of the reserved matters or, in the case of approval on different dates, the final approval of the last such matter to be approved.

Reason:

To comply with the requirements of Section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. Details of the layout, scale, external appearance of the stadium and the landscaping of the Site (hereinafter called the 'Reserved Matters') shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority before any development is commenced. The development shall be carried out as approved and in accordance with the submitted drawings unless the Local Planning Authority has given written consent to any variation.

Reason:

To comply with the requirements of Section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

3. The outline development hereby granted approval and any subsequent reserved matters shall not exceed the maximum parameters with regards to footprint and height as shown on the approved plans.



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Reason:

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

4. Notwithstanding the annotated inductive labels on the submitted plans and details, the stadium hereby permitted shall be constructed substantially to the same design and utilising similar materials as illustrations set out in the Design and Access Statements submitted in December 2017 (revised scheme) and 2018 (FEI 8) and other illustrative materials submitted subject to final approval under the Reserved Matters application(s).

The development shall be undertaken in conformity to the material submitted by the applicant as follows;

ite location plan – Ref: 6470_T0502_01 date December 2017 received on 21 December 2017.

Concept Masterplan Ref 6470_T0521_01 dated December 2018 (FEI 8) received on 18 December 2018.

Design and access Statement, December 2017 and 2018.

Non Technical Summary, December 2017.

Volume 1: Main Text, December 2017.

Volume 2: Figures, December 2017.

Volume 3; Appendices Part 1, Part 2 and Part 3, December 2017.

Revised scheme December 2017, Land use Parameter Plan Dwg no 6470_T0498_02.

Revised scheme December 2017, Building Height Parameter Plan, Dwg no 6470_T0497_01.

Revised Green Infrastructure Parameter Plan (contained within FEI 7 Proposed Additional Habitat Creation 4.10.18 (final version received on 08th May 2019),

Reason:

To ensure the final stadium design and layout reflects the form and materials set out in the Design and Access Statements and the means of access comprising the non reserved matter hereby approved.

5. The details submitted for the reserved matters of landscaping shall include full details of both hard and soft landscape works and include:-

i. Proposed finished levels or contours;

ii. Means of enclosure;

iii. Car parking layouts;

iv. Practice pitch layouts;

v. Pedestrianised areas;

vi. Water features;

vii. Other vehicle and pedestrian access and circulation areas;

viii. Hard surfacing materials;

ix. Minor artefacts and structures (e.g. furniture, refuse or other storage



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units, signs etc.);

x. Existing vegetation and landscape features to be retained and /or translocated;

xi. Boundary treatments indicating the positions, design, materials and type of boundary treatment including the earth bund incorporating the bat corridor;

xiii. Proposed soft landscape elements (planting and seeding) including planting plans; written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment); schedules of plants, noting species, plant sizes and proposed numbers/ densities where appropriate;

xiv. Programme for implementation.

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved Landscape Scheme.

Reason:

To provide a high quality development which protects, conserves and enhances the built and natural environment, respects and integrates the surroundings and creates a positive sense of place in accordance with Policies CP4, CP14, EI11, ES7, ES8, ES12 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015.

6. Notwithstanding the submitted plans, full details of the bund along the north eastern edge of the application site (as annotated on the concept plan) shall be submitted in the reserved matters application (as part of the landscaping submission required by condition 2). It shall be made as high as practically possible, with varying slopes, varying alignment and comprehensively planted to soften its form.

Reason:

To maximise its visual, ecological and residential amenity value in accordance with Policies ES3, CP14, and ES7 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015.

7. Prior to the commencement of any above ground works hereby approved, details of the precise materials used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development including the finishes and colours shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. This shall include sample panels and/or boards which will be retained on site and made accessible and available for inspection for the period of the construction works. This condition shall apply notwithstanding any indication as to these matters that have been given in the current application. The materials to be used in the development shall be in accordance with the approved details and retained in perpetuity.

Reason:

To enable the Local Planning Authority to ensure the satisfactory appearance of the development, in accordance with Policies CP4, CP14, EI11, ES3, ES7 and ES10 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015.



