

**THE WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL
(WELLINGTON ROAD, WOKINGHAM)
COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER 2019**

THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

AND

THE ACQUISITION OF LAND ACT 1981

**STATEMENT OF THE COUNCIL'S
REASONS FOR MAKING THE ORDER**

[July] 2019

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Wokingham Borough Council ("**the Council**") has made The Wokingham Borough Council (Wellington Road, Wokingham) Compulsory Purchase Order 2019 ("**the Order**") which it has submitted to the Secretary of State for confirmation.
- 1.2 The Order has been made to enable regeneration of land at Wellington Road in Wokingham ("**the Site**"), by the delivery of a leisure led development as part of the regeneration of Wokingham town centre ("**the Scheme**").
- 1.3 The Scheme has been a corporate and planning objective of the Council for many years. Although the Council owns the freehold interest in much of the Site, implementation of the Scheme requires the acquisition of various land and property interests. The Council has endeavoured to acquire the necessary interests by negotiation, but it has not been possible to reach agreement with all of the parties affected.
- 1.4 Implementation of the Scheme will bring economic, social and environmental benefits through the regeneration of the Site. The benefits of the Scheme are described in detail in section 5 of this Statement.
- 1.5 Planning permission (reference 172012) was secured for the Scheme on 2 February 2018 ("**the Planning Permission**"). It authorises redevelopment of the Site to create leisure led development as part of the regeneration of Wokingham town centre. The proposals include the demolition of all existing buildings on site and the construction of: a leisure centre (use class D2); library (use class D1); restaurant (use class A3); commercial unit for non-residential institution or assembly and leisure use (use classes D1 or D2); 55 dwellings (use class C3); pedestrian and vehicular access including a pedestrian boulevard and realignment of Wellington Road; car parking; hard and soft landscaping; realignment of an existing footpath; drainage ("**the Permitted Scheme**").
- 1.6 On 30 March 2017, the Council resolved to, in principle, make a compulsory purchase order pursuant to the powers conferred by Section 226(1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004). The Council has consequently made the Order in order to secure the outstanding interests ("**the Order Land**") required for the purpose of implementing the Scheme.

2. Location and Description of the Order Land

- 2.1 The Order Land, comprising approximately *[To be completed when land referencing has concluded]* hectares, is located in Wokingham. The Order Land is more specifically described in the schedule of interests accompanying the Order and is identified on the related Order Map.
- 2.2 The Order Land is bounded by Wellington Road to the north, Finchampstead Road to the east and a railway line to the south. The Order Land contains a number of existing buildings currently in operational use including a bowling alley and leisure centre under ownership and operation of the Council. There is a small insurance brokers (Southgate House) within the Order Land, which is privately owned. There are a number of small trees and species-poor hedgerows within the site, albeit it is almost entirely comprised of built form and hardstanding.
- 2.3 The Order Land generally comprises the following land and property:
- Office building known as Southgate House, Wellington Road, together with ancillary car parking and landscaped areas
 - Premises comprising Wokingham Superbowl, Wellington Road
 - Carnival Multi-storey car park, Wellington Road
 - Land and premises comprising Carnival Pool and Fitness Centre, Wellington Road
 - Electricity substation at Wellington Road
 - Land, bridge and public footpaths to the south of Outfield Crescent

3. The Scheme

- 3.1 The Site is being developed in two phases. Phase I was completed in July 2017 and comprises a new 529 spaces multi-storey car park and replacement bowling alley
- 3.2 Phase II (the Scheme) will deliver replace the existing leisure centre with a new leisure centre, including swimming pool, new library and 55 residential apartments.

Purpose of the Scheme

- 3.3 The purpose of the Scheme is to facilitate strong, vibrant and healthy communities with accessible local services that reflect the need and support its health, social and cultural well-being, contributing to sustainable development.
- 3.4 The physical and social benefits of sport and physical activity on individuals and communities are well documented - improvements in health for individuals and building stronger communities by bringing people together, often from different backgrounds, to make them feel better about where they live, improve community links and cohesion and build social capital. Government research also confirms that where old and tired existing facilities have been replaced with new ones, the number of people using them can go up by 400%. The desire to deliver these benefit through retaining and improving existing sport, leisure and community facilities and providing new facilities is set out in government policy, including within the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 3.5 It is the Local Authority's responsibility to ensure adequate provision of leisure facilities in Wokingham borough. The Council's 21st Century Leisure Strategy (2017) sets out the Council's key objectives in terms of leisure provision. These include:
- The promotion of opportunities for all residents to be active
 - To increase the proportion of adults achieving the CMO's physical activity guide levels from 66% to 70%
 - To reduce inactivity from 20.9% to 16% by 2021
 - To support the aims of the Childhood Obesity Plan
 - To maintain leisure centre provision; and to deliver services and facilities
- 3.6 Wokingham borough has a resident population of circa 163,000 which is expected to expand over the coming years. Within Wokingham Town two major new residential developments are being delivered to the northern and southern edges of the existing settlement; which alone will deliver some 4,000 new dwellings - an increase of the town's population by over 30%. The strategy for delivering this significant growth both on the edge of Wokingham settlement and wider is premised significantly upon the regeneration and growth of Wokingham Town Centre to accommodate the social and economic needs of the growing population.
- 3.7 The current leisure facility at Carnival Pool is in a poor state and the Council is continually investing funds to ensure it can continue to operate in a safe environment. The current state of the facility detracts from its ability to attract new users and the provision of new facilities is seen to be a key attractor of new users.
- 3.8 To address these policy and strategy requirements and objectives the Scheme

provides improved leisure and cultural facilities within Wokingham town centre. The Site has been identified within the Development Plan and the Council's Leisure Strategy as the site to deliver enhanced leisure facilities for residents. There will be a significant increase in the amount of leisure floorspace and the new facilities will deliver better quality provision and a more efficient operation. Considering this, as part of the wider regeneration of Wokingham town centre, the Scheme will greatly enhance the social and community development of the town centre, in line with local and national planning policy.

