



# HULTON PARK

## Planning Statement

Prepared by Turley

May 2017



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**Client**

Peel Holdings (Land and Planning) Limited

**Our reference**

PEEM3031

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# 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Turley on behalf of Peel Holdings (Land and Property) Ltd (“the Applicant” or “Peel”). It is submitted in respect of the hybrid planning and listed building consent application for the proposed development described herein, on land comprising and adjoining the Hulton Park Estate in Bolton (“the Site”).
- 1.2 The Statement is intended to assist Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council (“BMBC”) as the Local Planning Authority in determining the application, by providing an evaluation of the proposed development against the relevant planning considerations. Having regard to Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Statement considers the conformity of the proposed development with the Development Plan and the weight to be applied to other material planning considerations.

## **Background to the Proposals**

- 1.3 The Hulton family settled in Bolton in the 12<sup>th</sup> Century and acquired land at Hulton in the early 14<sup>th</sup> Century. For almost 800 years they occupied the Hulton Park Estate, becoming one of Lancashire’s longest standing families. Latterly the family became heavily involved in coal mining, with a number of pits established within and surrounding the estate, and the revenue derived supported investment in the Park itself. Hulton Park was designed to create a country estate sheltered from the outside workings of the collieries and encroaching urban landscape. The Park is a Grade II Registered Park on the Historic England Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest and as such it is recognised as a historic landscape of national and regional importance.
- 1.4 The Park has experienced decades of decline. It was unoccupied for over 40 years in the early to mid 20<sup>th</sup> Century and the centrepiece and focal point of the estate, Hulton Hall, was demolished in the late 1950s. Since then the Park has experienced little to no investment nor been subject to any active management regime. Today the landscape is subject to agricultural tenancies and – in the absence of an alternative use which is both appropriate and viable – it is used primarily for the grazing of cattle and horses. The impact of such day-to-day use of the Park, which has resulted in years of under-investment in the absence of an incentive to deal with it other than for agricultural uses, has led to the gradual degradation of the designed landscape, with the loss or reduction in extent and quality of natural and built parkland features.
- 1.5 The Park has been in the ownership of Peel since 2010. Since that time Peel has been considering a means of restoring the Park to its past glories and providing it with a lasting future. The Park requires substantial investment to reverse its long term decline and implement an ongoing conservation management regime. Peel’s vision is to return the Park to a working and productive landscape that once again makes a meaningful contribution to the vitality of the area and in doing so provides the means of retaining and enhancing its heritage significance, whilst conveying wider substantial and lasting benefits.
- 1.6 Peel’s proposal for realising this is the creation of a sporting hub of international standard and quality in the form of a championship-grade golf resort. The resort is

designed specifically to underpin a bid to host the Ryder Cup, the most prestigious and highest profile golf event and one of the biggest sporting events in the world. With this scale and profile comes the ability to secure significant social and economic benefit for the host location, in the immediate local area, but also regionally. That benefit can be lasting, providing a legacy associated with ongoing use of the highest quality of facilities and the ability to trade on the Ryder Cup experience, and the wide-ranging legacy initiatives that derive from the Ryder Cup. Peel aims to host the Ryder Cup at the Hulton Park venue in 2026.

- 1.7 The international-standard golf resort will comprise a championship-grade 18 hole golf course, a clubhouse, and a 4- to 5-star hotel complex including a destination spa and conference facility, all located within the registered Park, and an associated golf academy on land to the north. The proposed development entails the restoration of an extensive and diverse range of historical landscape features in the Park and a commitment to an ongoing conservation management regime.
- 1.8 A significant financial investment is required to create this resort, including to ensure that the facilities themselves are delivered to the quality standard required for the Ryder Cup tournament such that the scale of benefits associated with this event are secured. The investment required is of a scale that cannot be recouped from the future operation of the facilities or enhancement in land value. The lasting legacy that the development and management regime would create is not realisable – not commercially viable – without a significant funding stream.
- 1.9 The proposed development therefore includes the creation of sustainable residential communities on land adjoining the proposed golf resort. The new homes will provide essential cross-funding to make the project commercially deliverable, whilst conveying other significant benefits including contributing positively to meeting identified housing needs. The proposed residential communities are predominantly located on land outside of and adjoining the western edge of the registered Park, whilst two contained areas of residential development are located within the Park on land which is identified as being the least sensitive in respect of historic landscape significance.
- 1.10 This transformational vision for the Site – which also includes commitments to the enhancement of public access via a new ‘Hulton Trail’ and the delivery of new and expanded local infrastructure such as highways and schools – provides Hulton Park with a viable long term future. This will safeguard and enhance its historical and broader significance. In doing so, it will deliver a sustainable development with a national – and even international – profile which conveys significant and lasting social, economic and environmental benefits at a local and at least regional scale.

## **The Planning and Listed Building Consent Application**

- 1.11 The proposed development is the subject of a single hybrid planning application. In broad terms it seeks:
  - Detailed planning permission for the golf resort – including the golf course, clubhouse, associated structures and buildings, hotel complex, heritage restoration and golf academy – and for the ‘Hulton Trail’; and

- Outline planning permission for the residential communities, with only highway access to the relevant areas included as a detailed matter (though also in part reserved).
- 1.12 The application also seeks listed building consent for the proposed restoration of the Grade II listed Dovecote located within the Site. Two plans for the Dovecote – entitled *Elevations and Masonry Repairs* and *Plans & Sections* (refs: dov/lbc/001 and dov/lbc/002 respectively) – identify the scope of works proposed.
- 1.13 In respect of the residential communities, the application is accompanied by a *Parameters Plan* (drawing ref: 15191 (PI) 500 Q) and *Residential Design Codes* (for those parcels located within the Registered Parkland). It is anticipated that both will be tied to the grant of planning permission, requiring reserved matters submissions to be in accordance.

### **The Accompanying Documentation**

- 1.14 The planning and listed building consent application is accompanied by an extensive range of detailed evidence and information. In particular, the Applicant has undertaken a full Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) on a voluntary basis. This has been subject to a full scoping exercise with Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council (BMBC) as the Local Planning Authority. The submitted *Environmental Statement* (ES) reflects the feedback received from BMBC and various statutory consultees provided within a comprehensive Scoping Opinion. The ES which accompanies the application has been prepared having regard to the EIA Regulations 2011 (as amended) and associated guidance.
- 1.15 The full range of plans/drawings and documentation which is submitted by the Applicant – and which will assist BMBC in its consideration and determination of the application – is set out at Appendix 1.

### **Conditions and Obligations**

- 1.16 In the event that planning permission is granted:
- A series of conditions will be required to, *inter alia*, control the form of development, to deal with the submission and approval of additional detail, and to ensure the delivery of mitigation measures. Whilst the detailed wording will need to be determined by BMBC, an initial list of prospective conditions is provided at Appendix 2.
  - A Section 106 ('S106') Agreement will be required to secure various obligations which will ensure that the proposed development is acceptable in planning terms and which cannot otherwise be dealt with by condition. Draft Heads of Terms for such an Agreement are submitted alongside the application and are referred to within this Statement. The Applicant proposes to work with BMBC during the determination of the application to develop the Heads of Terms into a fully drafted S106 Agreement.

## **Structure of the Planning Statement**

1.17 The remainder of this Planning Statement is structured as follows:

- Section 2: Site and Surroundings
- Section 3: Hulton Park: An Asset and Opportunity
- Section 4: The Development Proposals
- Section 5: Policy Context
- Section 6: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment
- Section 7: Responding to a Positive Growth Opportunity
- Section 8: Meeting Housing Needs
- Section 9: Achieving Sustainable Development
- Section 10: Protecting Green Belt Land
- Section 11: Very Special Circumstances
- Section 12: Conclusion on the Planning Balance

## 2. Site and Surroundings

### Summary Points

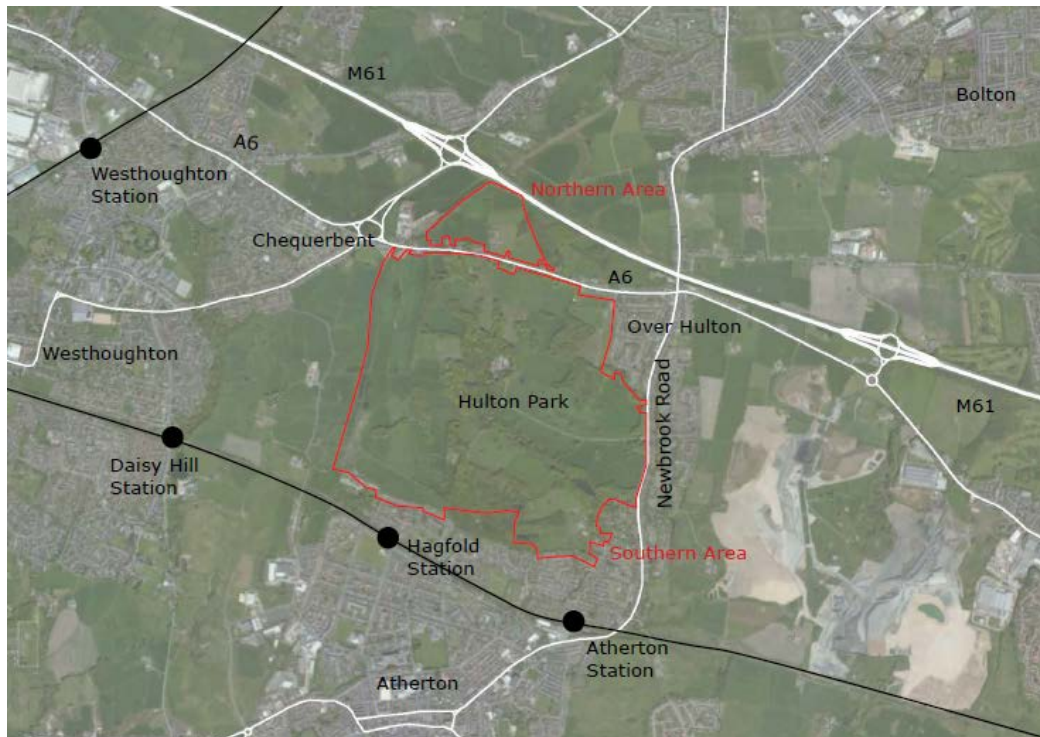
- The site adjoins the urban areas of Bolton and Wigan within the Greater Manchester conurbation, and has direct access to the A6 and onwards to the M61 motorway.
- The majority of the site comprises Hulton Park, a Grade II listed Registered Park and Garden.

- 2.1 This Section provides a brief description of the application Site and the surrounding area. Hulton Park itself is discussed in further detail in Section 3.

### Location and Boundaries

- 2.2 The application Site is approximately 268ha in size and is located at and adjoining Hulton Park, Greater Manchester in North West England. The Site is approximately 4.5km southwest of Bolton, 8km east of Wigan, and 16.5km northwest of Manchester. It is set between three established residential towns: Over Hulton bounds the Site to the east, Atherton to the south, and Westhoughton is approximately 500 metres to the west. The location of the Site is shown at Figure 2.1.

**Figure 2.1: Site and surroundings (Source: Design and Access Statement)**



- 2.3 The A6 (Manchester Road) runs through the Site, extending westwards where it forms the Chequerbent Roundabout (in junction with the A58) and eastwards where it forms Four Lane Ends (the junction with Newbrook Road and St Helens Road). The Site therefore includes land both north and south of the A6, including:



- A larger southern area, broadly square in shape and directly bounded by the A6 (Manchester Road) along its northern boundary, the A579 (Newbrook Road) and residential housing on its eastern boundary, residential housing on its southern boundary, and a disused railway line / public footpath along its western boundary; and
- A smaller area directly north of the larger site, broadly triangular in shape. The A6 (Manchester Road) and residential properties form the southern boundary, and the M61 forms its northern boundary. It is adjoined on its western boundary by a disused railway line / public footpath, and by a block of mature woodland on its eastern boundary.

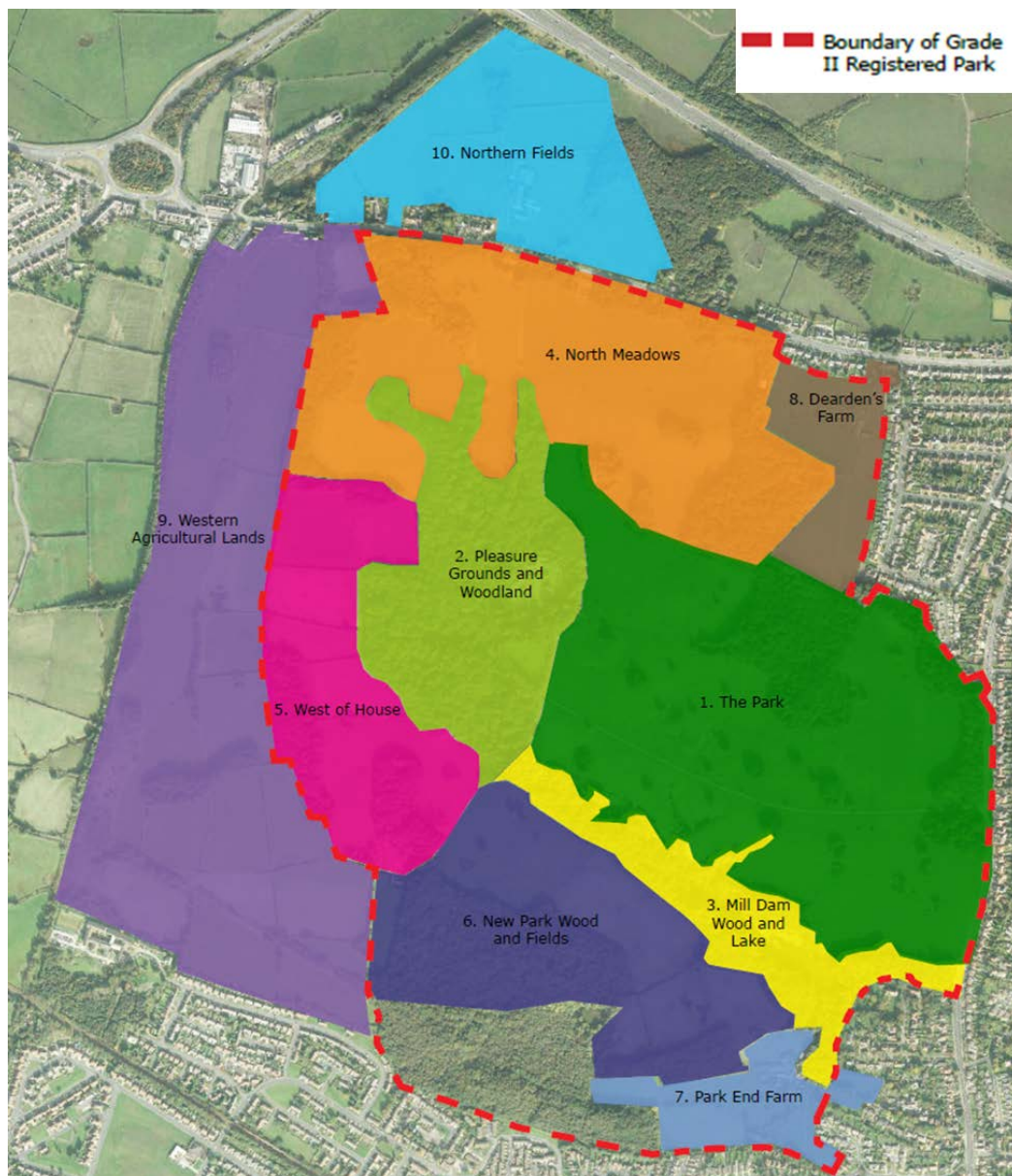
2.4 A rail line is approximately 300 meters south of the Site and there are two train stations – Hag Fold and Atherton – approximately 500 meters to the southeast and southwest of the Site respectively. These stops provide access to train services to destinations such as Southport, Chester, Wigan, Salford Manchester, Huddersfield, Stalybridge and Kirkby.

## **Site Description**

### **Hulton Park**

2.5 The majority of the larger southern parcel of the Site comprises Hulton Park, a Grade II Listed Registered Park and Garden of Special Historic Interest, as shown at Figure 2.2.

**Figure 2.2: Registered Park and Garden boundary and character areas**  
(Source: Design and Access Statement)



2.6 Hulton Park is formed of the landscaped estate that once surrounded Hulton Hall, which was demolished in the 1950s. The Park is generally gently undulating, rising to the north and, as identified in the accompanying *Design and Access Statement*, its features include:

- A principal entrance from the east off Newbrook Road, in the form of a gated carriage entrance bounded by a lodge building;
- A secondary entrance fronting the A6, again in the form of a gated carriage entrance, with a residential property known as the Cottage (a former residence of the Hulton family) lying adjacent;

- A cluster of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century farm buildings and deteriorated structures around the site of the former Hulton Hall, known as Home Farm. Within this cluster is a small Dovecote, which is a Grade II listed structure;
- The severely overgrown remains of pleasure grounds and a kitchen garden that once served Hulton Hall;
- Two large lakes, albeit subject to significant silting and hence reduced in depth and size;
- A stream known as Mill Dam Stream which extends from the north west down in to the centre of the Site where it feeds one of the lakes;
- Three other farm building clusters:
  - Dearden's Farm in the north east, accessed from the A6;
  - Park End Farm in the south east, accessed from Woodlands to the east; and
  - Wood End Farm in the west, accessed from a farm track which adjoins Platt Lane to the west;
- A memorial to the Pretoria Pit mining disaster in the south east corner;
- Large expanses of open ground, now largely grazing pasture, defined by woodland, plantations and individual specimen trees;
- Vehicular tracks and footways, only one of which is a public right of way, extending in to the western extent of the Park.

2.7 The Park is currently used for agricultural purposes (grazing), some limited residential use (in the properties referenced above) and limited leisure use, such as local archery and angling clubs.

### **Adjoining land within the application Site**

2.8 The Site also includes land beyond the designated boundary of the registered Park, namely:

- 42.66ha of land immediately west of the boundary of Hulton Park comprising agricultural land interspersed by a network of public footpaths and blocks of woodland. The land is bounded to the west by a disused railway line which is now an informal recreational footpath; and
- 19.18ha of land to the north of Hulton Park and north of the A6 (Manchester Road), comprising agricultural land, blocks of woodland, and agricultural buildings, with residential properties lining Manchester Road. One public right of way runs north to south through this part of the Site.
- Two smaller parcels of land, one in the south eastern corner of the Site adjoining Woodlands Drive and comprising grassed areas, trees, and a farm track access

to Park End Farm (also a public right of way); with a second in the north east, comprising farm buildings and access to Dearden's Farm. These are approximately 5.93ha and 7.44ha in size respectively.

- 2.9 The policy designations at the Site are identified in Section 5.

### **Associated Infrastructure Land**

- 2.10 In order to serve the residential development it is proposed that the Applicant will either deliver a new link road to the west of the Site or make a financial contribution of an equivalent value towards an alternative highways arrangement in this location (see Section 4). An indicative arrangement for this link road has been identified and it would extend from the Chequerbent Roundabout southwards and westwards to join Platt Lane (drawing ref: ITM10187-SK-159). The relevant land lies to the west of the disused rail line that forms the Site boundary and comprises pasture land broken up by field boundaries (mainly hedgerows).
- 2.11 The link road does not form part of the proposed development for which planning permission is sought and the relevant land is not included within application Site. Nevertheless, given that it is directly associated with the proposed development, the Environmental Impact Assessment ('EIA') has assessed the potential effects of the link road development alongside the application proposals.