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8. No development shall take place until details of the existing ground levels, proposed finished floor levels of the buildings, and the proposed finished ground levels of the site, relative to a fixed datum point which is to remain undisturbed during the development have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Such details shall also provide comparative levels of eaves and ridge heights of any adjacent properties and details of the levels of any existing or proposed boundary treatments. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the details as approved.

Reason:

In the interests of the amenities of local residents and visual amenity and character of the surrounding area to ensure the satisfactory appearance of the development in accordance with Policies CP14, EI11, ES3 and ES7 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015 and the provisions of the Revised National Planning Policy Framework.

9. The height of the stadium roof shall not exceed 19.54 metres above the existing ground level of 21m above ordnance datum as shown on plan 6470_T0501_01 'Existing Site Plan' dated December 2017, unless otherwise approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

In the interests of the amenities of local residents and visual amenity and character of the surrounding area to ensure the satisfactory appearance of the development in accordance with Policies CP14, EI11, ES3 and ES7 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015 and the provisions of the Revised National Planning Policy Framework.

10. The reserved matters application shall include a sustainability and energy statement which outlines the detailed measures that address the sustainability strategy of the development hereby approved. The approved measures shall be fully implemented prior to the first occupation of the development and shall thereafter be permanently retained to serve the development and maintained in a working order in accordance with the agreed statement.

Reason:

To encourage sustainable design and construction, maximise energy efficiency and a reduction of CO2 emissions in accordance with Policies CP14 and ES1 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015 and paragraph 148 of the Revised National Planning Policy Framework.

11. Prior to commencement of the construction works hereby, a bespoke Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) assessment confirming that the development achieves a 'Excellent' BREEAM rating shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Post construction review certificate(s) shall be submitted to and approved by Local Planning Authority, prior to the first use of the development is to be implemented.



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Reason:

To encourage sustainable design and construction, maximise energy efficiency and a reduction of CO2 emissions in accordance with Policies CP14 and ES1 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015 and paragraph 148 of the Revised National Planning Policy Framework.

12. In respect of the Class D2 use of the stadium hereby approved, notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, as amended, or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification; the use of the stadium shall be used for the hosting of association football events not be changed to or used for another D2 use such as a music and concert hall, dance hall, skating rink, bingo hall.

Reason:

To prevent an unsatisfactory form of permanent development, minimise disruption of the local environment, protect the living and working conditions of nearby residents and to accord with the details submitted which promote the unique use for FGR in accordance with Policies EI12, CP14 and ES3 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015.

13. The stadium hereby approved shall not hold football matches outside the hours of 9:00am to 11:00pm. Ancillary uses within the stadium building shall not be open to customers/members of the public outside the hours of 8:00am to 1:00am Monday to Saturday and 10:00am to 11:00pm on Sundays, Bank Holidays and Public Holidays, unless otherwise approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

In order to prevent noise and disturbance to residential properties in the locality in accordance with Policies CP13, CP14, EI12 and ES3 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015.

14. The stadium hereby approved shall contain a maximum attendance of 5000 spectators.

Reason:

In order to reduce the potential impact on the public highway and prevent noise and disturbance to residential properties in the locality and to accord with the details submitted in accordance with Policies CP13, CP14, EI12 and ES3 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015.

15. The stadium including the pitch and spectator terraced seats hereby approved shall not be used for standalone musical performance, concerts or similar entertainment events.

Reason:

To minimise disruption of the local environment and protect the living and working conditions of nearby residents and to accord with the details submitted which promote the unique use for FGR in accordance with



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Policies CP14, E112 and ES3 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015.

16. The stadium football pitch hereby approved shall only be open to the general public when being used for the following association football events, unless otherwise approved by the Local Planning Authority:

- a) Forest Green Rovers Football Club first team competitive league games in accordance with fixture lists as agreed by the relevant football authorities (e.g. Football League);
- b) Forest Green Rovers Football Club first team cup games in accordance with fixtures agreed by the relevant football authorities e.g. The Football Association;
- c) Forest Green Rovers Football Club preseason friendlies, reserve, youth and ladies team matches;
- d) Two charity matches per annum.
- e) Local community matches including local leagues and schools.