- 3.9 Options appraisals, including viability assessments were carried out to ensure the most economically viable option is brought forward. Each option assessment took into account the policy objectives and relevant planning considerations. The assessment concluded that a full redevelopment of the site scored the highest in terms of viability and cost-effectiveness, as opposed to refurbishment works and/or extensions to the existing facility already permitted.
- 3.10 The redevelopment of the site forms part of a wider scheme to regenerate Wokingham Town Centre. The multi-storey car park and new bowling centre has recently been completed to the immediate south; whilst the Elms Field development, inclusive of a new town park and commercial uses, is under construction to the immediate north of Wellington Road. The Permitted Scheme has been designed cognisant of these new developments, providing a coordinated link between the two sites which then will continue beyond up to the recently regenerated Market Place and the Council's Peach Place redevelopment. The Permitted Scheme therefore comprises the next phase of development in Wokingham Borough Council's regeneration programme which is significantly and positively transforming and re-energising Wokingham's Town Centre and the way that it will feel and function. The provision of the proposed range of leisure and community facilities in this location will provide support to supplement and strengthen the Town Centre offer.
- 3.11 The Council is consequently satisfied that the Permitted Scheme will ensure the continued health of Wokingham town centre, successfully integrating the new leisure, retail and residential proposals with the town in a seamless way that achieves wider benefits for all. It will offer an improvement to the quality of available leisure facilities in response to WBC's growth strategy for Wokingham and in accordance with the adopted development plan.

Description of the Permitted Scheme

- 3.12 A comprehensive description of the Permitted Scheme is provided within the Planning Statement and Design and Access Statement which accompanied the planning application for the Permitted Scheme. A summary of the proposals is as follows:
- Demolition of all existing buildings on the Order Land;
 - Construction of 4,865 m² GFIA of leisure (D2) floor space;
 - Construction of a 1,000 m² GFIA library (D1);
 - Construction of 448 m² GFIA of A3 commercial floor space;
 - Construction of 600 m² of (D1/2) floor space;
 - Provision of 55 1 and 2 bed apartments (C3);
 - Provision of a pedestrian boulevard;
 - Realignment of Wellington Road;
 - Pedestrian and vehicular access;

- Car parking;
 - Hard and soft landscaping;
 - Realignment of an existing footpath;
 - Drainage and infrastructure works; and
 - Servicing and utilities.
- 3.13 The proposals form an integral part of the wider Wokingham Town Centre regeneration, known as Carnival Phase II. It is proposed to demolish all existing buildings on the Order Land, except for the multi-storey car park and Wokingham Superbowl which were constructed in 2017. It should be noted that all the buildings on the Order Land are under the Council's ownership, except the existing office block of Southgate House.
- 3.14 The new leisure facility to be provided on the Order Land will replace the existing fitness and leisure facility and will include a 6 lane swimming pool, learner pool, spa facilities, sports courts, a gym and fitness studios, children's soft play area and ancillary facilities such as a cafe and changing areas. The facility will also provide spaces which can be used for cultural events, such as amateur music concerts, talks and classes, and which can be booked to be used by local community groups.
- 3.15 Alongside this, a library with IT spaces, offices and meeting rooms will be provided, together with commercial and restaurant facilities.
- 3.16 The Permitted Scheme also includes residential development comprising 55 apartments with associated cycle storage and refuse storage areas.
- 3.17 Public realm improvements are planned for Wellington Road and a direct pedestrian boulevard is to be provided through the site linking from Wellington Road to the multi-storey car park and on to the railway line to the south. The existing Public Right of Way to the west of the site will be diverted at its termination point with Wellington Road to take into account the proposed location of the buildings.

Design Detail of the Permitted Scheme

- 3.18 The Wokingham Town Centre Masterplan SPD acknowledges that currently the site does not respond well to the overall character of the town. The existing buildings on site poorly address Wellington Road and create little sense of place at this important gateway into the town centre. They are inward facing and do not relate to each other or other parts of the town centre with poor connectivity for pedestrians.
- 3.19 Significant consideration was given during the design stage to the proposed layout of the new buildings to ensure they address the current poor streetscape and link seamlessly to Phase I of the Carnival development (multi-storey car park and bowling alley) to the south and the Elms Field development and the wider town centre to the north, as envisaged in the Wokingham Town Centre Masterplan SPD. The leisure building of the Permitted Scheme has been situated in the eastern part of the site, to form a primary frontage onto Wellington Road and improve the overall visibility of the site as a leisure hub for the town centre. The residential development will be located to the west of the site, parallel to the western boundary with the adjacent residential development. This layout therefore ensures the application site has the most effective relationship with the surrounding area, placing the residential development close to existing dwellings to the west, and creating a centralised leisure-hub to the south including Carnival Phase I, Carnival Phase II, and Elms Field

- 3.20 A key aim of the design of the buildings is to maximise the active frontages of the site facing key view points, for example onto Wellington Road and Finchampstead Road, to create a lively and vibrant facility which is welcoming to the users of the site. Thus the proposed redevelopment presents the opportunity to provide a high quality scheme which is suitable to the area in terms of design. In addition, considering the large scale development which is currently under construction at Elms Field, to the immediate north of the site, the design of the Scheme takes these buildings into account, to ensure a good visual relationship is achieved whilst improving the townscape character of the site.
- 3.21 Considerable attention has been given to the design of the leisure centre building to ensure it meets the functional requirements of the leisure operator and wider interested parties, presenting a high quality, contemporary building which present a clear Civic aesthetic through its architectural style, scale, proportions and massing. The use of double height spaces for both the swimming pool halls and the entrance atrium play a significant part in this.
- 3.22 The building presents a double height elevation to Wellington Road, the primary features being the projecting entrance canopy to the development corner and the large format panels of light transmitting cladding to the swimming pool hall elevation. In between these panels, low level aluminium framed clear glazing provide street level interactivity between the building and Wellington Road. The use of this cladding allows diffused natural light to illuminate the pool hall and affords options for passive night-time or feature illumination in conjunction with building mounted signage on an evening. Red brickwork panels between feature cladding reflect the underlying character and materiality of Wokingham in its wider context.
- 3.23 The development utilises multi-red brick, insulated transparent cladding, aluminium, grey cladding and glazing which will maximise light levels within the leisure centre and pool area. The material palette has been selected to be sensitive to the surroundings, taking into account the materials used at Carnival Phase I and Elms Field.
- 3.24 The design of leisure centres are heavily influenced by the internal spatial requirements of the sport and leisure activities to be carried out within. The sports halls, fitness studios, fitness suite and changing have all been based on Sport England guidance which in turn dictates the volumes and heights within the building.
- 3.25 The new public library meets a briefed requirement of 1000m² of flexible floor space on a single floor plate. Its height has been determined by a number of positive contributory factors including the architectural and visual relationship to the adjacent sports facility, a stakeholder desire for high ceilings and opportunity to use tall, generous windows for deeper penetration of natural light into the library floor plate. The library mass wraps around the south western corner of the sports facility, providing active street level frontage to the adjacent pedestrian routes.
- 3.26 The residential development proposed is a three storey high, dual aspect building with subdividing elements and split level roof to provide a terraced aesthetic. The architecture of the residential building takes many design cues from local character and context of Wokingham urban centre and presents them in a contemporary housing design. The form of the building respects the aspirations of the wider context, maintaining a landscaped buffer adjacent to the established Pavilions development, enabling sufficient access space for shared spaces vehicle routes and providing a pedestrian promenade which links the Phase I Multi-Storey Car Park and Bowling Alley to the Wellington Road and the proposed Elms Road development.