### 3. Hulton Park: An Asset and Opportunity

#### Summary Points

- Hulton Park is a valuable historic landscape asset, but one which has experienced decades of decline.
- Change and significant investment is needed to sustain the asset for the future, and to rediscover the positive role the Park should have within the local area.
- A *Conservation Plan* has guided the proposals to achieve overall conservation and enhancement of the Park and will, through monitoring and review, guide the ongoing conservation management of the estate.

- 3.1 This Section introduces the characteristics of the Registered Park and the *Conservation Plan* which has informed the formulation of the proposed development.

#### Hulton Park

- 3.2 Hulton Park is a designed historic landscape of acknowledged national importance, as signified by its Grade II Registered status. The Park is synonymous with the Hulton family, as successive members of the family resided within and funded the development and expansion of the estate, from the mid 18<sup>th</sup> Century onwards. The parkland was designed and formulated by two highly regarded landscape architects, William Emes and John Webb, who oversaw this expansion during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. This culminated in a country estate of significant scale and quality and combined architectural structures, woodland, meadow, large water bodies and formal flower gardens. The Park sat at the centre of political and social life within the area, as the Hulton family became important local employers through their coal mining activity around the Park and beyond and offered recreational pursuits across the estate.
- 3.3 Whilst some of the originally designed landscape is discernible and the Park remains a significant asset of value at a local and national scale, it has become significantly degraded. The Park has experienced decades of under-investment and limited management, leading to the degradation of a number of those features and a consequent reduction in its quality and relationship to the original design. Hulton Hall, the centrepiece of the Park and focal point for the estate and social activity, has been lost and a number of other structures and features have deteriorated. For instance:
- The woodland plantations within the Registered Park, including the pleasure grounds, are severely overgrown, unmanaged, and have been invaded by non-native species (such as rhododendrons) and
  - Many of the historic structures are derelict or in a state of disrepair. For example:
    - The walled kitchen garden has suffered collapse or partial demolition, with parts of it reconstructed in unsympathetic brickwork. The majority is concealed by ivy which has damaged mortar and led to instability, whilst the garden itself is overgrown;
    - the Ha-Ha has suffered partial collapse; and



- the former Stable Block is in a ruinous and unstable condition;
- The large water bodies, such as the Mill Dam lake and the northern lake within the pleasure grounds, have silted up and reduced in extent such that their original form has been lost; and
- Much of the pasture suffers from over-compaction and over-grazing.

**Figure 3.1: The current state of various features within Hulton Park**



*Source: Heritage Impact Assessment*

- 3.4 The Park has no general public access, aside from a single Public Right of Way that extends in to the western extents. The estate is subject to farming tenancies and some limited recreational activities. Despite its quality and extensive history, the Park in its current condition and function performs a very limited role in contributing to the local area. Given the limited positive use of the Park it is continuing to deteriorate and there is a significant risk that remaining heritage assets will experience further decline.
- 3.5 Since Peel's acquisition of the estate in 2010 it has introduced a limited programme of management. However, this does not serve to reverse the decline that has occurred since the 1950s nor can it prevent further decline of those areas already in substantial disrepair. Only with substantial investment can the true value and historic qualities of the

Park be rediscovered, including the significant role it can and should play in local life and in supporting the local economy. With such investment and a viable means of safeguarding that investment through effective future management, the Park can once again represent a major asset for Bolton.

## **Conservation Plan**

- 3.6 For Hulton Park to be sustained as a heritage asset and for future generations to be able to understand, experience and enjoy the Park as it was originally conceived, change is needed. However, any change has to be carefully managed such that it achieves those aims and safeguards the Park's heritage value.
- 3.7 Peel commissioned a *Conservation Plan* (CP) in order to assess the overall value, significance and condition of the Park and its key features, to identify the threats to the landscape, and to identify conservation policies to inform proposals for the Park, including a means of restoration and conservation. This CP has been developed via an iterative process and has directly informed the form and content of those proposals. It is an important component of the planning application and will be a document that will be monitored and reviewed as the proposed development is implemented.
- 3.8 As documented within the CP, the proposals are founded on a thorough assessment of the historic significance of the Park and its setting in the wider historic environment. The CP has evidenced and evaluated the character and significance of the component parts of the Park and their condition, and in doing so has provided a clear framework to guide and test the proposals as they have evolved. In interpreting and applying the evidence and guiding policies of the CP, the proposed development has been designed to conserve and enhance the value of the Park as a whole. The design has sought to:
- Minimise harm where interventions in the original design are required, such as in the configuration and topography of the golf course and location of the residential development; and
  - Maximise the benefits through restoration. This has been achieved in a number of instances, including the water bodies, pleasure grounds and various built structures (such as the Ha-Ha).
- 3.9 Guided by the principles and policies of the CP, the proposed development is therefore a response to the threats the Park faces from its long-term decline and the opportunities it presents by virtue of its location, scale and value. The proposed development responds to the conservation aims of the CP and in doing so provides the means of sustaining the asset for future generations. The CP provides a conservation strategy specific to the Park and its heritage features, and outlines an action plan which will be tied to the implementation of the proposals as a whole, including a comprehensive and lasting management regime.

## 4. The Development Proposals

### Summary Points

- The application proposes the restoration and long-term active management of the Registered Park through the creation of a championship-grade golf resort.
- The scale, composition and quality of the golf resort is aligned with the needs of the Ryder Cup tournament, to afford the proposal the greatest prospect of success through the competitive bidding process and to convey the greatest benefit.
- The creation of residential communities adjoining the golf resort is an essential and cohesive part of the overall project.
- A comprehensive and integrated approach has been taken to the masterplanning of the proposals, including the provision of supporting social and other infrastructure and environmental enhancement.
- The Applicant is prepared to accept a condition tying the implementation of the development to securing the rights to host the Ryder Cup tournament.

- 4.1 This Section provides an explanation of the proposed development and the other associated development which does not form part of the application. Further detailed information can be found in the accompanying ES (Volume 2: Chapter 3) and *Design and Access Statement*.
- 4.2 At the heart of the proposed development is the vision to restore the heritage significance of Hulton Park whilst providing it with a long term and viable future. The proposed creation of a championship-grade golf resort and sustainable residential communities, along with commitments to improve local infrastructure, will achieve this vision alongside lasting social and economic benefits.
- 4.3 The proposed development has been subject to extensive pre-application discussions with the local authority and statutory consultees, and a comprehensive programme of community consultation has been conducted. The feedback received has informed the design and evolution of the proposed development. A summary of the pre-application discussions and community engagement is provided at Appendix 3 and further details are provided in the accompanying *Statement of Community Involvement* (SCI).

### The Proposed Development

- 4.4 The proposed development is summarised in the following table.

**Table 4.1: Overview of the proposed development**

Proposed development	
An international-standard golf resort	A 7,400 yard, Par 72, 18 hole championship-grade golf course
	A clubhouse serving the golf course, comprising changing facilities, bar and restaurant, associated function spaces, administrative spaces, and an ancillary retail facility (golf club shop, selling golf and golf-related



Proposed development	
	merchandise), with car and golf buggy parking
	A golf academy, including driving range, short course, adventure golf course, putting greens, and associated building to comprise teaching facilities, cafeteria, and retail facility (selling golf and golf-related merchandise), with car and golf buggy parking
	A 4- to 5-star equivalent hotel complex which includes 142 bedrooms, and other associated facilities including a restaurant, spa and conferencing facility, with car parking
	Other ancillary buildings, structures and works associated with the golf course, including a maintenance building, halfway house, underpass under the A6 Manchester Road, golf buggy tracks, various bridges, and boundary treatments
	Internal access roads to each of the above, including remodelling of existing drives within the Registered Park
	New and replacement landscaping throughout the Site
	New junctions with the A6 Manchester Road to provide vehicular and pedestrian access, both north and south of the A6
Restoration works to Hulton Park and various existing structures and heritage assets	Reinstating the original Pleasure Grounds, HaHa and walled kitchen garden associated with the demolished Hulton Hall
	Repair to dams (Mill Dam at the south lake and the dam at the north lake)
	Restoration / replacement of boundary treatments
	Restoration of the gate, railings and Lodge building at the estate entrance on Newbrook Road
	Restoration of the Dovecote
	Restoration of the Dutch Barn
	Restoration of various other historic structures
The re-routing, upgrading and extension of the Public Right of Way Network, including creation of a new 'Hulton Trail'	
The residential development of 56.03ha of land at three areas within the Site, providing up to 1,036 new homes with associated landscaping, public open space and a local centre	42.66ha of residential development (gross) at the west of the Site, referred to as Western Fields, which has the potential to deliver approximately 759 dwellings and will be accessed from the A6 and via a new link road to the west (see below). Part of this area is proposed in the alternative, for either residential use or the development of a local neighbourhood centre of up to 1,382sqm; if the local centre is delivered on-site the scale of residential development would reduce to 42.14ha (gross), with capacity for approximately 739 new homes
	7.44ha of residential development (gross) at the north-east of the Site, referred to as Deardens Farm, which has the potential to deliver approximately 192 dwellings and will be accessed from the A6

Proposed development	
	5.93ha of residential development (gross) at the south-east of the Site, referred to as Park End Farm, which has the potential to deliver approximately 85 dwellings and will be accessed from off Woodlands <sup>1</sup> and Broadway
Demolition of a various of existing structures	Hulton Cottage and associated outbuildings
	Farmhouse and farm buildings off Punch Lane (north of Manchester Road)
	Northern gateway and walls to drive
	Arcade wall to former Hulton Hall
	Home Farmhouse and farm buildings (with the exception of the Hay Barn and Dovecote)
	Dearden's Farm and associated outbuildings;
	Outbuildings associated with Park End Farm (the farmhouse itself is to be retained within the proposed residential development)
	Former stable block

- 4.5 All aspects of the proposed development have been subject to an iterative design process. A description of the design process is provided in the accompanying *Design and Access Statement* and ES (Volume 2: Chapter 6).
- 4.6 The proposed development is the subject of a single hybrid planning application which seeks:
- Detailed planning permission for the golf resort – including the golf course, clubhouse, Academy, hotel complex and all ancillary buildings, structures and works – and for the ‘Hulton Trail’.
  - Outline planning permission for the three areas of residential development, comprising 70.36ha (gross) of development with an estimated yield of up to 1,036 dwellings.
- 4.7 The restoration work to various historic structures within the Registered Park is also submitted in detail. Insofar as they constitute development, full approval is sought for the works described in respect of those features, as outlined by the accompanying *Historic Structures: Condition/Repair Issues*, albeit further definition of the detail and a programme of implementation is proposed to be a requirement of a planning condition. The application also seeks Listed Building Consent for the proposed restoration of the Grade II Listed Dovecote which is located within the Site.
- 4.8 Key components of the proposed development are described in more detail below.

<sup>1</sup> The Illustrative Masterplan indicates that just 9 dwellings are to be accessed off Woodlands.

### **Restoration Works to Hulton Park**

- 4.9 A key driver and objective of the proposed development is to restore Hulton Park and to provide it with a viable future. As such, inherent and embedded within it are a range of essential interventions and restorations works. These are a critical part of the proposed development, which has been the subject of an iterative design process to respond to heritage risks and opportunities, in order to convey the greatest benefit to the Registered Park. The proposed restoration works are identified in summary in the Table above and are discussed in detail in the accompanying documentation, including in the *Conservation Plan*, *Heritage Impact Assessment*, and *Historic Structures: Condition/Repair Issues*. These documents include a detailed specification for the works proposed to various historic structures at the Site and an action plan/objectives regarding the restoration of the wider Registered Park which the proposed development has been designed in accordance with.

### **Championship Golf Resort**

- 4.10 The Applicant has formulated the proposed development to give Hulton Park the best prospect of being selected as the 2026 Ryder Cup venue, and to be able to convey significant and lasting benefit. 2026 represents the next opportunity to secure the tournament and it is this opportunity that Peel is focussed on in offering the means of realising the lasting regeneration of Hulton Park.
- 4.11 The selection process and criteria for the Ryder Cup have historically not been clearly and formally defined, but Ryder Cup Europe introduced a formal bidding process with published selection criteria for the 2018 event and has since repeated that process for the 2022 event. It is unclear at this stage, since the process has not formally opened or otherwise been communicated, whether the same process and basis for selection will be maintained for the 2026 event, but the 2018/22 process provides the clearest direction.
- 4.12 Peel has formulated the proposed development mindful of the Bid Criteria established for previous tournaments, which are readily available and are instructive as to the key considerations used to judge potential host venues, the typical components of which are identified at Appendix 5. The criteria have directly informed the design of the proposals and are referred to in the below in the explanation of the individual components of the golf resort. In order to do so, Peel has employed the services of parties that have extensive experience in bidding for and realising Ryder Cup events. This includes:
- European Golf Design, the market-leading golf course architectural practice which designed the 2010 Ryder Cup venue at Celtic Manor and is remodelling the 2018 Paris venue. EGD has designed the golf course and proposed tournament staging at Hulton Park; and
  - Brookes Sport, consultants to the European Tour and advisors to proposed Ryder Cup venues throughout Europe, such as the Spanish bid for the 2022 Ryder Cup. Brookes Sport has advised on the positioning of the Hulton Park proposal relative to the selection criteria.
- 4.13 With that experience and insight, and by direct reference to the anticipated bid criteria, Peel has formulated its proposals to give Hulton Park the best possible prospect of

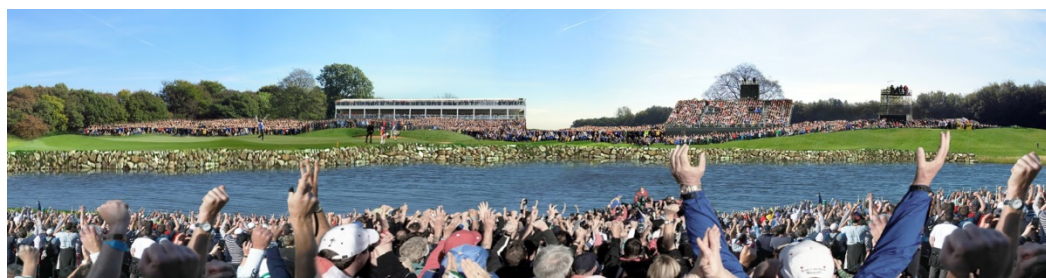
being selected as the 2026 venue and to be able to convey significant and lasting benefit.

- 4.14 The formulation of the proposed golf resort has also drawn upon a *Business Strategy* prepared by European Tour Properties, which is highly experienced at creating international-standard golf projects. It will ensure that the proposed development is viable over the long-term, such that it is capable of underpinning the future management and maintenance of the Site. A copy of the *Business Strategy* is provided at Appendix 6.
- 4.15 The key aspects of the golfing facilities – the course itself and ancillary buildings, structure and works; the clubhouse; the Academy, and the hotel complex – are all inter-related. The complementary components have been designed to create a single seamless operation which meets the criteria of a Ryder Cup venue and is capable of conveying significant and lasting benefits. This is noted by the *Business Strategy* (see Appendix 6), which states that “...the optimal operating model for the venue is one which will offer golf and ancillary on-site services to club members and green fee golfers, to hotel guests and the corporate market...”. Any dilution or reduction in the scale, function or quality of the golf resort will adversely impact upon the standard of the venue and its attractiveness, particularly to players of an international standard, and would therefore significantly diminish the prospects of the Site being selected as the venue for the 2026 Ryder Cup through the competitive bidding process. Each of the main aspects of the resort is discussed in turn below.

#### ***The golf course and ancillary development***

- 4.16 The Ryder Cup is ideally suited to parkland golf courses. A tree-lined course which features lakes and other landscape obstacles presents a unique challenge to golfers, in which risk and reward is an important element of the strategy. Parkland golf courses therefore facilitate drama and exciting golf play, and the ability of a course to do so is considered as part of the Ryder Cup bid process. Such courses are also highly attractive and enhance the viewing experience, which is of critical importance given the worldwide TV audiences which must be attracted to the event. Hulton Park therefore has the features necessary to create a world-class championship-grade golf course, given its existing parkland features.
- 4.17 The golf course will be built to the highest quality with the capability to host international professional tournaments. It will comprise a new 18 hole championship-grade golf course. The objective is to provide a high value, exciting and dramatic golfing experience which will satisfy a wide range of golfing abilities, from beginner to expert.

**Figure 4.1: Golf course visualisations, 15<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> holes**





- 4.18 The design of the course aligns with the matchplay format of the Ryder Cup. It will provide an exciting and challenging golf experience, where risk and reward is an important element of the course strategy. The golf course measures almost 7,400 yards with a par of 72 over 18 holes. It adopts a 'returning nines' approach, which involves two loops of nine holes, each beginning and ending at the clubhouse. It encompasses features such as ponds and streams which add to the drama and aesthetics of the playing and spectator experience. These water features function as part of the drainage network for the Site. It also includes sufficient space for spectators to circulate around the course and to accommodate catering and media facilities. Achieving all of these requirements has been a key driver of the design of the golf course. The key features combine to create an exceptional golf experience for international tournaments and will help to attract day-to-day visitors to Hulton Park, which will be a unique course within the north of England.
- 4.19 As set out in the accompanying *Design and Access Statement*, the golf course has been designed in a sensitive manner taking into account Historic England guidance<sup>2</sup>, such that individual golf holes follow the overall contours of the land and use the existing topography wherever possible. However, to create the features typical of a golf course – such as bunkers, water bodies, and positive surface drainage – some engineering works are required, including re-grading of the land in some locations. These works are also required to create dramatic golf holes and enhance the spectator experience, thereby meeting the expectations which arise from an international sport event. Such works have been restricted primarily to those areas of the Registered Park which are the least sensitive in heritage terms.
- 4.20 The creation of the golf course to meet championship tournament standards necessitates the development of various ancillary buildings, structures and works within the golf course itself, including:
- A 'halfway house' serving refreshment facilities adjacent to the 10<sup>th</sup> Tee. It is designed as a simple timber clad structure with a slate tiled roof such that it blends into the landscape;
  - An enclosed maintenance building and associated compound. This is located centrally within the Site to the west of the pleasure grounds, such that it can be easily accessed to ensure operational efficiency of maintenance activities. It is proposed to be clad in a timber-finished material such that it blends into the landscape;

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<sup>2</sup> *Golf in historic parks and landscapes*, Historic England (2008)

- Various bridge crossings, including in relation to the 13<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> holes. These are required to enable passage over various watercourses / address steep topography, thereby enabling access to areas of land within the Site that are required to ensure that the golf course is of sufficient length. For example, without the 13<sup>th</sup> hole bridge crossing over the Mill Dam stream the golf course will not be able to satisfactorily utilise land south of the Mill Dam stream, such that the golf course would not achieve the minimum 7,200 yard length. The scale of the crossing is necessary to be able to facilitate the movement of spectators across the course in this location;
  - A reservoir adjacent to the 18<sup>th</sup> hole, which will store water for use to maintain the golf course during summer months; and
  - Various boundary treatments around the periphery of the golf resort.
- 4.21 All of the above buildings, structures and works are evidently essential components of – and enable the successful operation of – a championship-grade golf course. The design of each is discussed in detail in the accompanying *Design and Access Statement*.
- 4.22 Access to the golf resort will principally be taken from the A6 Manchester Road. Two ‘T’-junctions will be provided, one providing access into the golf course to the south and to the Academy area to the north. The access to the south will be at the location of an original entrance to the Registered Park and lead on to a drive from the A6 to the hotel complex in the centre of the Registered Park. A secondary access, used for VIPs and special events, will be provided from the existing gateway on Newbrook Road. Public realm improvements are proposed on the A6 around the highway access points.
- 4.23 Lighting installations will be provided throughout the golf resort. The lighting strategy has been sensitively designed mindful of the Site’s historic context, Green Belt status and ecological/residential receptors. It is not proposed that the golf course itself will be lit after dark, with the exception of the driving ranges within the Academy area to enable practice to be undertaken during evenings and early mornings.
- 4.24 The impact of the proposed development – including the golf course – on the Registered Park and various associated heritage features is described and discussed in detail in Section 6.

