

COMMITTEE REPORT

APPLICATION DETAILS

APPLICATION No:	DM/22/03528/FPA
FULL APPLICATION DESCRIPTION:	New 3 storey school building and new sports building; associated landscaping, bin store, redeveloped access loop, reconfigured car parking, new accessible parking, and photovoltaic panel canopy; and temporary construction access and parking
NAME OF APPLICANT:	Galliford Try Construction Limited
ADDRESS:	Woodham Academy Washington Crescent Newton Aycliffe DL5 4AX
ELECTORAL DIVISION:	Aycliffe East
CASE OFFICER:	Chris Shields Senior Planning Officer 03000 261394 chris.shields@durham.gov.uk

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE AND PROPOSALS

Site

1. The 8.15 hectares (ha) application site, comprising existing school, sports hall, car parking and playing fields, is located on Washington Crescent in a residential area on the northern fringe of Newton Aycliffe, to the south of Woodham village. To the north, the site is adjacent to woodland and the watercourse of Woodham Burn and to the east, beyond a shared footpath/cycleway, are the school existing playing fields outside of the application site. Residential properties fronting Wolsey Close, Neile Road and Washington Crescent are located to the south, and are largely separated from the site by mature trees and hedgerows. To the west, the site is bound by undeveloped fields. More widely, the site is located approximately 800 metres northeast of Newton Aycliffe town centre and 800m south of Woodham village centre.
2. The site is located entirely within a Low Risk Coalfield Development area. The site is entirely located with Flood Zone 1, a Major Groundwater Vulnerability zone and within a Groundwater Source Protection Zone (SPZ). Due to the location of the site the Agricultural Land Classification value is Grade 4 (urban) and is therefore not of a best and most versatile quality.
3. There are no landscape or ecological designations within, or in the immediate vicinity of the site. The Moor Local Nature Reserve (LNR) is located approximately 1km to the north west, Byerley LNR is located approximately 1.8km to the west, Aycliffe Nature Park Local Wildlife Site (LWS) is located approximately 1.6km to the south. Simpasture Junction LWS is located approximately 2.5km to the west and Shildon Sidings is located approximately 3.3km to the west. Middridge Quarry Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is located approximately 3.3km to the west.

4. There are no designated heritage assets within the site and none within a 2.5km radius.
5. The site is located within a residential area. The nearest residential properties to the site are located immediately adjacent (5 to 10 metres) to the southern boundary on Wolsey Close, Washing Crescent and Neile Road. To the north the nearest properties are located on Grange Court, Whitton Court, Grindon Court, Mulgrave Court and Middleham Way approximately 100m from the site boundary but also separated by the Woodham Burn valley and woodland.
6. There are no public rights of way within or in the vicinity of the site. Public footpath No.31 (Great Aycliffe Parish) is located approximately 60m to the north of the site within the Woodham Burn valley.
7. Land adjacent to the school site to the west is allocated for housing in the County Durham Plan (reference H32) with an anticipated yield of 100 no. dwellings.

The Proposal

8. Planning permission is sought for the construction of a replacement secondary school for Woodham Academy. The proposal has been split into two applications, one for the construction of the new school and the second for the demolition of the existing school. The application for demolition of the existing school will be determined at a later date as further bat surveys are required to be undertaken before the application can be determined. This report will consider the application for the construction of the new school only.
9. The proposed school, comprising a teaching buildings and sports buildings would be a direct replacement for the existing and would not increase pupil numbers beyond the current 1200, or staff numbers above the current 103 full time equivalent (FTE) posts.
10. The proposed new 3 storey teaching building has an 'L' shaped ground profile with a maximum length on the southern elevation of approximately 78m, 33m on the western elevation and 58m on the eastern elevation with a height of 12m and a 7,522m² gross internal floor area / 9,161m² gross external floor area and would be positioned within the south-eastern section of the application site (to the north of Wolsey Close).
11. In addition to teaching spaces, staff offices and other ancillary areas, the new teaching block would include 2 dining halls and assembly hall with bleachers on the ground floor and a library located on the first floor of the building.
12. The proposed new sports building would measure approximately 48m by 51m with a height of 10.5m and a 2,201 gross internal floor area / 2,313 gross external floor area and would be located to the north of the new teaching building.
13. The sports building has been designed to allow out of hours community users to use the main entrance for direct access into the sports facilities. A dedicated community entrance utilises the dual aspect entrance at the secure line intersection. The single reception features sights lines of both playground and semi-public site plaza.
14. In terms of the key spaces provided in the new sports building, the provision includes a 4-lane swimming pool, 4-court sports hall, activity studio, fitness room and dining expansion area with a kitchen.
15. The proposed teaching building and sports building would both utilise buff and grey blend brickwork, the buff bricks being used for the main body of the buildings with grey

bricks for detail and to break up the elevations. Cedar cladding would be used to define entrances and create feature areas.

16. The proposed new buildings are designed to tackle climate change through being Net Zero Carbon in Operation (NZCiO). Both buildings would have green roofs and be covered in photo-voltaic (PV) panels. Due to the building energy yield, an additional 600m² of PV panels would be sited on existing hard standing to the northwest of the new buildings.
17. New hard and soft landscaping is proposed for the site. A 100m² area of woodland planting would be introduced to mitigate for the loss of 22 existing trees from the site.
18. Existing vehicular and pedestrian entrances to the site would be retained with new 2 tier security fencing to segregate pupils from visitors.
19. On-site parking provision would remain mainly unchanged. A total of 89 parking spaces are provided to the southwest of the site. In addition, 18 spaces are located in an overspill area, increasing the total to 107 spaces. As part of the development proposals, two accessible bays would be located within the island of the proposed extended internal loop road, increasing the overall parking provision to 109 spaces. The existing 4 electric vehicle parking spaces would also be retained on site.
20. An upgraded pick up/drop off area in the form of an enlargement to the existing internal loop road would be located to the southeast of the site, in the vicinity of the existing loop road. Coaches and servicing vehicles would gain access via the upgraded drop off/pick up area.
21. As part of the current proposals, 82 cycle parking spaces are proposed, located across two areas immediately to the northwest of the upgraded drop-off/pick-up internal loop road. A total of 20 Sheffield stands accommodating 40 spaces would be located in a cycle compound. An additional 42 spaces would be provided in a cycle shelter, located south of the cycle compound. The proposed cycle shelter would be constructed with stainless steel, clear roof and side cladding.
22. The proposed development would result in a temporary loss of grass playing field land that would be used for the construction of the new buildings and contractor's car parking that would be located within the south-western section of the site. The area of playing field lost to development proposals would be replaced once the existing buildings were demolished.
23. The proposed construction works are expected to take a total of 111 weeks with completion due in May 2025. However, the new school would be ready to accept pupils from September 2024.
24. This application is being reported to the County Planning Committee because it involves major development of more than 2ha.

PLANNING HISTORY

25. The existing school buildings at Woodham Academy date from 1952. There has been a number of applications for fencing, new buildings, road and fencing in the intervening period.

PLANNING POLICY

NATIONAL POLICY

26. A revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in July 2021. The overriding message continues to be that new development that is sustainable should go ahead without delay. It defines the role of planning in achieving sustainable development under three overarching objectives – economic, social and environmental, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways.
27. In accordance with Paragraph 219 of the National Planning Policy Framework, existing policies should not be considered out-of-date simply because they were adopted or made prior to the publication of this Framework. Due weight should be given to them, according to their degree of consistency with the Framework (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given). The relevance of this issue is discussed, where appropriate, in the assessment section of the report. The following elements of the NPPF are considered relevant to this proposal.
28. *NPPF Part 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development* – The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and therefore at the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. It defines the role of planning in achieving sustainable development under three overarching objectives - economic, social and environmental, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways. The application of the presumption in favour of sustainable development for plan-making and decision-taking is outlined.
29. *NPPF Part 6 – Building a Strong, Competitive Economy* – The Government is committed to securing economic growth in order to create jobs and prosperity, building on the country's inherent strengths, and to meeting the twin challenges of global competition and a low carbon future.
30. *NPPF Part 8 – Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities* – The planning system can play an important role in facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive and safe communities. Local Planning Authorities should plan positively for the provision and use of shared space and community facilities. An integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services should be adopted.
31. *NPPF Part 9 – Promoting Sustainable Transport* – Encouragement should be given to solutions which support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and reduce congestion.
32. *NPPF Part 14 – Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change* – The planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change. It should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.
33. *NPPF Part 15 – Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment* – The Planning System should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, site of biodiversity or geological conservation interests, recognising the wider benefits of ecosystems, minimising the impacts on biodiversity, preventing both new and existing development from

contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from pollution and land stability and remediating contaminated or other degraded land where appropriate.

