SUPPORTING PLANNING STATEMENT

DECEMBER 2014

PROPOSED NEW TRAINING FACILITY
GAWTHORPE

on behalf of:
BURNLEY FOOTBALL CLUB
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of the Applicant, Burnley Football Club (BFC). It accompanies a detailed Planning Application for the erection of a new indoor training facility (Use Class D2) with associated outdoor football pitches, access, car parking, landscaping, ancillary infrastructure and flood lighting to one existing pitch. The new indoor training facility will replace the current facility and the design will create a state-of-the-art training facility incorporating facilities for Burnley's First Team Squad and the Club's Youth Academy.

1.2 This Statement describes the proposals and examines the planning issues which they raise. In promoting the proposed use, our client appreciates that due regard must be given to a number of relevant and up-to-date policies as well as other material planning considerations. In developing these proposals, full regard has been given to the provision of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

1.3 The general approach to, and content of, this application has been discussed with Senior Officers of Burnley Council (BC) prior to its submission with formal pre-application meetings having taken place before the Application was lodged. These discussions have influenced the evolution of the scheme into its final form and the required supporting information which accompanies the application. Given the fact that the Application Site is adjacent to a Grade I Listed Building with associated registered park and garden (grade II), it was recognised that early engagement with English Heritage (EH) was important. A site visit and meeting took place on 26th November 2014 with EH, which will be referenced in the accompanying Heritage Statement.

1.4 Historically planning consent was granted for the ‘Proposed refurbishment and extension of existing clubhouse and erection of new covered training facility with associated parking and landscaping (including proposed new planting and the removal of and works to TPO trees)’ (App No APP/2010/0513), in January 2011. The consented scheme was similar in many ways to the proposed Training Facility; however it was located on the site of the existing Clubhouse on the opposite side of the River Calder to the current proposal.
1.5 Our pre-application dialogue has enabled us to agree a full list of documents which accompany this application. These include:

- Transport Statement including Car Park Management Strategy, prepared by HY Consulting;
- Planning Statement including Sequential Assessment, prepared by Zerum;
- Heritage Statement, prepared by Turleys Heritage;
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, including a Landscape Plan, prepared by Ares Landscaping;
- Ecology Appraisal, prepared by Cascade Consulting;
- Flood Risk Assessment, prepared by Paul Waite Associates Ltd;
- Geo-Env Phase 1, prepared by PWA Geo-Environmental Ltd; and
- Design & Access Statement, prepared by Campbell Driver Architects;

1.6 The application is also supported by a full set of plans and drawings including: a site location plan, proposed site plans, proposed floor plans, elevations, sections, and various 3D model drawings, prepared by the scheme architects, Campbell Driver Architects.

1.7 The remainder of this statement:

- Provides context and describes the site and its surroundings;
- Outlines the development proposals;
- Summarises the Development Plan framework against which the proposals will be assessed;
- Considers the proposal against the Development Plan framework and associated guidance; and
- Concludes by summarising the main points raised in this document.
2. DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

2.1 This section briefly describes the background to the Club, the site, its surroundings and local setting, and outlines the relevant planning history of the site.

THE CLUB

2.2 Burnley Football Club was a founder member of the Football League. Throughout its history the Club has seen great highs, for example, winning the F.A. Cup in 1914 and achieving a run of thirty unbeaten league matches as they led the Club to a first ever First Division title in 1920-21, but it has also had its fair share of lows. In the 80’s when they found themselves in the Fourth Division fighting to avoid relegation to the Vauxhall Conference on the last day of the season. But throughout the lows the Club has always maintained a commitment to and from its fans and a desire once again return to top flight football. The proposed redevelopment of Gawthorpe is a reflection of this aspiration. They achieved a return to top flight football in the 2013/14 season and they are now seeking to retain their position in the Premiership League.

2.3 The current development strategy being undertaken by the Club has its foundation in the provision of a modern, purpose built training facility for both the First Team and the Youth Academy.

SITE DESCRIPTION

2.4 The Application site comprises approximately 18 hectare of land. To aid identification a location plan with the site boundary shown edged red is appended (Appendix 1).

2.5 The application site is located to the east of Padiham approximately 5km north west of Burnley town centre. It is accessed from Stockbridge Drive and is located to the north of the River Calder. Adjacent to the Application Site is the Grade I listed, 17th century Gawthorpe Hall. Surrounding land uses are broadly commensurate with the sites rural location i.e. Home Farm, Gawthorpe Hall and the associated Plantation to the east and south, and Bankscroft Plantation to the west, however, there is a significant area of new residential development to the west and a new school to the south.
2.6 A more comprehensive description of the adjacent Gawthorpe Hall and its history is provided by the Application Heritage Statement.

2.7 The google map extract below (Figure 2.1) illustrates the location of the Application Site and its relationship to surrounding land uses.

![Google Map of Gawthorpe Hall and surrounding area](image)

**Figure 2.1**

**EXISTING FACILITIES**

2.8 The site at Gawthorpe currently accommodates Burnley Football Club's training ground and clubhouse. In terms of training pitches, there is currently one grass and one synthetic full sized football pitch to the south of the site along with a goal keeping area, and, 4 large grass pitches and 5 small grass pitches, across the other side of the river to the north. The main support facilities are provided within a clubhouse including changing rooms, drying rooms, a boot room, a referee's room, offices for coaching staff, a gym and a physio area. The permanent club house building accommodation is supplemented by three temporary portakabins which contain additional changing rooms and a toilet block.
2.9 Currently, the existing Gawthorpe facilities are primarily used by the First Team, however, youth players also use the facilities on some evenings and at the weekend. Gawthorpe is the home of the Club’s formal youth development activities, catering for boys between the ages of 8 and 18. Young people who join the Club participate in regular training. Weekend commitments include training and matches against other teams. A major reason for investing in Gawthorpe is to continue to support and develop the Youth Academy for the young players. This, along with the improvement of facilities for First Team players, is a key aim of the redevelopment programme at Gawthorpe.

2.10 Currently there are four existing areas of car parking associated with the training ground. These are outlined in detail in the accompanying Transport Statement, however, in summary they are:

- **Car Park A** (approximately 45 spaces): Located adjacent to the north of Stockbridge Drive and west of Gawthorpe Hall, this is a shared car park which is owned and used by Gawthorpe Hall (as the main visitor’s car park) and Burnley FC during match days.

- **Car Park B** (approximately 12 spaces): Ad-hoc parking on the widened access road in front of the grounds man depot.

- **Car Park C** (23 spaces): formal car park adjacent to the existing changing rooms.

- **Car Park D** (approximately 9 spaces): Located on the access road to the bridge.

2.11 All are accessed from Stockbridge Drive. In total there is capacity to accommodate approximately 89 cars.

**NEED**

2.12 In order to facilitate success Burnley Football Club need better training facilities. The First Team require facilities which reflect the best practice derived from the experience of other top Clubs. The proposals do not seek to intensify use of the Gawthorpe site, they seek purely to upgrade the existing facilities and provide the much needed indoor training pitch.
2.13 The proposed Training Facility will form the centre piece to drive performance of the First team and deliver aspirational facilities for the Youth Academy Teams. The aspiration is to have a Category 2 facility as regulated by the Premier League ‘Elite Player Performance Plan’ and therefore in operational terms the facility must include the following:

- Varying size of external football pitches to offer rotational training
- Indoor training area - 60 x 40 yard minimum football pitch
- Changing and washing facilities for first and youth teams
- Team meeting room
- Guest lounge for parents
- Match analysis suite
- Medical facilities with sports science
- Administrative facilities to support coaches, analysts, scouts etc
- Player lounge
- Drug testing suite
- Gymnasium
- Hydro Pool
- General support services
- External artificial pitch (floodlit); and
- External training and match pitches (one full sized match pitch is floodlit)

2.14 In recent years, the FA have brought in new rules to improve the standard of Football Training to Youth Football under ‘The Elite Player Performance Plan’ (EPPP) scheme. This has 4 categories of training centre ranked 1 to 4. Currently, BFC is only Category 3. The problem with this is that it only allows BFC to play other Clubs in Category 3 or 4, which are at the lower end of League football. This in turn inhibits the Club from signing many of the best youth prospects, as they will not sign for a Category 3 Club. It also does not allow BFC to test their current players at the highest level.

2.15 In order to play the Clubs at the top level BFC need to achieve a minimum of Category 2 status. To achieve Category 2 status the Club must have an indoor pitch that meets the minimum recommendations set out by the FA. The requirement is outlined in the Premier League Handbook which states
that, ‘One indoor Artificial Surface pitch measuring a minimum of 60 yards by 40 yards which shall be owned by the Club’. The application is for the stated minimum size, with a 3 metre runoff around the pitch. It is however, important to note that the Handbook’s recommendation is for a full size pitch which is some 105m x 68m. However, given the sensitive location of the Application Site the proposal seeks to keep the building size to the minimum allowed by the regulations.

2.16 The Club currently runs an Academy, with teams under Category 3 status, at age groups from 8 to 21 and they intend to continue to improve their Academy, given the investment made by the Club at Gawthorpe to date. Running an Academy is a long term project for the Club and it is important to keep up-to-date with the various policies and requirements of the Premier League (as ultimately the body responsible for the regulation of Academies in the country, and as a member Club of the Premier League or Football League).

2.17 During the recent Premier League audit, the Club did score highly, but for the current facilities and the lack of an indoor pitch that met the minimum standards. The Club must address these issues for them to move forward and be granted Category 2 status.

Planning History

2.18 A review of the planning history has confirmed that the following recent applications are relevant to the application site:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>App No</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Decision</th>
<th>Date of Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013/0223</td>
<td>Erection of 1 portacabin for period of five years</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>12.06.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013/0199</td>
<td>Variation of condition 1 of planning permission APP/2011/0464 relating to (the removal of portacabins from the site no later than 1 January 2014); application to vary removal period for portacabins to 1 January 2019</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>12.06.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011/0464</td>
<td>Retention of 2 portacabins for a temporary period of 2 years.</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>31.10.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010/0513</td>
<td>Proposed refurbishment and extension</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>11.01.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### App No | Description | Decision | Date of Decision
--- | --- | --- | ---
of existing clubhouse and erection of new covered training facility with associated car parking and landscaping (including proposed new planting and the removal of and works to TPO trees). | | | 
2005/0110 | Application to trim and remove lower limbs to trees covered by the Burnley (Padiham Urban District and Burnley Rural District) Tree Preservation Order 1955 | Delegated Approval | 05.05.05 |
2003/0871 | Provision of three portable cabins to provide two changing rooms and a toilet block | Approved | 03.12.03 |

2.19 The various planning permissions relating to the portacabins allow for retention of the portacabins until January 2019, however, should planning consent be forthcoming for the current proposal these will be removed on completion of the new training facility as they no longer be required.

2.20 It is also important to note that previously planning permission was secured for a new training facility to the south of the river. This proposal included many of the required elements of the new proposal but was utilising the existing Clubhouse building. It was decided that in order to better meet the needs of the Club, and benefit adjacent neighbours, that a site on the other side of the river, more remote from the Hall would be more appropriate and allow the Club to provide the much needed training facilities.
3. **DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

3.1 The preliminary sub-sections of this Statement have already touched upon the context and content of the Application with more details being provided within the Design & Access Statement (prepared by Campbell Driver Architects).

3.2 The application seeks to create a new indoor training facility (Use Class D2) with associated outdoor football pitches, access, car parking, landscaping, ancillary infrastructure and flood lighting to one existing pitch. These elements are discussed in turn.