The width of the pedestrian promenade respects a minimum residential privacy distance of 15m from the face of the Library at its narrowest point.

- 3.27 Existing public realm associated with the Site is relatively limited. The existing buildings are not well connected for pedestrians nor offer a high quality environment within which to walk or meet. A public footpath runs along the north western boundary of the site. It currently runs through a vegetated corridor, with mature trees providing separation from the Pavilions housing development to the north.
- 3.28 The proposals for the public realm associated with the Carnival Phase II development have been designed with a number of key principles in mind. These include:
- A new boulevard creating a physical and visual link between Elms Field and the Carnival Phase I development.
 - Retention of a green corridor for the public footpath along the north western boundary of the site.
 - An active frontage along Wellington Road, with visibility of the new leisure centre and high quality public realm.
 - Separation between public open space and semi-private open space around the residential block.
 - Replacement of trees to be lost as part of the development and enhancement of biodiversity through the use of nectar rich planting.
- 3.29 The public realm proposals are focused around a pedestrian boulevard which links the Phase development with the Elms Field development north of Wellington Road and acts as the central focus to the Phase II development. The pedestrian boulevard located between these two buildings is the public realm focus for the site and will create a high quality public realm to the area, greatly improving the accessibility of the site and linking it directly with the multi-storey car park to the south and the Elms Field development and wider town centre to the north.
- 3.30 The boulevard opens up into a square around the entrance to the leisure centre and library, where there will be a focus of activity. Trees along the Wellington Road frontage give an element of separation between the road and this entrance square, whilst still retaining visibility of both the leisure centre building and along the boulevard to the bowling alley and multi-storey car park. There is planting and seating opportunities closer to the entrance to the leisure centre which creates a softer, attractive frontage to the building.
- 3.31 To the rear of the residential block, the access route into the development has been design to be a shared space, incorporating parking for residents, occasional access for larger vehicles such as coaches and deliveries, as well as the revised alignment of the public footpath along the north west boundary of the site.
- 3.32 Overall the Permitted Scheme will deliver a well-designed comprehensive mixed-use scheme in accordance with national and local policies.

Delivery of the Permitted Scheme

- 3.33 The Council is committed, subject to completing the acquisition of all necessary land interests in the Order Land, to securing the early delivery of the Permitted Scheme. The grant of the Planning Permission is an important step in this process and

securing the making, confirmation and implementation of the Order to complete the land assembly process will be a further important milestone.

- 3.34 The Council further has, by way of committed financial provision within its Medium Term Financial Plan, the financial resources necessary to acquire all necessary land interests by agreement or pursuant to the Order and to deliver the Permitted Scheme. As such, the Council is in a position to proceed with the Permitted Scheme following completion of the land assembly process.
- 3.35 Assuming confirmation of the Order and making/confirmation of the related orders referred to in section 7 below by [], it is expected that vacant possession of the Order Land will be secured in [] with work commencing on the Order Land in [mid 2020].
- 3.36 It is anticipated that the Permitted Scheme will be completed by [mid-2022].

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4. Planning Position

Background and Relevant Planning History

- 4.1 Previous development on the Site has been piecemeal and has occurred over a significant period.
- 4.2 Prior to the 1960's, the Site was largely undeveloped, save for a school meals kitchen and public conveniences.
- 4.3 Planning permission was granted for part of the Site in the mid-1960's for a bowling centre and club which, over time, was subject to various extensions and alterations.
- 4.4 In the 1990's, planning permission was granted for a swimming pool and an extension to provide a health and fitness facility.
- 4.5 The office building known as Southgate House was permitted in 1997.
- 4.6 The above uses have continued in various forms on the Site since.
- 4.7 Having identified the need for comprehensive redevelopment of the Site at the time of adoption of its Core Strategy and Town Centre Masterplan, the Council sought to bring forward development on the Site in 2015. In 2015 a hybrid planning application (reference O/2015/1056) was submitted and approved on 5 August 2015 for a new multi-storey car park and bowling alley [full permission) and an extension to the existing pool complex and redevelopment of the bowling alley site to provide a mixed use development for sports and leisure with flexibility for other town centre uses and a residential element (outline permission). The full permission element (known as Carnival Phase I) of the application has been constructed; the new multi storey car park and new bowling centre were completed and opened in 2017.
- 4.8 Application O/2015/1056 included outline consent for the extension and refurbishment of existing leisure centre building. Since the granting of consent O/2015/1056, further option appraisal and viability testing and condition surveys of the existing leisure facility were undertaken, which concluded that a full redevelopment (demolition and rebuild) delivered the most in terms of viability and cost-effectiveness and achieving the Council's objectives which regards to leisure provision, as opposed to refurbishment works and/or extensions to the existing facility already permitted. Demolition and re-build did not fall within the parameters of the outline consent and therefore a new full planning application was prepared, submitted and ultimately approved – the Permitted Scheme. It has been commenced by virtue of the demolition of the old Bowling Alley building in 2018.

The Planning Policy Framework

- 4.9 The following national, regional and local planning policies and supplementary planning guidance are relevant to the Order Land.

National Planning Policy

- 4.6 The National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019) ("NPPF") sets out the Government's planning policies for England and explains how these are to be applied.

- 4.7 Paragraphs 7 and 8 establish that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development which has three objectives: economic; social; and environmental.
- 4.8 Paragraph 8a identifies the need for the planning system to perform an economic role, including:
- building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places at the right time to support growth and innovation and improved productivity; and by
 - identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure.
- 4.9 Paragraph 8b identifies the need for the planning system to fulfil a social role, which includes supporting the strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations, and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being.
- 4.10 Paragraph 8c further identifies the need for the planning system to fulfil an environmental role, which includes contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural built and historic environment, including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.
- 4.11 Paragraphs 85 - 90 are concerned with ensuring the vitality of town centres.
- 4.12 Paragraphs 91 - 101 set out guidance on promoting healthy and safe communities to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places and to provide social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs.
- 4.13 The Permitted Scheme is consistent with, and supports the policies contained in, the NPPF because:
- It would contribute to the achievement of economic, social and environmental sustainable development (as set out in section 5 of this Statement).
 - It would bring positive improvements to the quality of the built environment, providing new areas of public realm, improved paving, seating and lighting, to improve the conditions in which people take leisure.
 - It would deliver mixed use development on previously developed land, in a sustainable location.
 - It would support and encourage economic growth by creating additional direct FTE jobs post-construction, and in addition construction jobs over a 2 year construction period.
 - It would make efficient use of an area which is currently underutilised, in line with the Government's desire to optimise the potential of land to accommodate development.
 - It would deliver the Government's expectations that Council's should plan

positively for high quality and inclusive design on all development including individual buildings, public and private spaces to promote healthy communities and developments which add to the overall quality of the area.