34. *NPPF Part 16 – Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment* – Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Sites which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value. These assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

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

35. The Government has consolidated a number of planning practice guidance notes, circulars and other guidance documents into a single Planning Practice Guidance suite. This document provides planning guidance on a wide range of matters. Of particular relevance to this application is the practice guidance with regards to: air quality; climate change; determining a planning application; flood risk and coastal change; healthy and safe communities; historic environment; light pollution; natural environment; noise; renewable and low carbon energy; travel plans, transport assessments and statements; use of planning conditions; water supply, wastewater and water quality

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

LOCAL PLAN POLICY:

The County Durham Plan (October 2020)

36. *Policy 4 – Housing Allocations* – identifies the locations for new housing within the County. Applications for housing on these allocations if in accordance with the site-specific requirements of the policy and infrastructure requirements should be approved if in accordance with other relevant policies in the plan.
37. *Policy 6 – Development of Unallocated Sites* – States the development on sites not allocated in the Plan or Neighbourhood Plan, but which are either within the built-up area or outside the built up area but well related to a settlement will be permitted provided it: is compatible with use on adjacent land; does not result in coalescence with neighbouring settlements; does not result in loss of land of recreational, ecological, or heritage value; is appropriate in scale, design etc to the character of settlement; it is not prejudicial to highway safety; provides access to sustainable modes of transport; retains the settlement's valued facilities; considers climate change implications; encourages the use of previously developed land and reflects priorities for urban regeneration.
38. *Policy 21 – Delivering Sustainable Transport* – Requires planning applications to address the transport implications of the proposed development. All development shall deliver sustainable transport by delivering, accommodating and facilitating investment in sustainable modes of transport; providing appropriate, well designed, permeable and direct routes for all modes of transport; ensuring that any vehicular traffic generated by new development can be safely accommodated; creating new or improvements to existing routes and assessing potential increase in risk resulting from new development in vicinity of level crossings.
39. *Policy 26 – Green Infrastructure* – States that development proposals will not be permitted that would result in the loss of open space or harm to green infrastructure assets unless the benefits of the development clearly outweigh that loss or harm and an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space or land

to be surplus to requirements. Where valued open spaces or assets are affected, proposals must incorporate suitable mitigation and make appropriate provision of equivalent or greater value in a suitable location. Where appropriate there will be engagement with the local community.

40. *Policy 29 – Sustainable Design.* Requires all development proposals to achieve well designed buildings and places having regard to SPD advice and sets out detailed criteria which sets out that where relevant development is required to meet including; making a positive contribution to an areas character and identity; provide adaptable buildings; minimise greenhouse gas emissions and use of non renewable resources; providing high standards of amenity and privacy; contributing to healthy neighbourhoods; providing suitable landscape proposals; provide convenient access for all users; adhere to the Nationally Described Space Standards (subject to transition period).
41. *Policy 31 – Amenity and Pollution -* Sets out that development will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that there will be no unacceptable impact, either individually or cumulatively, on health, living or working conditions or the natural environment and that the development can be effectively integrated with any existing business and community facilities. Development will not be permitted where inappropriate odours, noise, vibration and other sources of pollution cannot be suitably mitigated against, as well as where light pollution is not suitably minimised to an acceptable level.
42. *Policy 32 – Despoiled, Degraded, Derelict, Contaminated and Unstable Land –* requires that where development involves such land, any necessary mitigation measures to make the site safe for local communities and the environment are undertaken prior to the construction or occupation of the proposed development and that all necessary assessments are undertaken by a suitably qualified person.
43. *Policy 33 – Renewable and Low Carbon Energy –* States that renewable and low carbon energy development in appropriate locations will be supported. In determining planning applications for such projects significant weight will be given to the achievement of wider social, environmental and economic benefits. Proposals should include details of associate developments including access roads, transmission lines, pylons and other ancillary buildings. Where relevant, planning applications will also need to include a satisfactory scheme to restore the site to a quality of at least its original condition once operations have ceased. Where necessary, this will be secured by bond, legal agreement or condition.
44. *Policy 35 – Water Management –* Requires all development proposals to consider the effect of the proposed development on flood risk, both on-site and off-site, commensurate with the scale and impact of the development and taking into account the predicted impacts of climate change for the lifetime of the proposal. All new development must ensure there is no net increase in surface water runoff for the lifetime of the development.
45. *Policy 36 – Water Infrastructure –* Advocates a hierarchy of drainage options for the disposal of foul water. Applications involving the use of non-mains methods of drainage will not be permitted in areas where public sewerage exists. New sewage and waste water infrastructure will be approved unless the adverse impacts outweigh the benefits of the infrastructure. Proposals seeking to mitigate flooding in appropriate locations will be permitted though flood defence infrastructure will only be permitted where it is demonstrated as being the most sustainable response to the flood threat.
46. *Policy 39 – Landscape –* States that proposals for new development will only be permitted where they would not cause unacceptable harm to the character, quality or distinctiveness of the landscape, or to important features or views. Proposals are

expected to incorporate appropriate mitigation measures where adverse landscape and visual impacts occur. Development affecting Areas of Higher landscape Value will only be permitted where it conserves and enhances the special qualities of the landscape, unless the benefits of the development clearly outweigh its impacts. Development proposals should have regard to the County Durham Landscape Character Assessment and County Durham Landscape Strategy and contribute, where possible, to the conservation or enhancement of the local landscape.

47. *Policy 40 – Trees, Woodlands and Hedges* – States that proposals for new development will not be permitted that would result in the loss of, or damage to, trees, hedges or woodland of high landscape, amenity or biodiversity value unless the benefits of the scheme clearly outweigh the harm. Proposals for new development will be expected to retain existing trees and hedges. Where trees are lost, suitable replacement planting, including appropriate provision for maintenance and management, will be required within the site or the locality.
48. *Policy 41 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity* – Restricts development that would result in significant harm to biodiversity or geodiversity and cannot be mitigated or compensated. The retention and enhancement of existing biodiversity assets and features is required as well as biodiversity net gains. Proposals are expected to protect geological features and have regard to Geodiversity Action Plans and the Durham Geodiversity Audit and where appropriate promote public access, appreciation and interpretation of geodiversity. Development proposals which are likely to result in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitat(s) will not be permitted unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists.
49. *Policy 43 – Protected Species and Nationally and Locally Protected Sites* – States that development proposals that would adversely impact upon nationally protected sites will only be permitted where the benefits clearly outweigh the impacts whilst adverse impacts. Appropriate mitigation or, as a last resort, compensation must be provided where adverse impacts are expected. In relation to protected species and their habitats, all development likely to have an adverse impact on the species' abilities to survive and maintain their distribution will not be permitted unless appropriate mitigation is provided, or the proposal meets licensing criteria in relation to European protected species.
50. *Policy 44 – Historic Environment* – Requires development proposals to contribute positively to the built and historic environment. Development should seek opportunities to enhance and where appropriate better reveal the significance and understanding of heritage assets.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN:

Great Aycliffe Neighbourhood Plan (July 2017)

51. *Policy GANP CH1 – Landscape Character and Townscape* – states new development should, where appropriate maintain existing hedgerows, trees and woodland and encourage the planting of new trees and hedgerows.
52. *Policy GANP T1 – Parking Impacts on Existing Infrastructure* – states that development proposals that include a reliance on existing streets shall not be permitted where on-street parking would impact on the safety of road users or have an unacceptable adverse impact on the character of the area and adequate provision has not been made on-site for parking and access for deliveries, service vehicles, tradesmen working on-site, workers, social visitors and residents.

CONSULTATION AND PUBLICITY RESPONSES

STATUTORY RESPONSES:

53. *Great Aycliffe Town Council* – has advised that they have no comments to make.
54. *Highway Authority* – initially objected to the proposals due to inadequate onsite parking and safety implications of the construction access on to Neile Road. The scheme was subsequently amended to direct construction traffic to the existing main entrance on Wolsey Close and retain this access for teaching staff and pupils. Construction workers parking would be accessed from Neile Road and access for demolition traffic would also use Neile Road. Following this amendment Highways officers accepted that the access arrangements would be acceptable. A condition is recommended to require pre and post construction highway condition surveys.
55. *Drainage & Coastal Protection* – has indicated that they have no objections to the proposals but have not, as yet, been able to audit the final drainage calculations. Conditions are therefore recommended to secure this detail.
56. *Sport England* – has raised no objections to the proposal. Officers have assessed the proposals and note that once the existing school has been demolished there would be a net increase in playing field area of 0.1ha. Notwithstanding this, conditions have been requested to ensure the timely delivery of the replacement playing fields to a good standard and also for submission and compliance with a community use agreement for the sports facilities.

INTERNAL CONSULTEE RESPONSES:

57. *Spatial Policy* – has raised no objections to the proposals. Officers have provided advice in respect of the principle of development and appropriate national, local and neighbourhood plan policies for determining the application.
58. *Environmental Health and Consumer Protection (Nuisance)* – has raised no objections in respect of noise impact. Further details of light spillage are requested, which would be required as a pre-commencement condition.
59. *Environmental Health and Consumer Protection (Air quality)* – has raised no objections to the proposal. Officers have requested that a Dust Management Plan or Construction and Environmental Management Plan be requested by condition prior to the commencement of development.
60. *Environmental Health and Consumer Protection (Contaminated land)* – has raised no objections subject to conditions for further assessment and remedial work if it is deemed to be required.
61. *Ecology* – has raised no objections to the proposals. Officers requested additional information regarding planting, light spillage and bird and bat boxes. Additional planting details have been provided that are considered acceptable, however, details of lighting and bird and bat boxes would be secured by planning condition. Officers have requested long term management of the biodiversity net gain on the site by Section 39 (Wildlife and Countryside Act) agreement.

62. *Landscape* – has raised no objections to the proposals. Officers have requested conditions to secure full details of hard and soft landscaping with a requirement to deliver long term management of soft landscaping.
63. *Design and Conservation* – has raised no objections to the proposals. Officers have requested that details of materials and samples should be requested as a pre-commencement condition.
64. *Archaeology* – has raised no objections to the proposals subject to conditions requiring trial trenching to be carried out prior to the commencement of development/

PUBLIC RESPONSES:

65. The applications have been advertised by site notice and in the local press as part of the planning procedures. Notification letters were sent to individual properties in the vicinity of the site. Two letters of objection have been received in response to the consultation, although both were received from the same person.
66. The issues raised in the objection centre around traffic impacts on Neile Road, which is located to the south of the application site. This was intended to be the access point for construction traffic, staff parking, contractor parking and pedestrian entrance for pupils that would be diverted away from the existing main entrance for the duration of construction works. The objector has set out existing access difficulties and limitations of Neile Road including the absence of a footpath on the north (school side) of the carriageway.