3.3 The proposed building houses a new indoor pitch, changing facilities for first and youth teams, team meeting room, guest lounge for parents, players' lounge and match analysis suite, medical facilities with sports science, administrative facilities to support coaches, analysts, scouts etc, drug testing suite, gymnasium, hydro pool, manager and assistant managers rooms and general support services.

3.4 The building (without the indoor pitch) is circa 29m wide by 53.5m long and has a curved sedum roof, which, at its highest level, is some 8.9 metres above ground level. The main indoor pitch element of the building is 42.5m x 61m external, which allows for a usable pitch of 40 yards by 60 yards. There is an allowance of approximately 3m around the pitch for run-off areas for safety purposes. There is also a viewing gallery for parents with a suitable lounge area. At its highest point the indoor pitch is 12.3 metres high.

3.5 The Clubhouse element of the building is contained within two storeys and is at the northern end of the building. This section of the building contains the changing rooms, treatment and physiotherapy facilities, relaxation and catering areas which are aimed at the First Team and Development Team.

3.6 The overall footprint of the building is 4,118 sq.m. This includes 2,597 sq.m. for the indoor pitch and 1,521 sq.m. for the Clubhouse element. The Clubhouse is housed over two levels and so the floorspace of this element is 3,033 sq.m (1,521 sq.m on the ground floor and 1,512 sq.m on the first floor).
PARKING

3.7 There are currently in the region of 89 car parking spaces allocated over four car parks/parking areas associated with the football training facilities at Gawthorpe. The National Trust have shared/adjoining car parking facilities. It is not proposed to significantly alter the number of car parking spaces associated with the training facility as the number of people using the facility is not to change. However, a new accessible parking area providing 50 spaces is included in the proposals adjacent to the new clubhouse building.

3.8 Ideally the Club would like a coach drop off and pick up point adjacent to the new building however, the bridge across the River Calder is not sufficient to allow the coaches to cross and therefore a coach drop and pick up point is proposed adjacent to the Great Barn on the opposite side of the River Calder.

3.9 Vehicle access to the facility remains unaltered from Stockbridge Drive.

3.10 Currently both the National Trust and BFC share certain areas of car parking and this is managed via a Car Park Management Strategy. On a daily basis during the week there is no potential conflict of parking, however, at the weekends, and especially on a Sunday, which is the busiest day for Gawthorpe Hall and is also busy in terms of the football, the current level of parking provided is stretched. As a result the Car Park Management Strategy (CPMS) was drafted with the input of both the Club and the National Trust to ensure that the car park spaces available are utilised to their best potential on a Sunday. The CPMS has been updated as part of the current proposals and is included within the submitted Transport Statement.

DESIGN

3.11 The design of the Clubhouse has been heavily influenced by the sensitive, rural location of the site. The overall design approach to the proposal is to provide a high standard of contemporary design that makes a statement without being obtrusive to its neighbours. The Design Statement sets out how the design concept for the building was developed in terms of both form and function.
3.12 In terms of materials it is proposed to use a limited palette of natural materials, using timber boarding in varying sections and sizes and ‘charred’ colouring to form visual patterns that will mimic the vertical light and shadow of surrounding tree cover. This will help deconstruct the overall mass of the building when seen from a distance.

3.13 It is proposed to use a living ‘green’ roof to the ancillary building with an off centre slope to the west elevation. This lowered eaves line will reveal a sedum roof that will blend with the surrounding tree cover and also contribute to the wildlife sustainability within the Green Belt, helping to mitigate the impact of the new footprint.

**LANDSCAPING**

3.14 Given the sensitive location within the Green Belt, a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) report has been prepared by Ares Landscape Architects in support of the application. The purpose of the report is to identify the significant landscape and visual effects likely to result from the development proposals.

3.15 In tandem with the findings of the Ecology Appraisal a Landscape Masterplan has been drawn. This along with the Landscape General Arrangement Plan and the Planting Plan forms the basis for the landscape proposals associated with the development. They provide information on the existing pond, which is retained and enhanced, the proposed bat boxes, and planting.

**ADDITIONAL PITCHES AND FLOOD LIGHTING**

3.16 As part of the development of the training facilities at Gawthorpe it is proposed to increase the number of grass pitches to the north of the River and also to flood light one of the existing pitches to the south.

3.17 The Proposed Site Plan identifies the existing grass pitches along with those new pitches that are to be created as part of the redevelopment proposals. Four new grass pitches are proposed.

3.18 Under the FA plan EPPP scheme to improve the standard of players skills the standard of grass pitch surface has to be improved. The Club as a result wish
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to increase the number of pitches, but still keep the same number of teams, training and match programme. This will allow the Club to rotate the pitches which will in turn help the ground staff maintain a better grass cover and pitch surface.

3.19 As is currently the case, all goal posts used will be portable and are moved on wheels. The number of goalposts would not increase as the current posts will also service the new proposed pitches. They will be moved around the pitch area.

3.20 Pitch and training areas are marked out with normal white grounds staff marking material, which fades in time with rain and as the grass grows. The intention is that only the areas to be used at that time will be marked out clearly with all the other pitches and areas faded. During the summer months when not in the football season the pitches are not used and the marks disappear.

3.21 In terms of the lighting of the additional pitch to the south of the River Calder, it is proposed to light the pitch adjacent to the existing flood lit pitch. A Philips Lighting report is submitted in support of the application which illustrates the size and type of lighting proposed. The report clearly illustrates the minimal amount of light spillage associated with the proposal.

ANCILLARY INFRASTRUCTURE

3.22 As shown on the Proposed Site Plan, the Application also includes a water tank which is necessary to keep the pitches correctly watered. The tank dimensions are 30' (9.14m) diameter x 7' 6” (2.29m) height. It is surrounded by an earth bank screen which is planted with grass and local plants. The bank is circa 2 m high.

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

3.23 At various stages over the last few months, pre-application consultation has been undertaken with the relevant Officers of Burnley Borough Council. Pre-application consultation has also been undertaken with the relevant consultees, both statutory and non-statutory. The responses received have guided the form of this development proposal, as detailed in a following section of this document.
3.24 Pre-application discussions with Burnley Borough Council commenced well in advance of the submission of the application. That process enabled the required supporting documentation to be agreed (summarised earlier).

3.25 In determining the appropriate approach to pre-application consultation, both the Applicant and their main professional advisors have adopted a best practice approach to both design and delivery. Recent Government guidance has emphasised the commitment to strengthening community involvement and set out examples of how developers should approach this. This is endorsed and developed in a Burnley specific context in the Council’s Statement of Community Involvement (September 2007). Burnley Football Clubs approach to pre-application community consultation has been based upon government best practice advice and guidance and the approach set out in the Burnley Borough Council Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

3.26 Section 5 of Burnley’s SCI sets out the steps it expects developers to take in involving the public when drawing up proposals. In line with these requirements the Club has held pre-application discussions with a variety of bodies and organisations such as The National Trust, as well as key stakeholders and members of the Club. These discussions have been held over the last 2 years and are detailed in Table 2.2 below.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6th Oct 2014</td>
<td>Meeting with the National Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10th Oct 2014</td>
<td>Meeting with Senior Planning Officers of Burnley Council and Lancashire County Council Highways re Green Belt and Highways</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22nd Oct 2014</td>
<td>Meeting with Senior Officers of Burnley Council re Visual Impact, Landscaping and Heritage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26th Nov 2014</td>
<td>On site meeting with English Heritage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.27 It should be noted that given the immediate relationship between the Clubs training facility and Gawthorpe Hall, detailed discussions have taken place between the Design Team and The National Trust. Consideration has been given to direct dialogue with English Heritage, with an on site meeting taking place on the 26th November 2014. In addition, it is acknowledged that both
of these parties will be consulted during the planning application process. Pre-Application consultation and discussions have focused on the Club’s immediate neighbours.

3.28 In addition to the National Trust and English Heritage, the Club is also proposing to engage with the nearest local residents. It is proposed to hold two separate meetings with local residents/community groups; one for the Stockbridge Drive residents off Padiham Road and one for the residents of Grove Lane, to the North of the site.

3.29 In summary, extensive pre-application consultation has been undertaken, which fully meets the requirements of the Council’s Statement of Community Involvement. Detailed discussions have taken place over the last six months with Burnley Borough Council and key stakeholders, in particular the National Trust, as the design and scale of the redevelopment of Gawthorpe Training Facility has evolved. The comments received have helped to develop and shape the scheme in a positive way.
4. **PLANNING POLICY BACKGROUND**

4.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that when determining a planning application, the decision maker must make their determination in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

4.2 Given this obligation, this chapter considers national planning policy guidance relevant to the application, as well as reviewing the development plan for the site which until the adoption of the Emerging Burnley local Plan, currently consists of the saved policies of the Burnley Local Plan (adopted April 2006).

**NATIONAL PLANNING GUIDANCE**

4.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 27th March 2012 and is the Government’s attempt to put in place a clearer, more consistent National Planning Policy Framework which consolidates more than 1,000 pages of national planning policy, in 47 documents, into 1 document. This Framework has replaced all the other national planning policy documents.

4.4 The document has a clear presumption in favour of sustainable development which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-making. The Ministerial Foreword sets the tone of the document when it states that,

‘Development that is sustainable should go ahead, without delay – a presumption in favour of sustainable development that is the basis for every plan, and every decision.’

4.5 The NPPF outlines that the primary objective of development management is to foster the delivery of sustainable development. Local planning authorities should look for solutions rather than problems, working pro-actively with applicants to secure developments that improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of an area.
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4.6 Section 4 of the NPPF relates to the promotion of sustainable transport. Paragraph 32 states that, ‘Development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.’ The proposed development would not have a material adverse impact on the road network. There is therefore no justification for refusing the proposed scheme on transport grounds.

4.7 Section 7 of the NPPF relates to Good Design. In summary it requires that decisions aim to ensure developments:

- will function well and add to the overall quality of the area;
- establish a strong sense of place;
- optimise site potential and sustain an appropriate mix of uses;
- respond to local character and identity;
- create safe and accessible environments; and
- are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.

4.8 In determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which help raise the standard of design more generally in the area. The proposed scheme responds to this advice as a high quality development is proposed.

4.9 Section 9 relates to ‘Protecting Green Belt Land’. The NPPF outlines that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.

4.10 Para. 80 identifies that a Green belt serves five purposes:

- to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- to prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another;
- to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
4.11 As with previous Green Belt policy, paragraph 87 of the NPPF is clear that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Paragraph 88 of the NPPF goes on to direct local planning authorities, when considering a planning application, to ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. ‘Very special circumstances’ will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

4.12 Para. 89 states that, ‘a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in Green Belt. Exceptions to this are:

- buildings for agriculture and forestry;
- provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation and for cemeteries, as long as it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;
- the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;
- the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;
- limited infilling of villages, and limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the Local Plan; or
- limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites (brownfield land), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings) , which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it than the existing development.

4.13 Bullet point two is relevant in this case. Historically national planning guidance on development in the Green Belt was previously contained in Planning Policy guidance 2: Green belts (1992). The important change to emphasise between the two is that whilst PPG2 referred to sports and recreation buildings being appropriate only where they were small in scale and ancillary to the associated sport and recreation activity being carried
out, the NPPF refers to the provision of appropriate facilities as set out in full in paragraph 4.11 above.

4.14 Section 12 refers to conserving and enhancing the historic environment. It states that, the degree of harm caused to the heritage asset has to be justified in terms of the social and economic benefits. In summary:

- Paragraph 128 - Advises that local planning authorities should require an applicant to submit sufficient information to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting.
- Paragraph 131 - Advises that in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities, including their economic vitality; and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- Paragraph 132 – This states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation, and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be.
- Paragraph 134 - Advises that where proposals will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.