#### ***Clubhouse***

- 4.25 The clubhouse is the necessary operational core of the golf course. It is the focal point for both players and spectators which signifies both the start and end of a round of golf. It is the social ‘hub’ for activities associated with the golf course, where members and visitors convene to use the changing facilities, collect and drop-off golf buggies, store and purchase equipment, and attend events.
- 4.26 The bid process for the Ryder Cup includes consideration of the clubhouse facilities, including issues such as the size of changing rooms and team facilities. The scale and mix of uses proposed within the clubhouse at the Site has therefore been carefully considered and formulated by the Applicant’s advisors, including European Golf Design and Brookes Sport, who have extensive experience and insight regarding its likely requirements.



- 4.27 The clubhouse is the principal new building which is proposed within the Registered Park<sup>3</sup>. As such, in order to minimise its adverse impacts on the heritage value of the Site, the options for its location – and therefore for the layout of the golf course itself – have been the subject of detailed consideration, as set out in the accompanying Design and Access Statement. It is proposed to be situated within the northern part of the Registered Park, immediately south of the A6 Manchester Road and east of Stone Holes Wood. This area is referred to as ‘North Meadows’ and is identified as being of relatively “little significance” in heritage terms given its relative absence of landscape features (see Section 6). This position will benefit from some natural screening by Stone Holes Wood, whilst affording the clubhouse views of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> fairways which is deemed critical for the operational success and appeal of the course. Access will be via the primary drive through the Site from the A6.
- 4.28 The clubhouse is designed to reflect the features and appearance of the hotel and takes inspiration from Edwardian architecture which was in use at the time of the Hulton family’s ownership of the Park. Traditional materials – such as stone and render – will be used to reflect the appearance of the hotel and former Hulton Hall. It has been designed to be viewed as a single storey building from its entrance approach. It makes the best use of the natural topography of the Site and is built into the slope of the land to achieve the single-storey aspect at this level.

**Figure 4.2: The proposed clubhouse**



### ***The Academy***

- 4.29 The Academy is a critical part of the golf resort and its contribution to legacy. It serves two key purposes:
- providing essential facilities for a championship-grade course; and
  - offering a dedicated ‘centre of learning’ for players of all ages and abilities, to encourage greater participation in golf.

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<sup>3</sup> Given that the hotel complex is located on the site of the former Hulton Hall and existing agricultural buildings.

- 4.30 With regard to the former, tournament competitors must have access to practice facilities on or adjoining the course to allow for use in between rounds, and other players will also expect such facilities on a course of such quality. It is a necessary part of a championship-grade golf course. In relation to the latter, the bid criteria for the Ryder Cup involve consideration of the extent to which the proposal will contribute to the development of golf as a sport. This includes a review of the likely legacy of the tournament and the proposed venue, including how it will help to expand participation in the sport. In this context, the Academy is an integral part of the golfing experience at the Site in that it aims to be a 'school of learning' or 'performance institute', which provides people of all ages and skill with facilities and educational support to learn and improve in the sport.
- 4.31 The Academy is located north of the A6 (Manchester Road) on land which is outside of the Registered Park. There are several existing residential properties located along the A6. However, the boundaries of the Academy maintain a minimum gap of 10m to these properties, with the main building located 36m from the nearest residential property, in order to safeguard the amenity of these existing residences. The Academy will have a vehicular access from the A6, whilst an underpass under the A6 will provide connectivity between the Academy and the main golf course for pedestrians and golf buggies.
- 4.32 Notwithstanding its location outside of the Registered Park, the Academy building will follow a similar design to the clubhouse and hotel to maintain visual completeness of the development as a whole and respect the historic context of the Site. The Academy also takes visual cues from nearby residential properties. It will therefore comprise a traditional low brick building with a pitched slate roof. The Academy will not rise above two storeys such that it is in-keeping with the scale of existing development in the surrounding area.

**Figure 4.3: The proposed Academy**



- 4.33 The scale and mix of uses within the Academy area has therefore been carefully considered and formulated by the Applicant's advisors with the Ryder Cup selection criteria in mind. The Academy building itself will accommodate:



- Specialist teaching facilities, including physical training and 3D analysis bays. They will provide state of the art digital teaching facilities in which golfing specialists are able to provide coaching services whilst players practice their skills. These will be located at the rear façade of the Academy building and will open up onto the driving range to the north; and
  - Ancillary facilities for visitors such as a café and a small-scale retail unit which will provide a range of golfing equipment. These will provide value-generating uses within the Academy which will support its viable operation over the long-term, whilst also providing necessary services for patrons of the Academy.
- 4.34 The main entrance to the building will be from the southern elevation. The northern elevation will contain the driving bays. The car park will be located to the south west of the Academy building, adjacent to the highways access. Landscaping will be incorporated to the front of the Academy and within the car park.
- 4.35 The accompanying practice facilities at the Academy have been designed to cater for general public use and use by members / paid visitors to the golf course. It will include:
- A driving range comprising 24 covered bays where the public will have the opportunity to practice and take lessons;
  - A 'starter hut' adjacent to the practice area, for the storage of kit such as golf balls and golf tees;
  - A grass teeing area where users of the championship-grade golf course can warm up and practice prior to playing the main golf course. Adjacent to this tee is a short game practice green with practice bunkers;
  - A six hole par 3 practice course. This will be constructed to similar standards as the 18 hole course but will offer a much shorter alternative to attract beginners and golfers looking for a less demanding challenge. The course will be aimed primarily at junior golfers as part of the legacy of the project, with holes ranging in length from approximately 100 to 130 yards; and
  - A family 'adventure golf' course and a putting green, which will seek to introduce children to the sport in an accessible way, whilst also supporting the viable operation of the Academy. Detailed approval is sought for the adventure golf facility and a proposed layout is submitted for it (reference: LUC-6628\_LD\_PLN\_201), including parameters and precedent images for the various structures and features which are proposed to be provided. It is envisaged that the planning permission will be the subject of a condition which requires the submission of a detailed specification for those structures in broad accordance with the parameters and precedent images.
- 4.36 The scale and mix of uses therefore combines essential facilities to support a championship-grade golf course and offer a 'school of learning' and a centre of excellence which will be of unparalleled quality in the North West region. The *Business Strategy* (see Appendix 6) notes that it will "...encourage the involvement of families and new and experienced golfers by providing a centre for all golfers who want to achieve

*higher skills and participate in personalised coaching programmes...". With the exception of a small dedicated practice area adjacent to the driving range which is reserved for golf resort members, the entire Academy area will be accessible for the general public to have the opportunity to practice and take formal lessons. This will enable the public to:*

*"...improve their skills and receive advice about all aspects of the game, from club fitting to fitness development. Teaching will be available to every level of golfer, from beginning to professional, either individually or in groups..."<sup>4</sup>*

- 4.37 The Academy will therefore provide a high quality recreational resource for the general public, comprising state-of-the-art teaching and practice facilities which are capable of both boosting golf participation and increasing the number of visitors to the Site. The benefits and legacy of the Academy area are discussed further in Section 7.

#### ***The hotel complex***

- 4.38 The hotel complex will be located on the site of the former Hulton Hall. It will comprise 4 to 5-star equivalent standard accommodation located at the heart of the golf resort, offering high quality associated facilities such as a destination spa, conference facility and fine dining restaurant. The hotel will be available to both members and paid visitors to the golf resort and the general public.
- 4.39 The hotel complex has been included and designed specifically with the hosting of major golf tournaments, and the Ryder Cup in particular, in mind. Whilst the availability of spectator accommodation in a wider catchment is also a critical consideration, the provision of high quality accommodation at the golf course for the competing teams, support staff and other VIPs is deemed essential for maximising the prospects of a successful Ryder Cup bid. The expectation for on-site hotel facilities is clearly evident in a review of the hotel facilities available at the previous Ryder Cup venues in Europe (see Table 4.2 below), which demonstrates that the venue for every Ryder Cup tournament hosted in Europe since 2000 – and the next tournament in 2018 – has an on-site hotel, ranging in size from 131 to 330 bedrooms and typically accompanied by spa and/or conferencing facilities.

**Table 4.2: On-site hotel facilities at Ryder Cup Europe tournament venues**

Ryder Cup venue		On-site hotel and facilities
2018	Le National, Paris, France	131 bedrooms and conferencing facilities
2014	Gleneagles, Scotland	232 bedrooms, including 26 suites, and spa
2010	Celtic Manor, Wales	330 bedrooms, conferencing facilities and spa facilities
2006	The K Club, Ireland	140 bedrooms and spa facilities
2002	The Belfry, England	319 bedrooms and spa facilities

Source: Turley

<sup>4</sup> Sustainability Blueprint: OnCourse Developments, The Golf Environment Organization (November 2016)

- 4.40 The scale of the facility proposed at Hulton Park has been carefully formulated in this regard. In particular:
- The number of bedrooms within the hotel (142) has been identified with regard to the scale of the demand for high quality on-site accommodation during the tournament. It is considered that the proposed number of bedrooms are required to provide sufficient availability for the number of players, their support staff and other VIPs (such as tournament officials and TV personalities) who will need to reside at the Site for the duration of the event. Indeed, the number of bedrooms is at the bottom end of the range provided for other recent Ryder Cup tournaments in Europe (between 131 and 330) and is therefore considered to be commensurate with the demands of the Ryder Cup;
  - The associated facilities – including the spa and conference area – have been identified to support the operation of the hotel both during and after the Ryder Cup. They will provide amenities for use during the tournament, adding to the ‘offer’ of the resort and its ability to compete with other prospective bidding locations, whilst also enhancing the overall attractiveness of the resort for future visitors, helping to ensure that the facility is able to operate viably over the long-term. The golf resort *Business Strategy* (see Appendix 6) highlights that the proposed mix of uses will enlarge the resort’s ‘offer’, such that it:
    - Will attract both business and leisure uses to “...*optimise financial and operational performance...*”, and
    - Has “...*great flexibility in product offering and offers clients a true golf resort experience. This enables the business to grow into new or enlarge existing golf markets...*”.
- 4.41 Given the above, any dilution or reduction in the scale, function or quality of the hotel facilities will adversely impact upon the standard of the venue and its attractiveness as a golf resort, and would therefore significantly diminish the viability of the resort and its prospects of being selected as the 2026 Ryder Cup venue.
- 4.42 Given its location on the site of the former Hulton Hall, the orientation and layout of the hotel complex reflects the historic arrangement of buildings in this location, including the former Hall, stable block and lake, which will be reinstated. In particular, it encompasses the footprint of the former Hall and its main facades have been designed such that they reflect the Hall’s original proportions. The layout has been designed to maximise use of the pleasure grounds, including by creation of a direct axial east-west through-route from the main entrance to the grounds at the rear, and by ensuring that the restaurant and spa have views over the lake. There are therefore heritage benefits to the development of a hotel complex in this part of the Site, which contribute to the overall objective of restoring the Registered Park, as discussed in Section 6.
- 4.43 As set out in the *Design and Access Statement*, the hotel has sought to strike a balance between making a design ‘statement’ whilst respecting the heritage, landscape and Green Belt sensitivity of the Site. The design is influenced by the former Hall and incorporates a modern classical appearance with stone cladding and slate roof tiles. It will have a grand entrance and focal point where visitors can be dropped off, with a

double height gallery area which will feature the entrance lobby, bar and lounge. The Hotel will curve northwards where a predominantly glass façade will provide the entrance to the spa, the orangery, meeting rooms and conference facilities.

**Figure 4.4: The proposed hotel complex**



- 4.44 The hotel will be accessed primarily via the principal drive linking to the A6. The existing access from Newbrook Road, which was the original carriageway route to the former Hall, will be retained with the drive upgraded, for use on an irregular and ceremonial basis.
- 4.45 The pleasure grounds surrounding the hotel complex will be reinstated, with various heritage features restored. In particular, the lake will be desilted and the walled kitchen garden will be reconstructed. The listed Dovecote east of the hotel will be retained and restored within an appropriate landscape context. The hotel building will enable access for the public to connect to the historic pleasure grounds via external terraces. The

proposals for the restoration of various heritage features at the Site is described and discussed in detail in Section 6.

### **Residential Development, including the Local Centre**

- 4.46 As discussed in Section 8, the residential development is required to provide essential cross-funding for the restoration proposals to Hulton Park and the delivery of the golf resort. Without it, the restoration of the site by the creation of a high quality golf resort, the ambition to host the Ryder Cup, and the significant social, environmental and economic benefits that would arise, are not commercially deliverable.
- 4.47 The proposed residential development will comprise up to 1,036 houses and apartments across three areas of the Site as follows:
- Dearden's Farm (north east area) – approximately 192 new homes
  - Park End Farm (south east parcel) – approximately 85 new homes
  - Western Fields (western parcel) – approximately 759 new homes
- 4.48 The residential development is comprised of a series of design character areas which seek to establish variation within the overall development, thereby engendering a sense of place and ownership by local residents. These character areas are identified and described in the accompanying *Design and Access Statement*.
- 4.49 The detailed design and mix of homes will be confirmed through the future reserved matters process. However, it is envisaged that a variety of high quality mid-market family homes will be provided, in line with the growing need and demand for such homes in the local market area. The *Illustrative Masterplan* (drawing ref: 15191 (PL) 001 P) shows that the scale of development proposed can be achieved alongside appropriate areas of open space and green infrastructure (see Section 8).
- 4.50 Mindful that the residential development proposals are submitted in outline, it is intended that planning permission will be granted subject to a planning condition/s which require reserved matters applications to broadly accord with the parameters and principles established by:
- The *Parameters Plan* (drawing ref: 15191 (PI) 500 Q), which provides a framework for the design and layout of the residential development. It defines the extent and distribution of development within the Site, and the relationship with green infrastructure. It also defines building heights, points of access and, where appropriate, indicative information such as the prospective alignment of principal roads and Public Rights of Way (see below). These parameters establish a framework for how the residential areas will be developed, pursuant to the reserved matters process.
  - The *Residential Design Codes* for the Dearden's Farm and Park End Farm areas, which are submitted alongside the application given the location of these areas within the Registered Park albeit within areas evaluated to be of lesser significance (see Section 6). These complement the *Design and Access Statement* to establish a series of coding principles for the two areas which will



frame the detailed design process, thereby ensuring that the design will be sensitive to the historic character of the Site.

4.51 Access into the proposed residential areas will be taken from:

- The A6 Manchester Road in respect of the Dearden's Farm area (access detailed for approval);
- Woodlands Drive and Broadway in respect of the Park End Farm area (access detailed for approval); and
- The A6 Manchester Road in respect of the Western Fields area (access detailed for approval), and subsequently via an additional access to the proposed Platt Lane-Chequerbent Roundabout link road (point of access in accordance with parameters, see below).

4.52 In respect of the latter access from the link road, a design for the link road has been developed and accompanies the application documents; however, the application does not seek its approval given BMBC may pursue an alternative arrangement as part of its intentions for a wider strategic road link in the area. As a consequence the specific access arrangement into the Western Fields area from the west via the link road is not defined and is a reserved matter; however, the principle of access from the west is considered by the application documentation, including in the accompanying ES, and the broad location where such an access would be located is identified by the *Parameters Plan* (drawing ref: 15191 (PI) 500 Q).

4.53 Local public transport infrastructure will also to be subject to service enhancements to provide opportunities for sustainable connectivity. In particular, there is potential for new bus routes to be implemented. These are discussed in the accompanying *Transport Assessment*.

### **Local Centre**

4.54 The Western Fields area of residential development includes a Local Centre. The provision of such a facility is important for the sustainability of this western residential community. There are however, emerging proposals for extensive residential development of land to the west of the Site<sup>5</sup>, and should this come forward the Local Centre would be expected to serve this wider community. In such circumstances, the optimum accessible location of the Local Centre is likely to be within this wider development area to the west.

4.55 As such, the Local Centre could be delivered either 'on-site' or 'off-site'. The approach to its location and delivery is discussed in detail in Section 8. It is proposed that a condition (or, if necessary, obligation) is attached to the grant of planning permission catering for either delivery options.

### **The Public Right of Way Network, the Hulton Trail and Pretoria Park**

4.56 There are several existing PROWs located within or passing through the Site. All of these will be retained within the proposed development, albeit the routes of some will be

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<sup>5</sup> Identified by the *Draft Greater Manchester Spatial Framework: Draft for Consultation*, Greater Manchester Combined Authority and Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (October 2016).

re-aligned. A new recreational route – referred to as the ‘Hulton Trail’ – will also be provided at the western and southern boundary of the Site, linking, extending and upgrading existing routes. A summary of the illustrative proposals for the various existing and new PRowS is provided in Table 4.3 below and in the accompanying *Public Right of Way Strategy* document (ref: 6628-LD-REP-800). The re-alignment of existing PRow routes will be the subject of a separate statutory process in due course.

**Table 4.3: Summary of illustrative proposals for the Public Right of Way network**

PRow number	Retained / re-aligned	Existing PRow length (approx).	Upgraded / re-aligned PRow length (approx.)
Informal path	Re-aligned	1,526m	1,526m (formalised as the Hulton Trail PRow)
WES 126	Re-aligned	288m	270m
WES 128	Re-aligned	520m	450m (within the Hulton Trail)
WES 129	Retained	250m	238m
WES 130	Re-aligned	480m	210m
WES 133	Re-aligned	590m	800m
WES 134	Re-aligned	740m	634m
WES 135	Re-aligned	250m	250m
WES 137	Re-aligned	322m	294m
WES 138	Re-aligned	410m	365m
WES 139	Re-aligned	510m	506m
WES 211	Re-aligned	435m	466m
New Hulton Trail	-	-	1,230m
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>6,221m</b>	<b>7,239m</b>

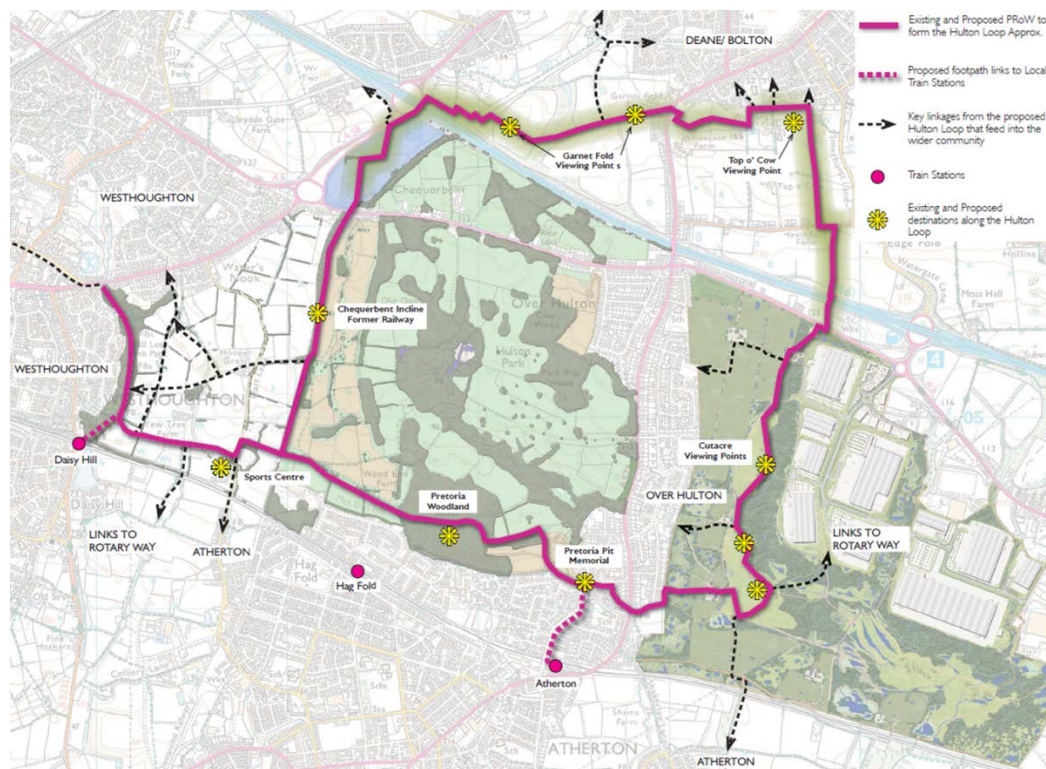
*Source: Design and Access Statement / Public Right of Way Strategy (ref: 6628-LD-REP-800)*

- 4.57 Existing PRowS will be accommodated within the residential development as part of landscaped greenways which will be between 6m and 10m in width, and delineated by tree and hedgerow planting. The surfaces of existing PRowS will also be upgraded.
- 4.58 The Hulton Trail is a proposed recreational route which through wider connections and enhancements (beyond the scope of this project) would encompass a wide area of land between Bolton, Atherton, Over Hulton and Westhoughton. It would connect existing PRowS and open spaces to link the communities of these settlements, whilst providing an extensive recreational trail for a range of activities, including walking, running, cycling and horse-riding. The proposed development will deliver those sections of the Trail which are located within the Site, along the western and southern boundaries. It will provide new facilities for walking and cycling, and will provide interpretation boards to

learn about the heritage of the Site, including its coal mining past. The Hulton Trail will comprise features such as:

- New wayfinding, including linkage to nearby train stations;
- New and improved footpaths;
- Incorporation of cycle and equestrian friendly routes; and
- Interpretation of historical importance of coal mining to the area.