The above is not intended to repeat every point made and represents a summary of the comments received on this application. The full written text is available for inspection on the application file which can be viewed at:

<https://publicaccess.durham.gov.uk/online-applications/search.do?action=simple&searchType=Application>

APPLICANTS STATEMENT:

67. The proposed redevelopment of Woodham Academy will provide a state-of-the-art new school building and sports facilities for its pupils. The school was selected by the Department for Education (DfE) to receive funding under the Schools Rebuilding Programme (SRP), due to the poor quality of the existing school accommodation. The new school buildings will ensure the academy is fit for the future by providing a high-quality and spacious learning environment. This improvement in the learning environment will have a positive impact on the quality of education and the well-being of pupils who attend Woodham Academy. The school is at the heart of its community and the redevelopment proposals will help to ensure that they can deliver the education and skills children need to succeed in life.
68. The new school buildings have been designed to tackle climate change through being Net Zero Carbon in Operation (NZCiO), which is a significant commitment in terms of sustainable design. The proposed development will use technologies such as air source heat pumps and PV panels, which will reduce carbon emissions and contribute towards a cleaner environment. In addition, the proposals include an increase in electric vehicle charging facilities and cycle parking, which will encourage more pupils and staff to travel to school by sustainable modes of transport, further contributing to the environmental improvements of the proposals.
69. The improved sports facilities such as the new sports hall, swimming pool and activity centre will provide the school with greater opportunities to promote student participation in sports and expand the school sports curriculum and range of extracurricular activities. The new sports facilities will also be accessible to the local community through a Community Use Agreement. The new facilities will offer venues

for events such as training sessions, swimming lessons, community sports and coaching. This will improve the access of the local community to high quality sports facilities within walking or cycling distance of their homes. This in turn will promote healthier lifestyles and reduce the reliance on private vehicles.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS AND ASSESSMENT

70. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 sets out that if regard is to be had to the development plan, decisions should be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In accordance with advice within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the policies contained therein are material considerations that should be taken into account in decision-making. Other material considerations include representations received. In this context, it is considered that the main planning issues in this instance relate to the principle of development, layout and design, locational sustainability of the site, access and traffic, residential amenity, contamination and coal mining risk, flooding and drainage, landscape, ecology, recreational amenity, cultural heritage, other matters and public sector equality duty.

The Principle of the Development

71. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The NPPF is a material planning consideration. The County Durham Plan (CDP) and the Great Aycliffe Neighbourhood Plan (GANP) comprise is the statutory development plan relevant to this proposal and are the starting point for determining applications as set out in the Planning Act and reinforced at Paragraph 12 of the NPPF. The CDP was adopted in October 2020 and provides the policy framework for the County up until 2035. The GANP was adopted in July 2017 and covers the period 2016 to 2036.
72. Paragraph 11 of the NPPF establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision taking this means:
- c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
 - d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission 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 this Framework taken as a whole.
73. In light of the recent adoption of the CDP, and the GANP, the Council now has an up-to-date development plan. Paragraph 11 of the NPPF establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision taking this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay (Paragraph 11 c). Accordingly, Paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is not engaged.

74. The application site is located within the Woodham area of Newton Aycliffe and is adjacent to a site allocated for housing within CDP Policy 4 with the reference H32 (Land at Woodham College) for 100 houses. CDP Policy 4 states that applications which come forward for housing development on allocated housing land will be approved where they comply with other requirements of the CDP. The allocation was adopted in the knowledge that the school and playing fields existed and would continue to operate on the adjoining site. The school has co-existed with surrounding developments satisfactorily and there is no reason to suspect that the proposal would prejudice the housing allocation.
75. Paragraph 95 of the NPPF emphasises the importance of sufficient school places to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Local Planning Authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education. In essence a new school on this site would deliver wider community benefits and can be viewed in terms of the requirements of CDP Policy 6, along with other policy requirements of the CDP.
76. Policy 6 of the CDP states that the development of sites which are not allocated in the Plan or in a Neighbourhood Plan which are either (i) within the built-up area; or (ii) outside the built-up area (except where a settlement boundary has been defined in a neighbourhood plan) but well-related to a settlement, will be permitted provided the proposal accords with all relevant development plan policies and:
- a) is compatible with, and is not prejudicial to, any existing, allocated or permitted use of adjacent land;
 - b) does not contribute to coalescence with neighbouring settlements, would not result in ribbon development, or inappropriate backland development;
 - c) does not result in the loss of open land that has recreational, ecological or heritage value, or contributes to the character of the locality which cannot be adequately mitigated or compensated for;
 - d) is appropriate in terms of scale, design, layout, and location to the character, function, form and setting of, the settlement;
 - e) will not be prejudicial to highway safety or have a severe residual cumulative impact on network capacity;
 - f) has good access by sustainable modes of transport to relevant services and facilities and reflects the size of the settlement and the level of service provision within that settlement;
 - g) does not result in the loss of a settlement's or neighbourhood's valued facilities services unless it has been demonstrated that they are no longer viable; or
 - h) minimises vulnerability and provides resilience to impacts arising from climate change, including but not limited to, flooding;
 - i) where relevant, makes as much use as possible of previously developed (brownfield) land; and,
 - j) where appropriate, it reflects priorities for urban regeneration.
77. The application site is not allocated for educational use within the CDP but benefits from an established use as a school site. The site is located in a built-up area and therefore the acceptance criteria associated with CDP Policy 6 are engaged. Many of

the criteria associated with CDP Policy 6 are considered in more detail elsewhere in this report. However, with regard criterion a), the application site is currently occupied by a school, and it is considered that education is the established and prevailing land use. The use of the land has therefore been demonstrated to be compatible with the existing adjacent land uses.

78. With regard to criteria b) part of the site is previously developed land with a clear boundary that is already surrounded by other, existing development and would therefore not lead to ribbon development or coalescence with other settlements. With respect to criterion c) the application site is not publicly accessible and has very limited recreational and ecological value and no heritage value. The proposal to build a new school on the site would improve the recreational value and the proposed planting and landscape features would add ecological value. Continuing the use of the site for education would maintain the character in the locality.
79. With respect to criterion d) the proposed school would be two storey building with a rectangular plan form. The building would have a modern appearance using a contrasting buff and grey brick palette. Whilst it would look different from its surrounds this is considered to be a positive choice and a clear break from the building that it replaces. The design of the building is to be as efficient as possible, and this would provide a scale and massing that would not be overbearing to surrounding occupiers.
80. Criteria e) and f) relate to transport and access. The site is well located within a residential area with bus stops less than 100m from the site entrance. The site would have multiple pedestrian access points and would have adequate parking provision for staff and would not have a detrimental impact on the highway network.
81. With respect to criteria g) the development would not negatively impact or result in the loss in neighbourhood facilities or services.
82. The development would provide modern, energy efficient buildings with carefully considered drainage and green energy systems on previously developed land currently occupied by a school in accordance with criteria h), i) and j).
83. In summary it is considered that the development of the application site would accord with CDP Policy 6 as it is considered to be well-related to the settlement, would not significantly affect the landscape character and lies within acceptable distances to local community facilities, services and sustainable transport links. The reasoning behind this judgement is set out in the consideration of the scheme against the relevant criterion of the Policy in later sections of this report. It is also considered that the proposal would not conflict with CDP Policy 4 as the housing allocation would not be prejudiced by the continuation of an education use on the application site.

Layout and Design

84. CDP Policy 29 outlines that development proposals should contribute positively to an area's character, identity, heritage significance, townscape and landscape features, helping to create and reinforce locally distinctive and sustainable communities. Parts 12 and 15 of the NPPF also seek to promote good design, while protecting and enhancing local environments. Paragraph 130 of the NPPF also states that planning decisions should aim to ensure developments function well and add to the overall quality of the area and establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit.

85. Within the application site there are trees to the south and east of the existing school building that would be retained. A more dense woodland planting belt in the south east corner, northern and eastern boundaries would also be retained. The development of the site would have a visual impact, particularly to the south where the proposed building would be clearly visible in the street scene from Washington Crescent and Wolsey Close. The views from residential properties on Wolsey Close would be partially mitigated by the existing intervening tree belt.
86. The height of the proposed new buildings would not be inconsistent or out of keeping with neighbouring buildings, noting in particular that there are examples of 4 story blocks of flats on Washington Crescent that would not be dissimilar in height to the proposed school buildings.
87. To achieve the educational facilities required for Woodham Academy, the accommodation has been split between two separate buildings on the site. The main teaching building to the south with the sports building separated by the playground.
88. The proposed elevations are composed mainly of a buff and grey blend brickwork. This material was chosen to provide architectural quality whilst providing suitable robustness for a school setting. Recessed brickwork to help define the buildings natural rhythm is proposed featuring window bays on the main elevations, helping to further break up the massing. A grey brick plinth would add a feature to the dedicated teaching facilities to the east of the buildings.
89. Design and Conservation officers have commented that the proposal reflects that discussed at the pre-application stage and would not be opposed from a design and conservation perspective. The main school building has legible entrance features for both students and visitors, with the visitor entrance immediately recognisable upon arriving at the site without the need for over-reliance on signage. The window reveal detail gives depth to what would otherwise be long, flat elevations. The proposed brick reflects the character of adjacent housing and the wider new town. With regard to the sports building, the overall material palette continues the approach of the main school building. At the ground floor, the building takes the opportunity to provide animation to the elevations away from the blank box of the sports hall. In general, pedestrian routes through the site are addressed by animated building frontage. Notwithstanding their general support for the scheme, officers have requested details of materials and samples to be submitted through a planning condition.
90. In response to CDP Policy 29 it is considered that the development would positively contribute to the character and townscape of the area and would create a modern building capable of providing and accommodating up to date educational needs. An energy statement has been provided in support of the application to demonstrate that the building can operate without reliance upon fossil fuels and the location of the school within a residential area with good transport connections adds to the sustainability credit. The scale, massing and siting of the building would maintain high standards of amenity and privacy to neighbouring residents.
91. The applicant has not demonstrated that the building would achieve a Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) 'very good' rating but have instead demonstrated that it would achieve Net Zero Carbon in Operation, thereby confirming that development would be highly efficient.
92. Subject to the imposition of a condition requiring details of materials and finishes it is considered that the development would accord with CDP Policy 29 and Part 12 of the NPPF in respect of good design.