4.15 The Framework is the latest in a sequence of similar policy statements recording successive Government’s growing commitment to removing obstacles to investment, development and the creation of jobs. It is therefore an important consideration in the context of this proposal.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN

4.16 As outlined earlier Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications be determined in accordance
with the statutory development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. For development management decisions, the development plan for Burnley currently comprises the saved policies of the Burnley Local Plan.

**SAVED LOCAL PLAN POLICIES**

4.17 The Burnley Local Plan was formally adopted on 4th April 2006 and sets out the Councils planning policies for guiding development and protecting the environment of the Borough of Burnley up to the year 2011.

4.18 As identified in figure 4.1 below, the site is allocated within the Local Plan as being within the Green Belt and as a Sports and Play Area. As such the following policies apply.

![Figure 4.1](image)

4.19 *Policy E26 Development in the Green Belt,* states that:
The construction of new buildings in the Green Belt is inappropriate except for the following:

i. Agricultural and forestry uses (unless permitted development rights have been withdrawn);

ii. Cemeteries;

iii. Essential facilities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation, and other uses of land which preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purpose of including land in it; and

iv. Limited extension, alteration or replacement of existing dwelling.

4.20 The policy also goes on to say that, within the Green Belt other development, not including buildings, will be inappropriate unless it maintains openness and does not conflict with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt. Inappropriate development in the Green Belt will only be permitted when the applicant can demonstrate very special circumstances why permission should be granted.

4.21 **Policy E27 Landscape Character and Local Distinctiveness in Rural Areas and Green Belt**, states that:

All proposals for new development in Rural Areas and the Green Belt will be expected to contribute to the protection, enhancement and restoration of the Borough's distinctive landscape character by:

- protecting critical environmental capital and key features in the landscape;
- protecting the setting of rural and urban settlements;
- protecting, enhancing and restoring archaeological and historical features;
- protecting farmsteads, barns, mills and other prominent buildings, and man made features such as ponds, lodges, and bridges;
- protecting and enhancing historic field patterns, including walls and hedgerows seeking the use of local materials, or the nearest match, and vernacular styles in all new buildings, walls, and fences, and by
resisting urban style lighting, materials and standardised detailing maintaining views and avoiding skyline development;

- encouraging tree planting, woodland and afforestation of native species when appropriate in the landscape setting;
- protecting and restoring native species;
- protecting, restoring, enhancing, and creating habitats reclaiming derelict land where appropriate; and
- by conserving and enhancing river corridors.’

4.22 **Policy CF1 - Protection, Enhancement and Replacement of Playing Pitches.** states that the loss of public and private playing pitches will not be permitted. The development proposed does not include the loss of any public or private playing pitches.

4.23 **Policy CF2 Intensification of Use of Existing Sports and Recreation Provision.** states that:

‘Proposals to increase the use and availability of existing outdoor sports and recreation provision by the introduction of ancillary facilities such as changing rooms, artificial surfaces and floodlighting will be permitted when:

i. there is no unacceptable impact on residential amenity;

ii. there is not an unacceptable increase in traffic to the site;

iii. the design of any floodlighting minimises light spillage from the site;

iv. the proposal includes measures to reduce noise nuisance;

v. it does not have a detrimental effect on the borough’s built and natural environment; and

vi. the design of the proposal complies with Local Plan General Policy GP5 - Access for All.’

4.24 Whilst it is not the case that the new facilities at Gawthorpe would intensify the use in terms of numbers of people using the training facility the policy is still relevant as it does include the provision of a new indoor football pitch and the provision of upgraded training facilities within a new building.

4.25 Other policies which may be of relevance include the following:
4.26 **Policy E3 - Wildlife Links and Corridors**, states that development will not be permitted where it would sever, or significantly detract from the function of Wildlife Links and Corridors.

4.27 **Policy E5 - Species Protection**, outlines that the presence of a protected species will be a material consideration in determining any planning application. A detailed Ecological Report with mitigation measures has been submitted in response to this Policy as part of the supporting documentation accompanying the application. Further details can be found within the report.

4.28 **Policy E8 - Development and Flood Risk**, outlines that development will not be permitted if, it increases the risk of flooding; it would be at risk itself from flooding; adequate provision is not made for access to watercourses for maintenance; and the proposal does not include adequate flood protection measures. A Flood Risk Assessment has been undertaken and is submitted in support of this application.

4.29 **Policy E17 - Historic Parks and Gardens**, seeks to preserve and enhance the Parks and Gardens included within English Heritage’s Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest within the Borough, including Gawthorpe Hall. Development within and adjoining historic parks and gardens will be permitted provided that all of the following criteria are satisfied:

- It would not lead to the loss of, or harm to, the historic character, setting and appearance of the park or garden and any important landscape or ecological features within it;
- The proposals are compatible with the character and appearance of the surrounding area; and
- The site has adequate access and the traffic generated can be safely accommodated on the local highway network.

A Heritage Report has been produced by DPP to assess the proposed developments impact on the adjacent Gawthorpe Hall and formal gardens.

4.30 **Policy E20 - Views**, states that new development will be permitted where, it respects skylines, rooftops and views, and it does not detract from the public view of prominent or important buildings, or affect views into and out
of Major Open Areas, by intruding into or on their margins. This is of relevance when considering the nearby location of Gawthorpe Hall. A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment is submitted in response to this policy.

**EMERGING LOCAL PLAN**

4.31 The Council is drawing up a new planning framework for Burnley to replace the Burnley Local Plan which was adopted in 2006. Consultation was undertaken on a document called ‘Burnley’s Local Plan: Issues and Options’ in February/March 2014. The issues raised during the consultation will inform future documents as the Local Plan takes shape. Given the very early stage of the emerging Local Plan it is not considered that any significant weight should be given to the document.
5. ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

5.1 The previous sub-section of this Statement has confirmed the planning policy context and we have particularly highlighted the policies which apply to the proposed use and the site itself. This section comments upon the relevant policies, considers the planning merits of the proposal against the Development Plan and provides supporting justification for this development.

5.2 The principal issues that are considered relevant in the context of this application are:

- The principle of development
- Heritage considerations
- Design
- Visual Impact
- Landscaping/Ecology
- Highways
- Floodlighting
- Flooding
- Sequential Assessment

PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

5.3 The application site is located within the Green Belt and so a major planning consideration is whether the proposal is appropriate development within the Green Belt, and if not whether very special circumstances which clearly outweigh the harm by reason of inappropriateness can be demonstrated.

5.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) outlines at paragraph 89 that a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt, however, it lists a number of exceptions to this. One such exception is the ‘provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation and for cemeteries, as long as it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.’
5.5 Whilst the NPPF is clear that it does not change the status of the development plan as the starting point for the decision making process, it does state in Annex 1 that:

‘For 12 months from the day of publication, decision-takers may continue to give full weight to relevant policies adopted since 2004 even if there is a limited degree of conflict with this Framework. In other cases and following this 12 month period, due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing plans according to their degree of consistency with this framework (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given).’

5.6 The relevant Local Plan policy in relation to Green Belt is E26 and it is proposed that whilst the policy may continue to be attributed full weight in the decision making process, where it differs in emphasis from the NPPF the policies of the latter should be given more weight.

5.7 The wording of the NPPF on this matter has changed from previous National Guidance in PPG2 where sports and recreation buildings were regarded as appropriate only if they were small in scale and ancillary to the sport and recreation activity being carried out in the Green Belt.

5.8 It is therefore correct in policy terms to regard what could be a relatively large scale building as being ‘appropriate’ for the purposes of the NPPF so long as the building is justified to serving the outdoor sports and recreation use concerned; the openness of the Green Belt is preserved and there is no conflict with the purposes of including land within it (the purposes being defined in Paragraph 80 of the NPPF).

5.9 Under the previous National Guidance it is clear that the proposed development would have been inappropriate and the very special circumstances test applied. However, it is the applicant’s case that given the wording of paragraph 89 of the NPPF, to ensure that Burnley FC achieve Category 2 Academy Status, there is a requirement to provide an indoor pitch, and a range of facilities including: team meeting room, guest lounge, match analysis suite, medical facilities, admin office space, and classrooms, of a size and description to comply with the Premier League’s requirements for Academies and Elite player Performance. Full details of the required
facilities are included within Appendix 2. The provision of these facilities is in principle therefore ‘appropriate’.

5.10 The requirement for the indoor pitch and associated facilities comes from the various documents (The Premier League Handbook, Elite Player Performance Plan and Youth Development Rules) published by the Premier League in connection with the operation of Academies at various levels by football clubs and for facilities to also comply with the Elite Player Performance Plan. Category 2 Academies are to contain all the relevant facilities outlined to allow clubs to operate Academies that produce young footballers in the interests of advancing the national sport. The provision of Academies and the sporting benefits that flow from them have been accepted as important planning considerations through the grant of planning permission for a number of Premier League football academies up and down the country.

5.11 The Secretary of State called in one of the first applications for academies/first team training centres that were proposed to comply with the then applicable FA Charter for Quality at Derby County. The relevant extracts from the Inspector’s Report and the decision are attached (Appendix 3). It highlights that the provision of facilities to enhance youth football training were regarded as in the interests of national sporting objectives. The Inspector noted that the proposals clearly accorded with Government guidance to promote sporting excellence.

5.12 More recently, Chelsea FC have secured planning consent for a new indoor pitch and Sports Research Centre in the Green Belt at Cobham (App No 2012/4052). Similar to this application the Chelsea application put forward the argument that the indoor pitch was appropriate development in the Green Belt given the change in policy set out in the NPPF. The premise being that a facility of this size was required to ensure that Chelsea complied with the Premier League’s requirements for Academies and Elite Player Performance. This argument was accepted by the local planning authority and planning permission was granted.

5.13 Whilst the Premier League’s Youth Development Rules require an indoor pitch with a minimum size of 60 x 40 yards, one of 105 x 68 metres is actually recommended under Rule K.15 of the Premier League Handbook. The proposed indoor pitch measures 60 x 40 yards with a 3m run off all the way
around the pitch making the dimensions 61m x 42.5m. The proposed pitch is therefore some way short of the recommended size and is the minimum size allowed by the Rules with a small 3 metre run off. This is the minimum size the indoor pitch can practically be.

5.14 There are numerous examples of indoor pitches that have been permitted within the Green Belt at other Clubs, for example, Stoke City 106m x 70m, Wolverhampton Wanderers 105m x 64m, Sunderland 110m x 82m, Arsenal 78m x 50m, Tottenham Hotspur 78m x 50m and Chelsea 80m x 60m. All of the cited examples are significantly larger than the proposed indoor pitch at Gawthorpe.

5.15 It is therefore concluded that the scale of the indoor pitch is ‘appropriate’ as it is compliant with the Premier League Handbook in terms of paragraph 89 of the NPPF. It could therefore be regarded as acceptable in planning terms so long as it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.

5.16 It could be suggested that not all of the facilities contained within the ancillary building relate directly to the Academy, for example the gymnasium, therapy pool and rehab room could be considered additional facilities, however, these are small scale and ancillary to the function of the building as an Academy training facility. In seeking an indoor pitch that is the minimum size allowed, Burnley FC have not sought to maximize the area of the indoor pitch, but instead have sought to propose an indoor pitch of a size so as to accommodate the additional facilities required of the training facility. A larger indoor pitch in its own right of up to 105m x 68m could be justified (and would indeed be similar to other Clubs in the Premier League as outlined above).