Reason:

To limit the number of home matches in order to reduce the potential impact on the public highway and prevent noise and disturbance to residential properties in the locality and to accord with the details submitted which promote the unique use for FGR in accordance with Policies CP13, CP14, E112 and ES3 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015.

17. No development shall take place within the application site until the Applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a phased programme of appropriate archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

To make provision for a programme of archaeological mitigation in advance of the commencement of development, so as to record and advance understanding of any heritage assets which may be lost due to ground works required for the scheme, in accordance with Policy ES10 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015 and paragraph 199 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

18. No development shall take place until a detailed drainage strategy has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The strategy should be supported by evidence of ground conditions and modelling of the scheme to demonstrate it is technically feasible and where applicable adheres to the NPPF, Non-statutory technical standards for Sustainable Drainage, Building Regulation H and the Local Plan policy. The drainage scheme shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. Where surface water requires disposal off site (i.e. not infiltrated) the applicant must provide evidence of consent to discharge/connect through 3rd party land or to their network/system/watercourse.

Reason:



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To ensure the development is provided with a satisfactory means of drainage and thereby preventing the risk of flooding in accordance with Policies CP14 and ES4 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015. It is important that these details are agreed prior to the commencement of development as any works on site could have implications for drainage in the locality.

19. No development shall take place until a SuDS maintenance plan for all SuDS/attenuation features and associated pipe work, in accordance with The SuDS Manual (Ciria, C753) has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The approved SuDS maintenance plan shall be implemented in full in accordance with the agreed terms and conditions.

Reason:

To ensure the continued operation and maintenance of drainage features serving the site and avoid flooding in accordance with Policies CP14 and ES4 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015. It is important that these details are agreed prior to the commencement of development as any works on site could have implications for drainage in the locality.

20. All soft landscape works including translocation in the approved Landscape Scheme shall be carried out within the first planting season (1 October to 31 March) and seeding season (the months of September or April) following the completion of the stadium, or within such extended time period as may be approved by the Local Planning Authority. Any trees or plants which within a period of five years from the completion of the soft landscape works die, are removed, or become seriously damaged or diseased, shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a similar size and species to those originally required to be planted.

Reason:

To ensure that the landscaped areas are laid out and retained in accordance with the approved plans in accordance with Policies CP4, CP14, EI11, ES6, ES7, ES8, ES12 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015.

21. No development shall take place (including demolition, ground works, vegetation clearance) until a construction environmental management plan (CEMP) has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The CEMP shall include the following:

- i. Measures that will be taken to protect the local drainage network from surface run-off during the construction phase.
- ii. Pollution Prevention Plan
- iii. Methods and Timings for the removal of vegetation likely to support breeding birds.
- iv. Full details of measures that will be taken when clearing vegetation with potential to support reptiles and great crested newts.
- v. Tree and hedgerow retention and protection details.
- vi. The role and responsibilities on site of an ecological clerk of works



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ECOW or similarly competent person.

vii. The locations of where machinery and materials will be stored

viii. A Soil Resource Plan in accordance with defra guidance Construction Code of Practice for the Sustainable Use of Soils on Construction Sites.

ix. Methods and timings that will be implemented for the safeguard of badgers

x. methods and timings that will be implemented for the safeguard of bats

xi. methods and timings that will be implemented for the protection, capture and translocation of reptiles.

The approved CEMP shall be adhered to and implemented throughout the construction period strictly in accordance with the approved details, unless otherwise approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

To ensure that priority habitats and protected and priority species are safeguarded in accordance with The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as amended, The Hedgerow Regulations 1997, the National Planning Policy Framework (in particular section 11), and Policies CP4, CP14, EI11, ES6, ES7, ES12 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015, and in order for the Council to comply with Part 3 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

22. The development shall not commence until a Landscape and Habitat Management Plan, including long-term design objectives, management responsibilities and maintenance schedules for the approved landscape works, has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The Plan shall incorporate the principles established in the revised Indicative Green Infrastructure Parameter Plan (contained within FEI 7 Proposed Additional Habitat Creation 4.10.18 (final version received on 08th May 2019), and include the following elements:-

- i. Details of the extent and type of new planting and habitat creation;
- ii. Details of the extent and type of retained habitats, historic landforms and features;
- iii. Details of the key landscape and habitat functions of landscape components;
- iv. Details of treatment of Site boundaries and/ or buffers around water bodies (including ditches/ drains);
- v. Details of management objectives;
- vi. Details of maintenance regimes;
- vii. Details of management responsibilities (for the duration of the project and once complete);
- viii. Details of long-term monitoring of:-
The success of mitigation and enhancement measures for protected/ notable species;
The success of habitat creation, enhancement and management.