- 4.14 Further guidance on NPPF policies is available from the Planning Practice Guidance ("PPG"). The section entitled "Ensuring the vitality of town centres" paragraph [2b-001-20140306] provides a summary of the policy on planning for town centres. Paragraph [2b-002-20140306] states that a positive vision or strategy for towns centres, articulated through the Local Plan, is key to ensuring successful town centres which enable sustainable economic growth and provide a wide range of social and environmental benefits. Paragraphs [53-002-20140306] give guidance on the role of health and wellbeing in planning and the need to bring forward development which support strong, vibrant and healthy communities to help create healthy living environments.
- 4.15 Through local planning policy and other initiatives described below, the Council has developed a strategy and vision for Wokingham town centre that is consistent with the PPG and the Permitted Scheme, for which the Planning Permission has been granted, is an appropriate response to this.
- 4.16 The NPPG also provides guidance on the 'importance of good design', 'well designed places', and town centre design issues. Again the Permitted Scheme responds positively to this guidance.

Local Planning Policy

- 4.17 The Core Strategy for Wokingham was adopted in January 2010. The policies in the Core Strategy set out the planning framework for the Borough up to 2026.

CORE STRATEGY – OVERALL SPATIAL PRIORITIES

- 4.18 Paragraph 2.68 summarises the "*Aspirations and Spatial Issues for the Borough*". This confirms:

"Overall, taking account of these issues, the aspirations and spatial issues that therefore need to be addressed by the Core Strategy are (in no order of priority):

- i. Delivers sustainable development by providing an acceptable balance of housing and employment including the provision of a full range of services accessible to people;*
- ii. Promotes sustainable use and disposal of resources while mitigating and adapting to climate change;*
- iii. Delivers housing in locations that meet the needs of the community;*
- iv. Supports a sequential approach to new mixed use development locations based primarily on larger scale (SDL) consisting of accessible, high quality, well designed development. The SDL will be supported by Development Briefs to ensure delivery of the essential community facilities and infrastructure required;*
- v. Delivers affordable housing that meets identified local needs;*
- vi. Promotes a transport system that enables access to services by a variety of modes;*
- vii. Protects the character of the borough by maintaining/improving the built/natural environment while mitigating the effect of new development on the environment;*
- viii. Maintains the distinct and separate identity of the borough's settlements;*
- ix. Maintains and enhances all the infrastructure, including roads, railways, schools, healthcare and open space provision through new development, taking account of the health and well-being of residents;*

- x. Supports the renaissance of Wokingham and other town centres;
- xi. Limits development in those areas at most risk of flooding and pollution;
- xii. Protects the most important areas for biodiversity, landscape and heritage from development;
- xiii. Maintains and enhances the borough's knowledge and skills base;
- xiv. Ensures good design which is in keeping with the area
- xv. Where national and regional policies allow, takes account of the public's views following consultation and engagement".

- 4.19 Paragraph 2.84 describes Wokingham as the largest retail centre in the Borough and states that:

"The town centre is the largest retail centre in the borough and its range of facilities and services is recognised in both LPS2 and appendix 3 [of the Core Strategy]. The sustainability of the town may be undermined unless schemes are developed which support its vitality and viability, particularly so it can retain trade that might otherwise leak to the centres of Reading or an improved Bracknell. During the plan period there are likely to be opportunities for a number of significant developments within the town centre. The Council recognises that development around Wokingham could help reduce traffic flows through the town and would support the vitality and viability of the centre through increasing its population".

- 4.20 One of the key aspirations for the Borough, as set out in the Wokingham Core Strategy, is to support the renaissance of Wokingham town centre. Indeed, this reflects nationally stated objectives in the NPPF.

CORE STRATEGY – TOWN CENTRE

- 4.21 The policies in the Core Strategy are particularly relevant to the assessment of the proposed development. Core Policy CP13 (Town Centres and Shopping) confirms that:

"Wokingham and Woodley town centres, Lower Earley district centre, Shinfield Road centre, Twyford village centre and Winnersh centre are suitable in principle to accommodate town centre uses. The roles of all existing and new retail centres will be protected and maintained, in addition to local shopping centres and parades that meet the day to day needs of the local community. Losses of retail from primary retail frontages will not be permitted in order to maintain vitality and viability".

- 4.22 The hierarchy of centres within the Borough is confirmed as:

- a) *"Wokingham town centre is designated as a major town centre;*
- b) *Arborfield Garrison district centre (proposed through policy CP18), Lower Earley district centre, Shinfield Road district centre, Twyford village centre, Winnersh village centre and Woodley town centre are designated as small town/district centres;*
- c) *Local centres – as defined in subsequent Development Plan Documents."*

- 4.23 Paragraph 4.63 of the Core Strategy provides information (derived from the Retail Study) on the current and potential needs during the plan period of retail floorspace within the four main centres of the Borough:

"Having regard to this, the Council expects...Wokingham to serve the convenience needs of its catchment and to reduce leakage of comparison expenditure to other

centres. Policy CP15 sets out the broad approach to achieving this in line with the findings of the Retail Study. As table 4.1 [of the Core Strategy] indicates, Wokingham town is the largest retail centre in the borough.”

4.24 CP14 expressly deals with the growth and renaissance of Wokingham Town Centre:

“Wokingham, as a major town centre in Berkshire is considered suitable for growth. Proposals should retain and enhance the historic market town character of Wokingham and maintain its position in the Berkshire retail hierarchy by:

1. *Strengthening shopping in the retail core to reduce leakage of expenditure;*
2. *Conserving and enhancing historic quality and interest;*
3. *Improving existing public space;*
4. *Ensuring development cumulatively provides and maintains:*
 - a) *A wide range of services, learning opportunities, community facilities and tourist facilities that complement existing provision;*
 - b) *Housing;*
 - c) *Office accommodation;*
 - d) *Public open space providing for a range of activities;*
 - e) *Leisure and entertainment;*
 - f) *Improved pedestrian links between the station and the shopping streets;*
 - g) *Improved pedestrian and cycle links between the centre and other parts of the town;*
 - h) *Appropriate car parking to facilitate a viable and sustainable town centre;*
 - i) *Enhanced environmental and design quality.*
5. *The use of compulsory purchase powers to facilitate site assembly and the delivery of renewal and regeneration schemes”.*

4.25 Paragraph 4.69 of the Core Strategy also explains that:

“Improving the centre means that it can better meet the needs of residents and prevent decline associated with loss of expenditure following expansion in nearby larger centres. The Retail Study indicates proposals within the town centre should contribute towards lengthening the time visitors stay (including into the evenings), as this will contribute towards the vitality and viability of the centre. The Retail Study (see table 4.1 earlier) indicates that there is scope for additional comparison floorspace in the centre to help reduce the current leakage....”.