**Figure 4.5: Conceptual framework plan for the Hulton Trail**



- 4.59 The Hulton Trail is submitted for detailed approval, except within the south-eastern extent of the Site where it will be routed through the proposed Park End Farm residential area. In relation to that part of the Trail, the specification is defined (width, materials, etc) in the accompanying *Public Right of Way Strategy* document (ref: 6628-LD-REP-800), but the alignment is a reserved matter (see below) in order to provide necessary flexibility to accommodate prospective residential layout. It is envisaged that the delivery of the Hulton Trail will be the subject of a planning condition, particularly in respect of the part which is proposed in outline.
- 4.60 A new community informal open space will be created in the southern aspect of the site known as Pretoria Park. This will be a new public open space adjacent to New Park Wood and the Pretoria Pit. The Park will be connected to the Hulton Trail, thereby enabling access to both the Pretoria Pit within New Park Wood to the west and the Pretoria Memorial to the east.



## Associated Development

- 4.61 Other development is associated the proposed development but does not form part of the accompanying planning application. This is summarised in Table 4.4 below.

**Table 4.4: Overview of other associated development**

Associated development
A new single-carriageway link road to the west of the Site, between Platt Lane and Chequerbent roundabout, approximately 1km in length.
A range of temporary buildings, structures and other facilities which will be required in association with the staging of the largest golf tournaments and events. Such facilities will include hospitality pavilions, on-site parking, facilities for world-wide media coverage, and spectator grandstands.
During golf tournaments, the temporary provision of park and ride facilities on land situated in proximity to key arterial routes, for use by visitors to the golf tournaments.

- 4.62 Key parts of this associated development are discussed below.

### **The Platt Lane to Chequerbent Roundabout Link Road**

- 4.63 In order to provide additional access to the proposed Western Fields area of residential development and to mitigate the traffic impacts associated with the new homes, a link road is deemed to be necessary to the west of the site to connect the Chequerbent roundabout in the north to Platt Lane in the south. This link road would shift traffic accessing the Chequerbent roundabout on to an additional arm of that junction, diverting it on to the link road and away from the A58 Park Lane and A6 Manchester Road, thereby improving the local network. A junction would be provided off this link road in to the Western Fields area (see above). The arrangements for the delivery of the link road are discussed in Section 11 and assessed fully in the accompanying *Transport Assessment*.

### **Temporary Development / Ryder Cup Staging**

- 4.64 As noted above, the golf resort has been designed to be capable of hosting the largest professional championship golf tournaments, with the objective of securing the rights to host the 2026 Ryder Cup. It is a sporting event lasting approximately one week, which requires a range of temporary structures, buildings and other facilities. The precise range and nature of such facilities required to host the competition will only be confirmed through detailed event planning and design, and cannot therefore be determined at this stage. Nevertheless, the temporary facilities and infrastructure likely to be required to stage the Ryder Cup have been identified based on previous experience of past Ryder Cup tournaments and assessed as part of the overall project through the EIA process.
- 4.65 A primary requirement for the hosting of a major golf tournament is the ability of the venue to provide suitable facilities for a large number of spectators and to offer appropriate space for viewing, circulation, on-course hospitality, public catering, retail outlets, media requirements and spectator drop off areas. In summary such facilities may comprise:

- Circulation space for approximately 70,000 spectators and approximately 7,000 staff per day over five days;
- VIP and corporate hospitality facilities for approximately 15,000 people per day over five days (the total 70,000 spectators is inclusive of the VIP / corporate spectators numbers);
- Space for grandstands behind greens and tees;
- Space for on-course concession points (refreshments, toilets, retail, first aid, communications);
- A full path system around the golf course suitable for buggies;
- Vehicular access to staging areas – a suitable road and path network is required to link all tournament staging areas, hospitality units, public areas and contractors compounds. Fast and efficient access to all parts of the golf course is also required for TV providers, emergency services, and waste disposal;
- Adequate golf course maintenance facilities for tournament operations;
- Substantial commercial outlets known as the spectator/tented village at approximately 45,000sqm;
- On site car parking for 2,500 cars (approximately 50,000sqm);
- International media and broadcast facilities at approximately 50,000sqm (for 800 personnel);
- Two bus terminals approximately 50,000sqm; and
- Contractors compound approximately 30,000sqm.

4.66 An *Interim Event and Travel Management Plan* (IETMP) is submitted alongside the planning application. It identifies a range of parameters for tournament staging such as the broad locations and quantum of the temporary facilities. A detailed Event and Travel Management Plan will be prepared prior to the Ryder Cup event pursuant to a planning condition.

4.67 All temporary facilities constructed to host the Ryder Cup, including areas of hardstanding, will be removed once the competition is complete. However, the staging platforms and access roads in the area where housing is to be located will likely be retained and then adapted for subsequent residential development.

### **Conditionality**

4.68 As explained later in this Statement, the significant social and economic benefits generated by the proposed development are of such a scale as to clearly outweigh the harm arising from the development and justify the grant of planning permission. That is considered to be the case regardless of whether the Ryder Cup is secured or not. The Ryder Cup opportunity does, however, convey added benefits in both scale and extent.

It is the full extent of those benefits that the application considers and asks to be appraised in the planning balance. It is also the Ryder Cup opportunity that drives the scale, composition and quality of the proposal and the level of investment needed, including in respect of the restoration of the Registered Park. It is in designing for the Ryder Cup that the particular needs of a Ryder Cup venue have been catered for and the level of associated investment is necessitated.

- 4.69 Certainty about the ability to deliver the venue and required facilities is essential for the bidding process. A critical component of that is a deliverable masterplan and scheme design with planning certainty. This also drives the timescales. The specific timescales that the European Tour and Ryder Cup Europe will adopt in the bidding process for the 2026 event are yet to be established. However, using the 2022 bidding process as a guide, it can be expected that the invitation to bid will be issued by early 2018. The decision of the English golf federation and UK Government to prepare a bid for England and which venue to select in doing so would need to be made in advance of that. There is therefore an imperative to advance the planning certainty of the proposal as soon as possible in 2017.
- 4.70 The Applicant is therefore prepared to accept a planning condition on the grant of planning permission which ties delivery of the proposed development as a whole to securing the Ryder Cup. The precise form of such a condition can be agreed with BMBC in due course.

## 5. Policy Context

### Summary Points

- Regional and national policy is supportive of initiatives that conserve and provide a viable future for heritage assets, contribute towards the growth of the economy, deliver much needed housing and facilitate the delivery of sporting facilities. All these objectives strongly align with the principles of sustainable development.
- The extant local Development Plan for the proposals is the *Bolton Core Strategy and Allocations Plan*, and the *Greater Manchester Minerals Plan*.
- The Site is subject to a number of land use designations as identified in the *Allocations Plan* Proposals Map, including Green Belt, Registered Park and Garden, Sites of Biological Importance and Mineral Safeguarding.

- 5.1 This chapter identifies the key national, regional and local policy tests against which the merits of the proposed development must be appraised, including those set out in the adopted Development Plan. The details of those local planning policies which are relevant to the current application are outlined fully in Appendix 7.

### The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 5.2 The policies of the NPPF are a material consideration to be afforded significant weight in the determination of the application.

#### *Positive Planning*

- 5.3 The Government has made clear its expectation, through the NPPF, that the planning system should positively embrace well-conceived development. Local Planning Authorities are encouraged to approach decision-making in a positive way looking for solutions rather than problems, and working proactively with applicants to secure development that would improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area (paragraphs 186 and 187).

#### *Achieving Sustainable Development*

- 5.4 The Government's view of what comprises sustainable development is provided in paragraphs 18 to 219 of the NPPF, taken as a whole. The presumption in favour of sustainable development is the 'golden thread' running through the NPPF for both plan making and decision taking. Paragraph 14 sets this out for decision taking as follows:

*"For decision-taking this means:*

- *approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay, and*
- *where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting permission unless:*
  - *any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, or*

- *specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.*”

5.5 Footnote 9 of the NPPF identifies the policies within the NPPF which indicate where development should be restricted and where the presumption in favour of sustainable development may not therefore apply. The policies identified include land designated as Green Belt. However, Footnote 10 prescribes that a decision-maker can act contrary to this direction “...where material considerations indicate otherwise...”.

***Building a strong, competitive economy***

5.6 The NPPF establishes that one of the core objectives for the planning system is to “...proactively drive and support sustainable economic development...” (paragraph 17). It recognises that authorities should contribute towards building a strong, response and competitive economy by ensuring sufficient land of the right type is available in the right place and at the right time to support growth and innovation. The NPPF requires authorities to make “...every effort...” not only to meet their objectively assessed development needs but also to:

“...respond positively to wider opportunities for growth...” (paragraph 17)

5.7 In particular, it states that planning should proactively drive and support sustainable economic development. The Framework states that plans should take account of market signals, and set out a clear strategy for allocating sufficient land taking account of needs of communities. Planning should operate to encourage and not act as an impediment to sustainable growth and therefore “...significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system...” (Paragraph 19).

***Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes***

5.8 The NPPF sets out that one of the key roles of the planning system is:

“...supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations...” (paragraph 7)

5.9 In order to do so, local authorities must “...boost significantly...” (paragraph 47) the supply of new homes. In particular, authorities must take action both to ensure that their Local Plans are able to meet the full objectively assessed need (OAN) for housing and are able to maintain a five-year supply of deliverable housing land. Where authorities are unable to do so, policies for the supply of new homes must be considered out-of-date (paragraph 49).

***Conserving and enhancing the historic environment***

5.10 The NPPF makes clear that authorities must pursue a “...positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment...” (paragraph 126). This is particularly the case in respect of heritage assets which are at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. The NPPF therefore encourages conservation of such assets “...in a manner appropriate to their significance...” (paragraph 126). In determining planning applications, authorities should be mindful 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 131).

5.11 Paragraph 132 states that “...*great weight*...” should be placed on the significance of a designated heritage asset when considering the impact of a proposed development. Substantial harm to such assets, including parks or gardens, should be “...*exceptional*...”. Where substantial harm is likely to arise, planning permission should be refused unless it can be demonstrated that “...*substantial public benefits*...” (paragraph 133) will outweigh that harm or loss, or where all of the following apply:

- *“...the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and*
- *no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and*
- *conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and*
- *the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use...*” (paragraph 133).

5.12 Where a proposed development will result in less than substantial harm to a designated asset, the harm should be weighed against anticipated public benefits, including securing the optimum viable use of the designated heritage asset (paragraph 134). LPAs are encouraged to seek opportunities for new development within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance (paragraph 137).

#### ***Promoting healthy communities***

5.13 The NPPF highlights that the planning system can play an important role in facilitating social interaction and creating health, inclusive communities. This includes creating places which promote meetings between members of the community who might not otherwise come into contact with each other, which are safe and accessible, and which provide clear and legible pedestrian routes and high quality public space which encourage active uses (paragraph 69).

5.14 The NPPF encourages the planning system to deliver social, recreational and cultural facilities and services by, *inter alia*:

- Planning positively for the provision and use of shared space, community facilities – including sports venues – and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments;
- Guarding against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services; and
- Ensuring an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services (paragraph 70)

- 5.15 In particular, the NPPF notes that “...open space and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities...” (paragraph 73).

***Protecting Green Belt land***

- 5.16 The NPPF attaches great importance to Green Belts (paragraph 79) and identifies that Green Belt serves five purposes (Paragraph 80), namely:

- to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- to prevent neighbouring towns 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.

- 5.17 Paragraph 89 states that local planning authorities should, in general terms, regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate development which is not to be approved except in very special circumstances (paragraph 87). Such circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt and other harm is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

- 5.18 In reviewing Green Belt boundaries, local planning authorities should take account of the need to promote sustainable patterns of development. They should consider the consequences for sustainable development and be undertaken in a review of a Local Plan.

***Other policies***

- 5.19 The NPPF sets out that the policies therein from paragraphs 18 to 219, taken as a whole, constitute the Government's view of what sustainable development means in practice. As such, in addition to the above there are a variety of other policies which are relevant to the determination of the application. In particular:

- Paragraph 32 states that planning decisions should take account of whether, *inter alia*, “...improvements can be undertaken within the transport network that cost effectively limit the significant impacts of the development. Development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe...”;
- Paragraph 69 states that the planning system can facilitate social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities. Planning decisions should, *inter alia*, promote safe and accessible developments, containing clear and legible pedestrian routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas;
- Paragraph 75 states that planning policies should “...protect and enhance public rights of way and access. Local authorities should seek opportunities to provide

*better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks...”;*

- Paragraph 118 of the NPPF states that when determining planning applications, local planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity; and
- Paragraph 63 states that “...*great weight*...” should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which help raise the standard of design more generally in the area. Paragraph 64 states that permission should be refused for development of poor design.

5.20 The above and other policies of the NPPF are referred to where relevant throughout this Planning Statement and in Appendix 7, mindful of the weight to be applied to them in the context of paragraphs 215 and 216 of the NPPF itself.

### **National and regional strategy and policy documents**

5.21 Various other national and sub-regional policy and strategy documents are relevant to the determination of the application. These include:

- *Stronger Together: Greater Manchester Strategy* (GMCA, Greater Manchester LEP and AGMA, 2013). This sets out a series of priorities to secure sustainable economic growth for the benefit of the Greater Manchester conurbation and its residents. Priorities include:
  - Delivering targeted investment based on market needs.
  - Improving both integration of infrastructure planning and connectivity.
  - Supporting business growth and improving international competitiveness.
  - Reforming public service delivery to build independence and raise the productivity of residents.

The GMS confirms that the Greater Manchester region must make improved use of its international assets, such as Manchester Airport. Sport is identified as a key sector where, *inter alia*, the city region has a comparative advantage to be exploited and accelerated. Furthermore, the GMS confirms that as an outcome of a primary vision, the Greater Manchester region will secure its place as one of Europe’s premier city regions, synonymous with creativity, culture, sport and the commercial exploitation of a world class knowledge base.

- *The Greater Manchester Strategy for the Visitor Economy 2014 – 2020* (Marketing Manchester, 2014). This sets out a strategic aims to:
  - Further develop Manchester as a leading events destination (Strategic Aim 2). It is confirmed that Manchester is well equipped to meet the requirements that come with staging major events, but that it critical that this position is maintained and grown including through sport and cultural events which can enhance Manchester’s image and profile.



- Maximise the capacity for growth (Strategic Aim 4) including though delivering increased hotel accommodation and new visitor attractions.
- *Greater Manchester Moving – The Blueprint for Physical Activity and Sport in Greater Manchester* (Greater Manchester Sport Partnership, June 2015). This outlines the aspiration for a collaborative approach to planning and investment in physical activity and sport. Among other things, it aims to increase levels of participation in physical activity and sport, increase active travel mode share, and increase the economic output of the sport and physical activity sector.
- *Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation* (Department for Culture, Media & Sport, December 2015). This is a cross-government strategy that aims to tackle the levels of sport participation across the country to create a more physically active nation. It confirms the Government's intention to secure major sporting events to prepare athletes for international success, enhancing the economic impact of sport, and providing a platform for inspiring those that experience them. The Strategy provides details of sporting 'mega-events' – events that due to their scale are not able to be owned and delivered in the same way as other events. The list of mega-events is short, but includes the biggest and most popular global sporting events, such as the Olympic and Paralympic Games, the FIFA World Cup and the Ryder Cup. The document confirms an ambition to further grow the UK's reputation as the home for global sport and to develop a strategy for the hosting 'mega-events'.
- *Northern Powerhouse Strategy* (HM Treasury, November 2016). This explains how the Government will work with local stakeholders to address key barriers to productivity in the northern regions. It confirms that the Government will invest in transport infrastructure to improve connections between and within key towns, cities and counties. Additionally, it will work with local areas to raise education and skills levels across the North. This will ensure that the North is an excellent place to start and grow a business, whilst ensuring that the Northern Powerhouse is recognised worldwide as an excellent opportunity for trade and investment.

5.22 The above are referred to where relevant throughout this Statement.

## **The Development Plan**

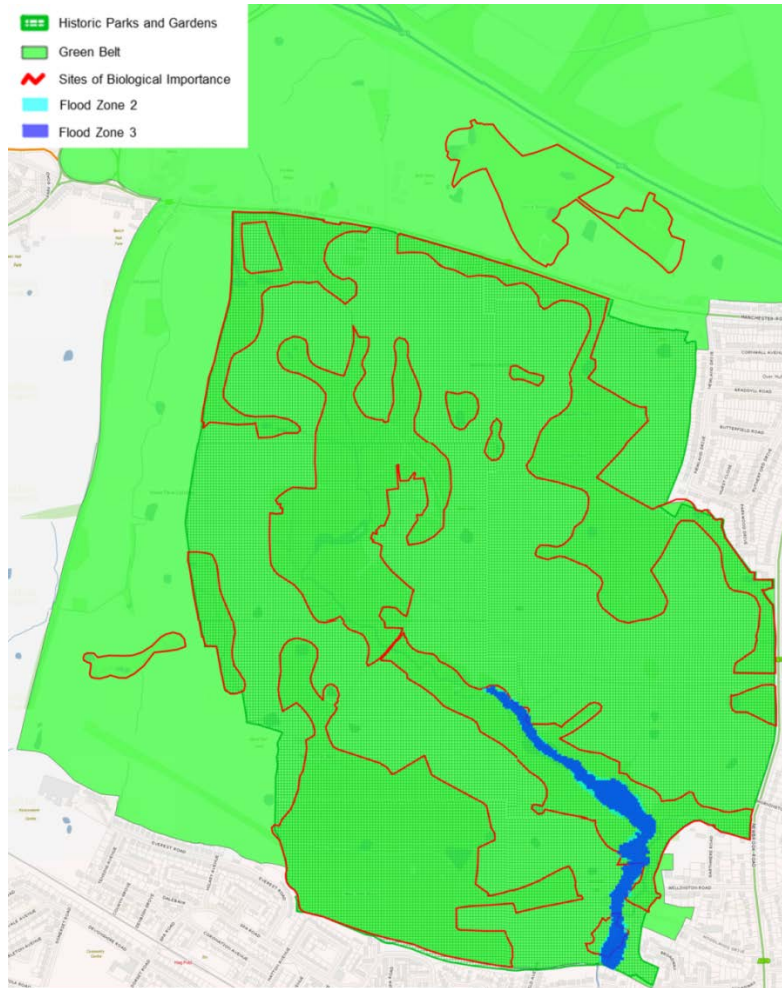
5.23 In accordance with the Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the application falls to be determined in accordance with the provisions of the adopted Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The relevant Development Plan in this case comprises the following and is summarised below:

- *Bolton Core Strategy* (March 2011) ('CS')
- *Bolton Allocations Plan* (December 2014)
- *Greater Manchester Minerals Plan* (April 2013)

## Land Use Designations

5.24 An extract of the *Bolton Allocations Plan* Proposal Map is provided at Figure 5.1 below. It identifies the key land use designations from the local Development Plan which are applicable to the Site.