5.17 Given that the indoor pitch and associated facilities are necessary to ensure Burnley FC comply with the Premier League’s requirements for academies and elite player performance, and secure Category 2 status, the development is considered appropriate, as long as it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.
5.18 In terms of the openness of the Green Belt, the overall development footprint of the indoor pitch is 2,597 sqm and the ancillary building containing the associated facilities has a footprint of 1,521 sqm. Together these have a footprint of 4,118 sqm. The overall size of the Gawthorpe training ground, which can be regarded as the area identified in blue on the Site Location Plan is some 24.9ha or 249,082 sqm. The ‘loss’ of 4,118 sqm or circa 1.6% as part of the overall training ground will not result in any material decrease in the openness of the Green Belt in this area. Furthermore the building has been sited so as to have as little impact on the openness of the Green Belt as possible with substantial screening.

5.19 It can therefore be considered that the openness of the Green Belt will be preserved should the development be permitted.

5.20 In relation to the purposes of including land in the Green Belt the building would be separate from large built up areas and would not contribute materially to their unrestricted sprawl, nor affect the ability of the Green Belt to restrict sprawl in the future. Nor would it lead to any towns merging into one another. In terms of the potential of the building to encroach the countryside it is considered that the proposed siting represents the best solution to minimize its visual impact. This is described in more detail later.

5.21 The final two purposes of including land within the Green Belt, preserving the setting of historic towns and assisting in urban regeneration are not affected by the proposal.

5.22 The proposed development therefore would not materially affect the openness of the Green Belt, nor would it offend the purposes of the Green Belt in paragraph 80 of the NPPF.

5.23 If it is considered that given that the indoor pitch and associated facilities are necessary to ensure Burnley FC comply with the Premier League’s requirements for Academies and Elite Player Performance, and secure Category 2 status, the development is considered appropriate, as it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.
HERITAGE CONSIDERATIONS

5.24 In response to the guidance outlined in the NPPF a Heritage Statement has been prepared by Turley Heritage to support an application. In conclusion the report finds that, there is no direct impact on Gawthorpe Hall, the associated Registered Park and Garden and the terrace; the issue for consideration is therefore one of setting. Whilst the Proposed Development will lead to change within the setting of designated heritage assets, that change does not impact the significance of the assets.

5.25 Having assessed the significance of relevant designated heritage assets and the contribution that elements of setting, including the Site, make to that significance it is concluded that the Proposed Development will have no harmful impact on Gawthorpe Hall (grade I), the terrace (grade II) and the Registered Park and Garden.

5.26 In relation to these heritage assets, the Proposed Development accords with the objectives of the statutory duties of the 1990 Act and NPPF. The proposals also accord with the requirements of Policies E10, E17, E20 and E27 of the Burnley Local Plan.

DESIGN

5.27 Due to the proximity of the adjacent Listed Building, Gawthorpe Hall, it was important to look at ways of mitigating the visual impact of the new building. The building brief dictates what is essentially two elements, the large sports hall and the ancillary block and our design process seeks to use materials and their arrangement to help deconstruct the overall mass of the building when seen in the landscape setting. The images submitted as part of the D&AS use a variety of techniques to break down the mass of the buildings but all with a very simple palette of materials. These are not to indicate exact methods but more to suggest what can be achieved and together with a managed landscape strategy provide a sympathetic form and shape in the open landscape.

5.28 In terms of materials, it is proposed to use a limited palette of natural materials, using timber boarding in varying section sizes and ‘charred’ colouring to form visual patterns that will mimic the vertical light and shadow
of surrounding tree cover. This will help deconstruct the overall mass of the building when seen from a distance.

5.29 It is proposed to use a living 'green' roof to the ancillary building with an off centre slope to the west elevation. This lowered eaves line will reveal a sedum roof that will blend with the surrounding tree cover and also contribute to the wildlife sustainability within the greenbelt which helps mitigate the impact of the new footprint.

5.30 The proposals comply with both the policies contained within the Local Plan and also national government guidance in the form of the NPPF.

**VISUAL IMPACT**

5.31 A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) report has been prepared by Ares Landscape Architects to accompanying the application. The purpose of the report is to identify the significant landscape and visual effects likely to result from the development proposals.

5.32 The LVIA report outlines the study area and the methodology for producing the study.

5.33 The report outlines that, following the production of a digital Existing Zone of Theoretical Visibility and extensive field work as well as discussion with the Burnley Planning Authority and English Heritage ten most sensitive views were identified. The ten viewpoints have been modelled and before and after photomontages produced.

5.34 The report finds that, the overall effect on the Landscape Character is predicted to be moderate negative impact. The overall impact of the proposed development on its surroundings, when taken as a whole, is only predicted to be Minor Adverse. Although the development and the associated planting will be visible from some receptors, the topography of the surrounding landscape and the presence of existing woodlands adjacent to the site means views from surrounding receptors are largely unaffected.

5.35 It is conserved that the proposed development complies with Local Plan policies E20 and E27.
LANDSCAPING/ECOLOGY

5.36 Cascade Consulting were commissioned to undertake an ecological appraisal of the Application Site. The report presents an ecological appraisal of the site and development proposals. An extended Phase 1 Habitat survey was undertaken in support of the appraisal. The main objective of the survey was to identify the presence of any priority/protected species and habitats within the application site.

5.37 The submitted report provides an overview of the legislation and policies relevant to protected species and habitats within the UK. Also included are a description of the methods used and the results of the ecological appraisal. The implications of the survey findings are discussed, with an assessment of potential impacts provided and recommendations to prevent, reduce and/or offset any adverse ecological impacts.

5.38 The ecological effects of the proposed development have been assessed against the current site masterplan. The report outlines the predicted impacts on habitats, bats, badgers, breeding birds and wintering birds. It then goes on to outline the mitigation measures that will offset most of the adverse impacts associated with the proposed development. These include:

- Retention of pond/swamp and woodland habitats
- Creation of 1.37 ha of new woodland/scrub habitat
- Creation of 360 m of native hedgerow
- Enhancement of semi-improved grassland habitat
- Provision of new bat roosting facilities
- Adherence to best practice construction methods when working near water, including Environment Agency PPG Guidelines
- Adherence to bio security measures to prevent the spread of invasive species
- Adopting sensitive working measures during construction

5.39 The report also outlines habitat creation and enhancement measures. A total of 1.37 ha of new trees and shrubs will be planted to help screen retained habitats from the new sports pitches and training academy as well as providing a source of food for birds and invertebrates. All planting will
comprise native species of local origin including: pendunculate oak, field maple, silver birch, alder, rowan, grey willow, goat willow, hazel, hawthorn, dogwood, dog rose and holly. 360 m of new native hedges will also be planted. Species will include silver birch, rowan, hawthorn, holly, blackthorn and honeysuckle. The hedges will principally act as physical barriers between the sports pitches and retained habitats, helping to reduce disturbance levels and the drift of fertilisers. In particular, these measures will act as a buffer between the new development and swamp habitat/wet grassland to the west of the site which is also used by overwintering snipe.

5.40 It is also proposed that two Schwegler bat boxes are installed in each of the three woodland copses within the site resulting in a total of six bat boxes.

5.41 Sensitive working measures will also be implemented during the construction and operational phases and best practice guidelines adhered to in order to prevent habitats and species being damaged and disturbed. In particular, there will be specific measures to limit disturbance during the winter months, as the site is of greater importance for birds at this time of year.

5.42 In summary, the above measures would contribute to UK and local BAP targets as well as being in accordance with the NPPF which advises that planning decisions should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity by applying a number of principles, including the encouragement of opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments.

5.43 In tandem with the ecological work that has been undertaken an Illustrative Landscape Masterplan has been produced and is submitted in support of the application. This along with the Landscape General Arrangement Plan and the Planting Plan forms the basis for the landscape proposals associated with the development. They provide information on the existing pond, which is retained and enhanced, the proposed bat boxes, and planting.

**HIGHWAYS**

5.44 Paragraph 32 of the NPPF states that development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of the development are severe. Development proposals should avoid having a negative impact upon local traffic management road safety.
5.45 The nature and scale of this development was not one which warranted the submission of a full traffic impact assessment. A transport statement is appropriate, which provides a more general review of the relevant transportation issues. In particular the existing situation in terms of access, parking and the existing Car Park Management Plan and reviews the proposals in light of each of these.

5.46 A detailed Transport Statement (prepared and submitted by HY Consulting) addresses all of the above matters in appropriate detail.

5.47 As part of the proposed development, a new car park will be constructed adjacent to the new indoor training facilities located to the north of the river. This will include a 50 space car park (5 spaces for disabled users) and a drop off area.

5.48 Furthermore Car Park C will be maintained and will be laid out and formalised to provide 9 car parking spaces and 2 coach spaces. The coach bays are located within the car parking aisle of Car Park C but this is considered to be acceptable given that the 9 spaces will be used by ground staff and management who will arrive on-site early, prior to the commencement of matches.

5.49 A revised Car Park Management Plan has been prepared to manage the proposed parking arrangements. The key element with this is the removal of all the parking demand on Gawthorpe Hall from Burnley FC visitors. Signage and stewards will continue to advise visitors where to park. To further alleviate the current traffic and parking concerns during the busy weekend periods, the Academy training session (Saturday morning) will be rescheduled to a weekday session when Gawthorpe Hall visitor numbers are lower.

5.50 No parking will be permitted in Car Park B or D or anywhere along Stockbridge Drive. As such the total car parking provision will be 59 spaces. This is similar to the peak parking demand established from the parking survey and will therefore accommodate the peak demand associated with the football club (since there will be no intensification of use).
5.51 Access to the main car park will be via the existing access from Stockbridge Drive and across the existing Bailey Bridge. A new single track access road (4m wide) will be provided to the north of the river. A passing place will also be provided in a central position along the new access road.

5.52 Since coaches will only be permitted to park in Car Park C, there will be no need to accommodate turning and potential bridge strengthening/widening to access north of the river. The coaches will reverse into the two dedicated coach parking bays and exit in forward gear. A small area of the adjacent properties garden will be required to ensure a safe and convenient turn.

5.53 The proposed development fully accords with both Local Plan policies on highways and access and national planning policy in the form of the NPPF.

**FLOODLIGHTING**

5.54 In terms of the lighting of the additional pitch to the south of the River Calder, it is proposed to light the pitch adjacent to the existing flood lit pitch. A Philips Lighting report is submitted in support of the application which illustrates the size and type of lighting proposed. The report clearly illustrates the minimal amount of light spillage associated with the proposal.

**FLOODING**

5.55 Paul Waite Associates has undertake a Flood Risk Assessment in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, to support the planning application.

5.56 The site is located to the north of the River Calder within Flood Zone 1, 2 and 3 of the Environment Agency’s fluvial (river) flood map.

5.57 The primary sources of flood risk at the development site are identified to be from overtopping of the natural river banks along the River Calder; and also from an increase of surface water runoff resulting from the proposed development.
5.58 Evaluating modelled flood levels obtained from the Environment Agency against the topographical survey indicates that a small area of the site, located against the west boundary lies within Flood Zone 3; within Flood Zone 2 extending over a larger area within the central part of the development site. The existing ground levels along the proposed access road and existing bridge crossing are however elevated sufficiently to remain dry during the extreme 1 in 1000 year flood event. As such it is concluded that the River Calder presents a flood risk at the proposed development site.

5.59 The proposed training academy building is designated by the Environment Agency as ‘less vulnerable’ type of development; with the football pitches considered to be ‘water compatible’ type of development.

5.60 The proposed footprint of the new academy building is located within the south west corner of the site and has been carefully designed to ensure that the building is located on ground which is outside of Flood Zone 3. It is noted however that the proposed car park area is within the high risk flood zone. In order to ensure that the flood storage capacity of the site is not compromised, it is recommended that the finished levels within the car park are not elevated above 77.75mAOD.