The plan shall also include:-

- i. Prescriptions for habitat enhancements for reptiles, birds, badgers and



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foraging bats;

ii. Prescriptions for the installation of new and where possible retention of features suitable for night roosts for bats, in addition to day roosts using woodcrete bat boxes in trees;

iii. A phasing plan to ensure that where appropriate and achievable, areas of habitat are created in a logical sequence in advance of construction activities;

iv. Procedures for monitoring and ongoing management of restored and created habitats.

The approved Landscape and Habitat Management Plan shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and timings.

Reason:

To protect features of recognised nature conservation importance in accordance with Policies CP14, E111, ES6, ES7 and ES12 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015 and to ensure that the proposed mitigation and enhancement measures are developed and located in a way that contributes to the nature conservation value and landscape character of the Site, in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework paragraphs 170 and 175.

23. No development shall take place (including demolition, ground works, vegetation clearance) until an Ecological Design Strategy (EDS) has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority addressing mitigation and enhancement. The EDS shall include the following:

i. Full details of hedgerows to be retained and protected during construction;

ii. Full details of enhanced bat commuting corridors that will aim to provide connecting unlit habitat between identified/ newly constructed bat roosts and the wider landscape beyond the identified red line area of the development footprint;

iii. Details of planting, such as hedgerows, wildflower planting and establishment;

iv. Type and source of materials to be used where appropriate, e.g. native species of local provenance;

v. Timetable for implementation demonstrating that works are aligned with the proposed phasing of development;

vi. Details for the erection of bird boxes;

vii. Details of remedial measures if planting fails;

viii. Details of initial aftercare and long-term maintenance.

The approved EDS shall be adhered to and implemented throughout the construction period strictly in accordance with the approved details.

Reason:

To protect and enhance the site for biodiversity in accordance with Policies CP14, E111, ES6 and ES7 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015 and the revised National Planning Policy Framework paragraphs 118, 170 and 175 and in order for the Council to comply with Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.



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24. Prior to the commencement of any development, retained trees on or adjacent to the Site that are likely to be affected by the development proposals, shall be identified and surveyed in accordance with the relevant guidance contained in BS5837:2012 Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction - Recommendations and this information, together with proposals for protecting the retained trees and hedging, shall be submitted and approved by the Local Planning Authority. This shall include a Tree protection method statement, protection fencing plan, implementation timetable and details of any proposed pruning, felling or other work. The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details for protecting the retained trees.

Reason:

To protect existing retained trees and hedges that could influence or be affected by the development in accordance with Policies CP14, ES6 and ES8 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015.

25. Prior to the first use of the stadium and associated pitches and facilities, all ecological measures and works shall be carried out in full accordance with the mitigation and enhancement recommendations contained in the Revised Scheme Environmental Statement Vol 1 Chapter 8 Ecology and Nature Conservation, Appendix 8.6 Principles of Environmental Enhancements received on 21st December 2017 and the Proposed Additional Habitat Creation 4.10.18 and revised Indicative Green Infrastructure Parameter Plan contained within FEI 7 final version received on 08th May 2019 unless an alternative ecological strategy or implementation timetable has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

To protect and enhance the site for biodiversity in accordance with paragraph 175 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Policy ES6 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015 and in order for the Council to comply with Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