Locational Sustainability of the Site

93. Criteria f of Policy 6 of the CDP requires that developments on unallocated sites have good access by sustainable modes of transport to relevant services and facilities and reflects the size of the settlement and the level of service provision within that settlement. Policy 21 of the CDP requires all developments to deliver sustainable transport by providing appropriate, well designed, permeable and direct routes for walking, cycling and bus access, so that new developments clearly link to existing services and facilities together with existing routes for the convenience of all users. Policy 29 of the CDP requires that major development proposals provide convenient access for all users whilst prioritising the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, public transport users, people with a range of disabilities, and emergency and service vehicles whilst ensuring that connections are made to existing cycle and pedestrian networks. Specifically, the NPPF sets out at Paragraph 105 that significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. At Paragraph 110 the NPPF states that appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes should be taken whilst Paragraph 112 amongst its advice seeks to facilitate access to high quality public transport.
94. The proposed development would be located on a site currently occupied by a school and is surrounded by residential properties. The site provides access to the A167 via an established route through Wolsey Close, Washington Crescent and Central Avenue and would provide adequate parking on site for staff and visitors. The site is served by existing pedestrian entrances that would continue to be used during construction and operation of the new school and there is a good network of pavements to the site to allow people to walk. Cycle parking would be provided on site to facilitate and encourage staff and pupils to cycle to school. In addition, there are bus stops less than 100m from the site entrance.
95. In conclusion, the development would promote accessibility by a range of methods in accordance with Policies 6 criterion f, 21 and 29 of the CDP and Paragraphs 98, 103, 108 and 110 of the NPPF.

Renewable Energy

96. CDP Policy 33 states that renewable and low carbon energy development in appropriate locations will be supported. In determining planning applications for such projects significant weight will be given to the achievement of wider social, environmental and economic benefits. Proposals should include details of associated developments including access roads, transmission lines, pylons and other ancillary buildings. Where relevant, planning applications will also need to include a satisfactory scheme to restore the site to a quality of at least its original condition once operations have ceased. Where necessary, this will be secured by bond, legal agreement or condition.
97. In line with the Department of Education employer requirements and aspirations towards Net Zero Carbon in Operation (NZCiO), enhanced energy objectives have driven the design from the concept stage. Goals in line with the shared governments Net Zero Coalition, targeting net zero emissions by 2050.
98. Both buildings would have green roofs and would be covered in photo-voltaic (PV) panels. Due to the building energy yield, an additional 600m² of PV panels are proposed to achieve the NZCiO. It is proposed to site these arrays on existing hard standing to the northwest of the site, eliminating the loss of sports playing fields. Precise details of the appearance of the solar panels would be required by conditions.

99. The proposed roof and ground mounted solar arrays would assist the school in achieving NZCiO status. CDP Policy 33 provide support for renewable and low carbon energy in appropriate locations. The location of the ground mounted solar panels and roof mounted panels are considered to be acceptable, and the proposal would therefore accord with CDP Policy 33 and Part 14 of the NPPF.

Access and Traffic

100. Paragraph 110 of the NPPF states that safe and suitable access should be achieved for all users. In addition, Paragraph 111 of the NPPF states that development should only be refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts on development are severe. CDP Policy 21 states that the transport implications of development must be addressed as part of any planning application, where relevant this could include through Transport Assessments, Transport Statements and Travel Plans.
101. Policy GANP T1 states that development proposals that include a reliance on existing streets shall not be permitted where on-street parking would impact on the safety of road users or have an unacceptable adverse impact on the character of the area and adequate provision has not been made on-site for parking and access for deliveries, service vehicles, tradesmen working on-site, workers, social visitors and residents.
102. An objector to the development has raised issues of traffic impacts on Neile Road. This was intended to be the access point for construction traffic, staff parking, contractor parking and pedestrian entrance for pupils that would be diverted away from the existing main entrance for the duration of construction works. The objector has set out existing access difficulties and limitations of Neile Road including the absence of a footpath on the north (school side) of the carriageway.
103. A Transport Statement (TS) and Construction Phase Plan have been submitted in support of the application. The TS provides a baseline assessment of the existing school, highway network and highways safety. Details are provided of the proposed development, site access and parking, refuse and servicing vehicles, proposed school opening times and construction management. The TS concludes that the proposed development is in a highly sustainable location with no local highway safety issues and that there would be no impact on traffic or parking demand in comparison with the existing situation.
104. The Construction Phase Plan, as originally submitted, showed access for teaching staff, construction workers and student pedestrian access to be from Neile Road, which is not currently used for school access at all. The main entrance would only be accessible for construction vehicles. Following discussions with the Highway Authority, the applicant has amended the construction access arrangements so that staff and pupils would continue to access the school from the existing main entrance, construction traffic would enter the site via new entrance immediately adjacent to the main entrance with appropriate segregation. Construction staff would access the temporary construction from Neile Road, and demolition traffic would also use Neile Road. It is important to note that demolition work would not commence until construction of the new school is complete so there would not be any overlap. The demolition of the existing school is the subject of a separate application. Construction traffic would be time managed to strictly avoid any vehicles arriving during school drop off and pick up times.
105. Following submission of the revised Construction Phase Plan, the Highway Authority have found the access arrangements for both the construction and operational periods to be acceptable. Conditions have been requested for a pre-commencement and post-completion road condition survey, incorporating Wolsey Close, Washing Crescent,

Neile Road and Dafoe Crescent. A condition is also requested for a pre-commencement swept path analysis of Neile Road for demolition traffic, but this would be more appropriately dealt with in the subsequent application for the demolition of the existing school.

106. No objection is raised by the Highway Authority subject to appropriate conditions. It is considered that the proposals have been appropriately assessed through a Transport Statement and would not result in harm to the safety of the local or strategic highway network and would not cause an unacceptable increase in congestion or air pollution. Subject to the condition set out above the development would not conflict with CDP Policy 21, GANP Policy T1 and Part 9 of the NPPF.

Residential Amenity

107. Paragraph 174 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of air or noise pollution. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air quality and water quality. Paragraph 185 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. Paragraph 186 of the NPPF advises that planning decisions should sustain and contribute towards compliance with relevant limit values or national objectives for pollutants. Opportunities to improve air quality or mitigate impacts should be identified, such as through traffic and travel management, and green infrastructure provision and enhancement. Paragraph 187 of the NPPF advises that planning decisions should ensure that new development can be integrated effectively with existing businesses and community facilities (such as places of worship, pubs, music venues and sports clubs).
108. CDP Policy 31 sets out that development will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that there will be no unacceptable impact, either individually or cumulatively, on health, living or working conditions or the natural environment and that can be integrated effectively with any existing business and community facilities. Development will not be permitted where inappropriate odours, noise, vibration and other sources of pollution cannot be suitably mitigated against, as well as where light pollution is not suitably minimised. Permission will not be granted for locating of sensitive land uses near to potentially polluting development. Similarly, potentially polluting development will not be permitted near sensitive uses unless the effects can be mitigated.
109. The nearest residential properties to the site are located immediately adjacent (5 to 10 metres) to the southern boundary on Wolsey Close, Washing Crescent and Neile Road. To the north the nearest properties are located on Grange Court, Whitton Court, Grindon Court, Mulgrave Court and Middleham Way approximately 100m from the site boundary but also separated by the Woodham Burn valley and woodland. There are no public rights of way within or in the vicinity of the site. Public Footpath No.31 (Great Aycliffe Parish) is located approximately 60m to the north of the site within the Woodham Burn valley.
110. A Noise Impact Assessment has been submitted in support of the application. The assessment provides baseline data for the existing acoustic environment around the site and a consideration of the potential noise from the operation of the building and sports pitches against British Standards and the Councils Technical Advice Notes (TANs). The assessment concludes that operation of the school and sports pitches

during normal school hours would be consistent with the noise environment in the area and no mitigation is required. No lighting is proposed for the outdoor sports areas.