5.61 The submitted report identifies a number of mitigation measures, including:

- Finished ground floor levels within the new building must be set to:
  - 300mm above the 1 in 100 year plus climate change fluvial flood level with an additional 300mm flood proofing i.e. 78.52 + 0.3 = 78.82mAOD, with flood proofing up to 79.12mAOD; or
  - 600mm above the 1 in 100 year plus climate change flood level i.e. 78.52 + 0.6 = 79.12mAOD.

- Burnley Football Club must sign up to receive flood alerts from the Environment Agency & devise a flood monitoring and evacuation plan.

- A safe place of refuge will be made available at first floor level in the event that evacuation from the building is not possible.

- Suitable signage must be erected within the site to warn of the possibility of flooding.
- Finished levels within the proposed car park area will not be elevated higher than 77.75m AOD to prevent a reduction in flood storage capacity within the site; and in turn prevent an increase in flood risk to others.

- No building works will be permitted within 8 metres of the river bank for the River Calder or open channel drainage ditch along the west boundary; and any works which are required within this easement strip will require formal consent from the Environment Agency (main rivers) and the Lead Local Flood Authority (ordinary watercourses) as appropriate.

- The proposed car park will have 50No spaces and as such pollution control in the form a type 1 bypass separator will be required, unless SUDS are employed to provide suitable treatment, prior to discharge into the local water environment.

- Regular inspection and maintenance of all drainage elements will be required in the post-development phase of the project to ensure that the designed system does not lose efficiency or fail over the lifetime of the development.

5.62 It is considered that with the identified mitigation measures, the proposed development complies with Local Plan policy E8 and national government guidance in the form of the NPPF.

**SEQUENTIAL ASSESSMENT**

5.63 In undertaking a sequential Assessment it is important to give weight to the nature of the proposals, their scale and the potential for an alternative location to be suitable. It must be remembered that Burnley’s proposal is for an extension to an existing facility and is not a new facility. The Club are therefore restricted as to where they can locate the indoor training facility. It is unrealistic to expect the Club to locate this facility at a separate location to the existing training area, particularly given that they own the site itself and have occupied the site for their training facilities for over 50 years.

5.64 It has previously been recognised by an Inspector (APP/A4520/A/02/1098944 – relating to an application for an indoor training barn by Sunderland Football Club) that a Club is at a substantial disadvantage not having an
indoor facility on the same site as existing training facilities. In that case, the Inspector recognised that all but a few Clubs have indoor training facilities on the same site.

5.65 The provision of an indoor facility away from Gawthorpe would also require the duplication of ancillary facilities, for example, physio, gymnasium, player lounge, changing rooms etc. The disadvantages would also include the loss of training time to travelling, resultant sustainability disadvantages and operational difficulties of needing to provide medical and coaching facilities at two separate locations.

5.66 Any sequential assessment of alternative sites would therefore have to consider only sites which are capable of containing all of the facilities currently found at Gawthorpe as well as the proposed facilities i.e. 8 grass pitches; 1 3G floodlit pitch; a goal keeping area; a training academy building and car parking.

5.67 A thorough search for sites capable of containing these facilities has been undertaken. Whilst there may be other large sites which are capable of accommodating the training facility they are also located within the Green Belt and so are not sequentially preferable. The only site which is sequentially preferable that has been highlighted through discussions with the local planning authority is the Former Baxi Heating application site (APP/2014/0042).

5.68 It is noted that the Local Plan designates the site as being within a defined Economic Improvement Area (Policy EW6/3). In addition, Policy EW7 of the LP seeks to protect existing employment sites from being redeveloped for non-employment uses. Use of the site for an alternative use other than employment is therefore contrary to planning policy.

5.69 As identified previously, the proposed footprint of the new academy building is located within the south west corner of the site and has been carefully designed to ensure that the building is located on ground which is outside of Flood Zone 3. The Baxi site is, according to the EA Flood Map, located in flood zone 3. From a flood sequential test perspective location of Clubhouse building as identified within the current proposals is better than locating the
building within Flood Zone 3. The Baxi application site can therefore also be discounted from a flood sequential test perspective.

5.70 In conclusion, no site has been found that is located in a sequentially preferable location.
6. CONCLUSIONS

6.1 This document seeks to address the main elements of the application proposal and to provide an overview of the planning policy framework against which the application will be assessed. This concluding section summarises a number of general and site-specific arguments in favour of the proposed development.

6.2 Pre-application discussions have taken place with Officers, the National Trust and English Heritage prior to submission of the application. The comments received have helped develop and shape the scheme into the form as presented by this application.

6.3 It is considered that the indoor pitch and associated facilities are necessary to ensure Burnley FC comply with the Premier Leagues requirements for Academies and Elite Player Performance, and secure Category 2 status. The development is considered appropriate as it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.

6.4 The application has been considered against the policies of the current development plan, and national government guidance. It has been illustrated that the proposal conforms to the criteria set out in these policies and that the principle of development is acceptable. In our view, the proposed development has policy support and is aligned with national policy. It should therefore be supported and planning permission granted.
APPENDIX 1
APPENDIX 2
Facilities

268. Each Club which operates an Academy shall ensure that:

268.1. it provides as a minimum the facilities and accommodation set out in this section of the Rules; and

268.2. in respect of Category 1 Academies, such facilities and accommodation are available for the exclusive use of its Academy at all times when it requires access to them in order to comply with these Rules.

269. The facilities and accommodation to be provided by each Academy (as referred to in Rule 268.1) are set out in the following tables. Save where otherwise indicated, or with the permission of the Board, all such facilities and accommodation shall be provided at the Club’s principal venue for the coaching and education of Academy Players.

269.1. Grass pitches

| Category 1 | a) A sufficient number of grass pitches of the appropriate sizes (as required by the Rules relating to Games Programmes and with goals sized as required by the Rules relating to Games Programmes) to enable the Club to play all its matches in the Games Programmes and fulfil its commitments under these Rules as regards coaching. Rule 1.26 shall apply to Academy pitches. Without prejudice to the generality of the Rule, each Club shall ensure that the quality of its pitches used for matches in the Games Programmes is not adversely affected by coaching taking place on them. Clubs may accordingly need to have a greater number of pitches than the bare minimum necessary to fulfil matches in the Games Programme. Rule 1.26 shall apply to Academy pitches.

b) One floodlit grass pitch enclosed with perimeter fencing and with designated areas for spectator attendance (save that if a Club is unable to obtain planning permission for floodlighting then the requirement for floodlighting shall be waived);

c) A designated area (on grass) for the coaching of goalkeepers. |

| Category 2 and 3 | a) A sufficient number of grass pitches of the appropriate sizes (as required by the Rules relating to Games Programmes and with goals sized as required by the Rules relating to Games Programmes) to enable the Club to play all its matches in the Games Programmes and fulfil its commitments under these Rules as regards coaching. Rule 1.26 shall apply to Academy pitches. Without prejudice to the generality of the Rule, each Club shall ensure that the quality of its pitches used for matches in the Games Programmes is not adversely affected by coaching taking place on them. Clubs may accordingly need to have a greater number of pitches than the bare minimum necessary to fulfil matches in the Games Programme.

b) A designated area for the coaching of goalkeepers. |

| Category 4 | a) A sufficient number of grass pitches of the appropriate sizes (as
269.2. Artificial Surface pitch

| Categories 1 and 2 | One floodlit outdoor Artificial Surface pitch (save that if a Club is unable to obtain planning permission for floodlighting then the requirement for floodlighting shall be waived). It is recommended (but not mandatory) that this pitch complies with Rule 1.21. |
| Categories 3 and 4 | Access to one floodlight outdoor Artificial Surface pitch (which need not be at the principal venue). |

269.3. Indoor area for training and the playing of matches

*Note: Ideally a Club’s indoor facility should be located at its principal venue for the coaching of Academy Players but it is accepted that a number of Clubs have existing indoor facilities which are located elsewhere. Provided that the Rules relating to the maximum travel time from an Academy Player’s residence to the coaching venue are complied with, this is acceptable. However, it is recommended that any new facility is located at the principal venue.*

| Categories 1 and 2 | One indoor pitch measuring a minimum of 60 yards by 40 yards which shall be owned by the Club (or alternatively the Club must have a legally enforceable agreement with the owner of the facility for its use by the Club, expiring not earlier than the end of the current Season) and which shall be for the exclusive use of the Academy at all times. *(Note: an indoor pitch which complies with the size requirements set out in Rule 1.21 is recommended).* |
| Categories 3 and 4 | Access to one indoor pitch measuring 60 yards by 40 yards during the months of November to April. Alternatively, the pitch may measure 30 yards by 20 yards but if so the Club shall only be permitted to coach the following maximum numbers of Academy Players at any one time:

| Age groups Under 9 to Under 14 inclusive: | 18 in each age group |
| Age groups Under 15 and Under 16 inclusive: | 15 in each age group |
| Age groups Under 17 to Under 21 inclusive: | 12 in each age group |

269.4. Changing rooms and washing facilities

| Categories 1 to 4 | a) suitably-sized changing rooms equal in number to the number of teams (including visiting teams) playing at the Academy at any one time so that each such team has exclusive use of a changing room; |
| | b) a sufficient number of washing and toilet facilities, of a suitable quality, for the exclusive use of all registered Academy Players; |
| Categories 1 to 4 | A dedicated room large enough to hold 20 people and equipped with individual desks (one per person), audio/visual projection equipment and a large screen, internet access and computers.  

*Note: in Category 3 and 4 Academies, this room:
  a) need not be located at the principal venue; but
  b) if it is so located (but not otherwise), may also be used as the guest lounge described in Rule 269.6.* |

### 269.6. Guestlounge

| Categories 1 to 4 | A guest lounge for the use of Parents at each training session and match that is open to Parents. The guest lounge shall be large enough to hold 50 people and have access to refreshments and toilet facilities.  

*Note: in Category 3 and 4 Academies, this room may also be used as the team meeting room described in Rule 269.5 provided that it is large enough.* |

### 269.7. Matchanalysisissuite

| Categories 1 and 2 | A room large enough to hold 20 people and equipped with such appropriate video and IT technology as is necessary to undertake, and present the results of, Performance Analysis. |
| Category 3 | A match analysis suite is recommended but not mandatory. |

### 269.8. Medicalfacilities

Such medical facilities as the Club requires to deliver its Sports Science and Medicine Programme.
269.9. Administration office space

| Categories 1 to 4 | a) Such office space and access to IT, email and the internet as each member of Academy Staff requires in order to perform the responsibilities set out in his job description;  

b) A private meeting room.  

Note: for Category 3 and Category 4 Academies, these can be provided at a place other than the principal venue (e.g. at the Club’s stadium). |

269.10. Academy/Player accommodation

| Categories 1 to 4 | Sufficient and adequate accommodation for all registered Academy Players and Trialists under the age of 18 not residing with their Parents. Clubs shall comply with any guidelines about Academy Player accommodation published by the League from time to time and with all applicable legal requirements in relation to the provision of such accommodation.  

Such accommodation shall be located in as close proximity as is reasonably practicable to the Club’s principal venue for the coaching and education of Academy Players and to the place at which Academy Players undertake their education (if this is not the principal venue).  

Note: Clubs may provide such accommodation by lodging students with private households (subject to compliance with all applicable legal requirements including as to CRB checks) or by operating their own dedicated facilities (such as hostels). |

269.11. Classrooms

| Category 1 | A minimum of three classrooms which shall each:  

- contain sufficient desks for 20 students;  
- contain 20 computers with access to the internet;  
- conform in all respects with any requirements for classrooms issued by the Department for Education and Skills. |

| Category 2 | A minimum of two classrooms which shall each:  

- contain sufficient desks for 20 students;  
- contain 20 computers with internet access.  