4.26 In Wokingham, the adopted Core Strategy policy framework and its associated guidance has clearly set out measures to promote the sustained growth of the town centre in accordance with the principles of the NPPF. The Scheme meets the tests as set out in the NPPF; primarily as this is planned development within the town centre (MDD Policy SAL08). Moreover, as the Scheme seeks to promote a range of town centre uses within the centre of Wokingham, with a clear aim of promoting the centre’s competitiveness and attraction within a highly accessible and sustainable location, the key objectives of the NPPF are clearly achieved.

4.27 The key ambition of the Scheme is to enhance the town centre’s leisure provision through redeveloping the Carnival Pool area to provide a mixed leisure quarter as part of the Council’s comprehensive regeneration proposals for Wokingham Town Centre. The improved leisure facilities will provide facilities to meet the needs of current and future residents and contribute to the health and wellbeing and cohesion of the local community. As such, the Scheme is in accordance with the Core Strategy policy ambitions and aspirations.

- 4.28 In particular, the strengthening of the leisure element, through provision of the Permitted Scheme, is seen as a key component of the town's future health. It will help in the diversification of the function and meet the trend for a more leisure focused experience. Indeed, the Town Centre Masterplan promotes mixed-use development throughout the town centre.

MANAGING DEVELOPMENT DELIVERY LOCAL PLAN ("MDD")

- 4.29 The MDD, adopted February 2014, is the second Local Plan document and provides a greater level of detail about how the vision in the Core Strategy will be delivered in practice. The MDD includes the Site specific policy SAL08. This, together with other guidance, informed the layout, mix and design of the Permitted Scheme.
- 4.30 SAL08 (Allocated Mixed Use Sites) allocates five sites for development, including land at the Site for the delivery of:

"Land at Carnival Pool, Wokingham, for the delivery of D1 (community uses), D2 (leisure uses) flexibility for A3 (restaurants & cafes), A4 (drinking establishments) and C3 (residential) development".

Other Strategies and Guidance

- 4.31 In addition to the approved Development Plan documents, emerging policies and a range of supplementary planning documents and guidance also have relevance. A summary of the main guidance and how the Scheme complies with it is provided below.

WOKINGHAM TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (2010)

- 4.32 This is a significant policy 'tool' in terms of the town centre. As adopted supplementary guidance, this policy guidance carries significant weight in the decision making process. The Wokingham Town Centre Masterplan SPD identifies development sites and other areas of the town centre as having potential for redevelopment as part of a wider town centre masterplan.

The SPD was created in order to identify:

"...a clear, distinctive and deliverable vision for Wokingham Town Centre to 2026"

"There are five key objectives:

- 1. ☐☐ A thriving town centre;*
- 2. ☐☐ An eighteen hour economy;*
- 3. ☐☐ Streets as places;*
- 4. ☐☐ Spaces to breath;*
- 5. ☐☐ Setting the design standard"*

VISION FOR THE ORDER LAND IN THE TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN

- 4.33 The primary objective for the site remains that of delivering an improved leisure offer for Wokingham town centre. This is set out in the [Wokingham Town Centre Masterplan SPD](#) at section 10.3:

10.3.1 The town centre's leisure offer and evening economy will be enhanced through redevelopment of the Carnival Pool area to provide a mixed leisure quarter, with sports

and cinema uses integrated to improve and extend the existing swimming pool facility at Carnival Pool.

- 4.34 The Permitted Scheme will provide a key role in delivering the objectives of the Town Centre Masterplan SPD through the provision of the proposed range of leisure and community facilities in this location.
- 4.35 The proposed development will contribute significantly to the delivery of objectives (1) A thriving town centre; and (2) An eighteen hour economy by providing a wider choice of attractions and facilities which will encourage people to visit the town and give them reason to stay longer whilst they are here. The Scheme provides a range of community accommodation including facilities for all ages. The provision of facility to host cultural events will build on the town's traditions and reputation for hosting community and cultural events and provide an additional and complementary venue for events. The development helps deliver town centre living which in turn supports social vitality, promoting a range of residential types and tenures as part of mixed use developments within the town centre.
- 4.36 Improvements to the public realm, especially along Wellington Road and improved pedestrian connectivity to and through the site, through the provision of the pedestrian boulevard, contributes to the delivery of objective (3) Streets as Places.
- 4.37 The Permitted Scheme also responded positively to the guidance contained within The Borough Design Guide SPD (May 2012) and the Wokingham Borough Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document and Companion Document.
- 4.38 The Scheme fully responds to the identified objectives and vision set out in the policies of the Town Centre Masterplan SPD. Indeed, the Design and Access Statement which was submitted with the planning application for the Permitted Scheme explains in detail how the mix of uses, design, form and scale of the Permitted Scheme complies with the principles included in the policies.
- 4.39 The Permitted Scheme has been developed in accordance with the key spatial land use principles of the Wokingham Town Centre Masterplan, Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery Plan.
- 4.40 In addition, the Permitted Scheme has responded in a positive way to the key land use principles of the Wokingham Town Centre Masterplan.
- 4.41 The Masterplan SPD identifies the site to improve and enhance the town's leisure and evening economy offer by providing a mixed leisure quarter, with sports and cinema uses integrated to improve and extend the existing swimming pool facility at Carnival Pool. The Permitted Scheme provides a range of uses on site which will deliver this and which will appeal to all ages and throughout the day and evening. The leisure centre operates from early morning and into the evening and the co-location of the library with the leisure centre and the sharing of common areas may enable the library to operate for longer hours. The commercial units will be operated as part of the leisure centre (spa facility and children's soft play).
- 4.42 A cinema is now being built at Elms Field so is not included within the proposals for Carnival Pool.

- 4.43 At Elms Field, the masterplan (paragraph 10.3.2) envisaged there would be “an opportunity for a multi-use cultural facility. This facility could provide for flexible arts, performance and exhibition space to create a cultural destination within the town centre and diversify the town centre’s existing evening economy.” A multi-use cultural facility is not proposed within the redevelopment of Elms Field and so proposals for Carnival Phase II have included this provision within the leisure centre building.
- 4.44 The Town Centre Masterplan SPD seeks to promote town centre living (paragraph 10.6.1) and in doing so seeks to improve the viability of shops and services, create activity and surveillance on streets and spaces, provide a range of accommodate for local people and reduce the number of car based journeys to and from the town centre. The provision of 55 apartments will contribute to this.