**Figure 5.1: Bolton *Allocations Plan* Proposals Map extract (excluding designations in respect of minerals safeguarding)<sup>6</sup>**



5.25 The above confirms that the various designations relate to different areas of the Site, as follows:

- Green Belt (Allocations Plan Policy CG7AP) – covers the whole Site.
- Historic Park and Garden (CS Policy CG3) – covers the Site, excluding the most westerly area and land north of the A6 Manchester Road.
- Site of Biological Importance: Mill Dam Wood (CS Policy CG1) – located to the south eastern area.
- Site of Biological Importance: Hulton Park (CS Policy CG1) – various locations across the Site.

<sup>6</sup> Source: [www.maps.bolton.gov.uk/residents/allocations-dpd-solomap-embed.html](http://www.maps.bolton.gov.uk/residents/allocations-dpd-solomap-embed.html)

- Site of Biological Importance: New Park Wood (CS Policy CG1) – located within the southern area.
- Site of Biological Importance: Carr Brook Mere (CS Policy CG1) – located to the south eastern area.
- West Bolton (CS Policy OA4) – covers the whole Site.
- Mineral Safeguarding: Brick and Clay (CS Policy 8) – covers the whole Site.
- Mineral Safeguarding: Sand and Gravel (CS Policy 8) – located to the south western area.
- Mineral Safeguarding: Sandstone (CS Policy 8) – located to northern and eastern areas.
- Mineral Safeguarding: Surface Coal (CS Policy 8) – covers the whole Site.

### **Relevant Planning Policies**

- 5.26 The relevant policies of the *Bolton Core Strategy* and the *Bolton Allocations Plan* are identified as follows.

#### ***Bolton Core Strategy (March 2011)***

- 5.27 The *Core Strategy* is the key document in the Development Plan. It provides the planning policy position for Bolton up to the end of the plan period in 2026. It sets out a series of objectives which are relevant to the proposed development, including:

- Maximising access to sporting and recreation facilities and increasing opportunities for walking and cycling (Strategic Objective 1);
- Ensuring Bolton takes full economic advantage of its location in the Greater Manchester City Region (Strategic Objective 5);
- Ensuring that transport infrastructure supports all aspects of the spatial vision (Strategic Objective 6);
- Conserving and enhancing the best of Bolton's built heritage and landscapes (Strategic Objective 11);
- Providing housing that meets the needs of everybody (Strategic Objective 14).

- 5.28 The CS includes a number of specific and detailed policies which are relevant to the determination of the accompanying application. These are identified and discussed where relevant throughout this Statement in undertaking an appraisal of the proposed development. Key policies include:

- Policy H1 – ensuring new developments contribute appropriately through planning contributions to meeting health needs that they generate;
- Policy P4 – ensuring that an adequate landbank of aggregates is maintained and known resources of minerals are safeguarded;

- Policy P5 – ensuring that developments are accessible to different types of transport;
- Policy S1 – ensuring the creation of safe developments, through reducing crime and fear with good design and promoting road safety in new development;
- Policy CG1 – safeguarding rural areas, enhancing biodiversity, parks and gardens and reducing flood risk;
- Policy CG2 – ensuring that all development proposals contribute to the delivery of sustainable development;
- Policy CG3 – conserve and enhance existing heritage assets and landscape character, whilst expecting innovative and sustainable designs that contribute to good urban design;
- Policy CG5 – ensuring that new development is compatible with surrounding land uses, confirming that new development should not generate unacceptable nuisances;
- Policy SC1 – identify a range of housing sites for the additional provision of 694 dwellings per annum to the end of the plan period;
- Policy IPC1 – ensuring that developers make reasonable provision or contribution towards the cost of appropriate physical and green infrastructure required by the proposed development.

***Bolton Allocations Plan (December 2014)***

5.29 The following policies within the *Allocations Plan* are considered relevant to the development proposals contained within this application and are discussed in detail where appropriate elsewhere in this Statement:

- Policy P8AP – development proposals affecting public rights of way will be permitted provided they retain the integrity of the right of way;
- Policy CG7AP – inappropriate development in the Green Belt will not be permitted, unless there are ‘very special circumstances’;
- Policy CG8AP – proposals for low carbon, decentralised and renewable energy, which comply with national and local policies will be supported.

***Greater Manchester Minerals Plan (April 2013)***

5.30 The *Greater Manchester Minerals Plan* (GMMP) was prepared by the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA) and forms part of the statutory Development Plan for Bolton. It seeks to ensure that development makes provision for a mix of potential minerals-based energy sources. National policy requires the Greater Manchester authorities to plan for minerals in a sustainable manner. The main minerals with the potential to be worked in Greater Manchester are construction aggregates, natural building stone, brick clay, coal and peat.

- 5.31 The GMMP includes various policies and objectives which are relevant to the proposed development and which are identified and discussed where necessary throughout this Statement. Among other things, it seeks to: protect local environments from landscape harm resulting from minerals extraction, protect minerals infrastructure from sterilisation, to provide an adequate supply of minerals to meet Greater Manchester's needs and to support the development of local energy minerals (Objectives 1-5); avoid adverse impacts upon sensitive areas (Policy 2); and encourage the extraction of viable mineral resources in advance of development construction (Policy 8).

### **The Emerging Development Plan**

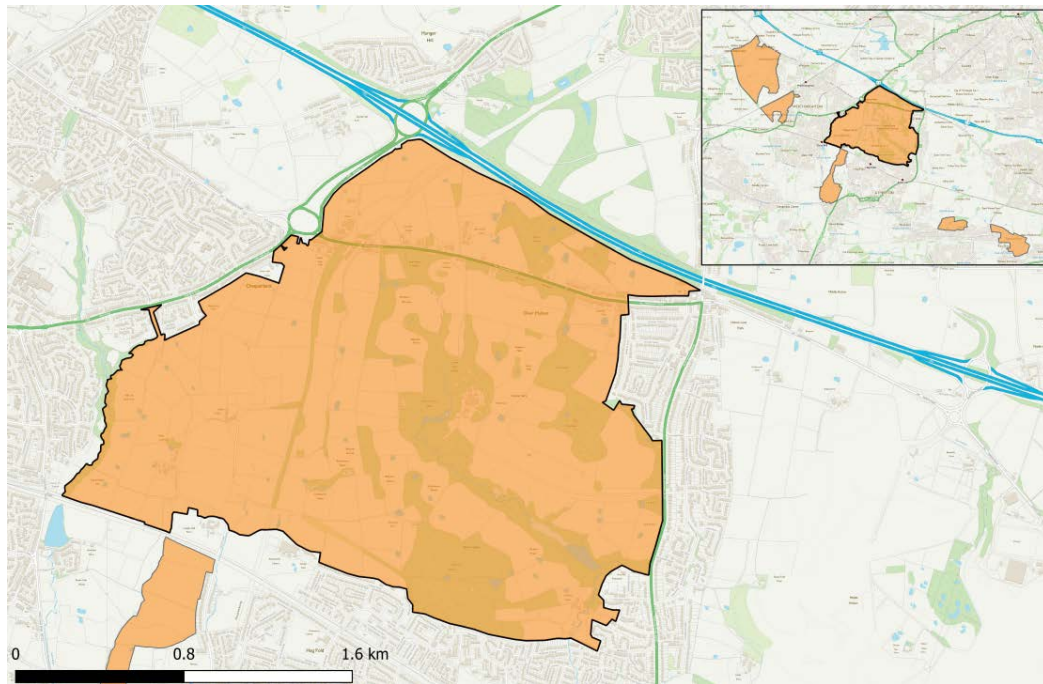
- 5.32 The Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA) – which comprises the ten LPAs within Greater Manchester, including Bolton – are in the process of preparing a joint plan for the conurbation. The *Greater Manchester Spatial Framework* (GMSF) will be a new strategic development plan for the city-region which will guide development up to 2035. It will form the first part of a new local development plan for Bolton which will, *inter alia*, establish a new housing requirement for the Borough and allocate strategic development sites. Upon adoption it will supersede the relevant policies of the existing local development plan, including those set out in the CS.
- 5.33 Following various initial stages of preparation, public consultation on the first draft of GMSF ("draft GMSF") was undertaken between November 2016 and January 2017<sup>7</sup>. It identifies a range of sites which are proposed to be released from the Green Belt and allocated for development over the plan period. The Site itself is the subject of a proposed development allocation, as part of a wider parcel of land referred to as 'Hulton Park and Chequerbent' (reference: M61C2), the extent and boundaries of which are shown in Figure 5.2.

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<sup>7</sup> *Draft Greater Manchester Spatial Framework: Draft for Consultation*, Greater Manchester Combined Authority and Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (October 2016)



**Figure 5.2: Hulton Park and Chequerbent proposed development allocation<sup>7</sup>**



5.34 The draft GMSF sets out that the 'Hulton Park and Chequerbent' allocation is comprised of three distinguishable plots:

- (a) Land east of the disused railway line/mature woodland including Hulton Park, which is allocated for a high quality leisure destination and heritage restoration project with around 1,000 homes on the western part of the Site;
- (b) Land south of Chequerbent roundabout, which is allocated for a residential development of approximately 1,700 new homes and associated infrastructure; and
- (c) Land north east of Chequerbent roundabout, which is allocated for approximately 25,000sqm of employment floorspace for B2/B8 uses including logistics.

5.35 Plot (a) reflects the broad extent of the application Site. The draft GMSF proposes:

- to release the western part of the Site – comprising approximately 126 acres of land to the west of the Registered Park – from the Green Belt; this area broadly corresponds to the Western Fields area of residential development which is included within the accompanying application proposals.
- That the Registered Park itself and the adjoining land north of the A6 is proposed to be retained within the Green Belt.

#### **Weight to Attach to the Existing and Emerging Development Plan**

5.36 The *Core Strategy* and *Allocations Plan* comprise the statutory development plan for the authority. As such, the proposed development will be assessed against the relevant policies within them. The *Core Strategy* was adopted in March 2011 and pre-dates the adoption of the NPPF. On this basis, and mindful that the *Allocations Plan* is subsequent



to the *Core Strategy*, the policies of the Development Plan will only be considered up-to-date and relevant where they are consistent with the NPPF.

- 5.37 Given that the GMSF is in the very early stages of preparation, the document cannot be afforded any material weight in the consideration of this planning application. However, the draft document and its evidence base is instructive in relation to the degree to which the adopted Development Plan is up-to-date. We consider this elsewhere in this Statement.

### **Other Material Considerations**

- 5.38 There are a range of material considerations which are relevant to the determination of the application. In addition to the NPPF and other strategy and policy documents identified at the outset of this chapter, BMBC has adopted a suite of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) which expand upon the policies within the Development Plan. A number of SPDs are considered relevant to the development proposals contained within this application and have been fully considered in designing this scheme. The relevant SPDs are considered throughout the technical submissions that form part of this application and are confirmed below:

- *Affordable Housing* (February 2013)
- *Accessibility, Transport and Road Safety* (October 2013)
- *General Design* (June 2015)
- *Infrastructure and Planning Contributions* (July 2015)
- *Sustainable Design and Construction* (October 2016)

- 5.39 The national *Planning Practice Guidance* (PPG) also provides relevant guidance and is referred to throughout this Statement where necessary.

### **Key Policy Issues for Evaluation**

- 5.40 Having regard to the relevant policy context outlined above, the following key matters are considered to be of the greatest relevance to the determination of the application:
- Conserving and enhancing the historic environment, relating to the effect of the proposed development on designated and non-designated heritage assets;
  - Building a strong, competitive economy, relating to the socio-economic effects which will result from the proposed development and how it has been formulated to secure and maximise benefit;
  - Meeting housing needs, relating to the proposed residential development at the Site;
  - Achieving sustainable development, contributed to by the above but considering the wider development effects as assessed through the EIA process and reported in the Environmental Statement, and through other technical assessments; and

- Protecting Green Belt land, relating to the effect of the proposed development on the objectives and purposes of the Green Belt and whether very special circumstances are demonstrated to justify the grant of planning permission.

5.41 The of proceeding sections of this Statement undertake an appraisal of these key policy issues, by reference to appended documents and the remainder of the planning application. An assessment of the proposed development against other relevant policies of the Development Plan and other material considerations is undertaken at Appendix 7. The Statement concludes by drawing from both the main body of the Statement and Appendix 7 in considering the 'planning balance' under the provisions of Section 38(6) of the 2004 Act.

## 6. Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

### Summary Points

- The proposed development will provide a sustainable future for a designated heritage asset of national importance, which has experienced decades of decline and is at risk of further deterioration.
- The design of the proposed development has been iterative and informed by a detailed historic evaluation of the Registered Park and all related heritage assets.
- The proposed development includes extensive positive interventions of benefit to the heritage assets, including the restoration and re-use of a listed building, and restoration of plantations, lakes and other key historic structures. An action plan provides for the long term maintenance and management of the Registered Park.
- The adverse impacts arising from essential interventions have been minimised. In particular, residential development is located in the less sensitive areas of the Registered Park and the golf course is sensitively designed respectful of the historic designed landscape and areas of greatest significance.
- The proposed development will deliver overwhelming benefits to heritage assets. Relevant statutory and policy provisions are met in full.

- 6.1 Hulton Park is now at a critical point in its 1,000 year history. Action is required to reverse the decline it has experienced and secure its future by identifying a viable use which can facilitate its long-term management and maintenance. This is a key driver for and objective of the proposed development – to restore Hulton Park and to provide it with a sustainable future.

### Context

- 6.2 The design of the proposed development has been informed by a detailed historic evaluation of the Registered Park and all related heritage assets. This evaluation has included an assessment of significance and the formulation of conservation objectives and policies, which is found within the following:
- *Conservation Plan* for the Site which assesses the significance of the Registered Park, establishes how that significance can be sustained, and assesses the ability of the proposed development to do so;
  - *Heritage Impact Assessment* (HIA) which assesses the impact of the proposed development on the Registered Park and all other heritage assets (including those within the Registered Park);
  - *Historic Structures: Condition/Repair Issues* which considers the current condition of historic structures within the Registered Park and sets out recommendations for their repair and restoration;

- *Design and Access Statement* which explains the design of the proposed development, including how the design process has minimised impacts on the significance of the Registered Park; and
  - a series of archaeological assessments – including a Desk Top Appraisal and geophysical assessment – which provide information regarding the Site's below-ground heritage.
- 6.3 The Registered Park is a designated heritage asset of significant scale, diversity and complexity. Within it, there are identifiable 'character areas', one other designated heritage asset – the Grade II listed Dovecote – and a number of non-designated heritage assets, including various historic structures such as the walled kitchen garden. Outside of the Site but within the vicinity of the Registered Park there are several other heritage assets, including the Grade II Listed property at 791-793 Manchester Road, all of which must be considered in respect of both direct effects and – in relation to the designated asset – impact on setting.
- 6.4 The HIA identifies the relevant statutory provisions and the policy tests set by the NPPF and the Development Plan, against which the effects of the proposed development must be appraised. The statutory test under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 in respect of the effects on listed buildings and their settings is of relevance to both the listed Dovecote and the listed building outside the Site (791-793 Manchester Road). The other identified heritage assets, including the RPG, are not covered by statutory provisions.

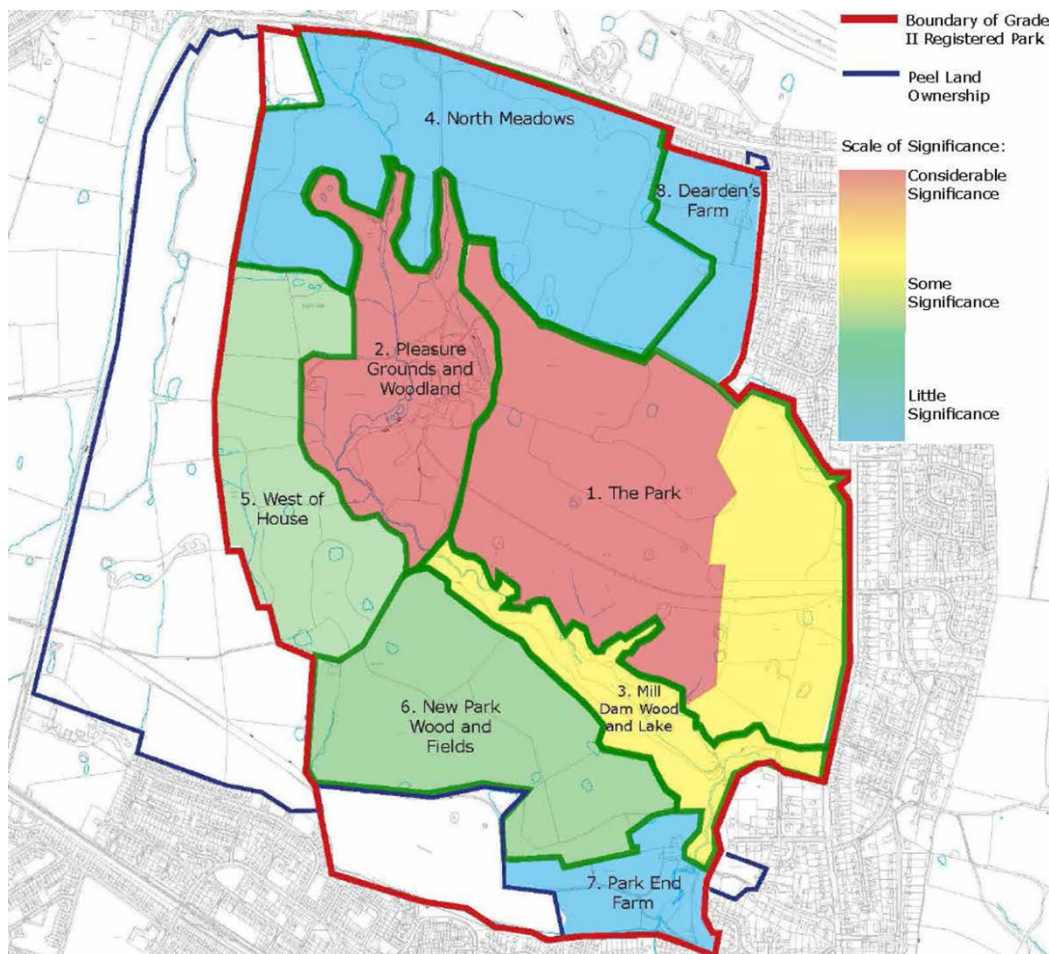
### **The design process: embedded enhancement and mitigation**

- 6.5 The development of a golf resort introduces a single activity which makes widespread use of all areas of the Registered Park. This is of critical importance, given that the absence of a single and/or viable use to manage it in recent decades has been a key cause of the fragmentation of the landscape and the decline of key historic features. The creation of the golf resort therefore encourages single ownership, meaning that a whole-site 'Vision' for the future maintenance and management of the Registered Park over the long-term is achievable. It is nevertheless essential to ensure that the golf resort is introduced into the Registered Park in a sensitive manner.
- 6.6 The design of the proposed development has been iterative and has evolved in full acknowledgement of the Site's historic significance. Mindful of the Applicant's principal objective of realising the restoration and future viability of the Registered Park, detailed research and evaluation of the history of the Registered Park and its component parts was undertaken by appointed specialists. These specialists included Land Use Consultants (LUC), who developed the Historic England guidance regarding golf course developments in historic parks and landscapes<sup>2</sup>, which informed the historic evaluation of the Site. The evaluation led to a full appreciation of the significance of the Registered Park and all designated and non-designated heritage assets within and surrounding the Site. This in turn has directly informed decisions made on design development and the content of the application itself. Such decisions were also informed by feedback received through pre-application discussions with key stakeholders, including:
- BMBC's Design & Conservation Manager; and

- The Lancashire Gardens Trust, which acts on behalf of The Gardens Trust - a statutory consultee in respect of the application.