111. During construction the proposed hours of working are 0800 to 1800 Monday to Friday and 0800 to 1400 on Saturdays. It is not proposed to work on Sundays, Bank or public holidays.
112. Environmental Health and Consumer Protection (Nuisance Action) officers have considered the submitted information and have not raised any issues, agreeing with the conclusions of the submitted impact assessment.
113. An Air Quality Assessment has been submitted in support of the application. The assessment provides a baseline analysis, details of assessment methodology, legislation and policy and consideration of the potential impacts. The assessment identifies that the proposals have the potential to cause air quality impacts at sensitive locations during the construction phase. These may include fugitive dust emissions and road traffic exhaust emissions from construction vehicles travelling to and from the site. During the construction phase of the development there is the potential for air quality impacts as a result of fugitive dust emissions from the site. This has been assessed in accordance with the IAQM methodology. It is advised that, assuming good practice dust control measures are implemented, the residual significance of potential air quality impacts from dust generated by demolition, earthworks, construction and trackout activities would not be significant. Potential impacts during the construction phase of the proposed development may occur due to road traffic exhaust emissions associated with vehicles travelling to and from the site. This has been assessed against the screening criteria provided within the IAQM[10] guidance document. Due to the low number of anticipated vehicle movements associated with the proposals, road traffic exhaust impacts have been predicted to be not significant.
114. Environmental Health and Consumer Protection (Air quality) officers have considered the proposals and raise no objections in respect of potential nuisance or air pollution. Officers welcome the recommendations with the air quality assessment to implement a construction management plan for the construction phase and for a travel plan to be adopted during the operational phase. Conditions would be imposed to secure these measures.
115. There would be some disturbance to residential properties during construction and would be part of the development. This disturbance would be time limited and necessary to provide new educational facilities. A Construction Phase Plan has been submitted to control and mitigate any potential impacts from construction, this would be secured by planning condition. It is considered that the proposed development would not create an unacceptable impact on health, living or working conditions or the natural environment. The proposals would not result in unacceptable noise, air quality or light pollution and, subject to the imposition of the conditions recommended above, it is considered that the proposals would provide an acceptable standard of residential amenity in accordance with CDP Policy 31 and Part 15 of the NPPF.

Contamination and Coal Mining Risk

116. Part 15 of the NPPF (Paragraphs 120, 174, 183 and 184) requires the planning system to consider remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land where appropriate. Noting that where a site is affected by contamination or land stability issues, responsibility for securing a safe development rests with the developer and/or landowner. CDP Policy 32 requires that where development involves such land, any necessary mitigation measures to make the site safe for local communities and the environment are undertaken prior to the

construction or occupation of the proposed development and that all necessary assessments are undertaken by a suitably qualified person.

117. A Phase 1 Desk Study and Phase 2 Site Investigation have been submitted in support of the application. This assessment concludes that there may be possible sources of contamination on the site.
118. The site is within a Low Risk Coalfield Development area. A Coal Mining Risk Assessment is therefore not required but an informative would be provided to the applicant regarding development in this location.
119. Environmental Health and Consumer Protection (Contaminated Land) officers have considered the proposals and raise no objections in respect of land contamination. Conditions have been recommended to require investigation of potential areas of ground contamination. The Coal Authority has considered the development in respect of coal mining risk and raised no objections.
120. It is considered that the proposed development would be suitable for the proposed use and would not result in unacceptable risks which would adversely impact on the environment, human health and the amenity of local communities and it is considered that the proposals would provide an acceptable standard of residential amenity in accordance with CDP Policies 32 and Part 15 of the NPPF.

Flooding and Drainage

121. Part 14 of the NPPF directs Local Planning Authorities to guard against flooding and the damage it causes. Protection of the water environment is a material planning consideration and development proposals, including waste development, should ensure that new development does not harm the water environment. Paragraph 174 of the NPPF advises that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of water pollution. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as water quality.
122. Paragraph 167 of the NPPF states that when determining any planning applications, local planning authorities should ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere. Where appropriate, applications should be supported by a site-specific flood-risk assessment. Development should only be allowed in areas at risk of flooding where, in the light of this assessment it can be demonstrated that it incorporates sustainable drainage systems, unless there is clear evidence that this would be inappropriate, and any residual risk can be safely managed.
123. CDP Policies 35 and 36 of the CDP relate to flood water management and infrastructure. Policy 35 requires development proposals to consider the effects of the scheme on flood risk and ensure that it incorporates a Sustainable Drainage System (SuDs) to manage surface water drainage. Development should not have an adverse impact on water quality. Policy 36 seeks to ensure that suitable arrangements are made for the disposal of foul water. National advice within the NPPF and PPG with regard to flood risk advises that a sequential approach to the location of development should be taken with the objective of steering new development to flood zone 1 (areas with the lowest probability of river or sea flooding). When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should ensure flood risk is not increased elsewhere and only consider development appropriate in areas at risk of flooding where a sequential test and some instances exception test are passed, informed by a site-specific flood risk assessment

124. The site is entirely located with Flood Zone 1 and a Minor Groundwater Vulnerability zone. Due to the location of the site the Agricultural Land Classification value is Grade 4 (urban) and is therefore not of a best and most versatile quality.
125. A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA), SuDS Management Plan and Drainage Philosophy have been submitted in support of the application. The FRA concludes that the risk of flooding to the proposed primary school on the greenfield parcel of land off Durham Road is low from all forms of flooding as categorised in the NPPF and Technical Guidance. This confirms the flood designation for the site, and it is stated that the proposed uses of land are appropriate in this Flood Zone.
126. The SuDS Management Plan has identified that there are limited opportunities within the site to incorporate open SuDS such as filter strips, swales, basins or ponds. It is therefore proposed to provide permeable paving and attenuation tanks with hydro brakes to control surface water flow. The management plan also provides details of monitoring and maintenance of the SuDS features. Surface water from the site would drain to public sewer.
127. Drainage and Coastal Protection officers have indicated that they have no objections to the proposals, but conditions are recommended to require precise details of the surface water management scheme.
128. It is therefore considered that the proposed development would not lead to increased flood risk, both on and off site, and through the use of SUDs would ensure there is no net increase in surface water runoff for the lifetime of the development. It is therefore considered that the proposals would not conflict with CDP Policies 35 and 36 and Part 14 of the NPPF.

Landscape

129. Paragraph 174 of the NPPF states that decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan.
130. CDP Policy 39 states that proposals for new development will be permitted where they would not cause unacceptable harm to the character, quality or distinctiveness of the landscape, or to important features or views. Proposals will be expected to incorporate appropriate measures to mitigate adverse landscape and visual effects. Development affecting Areas of Higher Landscape Value will only be permitted where it conserves, and where appropriate enhances, the special qualities of the landscape, unless the benefits of development in that location clearly outweigh the harm.
131. CDP Policy 40 states that proposals for new development will not be permitted that would result in the loss of, or damage to, trees of high landscape, amenity or biodiversity value unless the benefits of the proposal clearly outweigh the harm. Where development would involve the loss of ancient or veteran trees it will be refused unless there are wholly exceptional reasons, and a suitable compensation strategy exists. Proposals for new development will not be permitted that would result in the loss of hedges of high landscape, heritage, amenity or biodiversity value unless the benefits of the proposal clearly outweigh the harm. Proposals for new development will not be permitted that would result in the loss of, or damage to, woodland unless the benefits of the proposal clearly outweigh the impact and suitable replacement woodland planting, either within or beyond the site boundary, can be undertaken.

132. Policy GANP CH1 states new development should, where appropriate maintain existing hedgerows, trees and woodland and encourage the planting of new trees and hedgerows.
133. The site is not located within on close proximity to any designated landscapes. There are also no areas of ancient woodland, protected trees or trees in conservation areas within or in close proximity to the site.
134. A Landscaping Masterplan, Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) have been submitted in support of the application. The AIA has identified 86 trees within influencing distance of the application site, comprised of largely middle aged landscaping around the periphery of the school grounds with more mature trees growing around the north west and north east boundaries of the development site.
135. The development proposals would involve the removal of 22 individual trees and tree groups comprising an area of approximately 0.0426ha. No hedgerow would be removed. This loss would be mitigated through the planting of 22 trees and an area of whips equivalent to the felled area, which would replace the lost tree cover after 20 years.
136. Indicative landscaping plans have been provided to show hard and soft landscaping within the site, including playing fields, pathways and planting.
137. Landscape officers have considered the proposals and raised no objections. Conditions are recommended to confirm full details of hard and soft landscape proposals. Hard landscape details should include all enclosing elements, street furniture and street lighting locations. As stated above, details of external finishing materials should include finished levels, and all construction details confirming materials, colours, finishes and fixings.
138. Soft landscaping details should include a detailed planting plan and specification of works indicating soil depths, plant species, numbers, densities, locations inter relationship of plants, stock size and type, grass, and planting methods including construction techniques for pits in hard surfacing and root barriers. Details of rabbit protection should be provided. All existing or proposed utility services that may influence proposed tree planting shall be indicated on the planting plan.
139. In support of the planting schedule, details of proposed soft landscape management plan should be provided. The soft landscape management plan shall include long term design objectives, management responsibilities and maintenance schedules for all landscape areas/ retained vegetation, other than small privately owned domestic garden. Landscape maintenance shall be detailed for the initial 5 year establishment from date of completion of the total scheme regardless of any phased development period followed by a long-term management plan for a period of 30 years. This can be encapsulated within the Biodiversity Management Plan that would be required as part of the Section 39 (Wildlife and Countryside Act) agreement.
140. The proposed development would result in the loss of some tree planting, but this would be mitigated through replacement planting across the site along with enhancements to the streetscape from the development of a vacant plot. It is therefore considered that the proposal would not conflict with CDP Policies 39 and 40, GANP Policy CH1 and Part 15 of the NPPF.