Determination of the Application

- 4.45 The application, in respect of which the Planning Permission was granted, was considered by the Council on 8 November 2017. The report to members concluded that the Permitted Scheme “is consistent with the development plan objective of providing a leisure quarter centred on the Site as part of the growth and renaissance of Wokingham Town Centre and can be supported”.
- 4.46 The Council consequently resolved to approve the application and the Planning Permission was subsequently granted on 2 February 2018.

5. Case for Compulsory Purchase/Purpose of Acquisition

Compulsory Purchase Powers

- 5.1 The Council has the power in Section 226(1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004) to make a compulsory purchase order for any land in their area if the Council think that the purchase of the land will facilitate the carrying out of development, redevelopment or improvement on or in relation to the land.
- 5.2 Pursuant to Section 226(1)(a) the Council may not exercise the power unless they think that the development, re-development or improvement is likely to contribute to the achievement of any one or more of the following objectives:
- a the promotion or improvement of the economic well-being of their area;
 - b the promotion or improvement of the social well-being of their area;
 - c the promotion or improvement of the environmental well-being of their area.
- 5.3 The "Guidance on Compulsory purchase process and The Crichel Down Rules' (February 2018) ("the Guidance") provides updated and revised guidance to acquiring authorities in England on the use of compulsory purchase powers.
- 5.4 The Guidance recognises that compulsory purchase is an important tool to use as a means of assembling the land needed to help deliver social and economic change and encourages local authorities to consider using their compulsory purchase powers in a proactive way to ensure that benefits are secured for residents and the business community without delay.
- 5.5 Particular guidance on orders made by local authorities under Section 226 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is contained in Tier 2 Section 1 of the Guidance. It states:
- "This power is intended to provide a positive tool to help acquiring authorities with planning powers to assemble land where this is necessary to implement proposals in their Local Plan or where strong planning justifications for the use of the power exist. It is expressed in wide terms and can therefore be used to assemble land for regeneration and other schemes where the range of activities or purposes proposed mean that no other single specific compulsory purchase power would be appropriate."*
- 5.6 Importantly, the Guidance requires that a compulsory purchase order should only be made where there is a compelling case in the public interest.
- 5.7 A compulsory purchase order to which there are objections will require confirmation by the Secretary of State to become effective. The Guidance provides that any decision by the Secretary of State about whether to confirm an order made under Section 226 will be made on its own merit but the factors which the Secretary of State can be expected to consider include:-
- Whether the purpose for which the land is being acquired fits in with the adopted Local Plan for the area;

- The extent to which the proposed purpose will contribute to the achievement of the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental wellbeing of the area;
- Whether the purpose for which the land is being acquired could be achieved by any other means. This may include considering the appropriateness of any alternative proposals or locations;
- The potential financial viability of the scheme for which the land is being acquired.

5.8 The Guidance also requires the Council to have regard to the following when considering making a compulsory purchase order:

- That the purposes for which the order is made sufficiently justify interfering with the human rights of those with an interest in the land affected;
- Whether it is likely that the scheme will be blocked by any physical or legal impediments to implementation.

The Council's support for the Permitted Scheme

5.9 The Permitted Scheme is wholly consistent with adopted planning policy for the Site and finds significant support in national planning policy and guidance. It will deliver substantial regenerative benefits to the town centre of Wokingham and will make a significant contribution to the improvement of the economic, social and environmental well-being of Wokingham town centre. Importantly, the Council considers that the Permitted Scheme will deliver the comprehensive regeneration of the Site and that, in the absence of the Permitted Scheme and the Order to enable it, the comprehensive regeneration of Wokingham town centre would not be achieved; piecemeal redevelopment of the Site would be unlikely to come forward, and even if it were to do so it would be inferior in quality to a comprehensive redevelopment, and would thus fail to secure the benefits that will be delivered by the Scheme.

Resolution to make the Order

5.10 The Council resolved on [*To be completed later*] 2019 to make the Order.

5.11 In resolving to make the Order the Executive took into account the various factors referred to in this Statement and also the rights of property owners under the European Convention of Human Rights, as incorporated into domestic law by the Human Rights Act 1998.

5.12 Article 1 protects the right of everyone to the peaceful enjoyment of possession, so that no one can be deprived of possessions except in the public interest and subject to the relevant national and international laws.

5.13 Article 8 protects private and family life, home and correspondence, so that no public authority can interfere with these rights except if it is in accordance with the law and is necessary in the interest of national security, public safety or the economic well-being of the Country.

5.14 In balancing the rights of the individuals affected and the interests of the public, and especially in the light of the significant benefits arising from the Permitted Scheme, the Executive considered that the Order should be made.

Justification for the Order

- 5.15 The Council considers that the Order is fully justified. Its resolution to make the Order accords entirely with the advice (set out above) in the Guidance which encourages local authorities to exercise their compulsory purchase powers to ensure that sites are brought forward for development.
- 5.16 The Council believes that all of the land included in the Order is required for the Permitted Scheme to proceed.
- 5.17 The Council has determined, for the purposes of Section 226(1)(a), that the purchase of the Order Land will facilitate the carrying out of the development, redevelopment and improvement of the land the subject of the Permitted Scheme. In this respect the Council also believes, as regards Section 226(1A), that the Scheme will contribute to the achievement of the promotion or improvement of the economic, social and environmental well-being of Wokingham.

Scheme Benefits

- 5.18 A key ambition of the Scheme is to enhance the town centre's leisure provision through redeveloping the Carnival Pool area to provide a well-designed mixed leisure quarter as part of the Council's comprehensive regeneration proposals for Wokingham Town Centre.. In this regard, the Council notes that the existing buildings and facilities on the Site are of poor quality, appearance and layout.
- 5.19 As already noted, the Scheme is fully consistent with the Development Plan objectives for the Site, and finds strong support in national planning policy and guidance, (as discussed in some detail in section 4 of this statement). The Scheme will deliver regenerative benefits to the town centre of Wokingham and will make a significant contribution to the improvement of the economic, social and environmental well-being of the town.
- 5.20 In summary, it is considered that the Scheme will deliver the following public benefits:

Economic Benefits

- 5.21 5.22 The Permitted Scheme will redevelop the Carnival Pool site, ultimately increasing job opportunities on the site both during the construction period and following completion. In addition to job creation, the proposals will enhance economic development through increasing the town centre offer. The Carnival Pool sites together with the adjacent permitted Elms Field development will provide a great enhancement of leisure and retail facilities, as well as public space. This will support the town centre through increasing its attractiveness, ultimately supporting the growth of business and attracting new business to the area. The proposals are in accordance with local and national policy, and fulfil the main aims of the Wokingham Town Centre Masterplan, for example to encourage companies to invest in the town to secure long-term social and economic regeneration.