6.7 The CP and the HIA – which have been developed in tandem – identify a series of character areas within the Registered Park and undertake an evaluation of their character and significance, including their present condition. Through this detailed appreciation, supported by documentary evidence, the relative significance of the different character areas of the Registered Park were identified, as illustrated in Figure 6.1. The evaluation also established the essential characteristics of the Registered Park as a whole and each character area.

**Figure 6.1: Analysis of the significance of the Registered Park**



*Source: Design and Access Statement*

6.8 This evaluation culminated in a series of conservation policies which are set out in the CP. These policies are applicable to the conservation, restoration and management of individual character areas within the Registered Park. They comprise a series of key objectives to inform any future development to or within those areas, and to their ongoing management and maintenance. These policies have informed decisions on how to minimise potential adverse impacts arising from essential interventions associated with the proposed development, for example:

- in locating the proposed residential development within the less significant and hence less sensitive areas of the Registered Park, recognising the notable change in character that would arise;
- in the sensitive design of the golf course, for instance in the topography, in the balance of fairway and rough, in the design of bunkers, and scale and location of water features;
- in minimising the loss of woodland and mitigating loss with supplementary or replacement planting elsewhere within the Site, placed to be consistent with the spirit of the original landscape design; and
- in proposing demolition only where structures are identified by the HIA and CP as being of limited heritage significance, or where they are so degraded that their retention is not practicable. In particular:
  - Hulton Cottage – which is being removed to facilitate the delivery of the highway access to the golf resort from the A6 – is identified by the HIA to be of low significance; and
  - The curved arcade wall and remains of the stable block in the centre of the Registered Park are ruinous and it is not practicable to retain them within the proposed development.

6.9 Conversely, the evaluation identified critical opportunities for positive intervention. A number of areas and features of heritage significance have deteriorated given the decline in use and maintenance of the Registered Park, to the extent that some are now barely discernible (see Section 3). A programme of restoration for a variety of historic structures throughout the Registered Park, such as the walled kitchen garden, has been developed and is set out in the accompanying *Historic Structures: Condition/Repair Issues*. It has been designed to respond to those risks and opportunities, in order to convey greatest benefit to the Registered Park. This programme of restoration works comprises a critical part of the proposed development and is documented in the action plan for the Registered Park contained in the accompanying CP.

6.10 The interpretation and heritage value of the Site will be further safeguarded through:

- Further archaeological assessment, including:
  - Evaluation trenching in specific locations within the Registered Park to explore below-ground archaeological remains. This will include the site of the former Hulton Hall and will provide opportunities for involvement from community heritage groups and local schools; and
  - Archaeological building recording, particularly in respect of historic structures which cannot be retained within the proposed development, such as the stable block ruins and curved arcade wall;



- The delivery of the Hulton Trail, which will offer interpretative material to enable the local community to engage with and appreciate the Site's heritage and environment (see Section 4).
- 6.11 All of the above is embedded in the proposed development, reflective of the Applicant's objective of achieving restoration and lasting regeneration of the Registered Park. It has therefore informed the evaluation of impact of the proposed development on the Registered Park and other individual heritage assets.

### **The impact of the proposed development**

- 6.12 The impact of the proposed development on the Registered Park and other designated and non-designated heritage assets both at and within the vicinity of the Site has been appraised in detail within the application, including principally within the HIA. Whilst the proposed development will cause harm to some areas of the Registered Park and non-designated heritage assets of lesser significance, this is to be balanced against the significant benefit which will be achieved for other parts of the Registered Park and specific assets within it. It is necessary to consider the heritage of the Site as a whole, the threats that exist to its future condition, and the overall outcomes that can be achieved as a consequence of the proposed development.
- 6.13 In this regard, the proposed development will have major beneficial effects for several parts of the Registered Park, including:
- The **Grade II listed Dovecote**, which will be retained and subject to restoration as shown in the *Elevations and Masonry Repairs* and *Plans & Sections* drawings for it (refs: dov/lbc/001 and dov/lbc/002 respectively). This will involve, *inter alia*, the repair of the roof structure, repointing of the brick work, repair and replacement of brickwork where necessary, and the fabrication and installation of an ornamental gate. Moreover, the setting, which currently comprises modern farm buildings and structures associated with Home Farm, will be transformed with the Dovecote accommodated within a sensitively designed landscaped parking area associated with the hotel complex. The restoration and significant enhancement in setting of this listed structure, which is the subject of the accompanying Listed Building consent application, will be a significant benefit in its own right, made more so by its contextual position within the Registered Park. Given its listed status, these benefits carry significant weight ;
  - **The site of former Hulton Hall**, which was demolished in 1958. The Hall had originally formed the centrepiece of the Park and the focus of activity when at its peak. This is evident in the range of designated and non-designated heritage assets in this location, such as the Dovecote, the Dutch Barn, the stable blocks, and the pleasure grounds. The Hall itself was positioned to have extensive views to the east across the lawn at its front entrance and to the open pasture and plantations beyond. The Registered Park has therefore lost its centrepiece and design focus. The loss of the original design intention for the Park is identified as a key threat by the Conservation Plan<sup>8</sup>. The hotel complex is a direct response to this threat; as set out in Section 4 its location, orientation and layout has sought to

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<sup>8</sup> *Hulton Park Conservation Plan: Volume One: An Assessment of the Heritage Significance*, LUC (November 2016)

reflect key aspects of the former Hulton Hall, thereby reinstating the central design focus of the Registered Park, giving renewed coherence to the designed landscape and enhancing its significance. It also makes sense of and affords a viable active use for the proposed restored walked kitchen garden and pleasure grounds on adjoining land, with visitors to the golf resort and hotel complex making use of the area for leisure and recreational purposes. The site will of the former Hall will once again become the focus for the Park, with the hotel complex re-introducing a hub of social activity. This will be critical in ensuring that the pleasure grounds in particular are used and maintained over the longer-term as part of a single whole-site 'Vision';

- **The pleasure grounds** surrounding the site of the former Hulton Hall, which are unusable and barely discernible: being severely overgrown and harmed by invasive species. The proposed development will reclaim the pleasure grounds for leisure and recreational uses, with the woodland cleared of inappropriate species and re-planted, pathways created and the walled kitchen garden re-constructed. The relationship with the site of the former Hall will be reinstated, with the hotel complex designed to align with and encourage use and enjoyment of this restored asset;
- The **woodland plantations** within the Registered Park, an essential component of the original landscape design, have suffered from lack of management and are infested by invasive species. The proposed development will introduce a programme of phased management to restore them to their former condition. Additional planting will be introduced, respectful and complementary to the original design; and
- The **lakes** within the Registered Park, including the Mill Dam Lake to the south and the northern lake in the pleasure grounds. Both of these have existed since the 18<sup>th</sup> century but are severely silted up and overgrown. The proposed development will restore both to their original form, depth and size.

- 6.14 The proposed development includes the restoration of numerous designated and non-designated historic structures throughout the Registered Park. Whilst a small number of non-designated structures will be demolished those are assessed to be of lesser significance by the HIA and in some cases – such as with the curved arcade wall and stable block – it is simply not practicable for them to be retained given their ruinous and unstable condition. Despite this, the majority of historic structures within the Registered Park, and all of those assessed to be of greatest significance, will be retained and restored. The extent and significance of the heritage benefits achieved by the restoration of retained assets will far outweigh the effects caused by the necessary losses, as set out in Table 6.1.

**Table 6.1: Summary of proposals for key historic structures within the Registered Park**

Heritage asset	HIA conclusion on significance	Summary of restoration proposals	HIA conclusion on overall impact
Park Entrance (Newbrook Road)	Medium	Repair and repainting of gates and railings; minor repair and cleaning of masonry	Major beneficial
Entrance Lodge (Newbrook road)	Medium	Minor masonry repair and cleaning; re-pointing brickwork; roof repairs	Major/moderate beneficial
Ha-Ha	Medium	Repaired to original height, including partial rebuilding, repair of stonework, reinstatement of gateway in original position, new estate fencing to match original	Major beneficial
Walled Kitchen Garden	Medium	Rebuilding and repair of brick walls to original height, incorporating heating chambers; reinstatement of stone flag fencing; clearance of invasive vegetation and reinstatement of landscaping; restoration of entrance gateway	Major beneficial
Curved Arcade Wall	Low	n/a – to be removed following archaeological recording	Negligible adverse
Stable block	Low	n/a – to be removed following archaeological recording	Negligible adverse
Dovecote	High	Repairs to roof; repointing of brickwork; fabrication and installation of ornamental gate; improvement to setting	Major beneficial
Home Farmhouse	Low	n/a – to be removed	Negligible adverse
Red Brick Hay Barn	Medium	Repairs to roof and brickwork; improvement of setting	Moderate beneficial
Northern Entrance Gate (Manchester Road)	Low	Removed to enable alterations to access junction; restoration and re-siting within the Registered Park	Negligible adverse
Mill Dam	Medium	Restored alongside construction of a new dam structure	Minor beneficial
North lake dam	Medium	Restored using existing stones	Moderate beneficial
Park End Farm	Medium	Restored and converted for residential use	Minor beneficial

Heritage asset	HIA conclusion on significance	Summary of restoration proposals	HIA conclusion on overall impact
house and barn			
Hulton Cottage	Low	n/a – to be removed to enable highway access	Minor adverse

*Source: HIA and Historic Structure Condition & Repair Survey*

- 6.15 The Grade II Listed 791-793 Manchester Road building will not be directly affected by the proposed development given its location outside the Site. It is located adjacent to the proposed Academy; however, the HIA concludes that the impact of the proposed development on its setting will be neutral.
- 6.16 It is acknowledged that the proposed development also includes development within the setting of the Registered Park. This includes, in particular, the residential development within the Western Fields area. The HIA acknowledges that this will result in adverse impacts on the setting of the Registered Park, but concludes that such impacts are limited given that they are almost wholly restricted to areas of the Registered Park that are of the lowest significance.

## Conclusion on heritage impacts

- 6.17 The HIA appraises the proposed development against the relevant statutory and policy provisions. This appraisal– identifies that the proposed development will:
- Preserve, and indeed enhance, the listed buildings and their setting;
  - Sustain and enhance the special character of the Registered Park, protecting those areas of the highest value;
  - Re-establish a focus for the historic designed landscape;
  - Considerably enhance the setting and cumulative significance of heritage assets, which will be better revealed as a result of structural repairs, landscape restoration, improved management, managed public access and interpretation.
- 6.18 Overall, the HIA identifies that overall the proposed development will result in “...overwhelming benefits to heritage assets...” within the Site and its immediate surrounds. It will enable a substantial package of interventions and investment which will enable the Registered Park and heritage assets within it to be restored to their former condition after decades of decline.
- 6.19 The NPPF recognises the value of putting heritage assets to viable use consistent with their conservation, as it provides a means of sustaining and enhancing the significance of those assets. That is the case here, and is a principal objective of the project. The development of the golf resort will provide Hulton Park and its component assets with a viable long-term use, something it has not had for many decades and the absence of which puts the very future of the Park’s heritage significance and value at risk. It will

provide both the financial means and impetus to halt and reverse the decline of the Registered Park and maintain it as a whole – including key character areas and historic structures within it – over the long-term. It will allow for the enjoyment of and greater awareness of the asset and therefore return it to its original status as a focus for the local area. The proposed use, including all development necessary to make it sustainable and as beneficial as it can be, has been shown within the HIA to be consistent with the Park's conservation.

- 6.20 The CP schedules the proposed restoration works and provides an action plan for future maintenance. It will be subject to a condition of planning permission, ensuring that the restoration works and maintenance actions are secured and implemented over the duration of the project.
- 6.21 The integration of the conservation objectives, policies and actions of the Conservation Plan with the development of the project will ensure the overall significance of the Registered Park, the listed Dovecote and a number of other non-designated assets is sustained and enhanced. This hereby ensures accordance with statutory provisions and direct alignment with policy objectives at a national and local level (see Appendix 7 for a full account of this). This is a significant positive outcome of the development to be afforded considerable weight in the planning balance.

## 7. Responding to a Positive Growth Opportunity

### Summary Points

- The proposed development represents a once-in-a-generation growth opportunity, which is aligned with local, regional and national policy objectives, including in respect of growing and re-balancing the economy.
- The facilities associated with the golf course are necessary and designed specifically to cater for the scale and prestige of event the Ryder Cup represents.
- The proposed development will generate transformational benefits as part of a long-term legacy, both in the local area and regionally.
- Whilst the benefits of the proposal as a whole merit the grant of planning permission regardless of whether or not the Ryder Cup is secured, the Applicant is prepared to accept a condition tying development to a successful Ryder Cup bid.

- 7.1 As explained in Section 1, the proposed development has been designed with a specific purpose in mind: to provide a championship-grade golf venue capable of hosting a Ryder Cup tournament. This Section sets out the scale of the opportunity, the benefits arising from it, and how the proposed development will maximise those benefits.

### The Opportunity

- 7.2 The proposed development comprises the restoration of Hulton Park via the creation of a sporting hub of international standard and quality in the form of a championship-grade golf resort, alongside sustainable residential development. The resort is designed specifically to underpin a bid to host the Ryder Cup. If the restoration and long-term beneficial use of Hulton Park is the principal objective and driver, it is this opportunity – hosting the Ryder Cup at a purpose-built golf resort at Hulton Park and thereafter benefiting from the legacy that comes with such an event and facility – which provides the main impetus and rationale for the project.
- 7.3 The Ryder Cup is a biennial team golf event completed over three days (following practice days), competed for between the US and Europe. Since its inception it has grown dramatically and is now referred to as a ‘mega event’<sup>9</sup> – one of the greatest sporting tournaments in the world with true global appeal and media interest. It has increased its international profile dramatically over the past 20 years and is now the third largest global sports event, after the Olympics and football World Cup. It is the highest profile golf event in the world. Further background on the Ryder Cup opportunity is outlined at Appendix 5, including in respect of the bidding process, the prospects and timescales of securing it at Hulton Park, and the impact and legacy benefits of the tournament.
- 7.4 The proposed development provides Bolton with an unparalleled opportunity to capitalise upon its position within Greater Manchester to establish a world-leading golf and leisure resort, host one of the largest and highest profile global sporting events,

<sup>9</sup> *Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation*, Department of Culture, Media and Sport (December 2015)



deliver a long-term investment programme to increase sports participation, support local businesses, and strengthen the visitor economy. It represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity which will generate transformational economic benefits as part of a long-term legacy, both in the immediate area and regionally.

- 7.5 The re-balancing of the national economy is now recognised as one of the most important economic priorities in the UK's ambition of both accelerating growth and enhancing national productivity. The Northern Powerhouse has established the Government's ambition to bring together the city regions of the north to strengthen their combined contribution to the national economy. Whilst initial proposals have focussed on improved connectivity, its delivery also requires a focus on the growth of key economic sectors and strengths with a leading role in UK exports, including sport and tourism.
- 7.6 Given its position in the North West and in Greater Manchester, the golf resort at Hulton Park can make a significant and unique contribution to these and other national and regional strategic growth objectives. It provides an opportunity to raise the international profile of the region and city region, to align activities with inward investment priorities across key economic sectors, and to boost local producer businesses linked to a growing visitor economy. It can provide a focal point for enhanced tourism and business development across the North West.
- 7.7 Moreover, the staging of the Ryder Cup at Hulton Park and the associated "commitment" programmes (see below) – which seek to maximise the legacy and benefits of the tournament over the longer-term – can deliver a more pronounced impact in this northern location. Given the lower economic productivity in the North West compared to the South East, hosting the Ryder Cup in Greater Manchester will yield much greater benefits in terms of economic productivity.
- 7.8 The specific benefits arising, as evidenced within the application documents, are discussed further below.

### **The Benefits: A Transformational Growth Opportunity**

- 7.9 A detailed assessment of the economic and social impacts which will result from the proposed development is contained within the following documents:
- *Economic Impact of Hulton Park and The 2026 Ryder Cup*, prepared by Ekosgen; and
  - *Hulton Park: Social Value Assessment*, prepared by Turley.
- 7.10 The above are submitted alongside the application and have informed the preparation of the socio-economic impact assessment in the *Environmental Statement* (Volume 2, Chapter 16). The key impacts of the project include:
- Economic output (GVA) and employment growth;
  - Volunteers and sports participation;

- Tourism and expenditure; and
- Public revenue.

7.11 The benefits arising under each of the above are summarised below, typically on an average annual basis over a 20-year period from 2021 to 2040. The benefits of the proposed development are considered as a whole; this therefore includes those arising from the residential development, albeit the key drivers of this aspect of the proposed development are discussed separately in Section 8.

## **Economic output and employment growth**

### ***Construction and operation***

- 7.12 The delivery of the proposed development and the staging of the Ryder Cup is anticipated to result in a total capital investment of over £240m. This is a very significant injection of private sector funding into the Borough. It represents one of the largest development projects in the North West region. Significant benefits to the Borough, to Greater Manchester and to the North West will result from this investment.
- 7.13 The contribution to annual productivity arising from the construction of the proposed development in the local area is estimated to be approximately £1.71m per annum over the 20 year construction period, with a high of £9.0m in 2022 when the golf resort and other key infrastructure will be developed, whilst the 2026 Ryder Cup itself will generate a further £560,000. These figures increase to £7.17m and £2.34m across the North West region. Given the policy priority placed on economic growth and relative to the forecast change in construction GVA, the productivity effect associated with the construction of the proposed development and the facilities required to host the 2026 Ryder Cup is expected to be significant at all scales.
- 7.14 The project will have a unique and transformational impact on employment both within the local area and the wider North West region. The establishment of the golf resort – a world-class sport, leisure and tourist attraction and construction of the residential development will create:
- 164 net additional FTE<sup>10</sup> jobs per annum across the region during the 20 year construction period for the proposed development, including both direct construction jobs on-site, indirect jobs within the supply chain, and induced jobs (for example, those resulting from increased wage expenditure by construction workers). The construction of the temporary Ryder Cup facilities will support a further 54 net additional FTE jobs in 2026. The annual construction jobs will fluctuate during the build period, peaking at 867 net additional FTE jobs in 2022 during the construction of the golf resort. It is anticipated that approximately one third of the gross direct construction jobs – or one third of the net additional jobs (direct, indirect and induced) – will be taken up locally and, in the event that planning permission is granted, a Local Employment Framework will maximise the local take up of new employment opportunities;

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<sup>10</sup> Full Time Equivalent (FTE)

- 160 net additional FTE jobs per annum during the operation of the proposed development. This encompasses a wide range of potential job roles across a variety of facilities, including waiters, chefs, conference and hotel staff, spa attendants, specialist golf tutors, retail vendors, grounds maintenance and building managers. In respect of these operational jobs:
  - It is anticipated that 70% will be taken up locally, by people living in Bolton or neighbouring Wigan;
  - It is anticipated that 33% will be taken up by young people (25 and under), a figure which will increase further when apprenticeships are taken into account (see below). The jobs therefore provide critical opportunities for school leavers; and
  - Approximately 61% are entry level jobs, which have the potential to reduce unemployment rates and provide part time/temporary jobs for people who are seeking to return to work after some time out or boost their household income. It is anticipated that 20% of the jobs will be taken by current claimants of Job Seekers Allowance (JSA), thereby having a meaningful impact on worklessness in the Borough and helping to reduce the above average number of JSA claimants in Bolton (26.7% compared to just 24% across the North West and 24.5% nationally).