Ecology

141. Paragraph 180 of the NPPF sets out the Government's commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity by minimising impacts and providing net gains where possible

and stating that development should be refused if significant harm to biodiversity cannot be avoided, mitigated or, as a last resort, compensated for. CDP Policy 41 reflects this guidance by stating that proposals for new development will not be permitted if significant harm to biodiversity or geodiversity resulting from the development cannot be avoided, or appropriately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for. CDP Policy 43 states that development proposals that would adversely impact upon nationally protected sites will only be permitted where the benefits clearly outweigh the impacts whilst adverse impacts upon locally designated sites will only be permitted where the benefits outweigh the adverse impacts.

142. The presence of protected species is a material consideration in planning decisions as they are a protected species under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the European Union Habitats Directive and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). The Habitats Directive prohibits the deterioration, destruction or disturbance of breeding sites or resting places of protected species. Natural England has the statutory responsibility under the regulations to deal with any licence applications but there is also a duty on planning authorities when deciding whether to grant planning permission for a development which could harm a European Protected Species to apply three tests contained in the Regulations in order to determine whether a licence is likely to be granted. These state that the activity must be for imperative reasons of overriding public interest or for public health and safety, there must be no satisfactory alternative, and that the favourable conservation status of the species must be maintained. Brexit does not change the Council's responsibilities under the law.
143. There are no ecological designations within, or in the immediate vicinity of the site. The Moor Local Nature Reserve (LNR) is located approximately 1km to the north west, Byerley LNR is located approximately 1.8km to the west, Aycliffe Nature Park Local Wildlife Site (LWS) is located approximately 1.6km to the south. Simpasture Junction LWS is located approximately 2.5km to the west and Shildon Sidings is located approximately 3.3km to the west. Middridge Quarry Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is located approximately 3.3km to the west.
144. A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA), Ecological Impact Assessment, Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment and Preliminary Roost Assessment have been submitted in support of the application.
145. The PEA provides an analysis of baseline conditions for the site and an assessment of habitats and species on the site. It is noted that the existing buildings on the site are not of a type that are typically associated with the presence of roosting bats but the surrounding trees and hedgerow could support a bat population and further survey of the buildings is recommended prior to demolition. Similarly, the existing buildings could provide a limited extent of bird nesting habitat. No other species, including Great Crested Newt, common reptiles, dormice, otter, vole or other protected species were found on the site or considered likely to be supported by the available habitat. The PEA concludes that, notwithstanding the requirement for further bat surveys, the site would provide opportunity to incorporate appropriate measures to mitigate any potential impacts to ecological features and to demonstrate 'biodiversity net gain in accordance with NPPF and local planning policy.
146. The supporting Ecological Impact Assessment sets out measures for mitigation and enhancement including planting of grass, scrub and trees, management of hedgerows to maximise benefit to wildlife, gapping up of hedgerows, creation of green roofs for the buildings, creation of hibernacula and installation of bird and bat boxes. The assessment concludes that it is anticipated that the proposals may proceed with no significant adverse effect on protected or notable habitats and species assessed within this report. This is with the exception of bats that are assessed separately.

147. The Preliminary Roost Assessment has been submitted in the absence of a full bat survey. The objective of the survey was to assess the existing buildings in terms of their potential to support, or find actual evidence of, roosting bats. The assessment concludes that, based upon the building and tree features recorded during the external assessments, the sports hall at north of the site and all trees assessed were deemed to provide negligible bat roost potential; the remainder of the buildings are deemed to provide low bat roost. It is not possible to determine the presence of roosting bats within the buildings without further nocturnal survey work. The assessment therefore recommends that a single nocturnal survey is undertaken during the bat season (May – August inclusive) in appropriate weather conditions prior to the demolition of the existing school buildings. For clarity, demolition of the existing buildings is subject to a separate planning application. The existing buildings must remain in place for the duration of construction as they will still be required for the school.
148. The Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment is supported by a DEFRA's Biodiversity Metric 3.1. The metric advises that the baseline site provides 29.12 habit units and 5.61 hedgerow units. Post development and taking into account the habitat creation set out in the paragraphs above, the site would provide 30.34 habitat units and 6.46 hedgerow units equating to a net gain of 4.17% for habitat and 15.07% for hedgerow.
149. Ecology officers have considered the proposals and raised no objections subject to the implementation of a Biodiversity Management Plan secured through a Section 39 Agreement under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) for a period of 30 years. Section 39 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) enables local authorities to enter into management agreements with the owner of land for its conservation (and for other related purposes) and is regarded as a suitable mechanism for securing long term land management in relation to biodiversity net gain. A condition is not regarded as a suitable mechanism due to the minimum 30 year timescales involved and a Section 39 is more suited to ensuring long term management.
150. The proposed new school buildings themselves would provide biodiversity enhancement to the site and, whilst there may be temporary displacement of wildlife during the construction process, the net increase in biodiversity value would adequately mitigate any residual harm. It is considered that the proposed school buildings would not impact upon any nationally or locally protected sites or protected species. It is therefore considered that the proposals would not conflict with CDP Policies 41 and 43 and Part 15 of the NPPF in respect of avoiding and mitigating harm to biodiversity.

Recreational Amenity

151. Part 8 of the NPPF seeks to promote healthy communities with a key reference being towards the protection and enhancement of public rights of way and access. Paragraph 99 of the NPPF states that existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless an assessment has been undertaken showing the facility to be surplus to requirements; the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use.
152. CDP Policy 26 states that development proposals will not be permitted that would result in the loss of open space or harm to green infrastructure assets unless the benefits of the development clearly outweigh that loss or harm and an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space or land to be surplus to

requirements. Where valued open spaces or assets are affected, proposals must incorporate suitable mitigation and make appropriate provision of equivalent or greater value in a suitable location. Where appropriate there will be engagement with the local community.

153. The proposed development would provide a range of outdoor play spaces and pitches that would also be available for community use outside of normal school hours, however, there is no lighting for the sports pitches and none is proposed. Informal hard play areas would spread around the school building. The existing 2 Multi-Use Games Areas located to the north of the site would be retained, the existing 4 playing fields and running track to the east and the single playing field to the west of the site would be retained. The playing field in the south east of the site would be displaced by the construction of the new school but would be replaced on the land vacated once the existing school is demolished.
154. Sport England has been consulted on the application and raised no objections. Officers have carried out an assessment of the existing and proposed sports provision and concluded that once the existing school is demolished there would be a 0.1 hectare net increase in playing field provision. Notwithstanding this, officers have requested conditions to secure delivery and quality specification of the proposed playing fields. It has also been requested that a community use agreement be provided by condition.
155. Subject to the site being developed in accordance with the proposed site plan and detailed hard and soft landscaping plans supporting this scheme, as referred to above, it is considered that the temporary loss in open space on the site would be mitigated by the replacement playing field and overall improvement in sports provision on the site in addition to the new school. It is therefore considered that the proposal would accord with CDP Policy 26 and Part 8 of the NPPF.

Cultural Heritage

156. In assessing the proposed development regard must be had to the statutory duty imposed on the Local Planning Authority under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of a conservation area. In addition, the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 also imposes a statutory duty that, when considering whether to grant planning permission for a development which affects a listed building or its setting, the decision maker shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. If harm is found this gives rise to a strong (but rebuttable) statutory presumption against the grant of planning permission. Any such harm must be given considerable importance and weight by the decision-maker.
157. Part 16 of the NPPF requires clear and convincing justification if development proposals would lead to any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset. CDP Policy 44 seeks to ensure that developments should contribute positively to the built and historic environment and seek opportunities to enhance and, where appropriate, better reveal the significance and understanding of heritage assets.
158. There are no designated heritage assets within the site and none within a 2.5km radius.
159. Design and Conservation officers have considered the proposal and raised no objections in respect of cultural heritage and as the development would not be

intervisible with any designated heritage assets or their setting, it is considered that there would be no heritage harm.

160. Archaeology officers have also considered the proposals and due to uncertainty regarding potential below ground remains have requested conditions to require trial trenching prior to the commencement of development.
161. It is considered that, subject to conditions, the proposal would cause no harm to heritage assets or archaeological remains in accordance with CDP Policy 44 and Part 16 of the NPPF

Public Sector Equality Duty

162. Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires public authorities when exercising their functions to have due regard to the need to i) the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct, ii) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it and iii) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share that characteristic.
163. In this instance, officers have assessed all relevant factors and do not consider that there are any equality impacts identified.

CONCLUSION

164. The proposed development would provide a modern, efficient secondary school for Newton Aycliffe on a site currently in use for education purposes. The proposed development would provide a significant benefit to the community, would be sustainable and well designed, and in keeping with and complementary to its surroundings.
165. The development has been considered against relevant development plan policies and material considerations and was found to be acceptable.
166. The proposed development has generated some public interest, with letters of objection having been received. Concerns expressed regarding the proposal have been taken into account, and carefully balanced against the benefits of the scheme in terms modern education provision.
167. The proposed development is considered to broadly accord with the relevant policies of the County Durham Plan and Great Aycliffe Neighbourhood Plan and relevant sections of the NPPF.

RECOMMENDATION

168. That the application is **APPROVED** subject to the following conditions and completion of an agreement under Section 39 of The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to secure biodiversity management for the life of the development:
 1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: Required to be imposed pursuant to Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The Local Planning Authority shall be given at least seven days prior written notification of the date of commencement of the development

Reason: To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the approved documents.

3. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in strict accordance with the following approved plans:

REFERENCE	DRAWING / DOCUMENT TITLE
Plans	
BS2717.001.001.01	Existing Ground Floor Plan
BS2717.001.002.00	Existing First Floor Plan
SRP1099-OOB-Z0-ZZ-D-L-0003_P05	Existing Site Layout
SPR1099-OOB-ZZ-ZZ-D-L-0040_P05	Site Sections as proposed Sheet 1
SPR1099-OOB-ZZ-ZZ-D-L-0041_P05	Site Sections as proposed Sheet 2
SPR1099-OOB-ZZ-ZZ-D-L-0042_P04	Site Sections as proposed Sheet 3
SRP1099-1HZ-ZZ-XX-M-Y-0001 Rev. A	Topographical and Underground Utilities Survey (as
SRP1099-DES-Z0-ZZ-D-E-6310 P02	Lighting Strategy Drawing Site Wide
SRP1099-DES-Z0-ZZ-D-Z-9600 P02	Mechanical and Electrical Services Proposed External Underground Infrastructure (as proposed)
SRP1099-DES-Z0-ZZ-D-Z-9602 P02	Mechanical and Electrical Services Proposed Site-wide
SRP1099-OOB-Z0-ZZ-D-L-0001_P09	Site Landscaping Plan General
SRP1099-OOB-Z0-ZZ-D-L-0003_P05	Site Landscaping Plan Existing
SRP1099-OOB-Z0-ZZ-D-L-0050_P10	Access and Security Strategy Drawings
SRP1099-OOB-Z0-ZZ-D-L-0070_P05	External Sports Provision
SRP1099-OOB-Z0-ZZ-D-L-1000_P04	Site Location Plan Application 1
SRP1099-OOB-Z0-ZZ-D-L-1001_P07 (27.01.23)	Landscaping Masterplan Application 1
SRP1099-OOB-Z0-ZZ-D-L-1002_P06 (27.01.23)	Site Layout Application 1
SRP1099-OOB-Z0-ZZ-D-L-1003_P05	Proposed Landscape Plan (Proposed Planting Plan)
SRP1099-OOB-Z0-ZZ-D-L-1005_P01	Building Block Plan Application 1
SRP1099-OOB-ZZ-ZZ-D-L-0080_P04	Urban Greening Factor Existing
SRP1099-OOB-ZZ-ZZ-D-L-0081_P05	Urban Greening Factor Proposed Layout
SRP1099-OOB-ZZ-ZZ-D-L-1006_P01	Existing Site Sections Application 1
SRP1099-SPA-Z1-00-D-A-0101_P04	General Arrangement Floor Plan - Ground Floor
SRP1099-SPA-Z1-00-D-A-0102_P12	General Arrangement Department Plan - Ground Floor
SRP1099-SPA-Z1-01-D-A-0111_P04	General Arrangement Floor Plan - First Floor
SRP1099-SPA-Z1-01-D-A-0112_P12	General Arrangement Department Plan - First Floor
SRP1099-SPA-Z1-02-D-A-0121_P04	General Arrangement Floor Plan - Second Floor
SRP1099-SPA-Z1-02-D-A-0122_P12	General Arrangement Department Plan - Second Floor
SRP1099-SPA-Z1-RF-D-A-0131_P04	General Arrangement Roof Plan
SRP1099-SPA-Z1-XX-D-A-0201_P06	General Arrangement Elevations - North and East
SRP1099-SPA-Z1-XX-D-A-0202_P06	General Arrangement Elevations - South and West
SRP1099-SPA-Z1-XX-D-A-2101_P04	Construction Building Sections 1 Main Block
SRP1099-SPA-Z2-00-D-A-0101_P04	General Arrangement Sports Floor Plan - Ground Floor
SRP1099-SPA-Z2-00-D-A-0102_P10	General Arrangement Sports Department Plan - Ground Floor
SRP1099-SPA-Z2-R2-D-A-0131_P06	General Arrangement Sports Roof Plan
SRP1099-SPA-Z2-XX-D-A-0201_P05	General Arrangement Sports Building Elevations - North
SRP1099-SPA-Z2-XX-D-A-0202_P05	General Arrangement Sports Building Elevations - South
SRP1099-SPA-Z2-XX-D-A-2101_P02	Construction Building Sections 1 Sports Building
SRP1099-OOB-Z0-ZZ-D-L-1008_P03 (27.01.23)	Bat Mitigation Plan
SRP1099-OOB-Z0-ZZ-D-L-1009_P02 (27.01.23)	Bird Mitigation Plan
D47532/JB/E (26.01.23)	Light Spillage Plan (Updated)
Documents	
November 2022, SRP1099-AYL-ZZ-ZZ-P-T-0001	Planning Statement including Statement of Community Health Impact Assessment
November 2022, SRP1099-SPA-ZZ-XX-T-A-0002	Design and Access Statement
15 th November 2022, SRP1099-ARC-XXX-XX-T-O-0001	Supplementary Ground Investigation Letter
23-11-2022, TS01A	Transport Statement
22-11-2022, TP01A	Travel Plan

23/12/2021, SRP1099-1HZ-ZZ-Z1-T-Y-0001	Phase 2 Ground Investigation Report
18 th November 2022, SRP1099-APX-ZZ-ZZ-T-J-0005	Noise Impact Assessment
18 th November 2022, SRP1099-APX-ZZ-ZZ-T-J-0006	Air Quality Assessment
SRP1009-BGP-ZZ-Z0-T-C-0003 Rev.P04 (24.01.23)	Drainage Philosophy
SRP1009-BGP-ZZ-Z0-T-C-0004 Rev.P02 (24.01.23)	Flood Risk Assessment
SRP1009-BGP-ZZ-Z0-T-C-0005 Rev.P03 (24.01.23)	SuDS Management Plan
22/11/2022, SRP1099-DES-ZZ-ZZ-T-Z-5014-Issue P02	Energy & Sustainability Statement
21/11/2022, SRP1099-DES-ZZ-ZZ-T-Z-6300 Rev. P01	Lighting Strategy Report
SRP1099-GTC-XX-XX-T-X-0026 Rev. P05 (25.01.23)	Construction Phase Plan
SRP1099-GTC-ZZ-ZZ-T-X-9000 Rev. S5-P02	Sustainability Checklist For Developers
November 2022, SRP1099-TEP-ZZ-ZZ-T-0001 Rev. P02	Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment
K8034/R15140, Rev.5 (09.01.23)	Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment
September 2022	Preliminary Roost Assessment Report
24/11/2022, 7059_R02	BNG Assessment and Biodiversity Management Plan
24/11/2022, 7059_v01	BNG Calculations Metric
GN-HSS-L03-101, Rev. P02	Soil Management Strategy
22/11/2021, SRP1099-1HZ-ZZ-XX-T-Y-0003	Phase 1 Ground Investigation Desk Study
21/12/2021, SRP1099-1HZ-ZZ-XX-T-Y-0004	Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA)
Rev.R01 (09.12.23)	Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA)
25.01.23	Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS)

Reason: To define the consent and ensure that a satisfactory form of development is obtained in accordance with Policies 21, 31, 33, 39 and 41 of the County Durham Plan and Parts 9, 14 and 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

- The approved Construction Phase Plan shall also be adhered to throughout the construction period and the approved measures shall be retained for the duration of the construction works.

Reason: In the interests of protecting the amenity of neighbouring site occupiers and users from the impacts of the construction phases of the development having regards to Policies 21 and 31 of the County Durham Plan and Part 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Required to be a pre-commencement condition and the details of the construction management statement must be agreed before works on site commence.

- Construction operations shall only take place within the following hours:
0800 to 1800 Monday to Friday
0800 to 1400 Saturday

No operations including the maintenance of vehicles and plant shall take place outside of these hours or at any time on Bank, or other Public Holidays, save in cases of emergency when life, limb, or property are in danger. The Local Planning Authority shall be notified as soon as is practicable after the occurrence of any such operations or working.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity and highway safety in accordance with the County Durham Plan Policy 21 and Part 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

- The development shall be carried out in accordance with the submitted flood risk assessment and SuDS Management Strategy. The mitigation measures detailed with the SuDS Management Strategy shall be fully implemented prior to development being brought into use. These measures shall be retained and maintained thereafter throughout the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To reduce the risk of flooding to the proposed development and future occupants and to ensure there is no increase of flood risk elsewhere as a result of this

development in accordance with Policy 35 of the County Durham Plan and Part 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

7. No development shall commence until a land contamination scheme has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The submitted scheme shall be prepared by a suitably competent person and include an updated Phase 2 site investigation and ground gas risk assessment. If the Phase 2 site investigation identifies any unacceptable risks, a Phase 3 remediation strategy shall be prepared by a suitably competent person (including a programme of implementation and where necessary gas protection measures and method of verification) and submitted for approval by the Local Planning Authority.

If during development, contamination not previously identified by the land contamination scheme is found to be present at the site, then no further development shall be carried out until a remediation strategy prepared by a suitably competent person has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority detailing how this contamination shall be dealt with.

Reason: To ensure that the presence of contamination is identified, risk assessed, and proposed remediation works are agreed in order to ensure the site is suitable for use, in accordance with County Durham Plan Policy 32 and Part 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Required to be pre-commencement to ensure that the development can be carried out safely.

8. All remediation works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved remediation strategy prepared by a suitably competent person. The development shall not be brought into use until a Phase 4 verification report has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the remediation works are fully implemented as agreed and the site is suitable for use, in accordance with County Durham Plan Policy 32 and Part 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

9. No development above damp course shall be commenced until precise details of the colours and finishes for all buildings, external plant and machinery including photovoltaic panels shall be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority and the development carried out in accordance with agreed details.