At least one of the classrooms must conform in all respects with any requirements for classrooms issued by the Department for Education and Skills. |

| Categories 3 and 4 | Access for Academy Players and Trialists to a study area large enough to hold 20 people and which contains at least 20 computers with internet access.  

Note: in Category 3 and 4 Academies, this may also be used as the team meeting room provided that the timetabling of lessons in the |
Guidance

Flexibility will be accorded to a Club's provision of classrooms depending on the number of Academy Players that are engaged in each Training Model.

Clubs which operate a Category 3 or Category 4 Academy who have in place an artificial surface which does not meet the requirements of such a pitch as defined in Rule 1.10 may continue to use such a pitch until the end of its natural life. Thereafter however, they must use a pitch which complies with the definition.
18. CONCLUSIONS

18.1 The following conclusions are based on my report of the oral and written representations, and on my inspection of the site and its surroundings and of other sites referred to. In this section, the numbers in square brackets refer to paragraphs in the preceding sections of the report from which these conclusions are drawn.

The Development Plan

18.2 Section 54A of the Act requires the application to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for the area is the Derby and Derbyshire Joint Structure Plan 2001 and the Erewash Borough Local Plan 1994 (EBLP). Other material policy considerations include Government Planning Policy Guidance and, in relation to the availability of alternative sites, the City of Derby Local Plan and First Deposit of the Local Plan Review.[4.1, 4.2]

18.3 The application site is situated within designated Green Belt which separates the City of Derby immediately to the west from the towns of Ilkeston and Long Eaton, and ultimately from the city of Nottingham, to the east. Having regard to both national Green Belt policy in PPG2 and the Green Belt policies of the Development Plan, there is no dispute that the use of the application site for outdoor sport is an acceptable use. However, General Development Strategy Policy 7 of the Structure Plan states that buildings which go beyond providing essential facilities for outdoor sport will not be permitted and paragraphs 3.4 and 3.5 of PPG2 indicate that such buildings would constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt. [2.4.4.2]

18.4 It is agreed that the amount of building proposed goes beyond what might reasonably be termed essential facilities, and that for this reason the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Paragraph 3.1 of PPG2 says that there is a general presumption against inappropriate development within the Green Belt, which should not be approved except in very special circumstances. This requirement is reflected in policy GB3 of the EBLP in the consideration of development of an urban character. As much of the site would be used for outdoor sport, it is considered that policy GB3 of the EBLP is also of relevance and this permits such use provided that (A) the proposal would not harm an area where the open character is particularly vulnerable, (B) the visual effect would be minimised, (C) excessive numbers of people or traffic would not be attracted and (D) there would not be an urbanising influence. [4.3, 5.2, 7.1, 8.2, 16.1]

The Principal Issue

18.5 Against the relevant policy background, I consider that the main issue in this case is whether the harm to the Green Belt, and any other harm, would be outweighed by very special circumstances.

Effect on the Green Belt

18.6 The proposal, as inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt as indicated in paragraph 3.2 of PPG2. In addition, paragraph 1.4 states that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open, as the most important attribute of Green Belts is their openness. The importance of openness is also reflected in the wording of the Development Plan policies relating to the Green Belt. [4.2, 4.5, 5.2, 6.23]

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18.7 The outdoor pitches and landscaped areas would occupy the majority of the site. This would radically alter its appearance, particularly having regard to the remodelling necessary to create flat surfaces. However, outdoor sport is considered to be an appropriate use for the Green Belt and this part of the development would not result in a loss of openness nor would it, in itself, conflict with Green Belt policies. The buildings would only occupy some 3% of the site and, as such, the overall development can be said to be of a predominantly open character. [3.7, 5.2, 6.25, 7.1, 7.5, 15.3]

18.8 Notwithstanding the small proportion of the site that would be occupied by buildings, the footprint of the indoor pitch and main academy building would be some 5-6 times greater than the footprint of existing farm buildings. Even taking into account agricultural permitted development rights; this represents a substantial increase in built development. The buildings, together with the associated hard surfaced parking and servicing areas, would result in a loss of openness which would harm the Green Belt. [5.2, 6.25, 9.4, 9.5, 10.6, 11.1, 15.9]

18.9 The buildings, located some 155m from Morley Road, would physically intrude further into the Green Belt than the existing farm buildings which are situated close to the road frontage. However, with the re-grading of the land and landscaping proposed, I believe that the siting has been carefully chosen to minimise the impact in the Green Belt and on openness. The Applicant has also confirmed that the built facilities to be provided are no more than is necessary to meet the FA and FA Premier League requirements. [5.4, 5.7, 5.2, 6.13, 6.15]

18.10 The complex would have a compact and low form and the indoor pitch would be of minimum height and constructed below the existing ground level. The embankments, planting and curved drive would all help to screen the built development from view. Nonetheless, the buildings would be seen to varying degrees from public viewpoints. In my opinion, the group would appear significantly larger than a typical collection of farmyard buildings that one might expect to see in this location. However, with a design chosen to reflect the characteristics of farm buildings, I consider that the development achieves as close a rural character as is possible having regard to the function of the buildings. In my view, the careful thought given to the siting and design of the buildings and the location of the hard surfaced areas would limit the perceptible harm to the openness of the Green Belt. [3.5, 5.2, 6.26, 7.5]

18.11 The purposes of the Green Belt, in checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas, in preventing neighbouring towns from merging into one another; and in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment, are clearly important on this side of the City of Derby. Given that the majority of the site would remain open, and that the impact of the built development on the openness of the Green Belt would be limited, it seems to me that the proposal would not result in unrestricted sprawl, nor would it lead to neighbouring towns merging into one another at this wide point of the Green Belt. There would be some encroachment into the countryside but this would again be limited as indicated by my consideration of the effect on openness. Moreover, having regard to the unusual nature of the proposal, it could not be argued that a grant of permission in this instance would provide justification for further development on neighbouring Green Belt land, which could cumulatively undermine the purposes for including land within the Green Belt. [6.27, 11.1, 12.1, 12.2, 14.5, 15.9]

18.12 In addition to the harm to the Green Belt by definition, therefore, I conclude that the development would also result in limited harm to the openness of the Green Belt, and
that it would conflict with one of the purposes of including land within the Green Belt; in that there would be limited encroachment into the countryside.

**Effect on the Landscape**

18.13 Paragraph 3.15 of PPG2 and General Development Strategy Policy 7 of the Structure Plan seek to ensure that the visual amenities of the Green Belt are not injured by development. In this case there is a sharp contrast between the built up, western, side of Morley Road and the open countryside, primarily agricultural land, opposite. The proposed development would change the appearance of the existing farmland on the application site. The gently sloping form of the land would be altered to a series of banked flat areas, and the fields and farm buildings would be replaced with football pitches and a large built complex. [2.4, 3.4-3.9, 4.2]

18.14 However, the predominant use of the site for outdoor sport is considered to be an appropriate use for Green Belt land; wherever this facility were to be located it would be likely to result in a considerably altered appearance; and a significant change does not necessarily equate to harm. The rural scene within the vicinity of the application site is pleasant, but unexceptional, with large hedge-lined fields, scattered farmsteads and a small area of woodland. The site itself has no features of particular visual significance other than the protected mature trees grouped close to the access which are to be retained, and hedgerow enclosures where the intention is to build upon this particular characteristic. [2.1-2.4, 2.6, 4.4, 6.28, 7.5]

18.15 In my opinion, great care has been taken in the design of the scheme to ensure that the overall development would be well integrated into the rural landscape on the edge of the urban area. The ground remodelling, essential for the use, achieves a careful transition from the existing contours to the proposed levels and a network of hedgerows would enclose each of the flat areas. Whilst initially the site would have a somewhat raw appearance; as the planting matured, the abundant trees and hedgerows proposed would hide the pitches from public view and provide an attractive landscaped setting for the buildings. The buildings would remain partly visible, but with their sympathetic design in the rural vernacular, and the screening afforded by banking and planting I consider that they would be suitably assimilated into the countryside location. I believe that, in time, the planting would dominate public views so that the site would appear as a richly vegetated, verdant area of land that would not harm the landscape of this rural area on the edge of Derby. [6.29, 9.1, 10.6, 11.2, 15.6, 15.9]

**Effect on Ecology**

18.16 The construction of the development would inevitably involve considerable disturbance to the site, and the concerns with regard to the effects on flora and fauna are understandable. However, with 3 ecological surveys undertaken for the site, and a detailed mitigation and enhancement strategy developed in consultation with EBC, English Nature and Derbyshire Wildlife Trust, there is no reason to conclude that the development would have any long term harmful effect on wildlife or on nature conservation. In addition to the statutory protection afforded by other legislation, suggested conditions 3, 4, 6, 16 and 17 would all serve to ensure that the development would not result in ecological damage either on the site itself or on nearby land. With regard to the subsequent change of activities on the site, there is no evidence that shy species and birds cannot successfully thrive around playing fields. [3.8, 6.24, 6.30-6.32, 7.2, 9.10-9.11, 11.2, 17.1-17.6]
Effect on the Free Flow of Traffic and Conditions of Highway Safety

18.17 The application site is not well located in relation to public transport and there would, therefore, be a reliance on the car for travel to and from the site. Nevertheless, the offer of a Green Travel Plan to be provided by way of a condition could help to minimise overall numbers of car journeys. The amount of parking on the site has been calculated to ensure an adequate number of spaces to avoid overflow onto neighbouring highways, whilst discouraging excessive car use. [2.5, 3.5.6.4.6.7, 10.2, 11.3, 15.15]

18.18 The professional highways' evidence indicates that the site would be provided with a safe means of access and that the local road network could accommodate the predicted additional traffic. Despite the concerns expressed, there is no evidence to the contrary and DCC, the highway authority for Morley Road, is satisfied the scheme could progress without any material harm to the free flow of traffic or to conditions of highway safety. Derbyshire County Council, highway authority for roads in Erewash, has also raised no highway objection to the proposal. [2.5, 3.6, 6.33, 6.34, 6.35, 6.7, 15.10]

18.19 The turning facility in front of the gates would be of benefit by allowing those unable to gain access to the site to turn their vehicles clear of Morley Road. With no existing problem with casual spectators at the professional's current training ground and the screening that would be afforded by landscaping it seems unlikely that people would be attracted to the site. However, DCC have indicated that the matter would be addressed by a Traffic Regulation Order if road-side parking became a nuisance. [6.3, 8.4, 10.8]

Effect on the Living Conditions of Neighbouring Residential Occupiers

18.20 The outlook for residents on the opposite side of Morley Road would change as a result of the development. Nonetheless, the site would remain predominantly open, a wealth of planting is proposed and buildings and parking would be located a considerable distance from the road. In these circumstances, I consider that development would not appear unduly intrusive nor the buildings overbearing, and that a pleasant outlook would be retained. [15.9, 10.6, 6.37]

18.21 In relation to the activities generated, residents might notice the increase in traffic attracted to the site, particularly at busy times. However, in my view, the small numbers involved are unlikely to result in an appreciable increase in noise and disturbance over and above that already experienced from existing traffic using Morley Road. The use of the external pitches would be periodic rather than continuous and those closest to the road would not always be in use. Noise generated would be no greater than that from other sports pitches, often located close to housing, and may indeed be less. Taking into account the distance of the facilities from the houses and the noise from traffic using the intervening Morley Road, there would, in my view, be no unacceptable noise intrusion. [6.37, 7.5, 8.6, 10.7, 15.6, 15.7, 15.11]