Environmental Benefits

- 5.23 The Permitted Scheme has already seen the demolition of the old bowling centre building and would involve the demolition of both Southgate House and the existing leisure centre. These are all dated buildings of poor design, with little cohesion either aesthetically or functionally, and which offer little contribution to a sense of place in this

location. They would be replaced by well-designed buildings, arranged around high quality pedestrian connections and a well-conceived landscaped public space which would link up into the new improved town park at Elms Field. Landscaping on site, including the planting of new trees, will softened the appearance of the development and provide a level of separation between Wellington Road and the application site, whilst still ensuring prominent visibility of the site.

5.24 The buildings would be of modern construction; designed not only to maximise accessibility and inclusivity, but also to achieve at least a 10% reduction in carbon emissions beyond a current Building Regulation compliant scheme through renewables and/or low carbon technology. The Scheme has been designed to achieve a BREEAM “Very Good” rating which is in line with the Council’s Sustainable Design and Construction SPD policy requirements. Moreover, the Permitted Scheme would offer a mix of essential town centre uses, including residential, in a sustainable location with good access to/from public transport links and other local facilities.

5.25 The Scheme will contribute to the Council’s Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace and Strategic Access Management and Monitoring strategies to mitigate potential impacts in the Thames Basin Heath SPA.

Social Benefits

5.26 As well as developing individuals, sport and leisure can help build stronger communities by bringing people together, often from different backgrounds, to make them feel better about where they live, improve community links and cohesion and build social capital. The Permitted Scheme achieves this. For example, by providing a library along with an updated leisure centre and food and drink facilities, as well as an enhanced public realm incorporating a pedestrian boulevard, there would be a clear enhancement of high quality community facilities. Considering this, alongside the adjacent Carnival Phase I and Elms Field developments, the proposals will greatly enhance social and community development in the town centre, in line with local and national planning policy.

5.27 Recognising the importance of sport and increasing participation, the Government published ‘Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation’ in December 2015. The report seeks to ensure that in the future, the whole population is encouraged and supported to engage in sport and physical activity in whatever way is best for them. The Report identifies that ‘while there is a core of people that will take part in sport no matter what the facilities are like, for most people the type, suitability and quality of infrastructure and opportunity to take part have a huge effect on the chances of them trying a sport or activity for the first time and then coming back to it regularly’. The report goes on to identify that where old and tired existing facilities have been replaced by new ones, the number of people using them can go up by 400%.

5.28 These ideas are reiterated in Wokingham’s 21st Century Leisure strategy (2017), which highlights the key ambitions and drivers of the Council in terms of leisure provision. These include: the promotion of opportunities for all residents to be active; to increase the proportion of adults achieving the CMO’s physical activity guide levels from 66% to 70%; to reduce inactivity from 20.9% to 16% by 2021; to support the aims of the Childhood Obesity Plan; to maintain leisure centre provision; and to deliver services and facilities. The redevelopment of the Carnival Pool site will be a significant component in contributing to these goals.

Conclusions

- 5.24 The Scheme represents a fantastic opportunity to effect comprehensive redevelopment of Wokingham town centre. With the grant of the Planning Permission and securing of the necessary funding for the development, the Council is satisfied that there are no planning, financial or other impediments to the implementation of the Permitted Scheme.
- 5.25 The Council considers that there is a compelling case in the public interest for the Order to facilitate the Scheme.

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6. Related Orders and Special Considerations affecting the Order Land

6.1 There are no related orders or special considerations affecting the Order Land.

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7. Human Rights and Equality Considerations

Human Rights

- 7.1 The Human Rights Act 1998 incorporated into domestic law the European Convention on Human Rights (“ECHR”). The ECHR includes provisions in the form of Articles, which aim to protect the rights of the individual.
- 7.2 Section 6 of the Human Rights Act 1998 prohibits public authorities from acting in a way which is incompatible with rights protected by the ECHR.
- 7.3 As is clear from the Guidance, a compulsory purchase order should only be made where there is a “compelling case in the public interest”, and that a public authority pursuing a compulsory purchase order should be sure that the purposes for which it is making that order sufficiently justify interfering with the human rights of those with an interest in the land affected. In making this assessment, the authority should have regard, in particular, to the provisions of Article 1 of the First Protocol and Articles 6 and 8 to the ECHR.
- 7.4 Article 1 of the First Protocol of the ECHR states that “every natural or legal person is entitled to peaceful enjoyment of his possessions” and that “no one shall be deprived of his possessions except in the public interest and subject to the conditions provided for by the law and by the general principles of international law....”.
- 7.5 Whilst the owners of the land comprised in the Order Land may be deprived of their property if the Order is confirmed and thereafter implemented, this will be done in accordance with the law. The public benefits associated with the Order are set out in this statement, and the Council considers that the Order strikes a fair balance between the public interest in seeing the regeneration proceed (which is unlikely to happen in the absence of the Order), and the private rights which will be affected by the Order.
- 7.6 In this case, despite efforts being made, the Council has not been able to secure agreements with the owners of the Order Land nor has it been possible to locate the owners of the interest in “unknown” ownership. Such parties will be entitled to compensation calculated under the CPO Compensation Code in respect of the land interests acquired by the Council pursuant to the Order.
- 7.7 Article 6 of the ECHR provides that: “in determining his civil rights and obligations ...everyone is entitled to a fair and public hearing within a reasonable time by an independent and impartial tribunal established by law”. The Article 6 rights are met by the procedures for objection and confirmation, the right to bring a legal challenge in the High Court under the Acquisition of Land Act 1981 and the right to have any claim for compensation determined by the Upper Tribunal.
- 7.8 The regeneration of the Site has been comprehensively consulted upon. There has been an opportunity to make representations regarding the planning policies that promote development of the Order Land. The Council has further entered into extensive discussions and negotiations with the affected landowners regarding the future of the area and the regeneration proposals.
- 7.9 Where parties object to the Order, the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government will arrange either for those objections to be considered by way of written representations, or for a public local inquiry to be held to provide those parties with an opportunity to be heard. Should the Order be confirmed, a person

aggrieved may challenge the order in the High Court if they consider that there are sufficient grounds for doing so. In relation to compensation disputes, affected persons have the right to refer any claim for compensation to the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber), an independent body. This process is compliant with Article 6.