26. Prior to commencement of the development a Method Statement shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority, to detail those hedgerows and trees to be retained, those to be translocated, those to be removed for new access points through hedgerows and measures to ensure the protection, maintenance and ongoing management of existing, translocated and new hedgerows and trees. The Method Statement shall be implemented as approved. No trees or shrubs or hedges within the site which are shown as being retained/planted on the approved plans or Method Statement shall be felled, uprooted, wilfully damaged or destroyed, cut back in any way or removed without the prior written consent of the Local Planning Authority. Any trees, shrubs or hedges removed without such consent, or which die or become severely damaged or seriously diseased within 5 years from the completion of the development hereby permitted shall be replaced with trees, shrubs or



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hedge plants of similar size and species unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason:

To retain hedgerows and trees as landscape features and ecological connection throughout the Site in accordance with Policies CP14, EI11, ES6 and ES8 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015, Policy EP9 of the Eastington Neighbourhood Development Plan and the revised National Planning Policy Framework paragraphs 170 & 175.

27. Prior to the commencement of development a lighting design strategy for biodiversity shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The strategy will;

a) identify the areas/features on site that are particularly sensitive for foraging bats;

b) show how and where external lighting will be installed (through the provision of appropriate lighting contour plans and technical specifications) so that it can be clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent the above species using their commuter route.

All external lighting shall be installed in accordance with the specifications and locations set out in the strategy. Under no circumstances should any other external lighting be installed without prior consent from the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

To ensure those bat species sensitive to lighting can continue to cross the Site via the bat corridor in accordance with Policies CP14, EI11 and ES6 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015.

28. The stadium and associated training pitches and facilities hereby approved shall not be brought into use until an improvement scheme identified for M5 Junction 13 and the A419 corridor, generally in accordance with PFA Drawings E191/01 Rev E and E191/06 Rev B, has been approved by the Local Planning Authority and thereafter implemented as approved and opened to traffic.

Reason:

To ensure safe and suitable access is provided to the development and the safe and efficient operation of the strategic and local road network (i.e. M5 Junction 13 and the A419 between M5 Junction 13 and Chipmans Platt roundabout) in accordance with Policies CP13, CP14 and EI11 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015 and paragraphs 108 and 110 of the Revised National Planning Policy Framework.

29. Development shall not commence until details of the proposed bus, walkers and cycling entrance from Grove Lane (generally in accordance with PFA Drawing E191/05 Rev A) have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The stadium shall not be brought into use until the bus entrance has been constructed and available for use in accordance with the approved plans.



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Reason:

To ensure safe and suitable access to high quality public transport facilities is provided and that the opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up in accordance with Policies CP13, CP14 and E111 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015 and Paragraphs 102, 103, 108 and 110 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

30. The stadium and associated training pitches and facilities hereby approved shall not be brought into use until the cycle track improvement works identified on Plans 1-12 (Drg No. 6470_T0433-01 to 6470_T0444_01) have been completed and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

To ensure that the opportunities for sustainable transport modes are taken up in accordance with Policies CP13, CP14 and E111 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015 and paragraph 110 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

31. No development shall take place until a Construction Method Statement and a Construction Traffic Management Plan has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The Method Statement and Management Plan shall provide for:-

- i) The parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors;
- ii) The unloading and loading of materials;
- iii) The storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development;
- iv) Wheel washing facilities to be utilised by vehicles leaving the Site;
- v) Measures to control the emission of dust and dirt during construction;
- vi) A scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from construction works;
- vii) Details of the Site access, routing strategy and signage during the construction period;
- viii) External construction works and external operation of plant and equipment;
- ix) Working hours.
- x) A local resident liaison and complaint handling scheme.

The approved Statement and Construction Traffic Management Plan shall be adhered to throughout the construction period.

Reason:

To reduce the potential impact on the public highway and accommodate the efficient delivery of goods and supplies in accordance with in accordance with Policies CP13, E111, ES1, ES3 and ES6 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015 and Paragraphs 102, 108 and 110 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

32. Prior to the improvement works to the M5 Junction 13 and A419 corridor commencing (referred to in Condition XX) a scheme for the



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replacement layby(s) on the A419 to the west of the M5 (generally in accordance with PFA Drawing E161/23 Rev B) shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The approved replacement layby scheme shall be completed and available for use prior to the existing loss of the existing laybys or in accordance with an alternative timescale first submitted and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

To ensure that adequate road side facilities are maintained prior to the loss of existing facilities as a result of the highway improvement works to access and mitigate the development in accordance with Policies CP13, EI11, ES1, ES3 and ES6 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015 and Paragraph 108 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

33. The stadium hereby approved shall not be brought into beneficial use until the highway improvement works (A419 Corridor Improvements) at Chipmans Platt (generally in accordance with GCC Drawing COGL43047516/100/001), Oldends Lane, Downton Road and Horsetrough roundabouts have all been completed and open to traffic.