Reason: To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the approved documents and in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with County Durham Plan Policy 39 and Part 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Required to be pre-commencement in order to assess the appearance of the development.

10. Prior to the development being brought into use full details of hard and soft landscape proposals shall be provided to the Local Planning Authority for approval in writing. Hard landscape details should include all enclosing elements, street furniture and street lighting locations. Details of external finishing materials should include finished levels, and all construction details confirming materials, colours, finishes and fixings. Soft Landscaping details should include a detailed planting plan and specification of works indicating soil depths, plant species, numbers, densities, locations inter relationship of plants, stock size and type, grass, and planting methods including construction techniques for pits in hard surfacing and root barriers. Details of rabbit protection should be provided. All existing or proposed utility services that may influence proposed tree planting shall be indicated on the planting plan.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenity of the area and to comply with County Durham Plan Policies 29 and 39, Great Aycliffe Neighbourhood Plan Policy CH1 and Parts 12 and 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

11. Prior to the commencement of the development a scheme for surface water management shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval in writing.

Reason: To ensure that surface water is appropriately managed on the site in accordance with County Durham Plan Policies 35 and 36 and Part 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

12. Prior to any lighting being installed on the site, a detailed lighting scheme shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval in writing.

Reason: In order to protect amenity and to not impact biodiversity value in accordance County Durham Plan Policies 31 and 41 and Part 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

13. Prior to the development being brought into use a scheme detailing the precise number and locations for bird and bat box installation shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval in writing. The agreed scheme shall be implemented within 6 months of the completion of the development.

Reason: In order to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain in accordance County Durham Plan Policy 41 and Part 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

14. A pre and post road condition survey incorporating Wolsey Close, Washington Crescent, Neile Road and Dafoe Crescent shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval in writing. Any identified degradation of the highway shall be made good within 3 months of the completion of the development.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity and highway safety in accordance with the County Durham Plan Policy 21, Great Aycliffe Neighbourhood Plan Policy T1 and Part 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

15. Prior to the commencement of development, a Written Scheme of Investigation setting out a phased programme of archaeological work in accordance with 'Standards For All Archaeological Work In County Durham And Darlington' shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval in writing. The programme of archaeological work will then be carried out in accordance with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation.

Reason: To safeguard any Archaeological Interest in the site in accordance with County Durham Plan Policy 44 and Part 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Required to be a pre-commencement condition as the archaeological investigation/mitigation must be devised prior to the development being implemented.

16. No part of an individual phase of the development as set out in the agreed programme of archaeological works shall be occupied until the post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation. The provision made for analysis, publication and dissemination of results, and archive deposition, should be confirmed in writing to, and approved by, the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard any Archaeological Interest in the site in accordance with County Durham Plan Policy 44 and Part 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

17. Within 6 months of the commencement of use of the new school buildings the following documents shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority after consultation with Sport England:
- i. A detailed assessment of ground conditions (including drainage and topography) of the land proposed for the playing field which identifies constraints which could adversely affect playing field quality; and
 - ii. Where the results of the assessment to be carried out pursuant to (i) above identify constraints which could adversely affect playing field quality, a detailed scheme to address any such constraints. The scheme shall include a written specification of the proposed soil structure, proposed drainage, cultivation and other operations associated with grass and sports turf establishment and a programme of implementation.

The approved scheme shall be carried out in full and in accordance with the approved programme of implementation. The land shall thereafter be maintained in accordance with the scheme and made available for playing field use in accordance with the scheme.

Reason: To ensure that the playing field is prepared to an adequate standard and is fit for purpose in accordance with County Durham Plan Policy 26, Great Aycliffe Neighbourhood Plan Policy CH1 and Part of the National Planning Policy Framework

18. Within 4 months of the commencement of development a scheme to replace the 1.47Ha of playing field lost to the school's construction shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority (following consultation with Sport England). The scheme shall include a project plan for the replacement playing field's provision which, taking account the required growing season and establishment period, details when the playing field can be brought into use. The replacement playing field shall be developed in strict accordance with the approved scheme to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that replacement playing fields are provided in a timely manner in accordance with County Durham Plan Policy 26, Great Aycliffe Neighbourhood Plan Policy CH1 and Part of the National Planning Policy Framework

19. Prior to the occupation of the development, a community use agreement, prepared in consultation with Sport England, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The agreement shall apply to the indoor sports facilities and playing pitches and include details of pricing policy, hours of use, access by non-school users, management responsibilities and a mechanism for review. The development shall not be used otherwise than in strict compliance with the approved agreement.

Reason: To secure well managed safe community access to the sports facility/facilities, to ensure sufficient benefit to the development of sport in accordance with County Durham Plan Policy 26 and Part of the National Planning Policy Framework

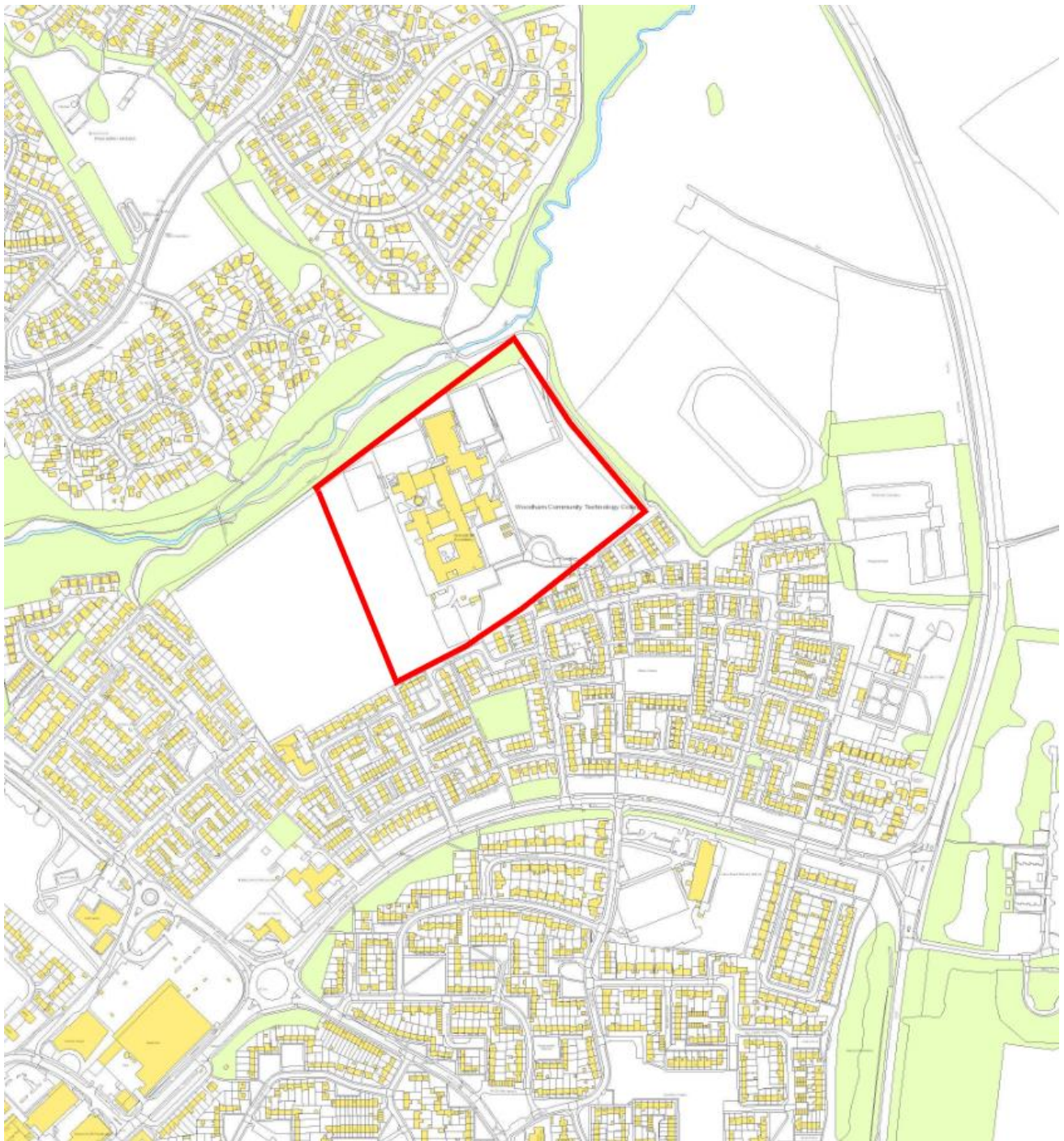
STATEMENT OF PROACTIVE ENGAGEMENT

In accordance with Article 35(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, the Local Planning Authority has, without prejudice to a fair and objective assessment of the proposals, issues raised and representations received, sought to work with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner

with the objective of delivering high quality sustainable development to improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area in accordance with the NPPF.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Submitted application form, plans supporting documents and subsequent information provided by the applicant.
- The National Planning Policy Framework (2021)
- National Planning Practice Guidance notes
- County Durham Plan
- Great Aycliffe Neighbourhood Plan (2017)
- Statutory, internal and public consultation response




Planning Services

DM/22/03528/FPA
 New 3 storey school building and new sports building; associated landscaping, bin store, redeveloped access loop, reconfigured car parking, new accessible parking, and photovoltaic panel canopy; and temporary construction access and parking - Woodham Academy Washington Crescent Newton Aycliffe DL5 4AX

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Comments

Date January 2023

Scale Not to Scale