- 7.10 Article 8 of the ECHR provides that: "*everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence*" and that "*there shall be no interference by a public authority with the exercise of this right except such as is in accordance with the law and is necessary in a democratic society in the interests of....the economic wellbeing of the country...*".
- 7.11 Whilst there may be some interference with the rights of the owners of the land comprised in the Order, this will be done in accordance with the law. The Council considers that the benefits associated with the Permitted Scheme as set out in this report, strike a fair balance between the public interest in seeing the Permitted Scheme proceed (which is unlikely to happen in the absence of the Order), and the private rights which will be affected by the Order.
- 7.12 The Council has carefully considered the matters it has to balance in reaching its decision to progress the Order, and has decided that there is a compelling case in the public interest to proceed with making it, so as to enable the redevelopment of the Site to proceed.

Equality

- 7.13 The Council further has a duty, when exercising any power, to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out its activities (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). This includes removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics, taking steps to meet the needs to people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people and encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low. The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- 7.14 The Council has been mindful of its equality duty and has had regard to the impact of the regeneration of the Site and provision of the Permitted Scheme on such protected characteristics.

Consultation with the Local Community about the Policy Context

- 7.15 The regeneration of Wokingham Town Centre has been a long term aspiration and corporate objective of the Council, and a high priority of the local community. Engagement with the local community to develop a better understanding of individual, group and business interests varied needs and aspirations for the site has been ongoing for a long period of time. Some of the key engagement activities and findings are outlined below.
- 7.16 As stated above the Local Plan policy in the Core Strategy (January 2010) and MDD (February 2014) identifies the Site as being allocated for development. Both plans were placed on deposit and provided individuals, groups and business concerns with the opportunity to consider the implications of the proposed policy and to comment on them. The Public Inquiry enabled the independent Inspector to consider all representations on the plan policy and to direct any changes; the policy was adopted

as sound and appropriate for the site and the needs of the local community.

- 7.17 The Wokingham Masterplan was adopted in 2010, this included details of how the Site was to be developed and how it related to its context and helped achieve the wider ambitions of the town centre. The Masterplan was the subject of extensive consultation, individuals, local groups and members of the local community were invited to comment.

Consultation with the Local Community about the Permitted Scheme

- 7.18 Significant consultation of the regeneration of Wokingham Town Centre in its wider context and specific development proposals for the Site has been undertaken over a number of years. This is set out in the Statement of Community Involvement which accompanied the planning application submission. Consultation events have included manned exhibitions in Wokingham town centre and at the Carnival Pool leisure centre, on-line forum discussions and the development of a scheme website (www.regenerationcompany.co.uk).
- 7.19 The Statement of Community Involvement details the views of the public and stakeholders on all aspects of the proposals, obtained as part of the lengthy consultation process. The report sets out strong support for improved leisure facilities, with positive comments relating to the provision of flexible spaces which can be used for a range of sports and leisure types. Therefore there is strong support for improved leisure facilities in this location as well as an improved mix of facilities.

Conclusions

- 7.20 The Council is content that it has discharged its public equality duty, and that the redevelopment of the Order Land in accordance with the Permitted Scheme will have a positive impact on those protected characteristics. Where there is potential for the Permitted Scheme to have a detrimental impact on those with protected characteristics, steps have been taken to mitigate that impact.

8 CONCLUSION

For all the various reasons set out in this Statement, the Council considers that there is a compelling case in the public interest and that the Order should be confirmed to facilitate the regeneration of the Site.

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9 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

General Information

- 9.1 The documents relating to the Order are listed in Appendix A to this Statement and can be inspected during normal office hours at the Council's offices at the Civic Offices Shute End Wokingham RG40 1BN.
- 9.2 The additional documents listed in Appendix B to this Statement, which the Council may also refer to at any public inquiry, can be inspected during normal office hours at the Council's offices. The Council reserves the right to add or remove documents from this list in the light of any objections and representations made in respect of the Order.
- 9.3 All of the documents can also be viewed online on the Council's website.
- 9.4 Persons requiring further information regarding the Order or owners and occupiers of the Order Land who wish to negotiate a sale or discuss matters of compensation should contact Damon Emes at the Council by telephone on 0118 974 6745 or by email to damon.emes@wokingham.gov.uk.

Statutory Procedures

- 9.5 Any objection or other representation concerning the Order must be made in writing to the Planning Casework Unit, 5 St Philips Place, Colmore Row, Birmingham B3 2PW before [*To be completed when order made*] and should state the title of the Order and the grounds of objection or representation.
- 9.6 If objections to the Order are received from any person who is an owner, lessee or occupier (except tenants for a month or a period less than a month) of the Order Land and such objections are not withdrawn, then an opportunity will be given by the Secretary of State for objectors to state their views at either a public inquiry or hearing before an independent inspector after the end of the objection period.
- 9.7 If a public inquiry or hearing is to be held, all objectors will be notified individually at least 6 weeks beforehand and those who have made representations or wish to support the proposals will be similarly informed. Notice of any public inquiry or hearing would also be published in the local press.
- 9.8 It should be noted that it might be necessary to communicate the substance of all comments received to other people. If a public inquiry or hearing is held, letters of objections and other representations would be passed to the inspector holding the public inquiry or hearing.

Compensation

- 9.9 Provision is made by statute with regard to compensation for the compulsory purchase of land and the depreciation in the value of affected properties. More information is given in the series of booklets published by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government entitled 'Compulsory Purchase and Compensation' Listed below:
- (a) Booklet No 1 – Compulsory Purchase Procedure;
 - (b) Booklet No 2 – Compensation to Business Owners and Occupiers;

(c) Booklet No 4 – Compensation to Residential Owners and Occupiers.

9.10 Copies of these booklets are available free of charge from the National Planning Casework Unit, 5 St Philips Place, Colmore Row, Birmingham B3 2PW or online at:

www.gov.uk/government/collections/compulsory-purchase-system-guidance

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APPENDIX A

Order Documents

- 1 The Order
- 2 The Order Map
- 3 Statement of Reasons for the Order

APPENDIX B

Reports and Minutes

- 1 Executive Paper dated 3 March 2017
- 2 Minutes of Executive Meeting on 3 March 2017
- 3 Executive Paper dated [*To be inserted later*] 2019
- 4 Minutes of Executive Meeting on [*To be inserted later*] 2019

Planning Application Reference 172012 Documentation

- 5 Planning Application Form for Application
- 6 Plan showing application boundary
- 7 Planning Statement dated July 2017
- 8 Approved Drawings
- 9 Committee Report dated 8 November 2017
- 10 Committee Minutes dated 8 November 2017
- 12 Planning Permission dated 2 February 2018

Planning Policy Documentation

- 13 Extracts from National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019)
- 14 National Planning Policy Guidance
(Available online at <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk>)
- 15 Extracts from Core Strategy for Wokingham (January 2010)
- 16 Extracts from Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (December 2012)
- 17 Wokingham Town Centre Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document (June 2010)

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