18.22 The provisions of the Unilateral Undertaking not only prevent floodlighting but also prevent an application being made for the installation of floodlighting. [3.10, 10.2, 15.11]

Other Effects

18.23 With regard to the concern about the effect of the overhead powerline on the health of children, East Midlands Electricity has confirmed that electromagnetic field strengths associated with electricity supply equipment are many times lower than the maximum recommended by the National Radiological Protection Board (NRPB). The findings of the NRPB Advisory Group on Non-ionising Radiation indicate that evidence is currently
not strong enough to justify a firm conclusion that electromagnetic fields cause leukemia in children. Nonetheless the Group acknowledges the possibility that intense and prolonged exposure to magnetic fields might increase the risk of leukemia in children and recommends further research. In the absence of any conclusive evidence of harm, and having regard to the relatively short periods of time that students would be in close proximity to the powerlines, the concern about health risks does not seem to be a justifiable reason for resisting the development. [2.2, 3.5, 6.39, 11.7]

18.24 The loss of poorer quality Grade 3b agricultural land is not sufficient reason to withhold permission. [3.1, 11.2, 15.2]

18.25 Although the written representation in connection with the Human Rights Act refers to Articles 6 and 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights, it would appear that the writer is primarily concerned with the quality of neighbouring residents' private lives and the peaceful enjoyment of their homes. However, having regard to my findings in relation to the effect of the development on the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers, I consider that there is no interference sufficient to give rise to a violation of residents' Human Rights. [6.40, 16.4]

Very Special Circumstances: the Need for the Development

18.26 There is no obligation for DCFC to operate an academy. However, since the production of the FA Charter for Quality in 1997 nearly every Premier League Club has set one up and clearly it has quickly become an expected element of the operation of the Clubs. None of the objections raised to the proposal suggest that there is no need for DCFC to run an academy and, indeed, most of the objectors make clear that they support the principle but not the chosen site. [3.5, 6.5, 6.8, 7.6, 8.3, 9.1-9.3, 10.2, 12.2, 15.2, 15.8, 16.2]

18.27 The existing academy facilities run by DCFC are unsatisfactory, and the Club has already fallen behind most other Premier League Clubs who have acceptable academies. The existing arrangements do not meet the Charter or FA Premier League Rules, and the operation on split sites with inadequate facilities is not in the best interests of the overall welfare and education of the students nor sustainable in relation to minimising travel. Even if it wished to do so, the Club cannot continue to run its academy as it is at present. It has been given an extended, but limited period of time, in which to provide a facility that meets the Charter and the FA Premier League Rules so that there is now an urgent need to resolve the situation. [6.6, 6.7]

18.28 The sanction for not progressing an acceptable scheme would be the loss of the Club's academy licence and thereby the ability to play other Premier League academy teams of similar standing. The loss of the academy licence would not directly affect the status of the first or reserve teams. However, without it DCFC would be unable to compete with other Clubs to attract and retain young talented players. This would have a knock-on effect as there would be a lack of young players to supply the reserve and first teams and this would ultimately effect the Premier League status of both those teams. [6.12]

18.29 The importance given to progressing young talented football players is not only recognised by national sporting bodies, but also accords with Government policy which recognises that the promotion of sporting excellence can help foster civic and national pride. The significant role that DCFC plays in promoting the national game, and in enhancing the image and profile of both the City of Derby and the East Midlands Region is not disputed by any objector. A large proportion of the local population associates itself with the fortunes of the football team, the promotional benefits of the Club are
clearly evident, and the Club also makes a direct contribution to City life through its community activities. [6.2, 6.4, 6.8, 6.9, 6.46, 16.2, 13.2, 13.3]

18.30 In my opinion, it is important that the DCFC continues to play a leading role in the life of the City and the Region by remaining at the forefront of the community. However, I believe that it cannot be expected to do so if it cannot compete on an equal footing with other Clubs of similar standing. The provision of an academy, with adequate facilities to attract and retain young players and to meet the requirements of the Charter and Rules has become a fundamental requirement of the Club’s activities, albeit that it is not obligatory. A single-site operation is necessary in order to minimise travel and to properly provide for the welfare and education of students, as the experience of operating from split sites has shown. [6.10, 6.11, 6.16, 13.4]

18.31 To my mind, the Club has demonstrated that the built facilities and the number of pitches proposed are the minimum necessary to operate the academy. Although the number and size of pitches is not identical to the FA Premier League written requirements, the variation does not increase the amount of land required. Furthermore, the FA and the FA Premier League, the instigators and regulators of the academy scheme, have both confirmed that no more than the minimum necessary is being provided. Objectors have argued that a smaller number of pitches would suffice, but it seems to me that the Club would not be retaining the option of using Repton School as a fall back for some academy matches if the number of pitches on the application site were more than adequate. Moreover, this part of the scheme does not, in itself, conflict with Green Belt policy. [6.13-6.15, 5.6]

18.32 With regard to training facilities for the professionals, no additional space in terms of built facilities or pitches would be needed to put this on the same site as the academy. The existing training ground does not meet the standards expected for a first class team and substantial upgrading or replacement is needed. It is thus logical to combine the 2 on one site to avoid duplication of facilities. [6.3, 6.17]

Very Special Circumstances: the Availability of Alternative Sites

18.33 The documented and oral evidence presented to the inquiry by DCFC, EBC and DCC indicates that a thorough and repetitive search of the area in and around Derby has been conducted in order to identify an alternative site for the academy. None has been identified that is available within a reasonable time period, suitable for the development proposed, or viable in all other respects. The only available site identified that is suitable for the kind and scale of development proposed is the application site. In view of the limited timescale imposed by the FA and FA Premier League, it is likely that the Club would have progressed any other realistic option rather than facing the inevitable delays associated with applying for planning permission on Green Belt land. [5.3, 6.19-6.23, 7.2, 7.3, 8.4]

18.34 The Applicant has addressed every alternative site suggested by objectors. The most popular suggestion is to locate the facility at Pride Park, adjacent to the Club’s stadium, and there would be benefits arising from this more central urban location, convenient to a variety of modes of transport. However, there are a number of clear reasons why the academy could not be located on this site, not least, as confirmed by both DCFC and DCC, that insufficient land is available. Other sites suggested are equally unsuitable, in particular those allocated for other purposes in the Local Plans where the loss of a significant amount of land would undermine the intentions behind those allocations and where compensatory land would have to be found for the allocated use displaced. [6.23, 7.4, 8.4, 8.5, 9.3, 9.9, 10.3, 10.4, 11.4-11.6, 13.3, 14.1-14.4, 15.8]
Despite the objectors' reluctance to accept that no alternative site can be found, I consider that the Applicant has taken all reasonable steps to demonstrate that this is the case. There is no evidence of any suitable single site that is currently available to meet the requirements of DCFC and no evidence that any suitable site is about to come forward. To extend the search further afield would not be in the best interests of the students, nor would it accord with the Government's sustainability objectives. The suggestion that the academy might operate from 2 or 3 sites would defeat the purpose behind the proposal, which is for a single site with its attendant advantages. [8.3.9.2. 10.5.11.5.13.2.14.5.16.2]

Very Special Circumstances: the Benefits of the Development

The limited community and educational use of the site, provided for by way of the Unilateral Undertaking, would be of benefit to the Derby area. Similarly, the implementation and subsequent management of a scheme aimed at promoting nature conservation on the site might also be regarded as a benefit. Whilst the operation of the academy from a single site would be advantageous when compared with the current practice, the site is not well positioned in relation to public transport and as a result there would be a reliance on car based transport. Nonetheless, a Green Travel Plan has been offered in order to minimise car journeys. In my view, none of these matters can be regarded as very special circumstances sufficient to justify inappropriate development in the Green Belt. However, I believe that they can be seen as positive factors to be weighed in the balance of considerations. [12.5.3.8.3.10.6.24]

Conclusion

The proposal is for inappropriate development in the Green Belt which is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt. In addition, arising from the intrusion of the built complex, there would be some harm to openness and some conflict with the purpose of including land within the Green Belt to safeguard the countryside from encroachment. However I consider that there would be no material harm to the landscape, to ecology, in relation to any highway matters, to the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers, or to any other interest of acknowledged importance. Whilst I believe that it might, therefore, be argued that the overall harm is limited, there is a presumption against inappropriate development in the Green Belt unless the harm is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

The important contribution that DCFC makes to the game of football from national to local level and its important role in the community have not been disputed. The Club needs to run a licensed academy if it is to preserve its status as a leading Club and if it is to remain a competitive force within the Premier League, thereby maintaining its position at the forefront of the community. In my opinion, the Club has demonstrated that the academy needs to be located on a single site and that the facilities proposed do not go beyond what is considered to be necessary. With the time constraints imposed by the FA and FA Premier League, there is now an urgent and pressing need to reach a satisfactory solution. The inclusion of the professional’s training ground on the same site makes no further demand on the amount of land or built development required.

The establishment of football club academies is a relatively recent occurrence so that site provision in current Development Plans is not to be expected. [11.5] Whilst they clearly accord with Government guidance to promote sporting excellence, the built facilities plainly go beyond the level envisaged in Green Belt locations. DCFC has made thorough and repetitive searches of the area in and around Derby, in consultation with the local authorities, to identify a suitable alternative site. None has been found and
there is no sound evidence that an alternative could be found in the near future. The Club’s position is, in any event, that a site is needed now.

18.40 In my view, the urgent need for an academy to meet the FA and FA Premier League requirements and the absence of any alternative solution amounts to very special circumstances, which outweigh the limited harm to the Green Belt. The proposal would thus comply with the requirements of PPG2 and policy GB3 of the EBLP. General Development Strategy Policy 7 of the Structure Plan does not include an exception to the presumption against inappropriate development in very special circumstances, but I consider that the material considerations warrant an exception to the policy in this instance. Whilst each case must be treated on its own merits, similar factors were accepted as very special circumstances in the Sunderland Association Football Club appeal, where that Club was in much the same position. {6.18,6.19}

18.41 The benefits of the limited community and educational use of the site, the possible ecological benefits, and the advantages of operating from a single site in terms of reducing the need to travel, do not seem to me to amount to very special circumstances which justify inappropriate development, but nevertheless do weigh in favour of the proposal.

18.42 With regard to the criteria listed in policy GB5 of the EBLP, I believe that (A) and (B) are met as the site is located at a wide point of the Green Belt where the open character is not particularly vulnerable and the scheme has been designed to minimise the visual effect. The predicted traffic figures demonstrate that excessive numbers of people or traffic would not be attracted to the site as required by criterion (C) and this would be further ensured by the prohibition of any paying spectators and the deterrent to casual road-side spectating. The built complex would have an urbanising influence in conflict with criterion (D) but I have already found that the limited harm, due to the sympathetic design, careful positioning and screening, would be outweighed by the very special circumstances of the case.

18.43 I have noted the comments made regarding the manner in which the planning application was dealt with by Erewash Borough Council, but these do not address the planning merits of the proposal and as such can have no bearing on my recommendation.\[3.1\]

Recommendation

18.44 For the reasons given above, I recommend that planning permission be granted for the development applied for. If the Secretary of State agrees, then the permission should be subject to the conditions listed at document C36 for the reasons given in document C29, but with the changes set out in section 17 of this report.