Reason:

To ensure that the proposed development traffic can be safely accommodated on the transport network in accordance with Policies CP13, EI11, ES1, ES3 and ES6 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015 and Paragraphs 102 and 108 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

34. Prior to the first home match at the stadium a Travel Plan for Forest Green Rovers Football Club, broadly in accordance with the approved Outline Travel Plan, shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority to include the following:

- i) Objectives and targets for promoting sustainable travel;
- ii) Appointment and funding of a travel plan coordinator;
- iii) Details of sustainable travel measures including additional bus capacity from Stroud, Stonehouse, and Nailsworth to and from home matches in line with expected match day demand;
- iv) Details of means of communication of sustainable travel measures;
- v) Details of crowd control and co-ordination from the train stations at Stroud and Stonehouse to match day buses.
- vi) Details of a monitoring, review and reporting process.

The approved Travel Plan shall be implemented in accordance with the timetable therein and shall be continued thereafter, unless otherwise approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

To ensure that opportunities for sustainable transport modes are taken up in accordance with Policies CP13, CP14, EI11, EI12, EI16 and ES1 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015 and Paragraphs 102-3, 108 and 110-111 of the National Planning Policy Framework.



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35. The stadium shall not be brought into use unless or until an Event Management Strategy, to include a Car Park Management Strategy, has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. This strategy shall include, but not be limited to, information on:

- i) The size, frequency and type of events, including non match hospitality, conferences and any other event attracting more than 50 participants (excluding staff) and expected traffic generation;
- ii) Traffic management to ensure the safe and efficient flow of vehicles in and out of the Site and access junction;
- iii) The management of car parking and of coach, stage bus, taxi and general drop-off/pick-up movements at the site and A419 corridor at all times including events.

The Event Management Strategy shall thereafter be implemented as approved.

Reason:

To ensure that opportunities for sustainable transport modes are taken up, and to ensure the safe and efficient operation of the local and strategic road network in accordance with Policies CP13, CP14, EI11, EI12, EI16 and ES1 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015 and Paragraphs 102-3, 108 and 110-111 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

36. Prior to the commencement of any above ground works details of the proposed parking for all vehicles including cars and coaches within the site shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The approved parking shall be provided and available for use prior to the Stadium being brought into beneficial use and maintained thereafter.

Reason:

To ensure that adequate parking is provided to reduce the impact on the adjacent transport network in accordance with Policies CP13, CP14, EI11, EI12, EI16 and ES1 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015 and Paragraphs 102-3, 108 and 110-111 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

37. Prior to the first use of the car park, details of a scheme of electric/low emission vehicle charging points and their maintenance schedule shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The approved electric charging points shall then be provided in accordance with the approved plan and made available prior to the first use of the car park and retained in perpetuity unless otherwise approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

To ensure that the development incorporates facilities for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles and to ensure that the opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up in accordance with Policies CP13, CP14, EI11, EI12, EI16 and ES1 of the



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adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015 and Paragraphs 102-3, 108 and 110-111 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

38. Prior to the commencement of any above ground works details of the proposed cycle parking within the site shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The approved cycle parking shall be provided and available for use prior to the Stadium being brought into beneficial use and maintained thereafter.

Reason:

To encourage more sustainable modes of travel in accordance with Policies CP13, CP14, EI11, EI12, EI16 and ES1 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015 and Paragraphs 102-3, 108 and 110-111 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

39. The stadium and associated areas including the car park shall not be brought into use until a detailed lighting impact assessment has first been carried out for the development and its curtilage and submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The assessment shall include:

- i) Identification of sensitive receptors likely to be affected by light emissions;
- ii) Detail of the level of obtrusive light (hours of operation, upward light ratio, light intrusion and luminance intensity).
- iii) The proposed lighting scheme including technical details of the lights, the methods of mitigation and enhancement against potential light emissions, including any potential glare and light spill, on sensitive receptors.