7.15 The new jobs will deliver significant social value, as set out in the accompanying SVA report, equivalent to:

- £32.57m resulting from exchequer savings and increases in tax revenues associated with people coming off JSA and gaining new employment; and
- £25.78m associated with young people who are 'Not in Employment, Education or Training' (NEET) gaining employment.

***2026 Ryder Cup and the “Ryder Cup commitment”***

7.16 In addition to the construction and operation of the golf resort, the hosting of the Ryder Cup at the Site – a sporting event of global significance – will create 859 net additional FTE jobs in 2026 during the tournament, in addition to opportunities for volunteers (see below). This will comprise hospitality staff, site marshalls, and a range of other event jobs. This will in turn generate additional social value of £140,000 resulting from savings and increases in tax revenues associated with people coming off JSA and gaining new employment.

7.17 As important as the impact of the event itself in 2026 are the benefits generated in the build-up years and the legacy after 2026, given the scale, profile and appeal of the event on the world-stage and the emphasis placed upon developing the game of golf in the selection process. The Ryder Cup 2026 would be one of the largest sporting events of the decade to be held in the UK. In promotional terms, only the Olympics and FIFA World Cup generate more publicity. As such, the years leading up to and immediately after the Ryder Cup will include extensive developmental work to maximise the long-term benefits of the event for the nation, and for Bolton and Greater Manchester in particular. This is referred to as the “Ryder Cup commitment”, which is comprised of

activities relating to increased training, inward investment, supply chain development work, and numerous tournaments to road test the new course and establish the legacy of the Ryder Cup. These programmes extend the impact of the Ryder Cup considerably and put in place long-term opportunities to grow the economy.

7.18 The key “commitment” programmes are outlined at Appendix 5. The benefits associated with them are identified by Ekosgen based on reasonable assumptions, drawing upon assessments of similar programmes undertaken for previous Ryder Cup events, such as Gleneagles in 2014, but mindful that the 2026 Ryder Cup is expected to be considerably larger. These “commitment” programmes – which will benefit local residents and businesses – include the following:

- Apprenticeship Programme – approximately 110 apprenticeships will be supported across the North West region in the years leading up to the 2026 Ryder Cup. Ekosgen describes apprenticeships as “jobs with training, rather than training places”. As such, an apprentice will become a trained employee upon completion of the programme. The programme is therefore expected to generate 111 net additional FTE jobs per annum, in turn supporting £3.16m GVA annually. This provides important opportunities for young people to learn a profession and secure an occupation.
- Business Development Programme – this aims to increase the number of local firms involved in delivering golf tournaments, provide a successful showcase for food and drink, artisan and leisure industry businesses, increase the leisure and golf industry economy, and attract inward investment and tourist visitors to the North West. It is expected to provide opportunities for approximately 178 businesses linked to the visitor economy and boosting employment growth by an annual average of 639 net additional FTE jobs (direct, indirect and induced), in turn supporting an average of £21.56m GVA annually. The Business Development Programme will help to ensure that the hosting of the Ryder Cup and the establishment of the golf resort provides unique growth and legacy opportunities for local businesses which can be sustained over the long-term.
- Tournament Programme – as noted in Appendix 5, the bid process for the Ryder Cup itself requires a commitment to host three tournament events of varying scales (see Table 7.1) every year for 12 years both preceding and succeeding the Ryder Cup itself. It is anticipated that this Tournament Programme will run from 2023 to 2034, with one third of the tournament events hosted at Hulton Park. These tournament events would be smaller in scale than the Ryder Cup itself, but would nevertheless considerably increase sports-related tourism over a sustained period, in turn generating average annual impacts of approximately 146 net additional FTE jobs and £4.18m GVA per annum.

**Table 7.1: Tournament Programme events**

Tournament event	Description and key assumptions
European Tour	100,000 spectators 80,000 day visitors, spending £50 each 20,000 overnight visitors, staying 3.2 nights and £135 day spend (incl. accommodation)
Challenger Event	12,000 spectators 9,600 day visitors, spending £50 each 2,400 over overnight visitors, staying 3.2 nights and £135 day spend (incl. accommodation)
Senior Tour	16,000 spectators 12,800 day visitors, spending £50 each 3,200 over overnight visitors, staying 3.2 nights and £135 day spend (incl. accommodation)

Source: *Economic Impact of Hulton Park and The 2026 Ryder Cup*

**Overall economic output and employment growth**

7.19 Mindful of all of the above and as summarised in Table 7.2 below, the average number of annual jobs which are expected to result from the project from 2021 up to 2040 are as follows:

- 305 FTE jobs in Bolton/Wigan;
- A further 673 FTE jobs elsewhere in Greater Manchester; and
- A further 133 FTE jobs elsewhere in North West.

**Table 7.2: Summary of annual average net employment and GVA impacts over the period 2021 to 2040**

	Bolton / Wigan		Greater Manchester		North West	
	Jobs <sup>10</sup>	GVA (£m)	Jobs <sup>10</sup>	GVA (£m)	Jobs <sup>10</sup>	GVA (£m)
Construction	39	1.71	138	6.01	164	7.17
Ryder Cup staging construction	13	0.56	45	1.97	54	2.34
Operation of golf resort	85	2.44	150	4.29	160	4.57
Apprenticeships	10	0.28	76	2.18	111	3.16
Business development	170	5.75	599	20.21	639	21.56
Golf tournaments	39	1.12	137	3.92	146	4.18

2026 Ryder Cup	65	2.30	343	12.08	859	30.21
Total	305	10.11	978	32.96	1,111	37.51

Source: *Economic Impact of Hulton Park and The 2026 Ryder Cup*

- 7.20 It is clear that the proposed development and commitment to hosting the Ryder Cup will deliver a substantial number of jobs – 1,111 FTE jobs as an annual average over the duration of the project to completion – supported by an extensive range of programmes. Bolton and Wigan are the major beneficiaries of the employment and GVA benefits. Given that the projected rate of jobs growth in Bolton up to 2035 is below the average for Greater Manchester and the North West, this will provide an additional boost which will help to enhance the Borough's performance within the city region and the wider region.
- 7.21 The Applicant is willing to commit to the preparation of a Local Employment Framework which will ensure that local take up of new employment opportunities is maximised. Such a Framework would secure the implementation of local employment initiatives and schemes and would include commitments to, *inter alia*:
- Recruiting local residents into employment positions where possible;
  - Local advertisement of opportunities;
  - Provision of apprenticeships, work experience placements and internships, including in partnership with local schools, colleges and universities;
  - Supporting employment programmes for people with a disability;
  - Using supply chains to create and promote local opportunities and local businesses;
  - Holding 'Meet the Buyer' events to introduce local companies to contractor partners; and
  - Working with contractor partners to forecast detailed labour demand requirements on specific projects and seeking to meet those labour demands through local sourcing.
- 7.22 This Framework can be secured via an appropriately worded condition in the event that planning permission is granted (see Appendix 2).

### **Volunteers and sports participation**

- 7.23 The staging of the Ryder Cup will involve several years of build-up and developmental work to ensure that the benefits of the event are maximised. In addition to the Tournament, Apprenticeship and Business Development Programme's discussed above, this will include:
- Volunteer Recruitment and Training Programme
  - Sports Participation Programme



- 7.24 The Volunteer Recruitment and Training Programme will seek to recruit volunteers to assist with the operation of the Ryder Cup from all over the world and provide them with the necessary training. The Programme will commence in 2023 and will recruit and train volunteers in each of the years leading up to the Ryder Cup in 2026. Analysis undertaken by Ekosgen has estimated the value of volunteering both to the economy and the individual, as well as health and wellbeing benefits associated with volunteering. As illustrated in Table 7.3 below, the analysis indicates that the Programme will generate an economic value equivalent to approximately £1.5m over the four year period and provide opportunities to over 600 local people.

**Table 7.3: Volunteering Recruitment and Training Programme impact**

		Bolton/Wigan	Greater Manchester	North West
2023	Volunteers trained	100	400	1,000
	Economic value	£31,200	£93,601	£187,202
2024	Volunteers trained	100	400	1,000
	Economic value	£31,200	£93,601	£187,202
2025	Volunteers trained	250	1,000	2,500
	Economic value	£97,501	£292,503	£585,006
2026	Volunteers trained	230	920	2,300
	Economic value	£89,701	£269,103	£538,206
<b>Total volunteers trained</b>		<b>680</b>	<b>2,720</b>	<b>6,800</b>
<b>Total economic value</b>		<b>£249,603</b>	<b>£748,808</b>	<b>£1,497,617</b>

*Source: Economic Impact of Hulton Park and The 2026 Ryder Cup*

- 7.25 The Sports Participation Programme is a major element of the Ryder Cup commitment. It seeks to increase awareness, participation and excellence by boosting the number of people taking up and playing golf, and is therefore a central part of ensuring that the event contributes to the development of the sport and generates a legacy over the long-term. The Programme will be implemented across the North West region between 2022 and 2026, and would establish a comprehensive set of targets to be met during the five-year period. It will focus on increasing participation amongst priority grounds, including women and young people in particular, via coaching and introduction to golf classes. For example, every school student in Bolton and Wigan would be introduced to golf and old school students will be provided with a coaching lesson at local clubs.
- 7.26 There are demonstrable benefits associated with increased sports participation. These include in particular a predicted reduction in GP visits and the use of mental health services as a result of good health. This has a value to society via, inter alia, cost savings to the NHS. As summarised in Table 7.4 below, the Programme has the potential to involve 225,000 participants and to secure health cost savings of over £2.5m.

**Table 7.4: Potential participation rates and health cost savings**

	Bolton / Wigan	Greater Manchester	North West
Young people participants	4,438	57,750	175,000
Women participants	1,650	6,600	20,000
Over 50 participants	2,475	9,900	30,000
<b>Total participants</b>	<b>18,563</b>	<b>74,250</b>	<b>225,000</b>
NHS savings	£89,991	£359,964	£1,090,800
Mental health savings	£121,325	£485,298	£1,470,600
<b>Total savings<sup>11</sup></b>	<b>£211,316</b>	<b>£845,262</b>	<b>£2,561,400</b>

Source: *Economic Impact of Hulton Park and The 2026 Ryder Cup*

7.27 Mindful of the above, Ekosgen has concluded that the proposed development will provide an “...exceptional level...” of opportunities in respect of sports participation and volunteering, which will provide significant benefits to residents living both in Bolton and Wigan, and throughout Greater Manchester and the North West region. These opportunities will also generate significant social value of:

- £13.48 attributable to two thirds of trained volunteers volunteering at least once at a sports event in the future; and
- £2.56m associated with increased participation in sport over an indicative 10 year period.

### **Tourism and Expenditure**

7.28 The proposed development creates significant opportunities to boost the vitality and viability of local shops, services and facilities both locally and in the wider area, through enhanced tourism and increased household expenditure. The scale of these benefits will be determined by, *inter alia*, the expenditure patterns of local residents and visitors to the golf resort, but is estimated as follows.

#### ***Golf resort expenditure***

7.29 The development of the golf resort will establish an international-standard sporting, leisure and tourist attraction in the Borough. It will be one of the most significant tourist destinations in the North West and will attract visitors from all over the world. The hosting of the Ryder Cup at the Site will provide credible forward momentum and global recognition for the resort, which will ensure that it functions as a visitor draw in future years both in respect of tourism and sport engagement. This is particularly the case given the inclusion of the high quality hotel complex, which will enhance the overall attractiveness of the resort by ensuring that visitors have a true golf resort experience, thereby optimising its financial and operational performance (see Section 4).

7.30 It is anticipated that the golf resort will accommodate approximately 39,400 annual overnight visitor stays which will generate economic impacts through expenditure on

<sup>11</sup> Assuming that 1 in 5 participants in the Programme continue to take up golf on a regular basis.

leisure and tourism activities at the Site, in local shops and services, and on transport. Excluding accommodation it is estimated that a visitor stay will be accompanied by an average spend of £75 per night. Visitors to the golf resort could therefore spend £3.0m annually in the local economy, which will in turn support 21 FTE jobs per annum within local industries in the leisure and tourism sector. This would boost local productivity and support growth over the long-term. This expenditure is considered to be a conservative estimate given the quality of the facilities proposed.

#### ***Household expenditure***

- 7.31 The proposed development includes the delivery of up to 1,036 new homes. It is estimated that new residents at the Site will have earnings potential of up to £25.6m (gross), which funds purchases in relation to housing, food shopping, comparison goods, leisure and other forms of discretionary expenditure. In this respect, based on spending patterns in the local area, the new homes have the potential to generate spending of up to approximately:
- £12.4m annual on convenience and comparison retail goods;
  - £6.9m annually on leisure goods and services; and
  - £5.2m of 'first occupation' expenditure, associated with households spending on new furnishings and decoration when moving into a new property.
- 7.32 The residential development will therefore result in substantial amounts of additional spending. A proportion of this spending is expected to be retained within the local area, such that it will provide a valuable source of trade and help to boost employment in local businesses.

#### ***Ryder Cup expenditure***

- 7.33 The Ryder Cup is one of a handful of sporting 'mega events' which are of international significance. In promotional terms, only the Olympics and FIFA World Cup generate more publicity. It is the most prestigious and highest profile golf event in the world. The 2026 Ryder Cup will be one of the largest sporting events of the decade to be held in the UK. It will attract significant numbers of visitors from around the globe to the local area, generating substantial amounts of spending on accommodation and in local shops and services. Key visitor groups include:
- Spectators – approximately 303,000 people are expected at the golf resort during the six day event, including practice days, to watch the tournament. It is estimated that 22% will be international visitors and that a further 57% will come from outside the North West region. There will therefore be a significant number of overnight stays associated with the tournament, with some visitors expected to extend their stay beyond the event;
  - Volunteers – the 2026 Ryder Cup will require a total of approximately 2,300 volunteers, of whom 1,500 will be on-site, the majority of whom are expected to reside in the local area or elsewhere in Greater Manchester. Volunteers are self-financing and tend to spend less than spectator visitors, although many are recognised to extend their stay beyond the event itself;

- Media presence – it is anticipated that approximately 2,000 media personnel. The vast majority are likely to stay overnight in nearby tourist accommodation for the duration of the event, thereby generating high levels of expenditure; and
- Contractors and other partners – the 2026 Ryder Cup is anticipated to have 98 contracting companies and 46 partner organisations and companies (such as sponsors) on-site during the event, supporting approximately 5,000 members of staff of which a consideration proportion will require overnight accommodation within easy travelling distance.

7.34 Overall, as set out in Table 7.5 below, it is estimated that the above will generate 318,367 overnight stays associated with the 2026 Ryder Cup, both in the local area, throughout Greater Manchester and elsewhere within the North West region, with expenditure of:

- £19.73m on accommodation; and
- £33.55m in local shops and services.

7.35 This expenditure – totalling £53.28m – will support 1,973 net additional FTE jobs and £56.40m net additional GVA across the North West region, and 539 FTE jobs and £15.42m GVA in the local area.

**Table 7.5: Expenditure impacts of the 2026 Ryder Cup**

	Bolton	North West
Spectators	£17,438,680	£45,727,706
Volunteers	£563,758	£609,907
Media	£1,421,121	£2,331,459
Contractors / partners	£3,567,992	£4,606,480
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>£22,991,552</b>	<b>£53,275,553</b>
<b>Jobs supported</b>	<b>539</b>	<b>1,973</b>
<b>GVA supported</b>	<b>£15,422,949</b>	<b>£56,404,946</b>

*Source: Economic Impact of Hulton Park and The 2026 Ryder Cup*

### Public revenue

7.36 The Localism Act (2011) sets out that “...*local financial considerations*...” are a material consideration in the determination of applications. The key fiscal impacts which are anticipated from the proposed development are as follows:

- Up to £4.5m of New Homes Bonus payments to BMBC during and immediately after the build period for the new homes at the Site;
- Up to £2m of annual Council Tax payments to BMBC arising from the new homes following their completion;

- £400,000 of annual business rates revenue for BMBC arising from the operation of the hotel complex and the local centre within the residential development.

7.37 It is therefore clear that the proposed development will result in a substantial uplift in revenue to BMBC.

## Conclusion

7.38 The NPPF sets out that planning should encourage and not act as an impediment to sustainable growth. It therefore states that:

*“...significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system...”* (paragraph 19)

7.39 Hulton Park as designed will be a world-class golf resort, providing facilities of an international standard. The *Business Strategy* at Appendix 6 identifies that it *“...will be regarded as one of the best golf facilities in England which will be open to and encourage use by all members of the public whilst also providing all visitors with a truly memorable experience...”*. It will generate substantial social and economic value in Bolton, across Greater Manchester and within the wider North West region. It will deliver an extensive range of significant economic benefits and social value across a broad range of policy areas and for numerous target groups, such as young people and those who are currently out of work. It will provide a boost to economic productivity and tourism in the Borough and throughout Greater Manchester, with associated uplifts in jobs and spending. Realising such opportunities is central to delivering the Northern Powerhouse ambition and enables Bolton take full economic advantage of its position within Greater Manchester, in line with the strategic objectives of the adopted CS. Ekosgen has concluded that the proposed development will have a *“...unique impact...”* upon the Borough and will provide:

*“...a transformational opportunity for both residents and businesses. The local impact of hosting a global sports event, the many years of activity in advance of 2026 and the intensity of the event itself provides a once in a generation experience with the potential to change lives and open up new opportunities for local people...”*

7.40 The Index of Multiple Deprivation identifies that Bolton is in the top 20% most deprived authorities in England. In this context, the proposed development will strengthen and diversify the local economy in a sustainable manner, particularly in respect of an enhanced tourist offer of the area. The benefits to local residents and businesses will be considerable. The economic benefits associated with the proposed development are highly material and must be afforded substantial weight in the determination of the application.

7.41 The development of the golf resort, the staging of the Ryder Cup and the benefits which will result will make a very substantial contribution towards achieving various planning and other policy objectives at the local and sub-regional level, including:

- Strategic Objectives of BMBC's adopted CS, including:

- Objective 1 which seeks to maximise access to “...*sporting and recreational facilities...*”;
  - Objective 3 which seeks to take advantage of the economic opportunities presented by, inter alia, the M61 corridor, and to “...*ensure that these opportunities benefit everybody in Bolton...*”; and
  - Objective 5 which seeks to “...*ensure that Bolton takes full economic advantage of its location in the Greater Manchester City Region...*”;
  - The *Strategy for the Visitor Economy*<sup>12</sup> prepared by Marketing Manchester, which seeks to:
    - “...*further development Manchester as a leading events destination...*”. It aims to grow and attract additional cultural and sporting events to the city-region, both to boost the image and profile of the Greater Manchester and to “...*bring millions of people and maximum economic benefit...*” (Strategic Aim 2); and
    - maximise the capacity for the growth of the visitor economy by delivering “...*major new attractions and conference facilities...*” (Strategic Aim 4);
  - The *Greater Manchester Strategy*<sup>13</sup>, which seeks to grow the sporting ‘offer’ of the city-region. It notes that continuing to expand the diversity of assets can facilitate innovation and growth. It states that “...*Focusing on both the creation and promotion of genuinely distinctive elements of Greater Manchester’s offer will serve to raise our profile within priority national and international markets...*”.
- 7.42 The proposed development also responds to the national *Sporting Future*<sup>14</sup> strategy document published by the Government. This seeks to bring sporting ‘mega events’ – including the Ryder Cup – to the UK in order to boost the country’s “...*reputation as the home for global sport...*”. The proposed development is also aligned with the requirement of the NPPF to “...*plan positively...*” for the provision of sports venues<sup>15</sup> and to “...*encourage and not act as an impediment to sustainable growth...*”<sup>16</sup>.
- 7.43 It is therefore clear that there is policy support in principle at the local, sub-regional and national level for the development of growth opportunities and new golfing facilities of the quality proposed at Hulton Park.