[Signature]

B M Campbell
INSPECTOR
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Mr K Hopkins Kimberley House, Church Lane, Morley, Derby
Mrs C Goodwin 11 Deborah Drive, Morley Road, Chaddesden, Derbys
Mr R Upton Deputy Head of Lees Brook Community School, 13 Clumber Street, Long Eaton, Derbys
Mrs E Knight 15 Brackley Gate, Morley, Derby
Ms S Heard 57 Fairway Crescent, Allestree, Derby
Mr K Brown 3 Oakwood Drive, Oakwood, Derby
Mr I Buck 15 Ryegrass Road, Oakwood, Derby
Reverend P Waller Oakwood Vicarage, 239 Morley Road, Oakwood, Derby
Mr V Mills 454 Nottingham Road, Chaddesden, Derbys
Mr P Gill Flat 11, 33 Charnwood Street, Derby
Mr P Ashburner 251 Morley Road, Oakwood, Derby
Mr G Harvey 27 Brackley Gate, Morley, Derby
Mr G Oliver 53 Boulton Lane, Alvaston, Derby

DOCUMENTS
Document 1 List of persons present at the Pre-Inquiry meeting and at each session of the Inquiry.

CORE DOCUMENTS
C1 Erewash Borough Local Plan 1994
C2 Derbyshire Structure Plan 1990 (superseded)
C3 Derby and Derbyshire Joint Structure Plan January 2001
C4 PPG2 Green Belts
C5 PPG3 Housing
C6 PPG17 Sport and Recreation
C7 ERE/0599/0007 Application forms and plans
C8 ERE/0599/0007 Representations received
C9 ERE/0599/0007 Committee Report and Resolution to refuse the application
C10 ERE/0500/0035 Application forms and plans
C11 ERE/0500/0035 Representations received
C12 ERE/0500/0035 Committee report and resolution to approve the application
C13 Call in letter from the GOEM dated 4 October 2000
C14 Notice served pursuant to Article 18 of the GDPO dated 18 October 2000
C15 Letter of notification of the Inquiry and list of persons notified
C16 Letter of notification of the Inquiry to Derby Friends of the Earth
C17 Letter of notification of the Inquiry to CPRE
C18 Erewash Borough Council Statement of Case
C19 Derby County Football Club Statement of Case
C20 Derby City Council Statement of Case
C21 Statement of Common Ground – Erewash Borough Council/Derby City Council/Derby County Football Club
C22 Letters of representation received following call in
C23 The FA “A Charter for Quality”
C24 Letter from the Chairman of Sport England
C25 Notes of the Pre-Inquiry Meeting held on 9 January 2001
C26 Letter from Ockbrook and Borrowash Parish Council dated 28 February 2001
C27 City of Derby Local Plan 1998
C28 Letter from Mr I Jones dated 28 February 2001
C29 Suggested conditions with reasons
C30 Friends of the Earth Statement of Case
C31 Moor Farm Green Belt Protection Group Statement of Case
C32 Morley Parish Council Statement of Case
C33 Mr R Barker Statement of Case
C34 Mr I Jones Statement of Case

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C35  Letter from Derbyshire County Council dated 6 November with attachments  
C36  Revised list of suggested conditions  
C37  Site inspection itinerary  

**APPLICANT'S DOCUMENTS**  
APP2  Evidence of Mr Chadwick including plans SWC1 and SWC2 with key  
APP3  Appendices 1-11 to Mr Chadwick's evidence  
APP4  Appendices 12-20 to Mr Chadwick's evidence  
APP5  Summary of Mr Chadwick's evidence  
APP6  Evidence of Mr Denney with appendices 1-7  
APP7  Evidence of Mr Gadsby with appendices A-C  
APP8  Evidence of Mr Cheetham with tables 1-7, figures 1-5 and appendices A-D  
APP9  Evidence of Mr Wilkinson  
APP10  Evidence of Mr Richards  
APP11  Supplementary evidence of Mr Chadwick with attachments  
APP12  Draft Unilateral Undertaking  
APP13  Calculation of pitch requirements for DCFC Academy  
APP14  Letter from BWB dated 28 February 2001  
APP15  Bundle of various letters relating to alternative sites  
APP16  Access to hectares conversion within Mr Chadwick's evidence  
APP17  Derby Stadium Plan, Pride Park  
APP18  Derby Stadium application plan 1996  
APP19  Copy of Land Registry plan with pitch layout and reasons for unsuitability  
APP20  Pride Park rehabilitation scheme and reasons for unsuitability  
APP21  Plan SWC1A: location of Academy Students (including U17-U19) and existing facilities  
APP22  Letter from East Midlands Electricity dated 28 February 2001 with attachments  
APP23  The FA Child Protection Policy  
APP24  Information relating to buses serving the application site  
APP25  Information relating to Sawley Marlia, Long Eaton  
APP26  Glossary of Terms  
APP27  Completed Unilateral Undertaking  
APP28  Information relating to Sports Colleges  
APP29  NRPB Press Release 6 March 2001  
APP30  Draft Green Travel Plan  
APP31  Hedging development schedule  
APP32  Letter from CPM concerning ecological matters  
APP33  List of DCFC Academy teams and students  
APP34  Summary of ecological appraisal process at Moor Farm  
APP35  Phase 2 Ecological Survey Results and Mitigation (A)-April 1999, (B)-September 1999  

**EREWASH BOROUGH COUNCIL'S DOCUMENTS**  
EBC.A  Evidence of Mr MiCihu with summary  
EBC1  Committee Report ERE/500/35  
EBC2  Extract from Derbyshire Structure Plan 1990  
EBC3  Extract from deposit edition of the Derby and Derbyshire Joint Structure Plan  
EBC4  Extract from the Erewash Local Plan 1994  
EBC5  Letter from the FA dated 14 April 2000  
EBC6  TPO extract  
EBC7  Letter from Saint-Gobain Pipelines dated 20 February 2001  
EBC8  Reasons for refusal of application ERE/599/07  

**DERBY CITY COUNCIL'S DOCUMENTS**  
DCCA  Evidence of Mr Stewart with summary  
DCCB  Evidence of Mr Hansell  
DCC1  Extract from Derby and Derbyshire Joint Structure Plan 2001  
DCC2  Extract from City of Derby Local Plan 1998  
DCC3  Report to the City Council's Planning Control Committee 29 June 2000  
DCC4  Letter from the City Council to Erewash BC dated 3 July 2000  
DCC5  Report to the City Council's Policy Committee relating to the City of Derby Local Plan Review – First Deposit  
DCC6  Schedules of housing and employment land supply at April 2000
MORLEY PARISH COUNCIL’S DOCUMENTS
MPC.1 Evidence of Councillors Milner and Queenborough
MPC.A Circular to residents relating to an open meeting
MPC.B The FA Premier League – Youth Development, Section N, Rules 26 and 48
MPC.C Plan showing location of Stanton Iron Works
MPC.D The FA Premier League Rules, Section N Youth Development
MPC.E Letter dated 1 March 2001 relating to Stocker Flats
MPC.F Extract from City of Derby Local Plan 1998
MPC.G Extract from Derbyshire Wildlife Sites Register
MPC.H Imperial to metric conversion where they appear in evidence
MPC.I Minutes of the Parish Council meeting 15 July 1999
MPC.J Calculation of minimum pitch provision for the Academy
MPC.K Extract from Laws of Association Football
MPC.L Parish Council’s response to application ERE/0599/007 on ecological and environmental matters
MPC.M Extract from Mid-Derbyshire Local Biodiversity Action Plan
MPC.O Plan showing golf courses in Morley

MOOR FARM GREEN BELT PROTECTION GROUP’S DOCUMENTS
MFGBPG.A Evidence of Mr Latham with summary and appendices 1-8
MFGBPG/1 The Case for Pride Park with attachments
MFGBPG/2 GOE decision on application by Leighton Buzzard Rugby Football Club
MFGBPG/3 Football Club Training Grounds and Academies – Site Survey Report
MFGBPG/4 Minutes of the Derby City Council’s Planning Control Committee 29 June 2000

DERBY FRIENDS OF THE EARTH’S DOCUMENTS
FOE.A Evidence of Ms Skrytek with introduction and summary
FOE/1.1 DCFC Brochure Moor Farm, Locke Estate
FOE/1.2 Report to Derby City Council’s Policy Committee concerning the Consultation Paper on a Revised UK Strategy for Sustainable Development
FOE/1.3 Article on Hot Warning
FOE/1.4 PPG17 Sport and Recreation
FOE/1.5 Extract from the Lancet 1999 concerning The UK Childhood Cancer Study
FOE/1.6 Powerwatch News Archive
FOE/1.7 Corona ions from powerlines and increased exposure to pollutant aerosols/Increased exposure to pollutant aerosols under high voltage powerlines
FOE/1.8 Executive Summary of the Review of the Hedgerow Regulations 1997
FOE/1.9 Wildlife Too – Californians for Alternatives to Toxics
FOE/1.10 Australian Frogs – an overview – Environment Australia
FOE/1.11 Extract from report to the City Council’s Policy Committee relating to the City of Derby Local Plan Review – First Deposit
FOE/1.12 Sport in the Inner City – A Community Report – The Derby Inner City Sports Forum
FOE/1.13 Extract from Pride Park Planning Brief plus note relating to Wilmorton College
FOE/1.14 Extracts from the Sunday Times 4 March 2001
FOE/1.15 Derby Cycling and Walking Map showing locations of Academy students
FOE/1.16 Letter from Chair of the Inner City Sports Forum dated 7 March 2001
FOE/1.17 Article from the Pride Park Project Study December 1997

MR R BARKER’S DOCUMENTS
RB.A Evidence of Mr Barker with summary
RB.1 Plans showing Sawley Marina in comparison to the Application Site
RB.1.1 Approved Green Belts
RB.2.0 Extract from Viewpoint, Erewash Borough Council, Local Democracy Issue, August 1999
RB.3.0 Extract from FPG2
RB.4.0 Extract from the Stapleford and Sandiacre News 17 February 2000
RB.5.0 Extract from Erewash BC Performance Plan 2000-2001
RB.6.0 Extract from FPG3
RB.7.0 Extract from appeal decision T7APP/N1025/A/99/1025302/F4
RB.8.0 Extracts from the Derbyshire Evening Telegraph 30 June 2000 & 7 July 2000
RB9.0  Extract from the Stapleford and Sandiacre News 22 February 2001
RB.10 Annual District Auditor’s Report – not submitted
RB11.1 Correspondence between Mr Barker and Erewash Borough Council
   - 11.9
   & 12.0
   - 12.3
RB.13 Closing statement of Mr Barker

MRS ARMITAGE’S DOCUMENTS
BMA.A  Evidence of Mrs Armitage
BMA1  Extracts from Derbyshire Evening Telegraph – January 1997 and January & February 1998
BMA2  Extracts from Derbyshire Evening Telegraph – January 1997. extracts from the City of Derby Local
       Plan Review
BMA3  Plan of Pride Park and OS extract southern end of Pride Park
BMA4  Correspondence with the FA and FA Premier League
BMA5  Letter to the Planning Inspectorate dated 29 January 2001

INQUIRY DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED BY OTHER INTERESTED PERSONS
INT.1  Evidence of Mr I Jones
INT.2  Statement from Mr A Hill, Manor Farm, Stanley
INT.3  Letter from Mr I Bennett, 273 Morley Road, Oakwood, Derby DE216 4TD

PLANS
Plan A  Application drawing – 90.1840:012 site location plan
Plan B  Application drawing – 747/01M overall site plan
Plan C  Application drawing – 747/02C overall site section
Plan D  Application drawing – 747/03B landscape site plan
Plan E  Application drawing – 747/01H revised building plans
Plan F  Application drawing – 747/10E building elevations
Plan G  Application drawing – 747/10F building elevations -- true visible zones
Plan H  Application drawing – DBY/061/04 Rev.P5 proposed levels