The approved lighting scheme, inclusive of any mitigation and enhancement measures, shall be implemented prior to the first occupation of that component of the development and retained thereafter.

Reason:

To safeguard the amenities of the surrounding landscape area and nearby residents in accordance with Policies CP14 and ES3 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015 and Paragraph 180 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

40. No development shall take place until a Construction Noise Management Plan has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The plan shall provide for:

- i) dates and hours of working
- ii) the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors
- iii) measures to control the noise and vibration during construction
- iv) noise management and monitoring procedures, including a dedicated point of contact throughout the construction process.

The approved management plan shall be adhered to throughout the construction period.

Reason:

For the protection of residential amenity and ecology interest in the area



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in accordance with Policies CP14, EI11, ES3 and ES6 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015 and Paragraphs 174-175 and 180 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

41. The stadium hereby approved shall not be brought into use until a detailed noise impact assessment has been prepared, submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority detailing the noise control measures to be implemented in order to reduce the Rating Level from fixed building services plant to below existing background noise levels at the nearest neighbouring dwellings, when assessed in line with BS4142:2014 or any subsequent guidance or legislation amending, revoking and/or re-enacting BS4142 with or without modification. The noise control measures for this plant shall be implemented as approved for the duration of the development.

Reason:

To safeguard residential amenity of nearby occupants as a result of the use of the stadium in accordance with Policies CP14, EI11, ES3 and ES6 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015.

42. The stadium hereby approved shall not be brought into use until a scheme of mitigation has been prepared to prevent noise from scheduled sporting or events exceeding 40 dB LAmax within sensitive internal spaces of William Morris College and this submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The mitigation strategy shall be implemented as approved for the duration of the development.

Reason:

To protect the amenities of occupiers of William Morris College in accordance with Policies CP14, EI11 and ES3 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015.

43. The stadium hereby approved shall not be brought into use until a noise assessment (using measurement and/or prediction) and including an appropriate mitigation strategy and a noise operational management plan have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

The noise assessment shall assess the noise from amplified music and sound in accordance with the Noise Council: Code of Practice on Environmental Noise Control at Concerts, and include a scheme of mitigation to prevent amplified music exceeding a Music Noise Level (MNL) of 15 dB above background LA90 noise levels over a 15 minute period (between 1 – 12 events per year) or less than 5 dB above background noise levels over a 15 minute period between 09:00 and 23:00 (up to 30 events per year) at free-field locations representative of surrounding residential dwellings. At William Morris College, a MNL less than 5 dB below background LA90 noise levels over a 15 minute period between 09:00 and 23:00 (during all events when the College is occupied by students) at free-field locations shall be used. The submitted details shall also include details of the stakeholder engagement, monitoring and a review process. The above mitigation, monitoring and management plan shall be implemented as approved for the duration of the development.



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Reason:

To protect the amenities of local residents and the occupiers of William Morris College in accordance with Policies CP14, EI11 and ES3 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015.

44. Full details, including location and noise levels of any visual display, Public Address System (PA), or amplified sound system for the development shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to the first use of the development.

The approved PA system shall only be used during events that take place within the Stadium two hours prior to the event commencing (apart from for testing purposes) and within 30 minutes of the completion of the event.

No PA system, other than for transmission and travel information or emergency use shall take place outside the stadium building. The PA system shall be operated in accordance with the approved details.

Reason:

To minimise impacts on the surrounding environment, to ensure a satisfactory standard of development and to safeguard the amenities of the surrounding area in accordance with Policies CP14 and ES3 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015.

45. Prior to the first occupation of the development an odour management strategy and litter picking management plan shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. This shall set out full details of the venting arrangements for food preparation areas to minimise the escape of cooking odours and a plan to manage litter picking during the operation of the Stadium. The building and curtilage shall when occupied be utilised in accordance with the approved strategy.

Reason:

To safeguard the amenity of local residents and occupiers in accordance with Policies CP14 and ES3 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015.

46. Prior to construction of the development, a scheme detailing the proposed biomass system shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme should detail the measures to be taken to ensure that any emissions and noise created by both the system itself and activities associated with it do not cause detriment to amenity or a nuisance, especially to those living and working in the vicinity. The approved scheme shall then be installed before the use hereby permitted commences and shall be maintained as such thereafter.

Reason:

In the interests of the amenities of the area and the local residents and in accordance with Policies CP14 and ES3 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015.



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47. Development shall not commence until an Employment and Skills Plan has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Where reasonably possible and commercially viable the aims of the Employment and Skills Plan should be to:

- i) Help local jobseekers find work through a range of paid and unpaid roles;
- ii) Create training and development opportunities for those already employed;
- iii) Stimulate awareness of careers in construction, green technologies, sport and other sectors related to the Development.

The Employment and Skills Plan should, where reasonable and appropriate, include:

- i) Arrangements setting out how the Owner, the Parent Company and/or the Developer (as the case may be) will and to the extent they are not the same person how the developer or occupier and their contractors will be required to work directly with local employment/training agencies including but not limited to (where reasonable and appropriate for the Development):

Arrangements to provide training and learning opportunities for students, apprentices and other learners or trainees, during the operation of the Development;

- ii) Details of the proposed timing and formatting of monitoring reports to the Council indicating how the Employment and Skills Plan has been delivered.

Reason:

To promote employment and training opportunities in the local area in accordance with sustainable objectives in accordance with Policies CP1, CP11 and ES1 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015 and Section 8 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

48. The development hereby approved shall not be first occupied until a strategy of community engagement and access to the new facilities has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. This shall include but not be limited to; consideration of an appropriate public access to the gym, practice pitches for local clubs or members of the public, training and education opportunities including both the football and operational (eg kitchen) side of the site and a formal commitment and timescale. The Community engagement strategy shall then be implemented as approved and continue therefore after.

Reason:

To promote social interaction, health and well-being and provide ongoing community benefits and engagement in accordance with the positive planning balance and Policies CP1, CP6, EI11 and ES12 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015 and paragraph 91 of the NPPF.

49. No helicopters (excluding emergency services) shall use the site.

Reason:

To protect the amenities of local residents and the occupiers of William



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Morris College in accordance with Policies CP14, EI11 and ES3 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015.

50. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that order with or without modification), no development permitted under Article 3 and described within Class B of part 16 of Schedule 2 (erection or modification of aerials and satellite dishes) shall take place.

Reason:

In the interests of the amenities of local residents and visual amenity and character of the surrounding area to ensure the satisfactory appearance of the development and design integrity of the proposed stadium in accordance with Policies CP14, EI11, ES3, ES7, and ES12 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015 and the provisions of the Revised National Planning Policy Framework.

51. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that order with or without modification), no development permitted under Article 3 and described within Class A of part 2 of Schedule 2 (erection of gates, fences and walls) shall take place.

Reason:

In the interests of the amenities of local residents and visual amenity and character of the surrounding area to ensure the satisfactory appearance of the development and design integrity of the proposed stadium in accordance with Policies CP14, EI11, ES3, ES7, and ES12 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015 and the provisions of the Revised National Planning Policy Framework.

52. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that order with or without modification), no development permitted under Article 3 and described within Class B of part 4 of Schedule 2 (Temporary use of land) shall take place.

Reason:

In the interests of the amenities of local residents and visual amenity and character of the surrounding area to ensure the satisfactory appearance of the development and design integrity of the proposed stadium in accordance with Policies CP14, EI11, ES3, ES7, and ES12 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015 and the provisions of the Revised National Planning Policy Framework.

Informatives:

1. This application is subject to a legal agreement and the applicant's attention is drawn to the requirements and obligations



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contained here in and the need to ensure compliance as the development progresses.

2. There is a public right of way running through the site, the applicant will be required to contact the PROW team to arrange for an official diversion, if the applicant cannot guarantee the safety of the path users during the construction phase then they must apply to the PROW team on 08000-514514 or highways@gloucestershire.gov.uk to arrange a temporary closure of the right of way for the duration of any works.