<sup>12</sup> *The Greater Manchester Strategy for the Visitor Economy 2014 – 2020*, Marketing Manchester (2014)

<sup>13</sup> *Stronger Together: Greater Manchester Strategy 2013*, Association of Greater Manchester Authorities and Greater Manchester Combined Authority (2013)

<sup>14</sup> *Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation*, Department of Culture, Media and Sport (December 2015)

<sup>15</sup> NPPF, paragraph 70

<sup>16</sup> NPPF, paragraph 19



## 8. Meeting Housing Needs

### Summary Points:

- The residential development proposals will provide essential cross-funding to make the golf resort project commercially realisable. The scale of residential development has been informed by the amount of funding required and a number of other influences, including a full appreciation of the physical, environmental and heritage constraints at the Site and the prospective impact of development.
- The new homes will convey significant benefits, including contributing positively to meeting identified housing needs in the context of a longstanding and growing shortfall of housing supply, the need for a step-change in housing delivery in the Borough, and a chronic shortage of land in both the short- and longer-term.
- The Site is suitable and sustainable for residential development and the new homes will be delivered alongside necessary infrastructure, such as public open space, schools places and a Local Centre.

- 8.1 As set out in Section 4, the proposed development includes approximately 70.36ha (gross) of residential development which has an estimated yield of up to 1,036 dwellings. The following discusses the key issues relating to the principle of development for the new homes.

### The Commercial Need for the Residential Development

- 8.2 A viability appraisal of the proposed development has been undertaken by Cushman & Wakefield. It is submitted to BMBC on a confidential basis, given the commercial sensitivity of the information provided within it.
- 8.3 A significant financial investment is required to deliver the golf resort and associated facilities and infrastructure, including to ensure that it is developed to the quality standard required to a) facilitate the appropriate restoration and long-term maintenance of the Registered Park, and b) enable the Ryder Cup tournament to be hosted at the Site, such that the significant benefits associated with this event can be secured.
- 8.4 The investment required to create the proposed development and realise those benefits – costed at approximately £103m – is of a scale that cannot be recouped from the future operation of the facilities or enhancement in land value. The value of the asset, arising from the successful commercial operation of the golf resort and associated facilities, including the hotel complex, and assuming that the 2026 Ryder Cup is hosted at the Site has been estimated at approximately £45m. There is therefore a very significant gap between the cost of the development and its subsequent value.
- 8.5 The lasting legacy that the golf resort and management regime would create is therefore not realisable – not commercially viable – without a significant funding stream. The creation of sustainable residential communities on land adjoining the proposed golf resort is therefore included within the proposed development, to provide essential cross-funding.

- 8.6 The scale of residential has been informed by the identified cost gap, but has also been determined with regard to a range of other influences, including a full assessment of the heritage sensitivity of the Site and the prospective impact upon it. This is demonstrated in the accompanying *Environmental Statement* and the *Design and Access Statement*, which identify the alternative development proposals which have been considered and subjected to testing against the project objectives and Site constraints. For example, the scale of residential development proposed in the Park End Farm area was significantly reduced from initial options, cognisant of the potential impacts on the Registered Park. The Applicant has therefore sought to balance all relevant considerations in formulating the proposed development. The scale of the residential development is considered to be a) necessary to underpin the viable delivery of the golf resort and associated facilities and infrastructure in order to secure, *inter alia*, the future conservation of the Registered Park and b) appropriate in the context of the constraints and opportunities at the Site.

## Housing Need

- 8.7 Whilst the residential development proposals provide essential cross-funding to make the golf resort project commercially realisable, the new homes will nevertheless convey other significant benefits, including contributing positively to meeting identified housing needs. This is discussed in the following paragraphs.

### Context: addressing the national housing crisis

- 8.8 The nation is experiencing a housing crisis. The latest household projections<sup>17</sup> forecast that in 2015 alone there would be an extra 244,430 households in England and some estimates suggest that 300,000 new homes are required every year to meet needs<sup>18</sup>. However, in 2015/16 just 189,650 new homes were built across the country<sup>19</sup>. This crisis has its roots in several factors which have arisen over the short- and longer-term, including the difficulties with housing delivery resulting from a restrictive planning system and the market failure which was experienced during the last economic recession in the late 2000's. There is now a severe and growing undersupply of housing which is failing to meet identified housing needs.

- 8.9 The Government introduced the NPPF in 2012 to address the chronic undersupply of housing across the country. It establishes a national agenda which places significant emphasis upon delivering sustainable growth which must be enacted across the whole country. It sets out a clear expectation that:

*"Planning should operate to encourage and not act as an impediment to sustainable growth."* (paragraph 19)

- 8.10 The Government requires that all local planning authorities act to "...boost significantly the supply of housing..." (paragraph 47). This objective can be delivered either via the plan-making or decision-taking process, but the overarching objective is clear – new homes must be delivered to meet housing needs and address the nation's chronic undersupply.

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<sup>17</sup> 2014-based Household projections for England and local authority districts, Department of Communities and Local Government

<sup>18</sup> *Building more homes*, House of Lords Select Committee on Economic Affairs (July 2016)

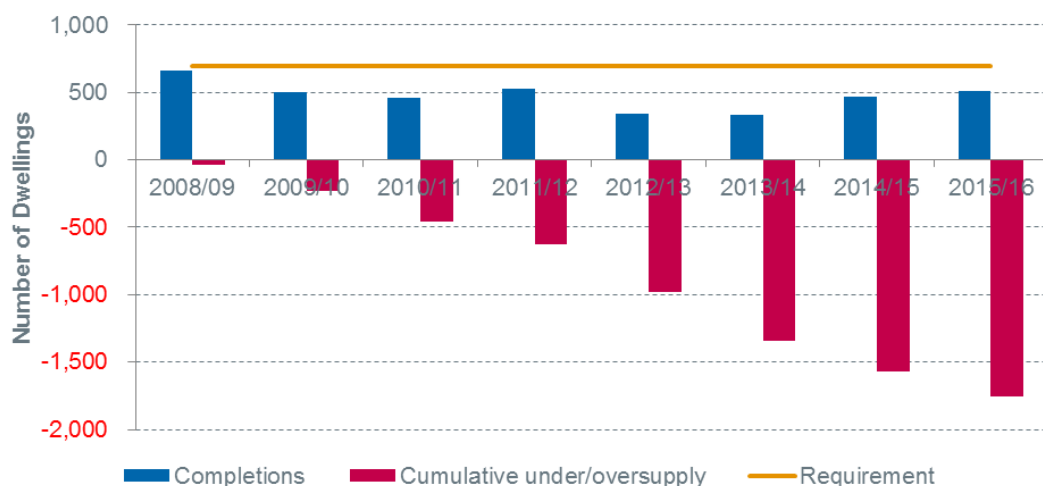
<sup>19</sup> CLG Statistics, Table 122: Housing Supply; net additional dwellings, by local authority district, England: 2001-02 to 2015-16

- 8.11 The Government has reiterated its commitment to tackling the housing crisis in its recent Housing White Paper<sup>20</sup>, in which the current Secretary of State has set out the need “...radical, lasting reform that will get more homes built right now and for many years to come...”. The Housing White Paper sets out the Government’s proposals for the reform of the planning system, noting that the country needs to “...build many more houses, of the type people want to live in, in the places they want to live...”. The need for residential development in Bolton is considered in the context of this national imperative.

### Past provision

- 8.12 BMBC’s adopted *Core Strategy*<sup>21</sup> (CS) sets out a requirement for the delivery of 694 dwellings per annum (net) over the plan period (Policy SC1). As such, between 2008 – the start of the plan period – and 2016 a total of 5,552 dwellings (net) should have been delivered within Bolton. However, completions data provided by CLG<sup>19</sup> identifies that just 3,800 dwellings have been provided over the period – only just over two thirds (68.4%) of the requirement. This means that there has been a shortfall of 1,752 dwellings in Bolton over the eight year period. It is particularly notable that the rate of housing delivery has failed to meet the CS requirement in each of the eight years, as illustrated in Figure 8.1.

**Figure 8.1: Housing trajectory for Bolton, 2008/09 to 2015/16**



Source: Turley analysis

- 8.13 It is clear that the scale of housing delivery in the Borough over the last eight years has been wholly insufficient. The housing supply shortfall is persistent and has grown significantly over the last decade or more. The persistent under-delivery is fuelling a growing housing shortage, with every ‘lost’ dwelling representing a household which has been unable to meet its housing needs in the Borough. This creates an imbalance between the demand for and supply of new homes, with the housing market becoming increasingly inaccessible as a result. In particular:

<sup>20</sup> *Fixing our broken housing market*, Department for Communities and Local Government (February 2017)

<sup>21</sup> *Bolton’s Core Strategy Development Plan Document*, Bolton Council (March 2011)

- Over the 10 year period between 2005 and 2015 house prices in Bolton increased by 20%<sup>22</sup>; and
- Between 2013 to 2015 the affordability ratio in Bolton has worsened from 4.19 to 4.56, an increase of 8.83%<sup>23</sup>.

8.14 It is clear that a step-change in housing delivery in the Borough is required to address the urgent and growing shortfall of new homes. However, the housing strategy of the extant local development plan is unable to facilitate such delivery because:

- BMBC is not able to demonstrate a deliverable 5-year housing land supply (5-YHLS); and
- The housing requirement set out in the CS does not reflect the full objective assessed need (OAN) for housing in the Borough.

8.15 Each of these issues is considered in turn.

### **5-Year housing land supply**

8.16 BMBC's 5-YHLS position has been considered at several recent appeal inquiries which relate to residential development proposals on greenfield land outside of the existing built up urban area. In particular, it was explored in detail in an appeal decision issued in April 2016 in relation to the provision of 110 dwellings on land at Hill Lane, Blackrod<sup>24</sup>. In that case the Inspector noted that there was disagreement between BMBC and the appellant (Hollins Strategic Land) regarding the scale of the land supply and whether or not particular sites should be included within it. Notwithstanding, the Inspector concluded that the 5-YHLS is:

*"...within the range of approximately 2 years supply to around 3.4 years supply. Accordingly, it is clear that the Council cannot currently demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing land by some considerable margin..."* (paragraph 30)

8.17 The 5-YHLS conclusions of the appeal Inspector related to the period 2015/16 to 2019/20, rather than the current 5-year period of 2016/17 to 2020/21. Nevertheless, there has been no significant change in circumstances which would materially alter the 5-YHLS position of BMBC since the decision was issued. Indeed, BMBC has acknowledged in recent planning decisions that it is not currently able to demonstrate a deliverable 5-YHLS<sup>25</sup>.

8.18 As such, the relevant policies for the supply of housing in the extant local development plan – including in particular the policies of the CS and the *Allocations Plan* – must be considered out-of-date and carry very limited weight in the determination of applications and appeals. Moreover, there is an urgent need for BMBC to identify new sources of deliverable housing land. In doing so, BMBC must have regard to whether proposed

<sup>22</sup> *Housing Summary Measures: 2015*, Office of National Statistics

<sup>23</sup> CLG Statistics, Table 576: ratio of lower quartile house price to lower quartile earnings by Local Authority, 2013 to 2015

<sup>24</sup> Appeal Ref: APP/N4205/W/15/3136446

<sup>25</sup> Peel reserves the right to provide further comments and evidence regarding BMBC's 5-YHLS position, including in relation to the implications of the OAN for housing for Bolton identified by the draft GMSF evidence base and the composition and deliverability of the land supply itself.

residential developments can be considered acceptable having regard to the principles of sustainable development set out in the NPPF and elsewhere within the local development plan.

### **The scale of the need for new homes**

8.19 The current housing requirement for Bolton – 694 dwellings per annum – is set out in the CS. The CS was adopted in March 2011 and therefore pre-dates the requirements of the NPPF, which was published in March 2012. The CS was instead prepared cognisant of the earlier requirements of *Planning Policy Statement 3*<sup>26</sup> (PPS3), which was superseded by the NPPF.

8.20 Various legal judgements have considered the change in policy which was introduced upon the publication of the NPPF. For example, the *Gallagher* High Court judgement<sup>27</sup> notes that:

*“The NPPF indeed effected a radical change. It consisted in the two-step approach which paragraph 47 enjoined. The previous policy’s [PPS3] methodology was essentially of striking a balance. By contrast paragraph 47 required the OAN to be made first, and to be given effect in the Local Plan save only to the extent that that would be inconsistent with the other NPPF policies.”*

8.21 In simple terms, PPS3 and the NPPF contain different approaches to meeting housing needs. Whilst PPS3 previously required local planning authorities to identify an “appropriate” level of housing, the NPPF now makes clear that Local Plans should meet housing needs in “full”. Given that the CS housing requirement pre-dates the NPPF, it is evident that it is not representative of the Borough’s full OAN. This was acknowledged in the recent Blackrod appeal referred to above, which noted that:

*“The Council agree that the housing requirement figure within the Core Strategy was not derived to meet the FOAN for housing as required by paragraph 47 of the Framework.”* (paragraph 20)

8.22 The CS is therefore not compliant with the requirements of the NPPF in this respect. As such, relevant policies for the supply of housing in the local development plan must be considered out-of-date.

8.23 BMBC is collaborating with the other local planning authorities within Greater Manchester to prepare the GMSF. This will be a new strategic development plan for the city-region which will guide development up to 2035. It will form the first part of a new local development plan for Bolton which will, inter alia, establish a new housing requirement for the Borough. Upon adoption it will supersede the relevant policies of the existing local development plan, including in particular the housing requirement set out in the CS.

8.24 The draft GMSF<sup>7</sup> was published in October 2016. It remains at an early stage of preparation and cannot be afforded any material weight at the present time. However, it is accompanied by an evidence base which provides up-to-date information and which

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<sup>26</sup> *Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3): Housing, Communities and Local Government*

<sup>27</sup> *Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council v Gallagher Estates Limited and Lioncourt Homes*, [2014] EWCA Civ 1610 (17 December 2014)

is instructive regarding the level of housing needs in the Borough. In particular, the draft GMSF is accompanied by a new *Strategic Housing Market Assessment*<sup>28</sup> (SHMA) which identifies the scale of the OAN for housing across Greater Manchester. It identifies that Bolton now needs to provide at least 821 new homes pa between 2015 and 2035. This figure – which is over 21% higher than the extant and outdated CS requirement – is that which BMBC must now plan to deliver, albeit Peel has submitted representations to the public consultation regarding the draft GMSF to the effect that housing need within the Greater Manchester conurbation has been underestimated<sup>29</sup>.

### A step-change in housing delivery

- 8.25 Given the Borough's 5-YHLS position and the scale of current housing needs identified by the draft GMSF, it is clear that the housing supply policies in the existing local development plan are out-of-date. The NPPF was published over five years ago. However, BMBC has failed to respond positively to the requirement to meet housing needs and “...boost significantly the supply of housing...” (paragraph 47). The extant housing strategy for Bolton remains unable to facilitate the delivery of the numbers which are required to meet the Borough's housing needs. Indeed, in 2015/16 just 510 dwellings were delivered in Bolton<sup>19</sup>. The rate of delivery needs to increase by 60.98% to meet the OAN identified by the emerging GMSF for the Borough. It is clear that a step-change in housing delivery is required to address the urgent and growing shortfall of housing.
- 8.26 Bolton and the other Greater Manchester authorities have undertaken an assessment of the existing land supply to inform the preparation of the draft GMSF. This has sought to identify the number of new homes which can be delivered from existing sources of housing land within the built-up urban area (i.e. excluding delivery on greenfield and Green Belt land). The findings are set out in Table 8.1 below.

**Table 8.1: Housing land supply shortfall in Bolton and Greater Manchester**

	Bolton	Greater Manchester
Draft GMSF OAN	16,420 dwellings	227,200 dwellings
Existing housing land supply <sup>28</sup>	11,817 dwellings	181,437 dwellings
Shortfall	4,603 dwellings (28.03% of the OAN)	45,763 dwellings (20.14% of the OAN)

Source: Turley analysis

- 8.27 The scale of the existing housing land supply within the built-up urban area is wholly insufficient to meet housing needs. There is simply not enough of it. Even if all brownfield sites in Bolton are redeveloped by 2035, there will still be a shortfall of more than 4,600 new homes, equivalent to over 28% of the OAN identified by the emerging GMSF. There is a critical imperative to find new sources of deliverable housing land to meet the Borough's housing needs.

<sup>28</sup> Greater Manchester: *Strategic Housing Market Assessment* (October 2016)

<sup>29</sup> These representations can be made available to BMBC upon request.



### **Green Belt release**

- 8.28 Given the shortage of deliverable housing land within the existing built-up urban area, the Borough's settlements will have to grow if its housing needs are to be met. This has been made clear by both recent appeal decisions in the Borough and by the draft GMSF. Indeed, the latter identifies numerous proposed development allocations for sustainable urban extensions throughout the conurbation, including in Bolton. In doing so, the accompanying evidence base to the draft GMSF makes clear that a key objective in identifying such extensions has involved:

*"Preferring, where possible, Protected Open Land for development, rather than Green Belt, to minimise the effects on the national priority for protecting Green Belts..."*<sup>30</sup>

- 8.29 The draft GMSF has therefore sought to prioritise the use of Protected Open Land (POL) – which is effectively safeguarded land located between the urban area and the Green Belt – ahead of Green Belt release. However, such sources of land are insufficient to meet current and future housing needs. The draft GMSF therefore sets out that:

*"...exceptional circumstances exist to amend the existing Green Belt boundaries..."*  
(paragraph 1.5.3)

- 8.30 It does so in recognition that the Green Belt is not an environmental designation; it is a strategic planning tool which was introduced to manage the growth of urban areas. It is wholly appropriate to revisit Green Belt boundaries when development requirements justify this. Given the low rate of housing delivery relative to the scale of housing need in Bolton, the release of land from the Green Belt is required if Greater Manchester and Bolton are to have a sustainable future.

- 8.31 The Site itself is the subject of a proposed development allocation in the draft GMSF (reference: M61C2). In particular, it is allocated as a *"...high quality leisure destination and heritage restoration project, with peripheral residential development..."*. The draft GMSF elaborates that:

*"Approximately 1000 new homes will be built on the western part of the site. The new homes will be of mixed size, type and tenure, with a focus on family homes at the upper-end of the housing market..."*

- 8.32 The proposed allocation of the Site in the draft GMSF is broadly aligned with the proposed development which is the subject of the accompanying application. This includes, in particular, the identification of the western part of the Site for residential development. The draft GMSF allocation does not make reference to the residential development proposed at the north east and south east corners of Hulton Park (referred to as Dearden's Farm and Park End Farm respectively); however, Peel has submitted representations to the public consultation regarding the draft GMSF to the effect that the allocation should be amended to include these two remaining parcels<sup>31</sup>.

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<sup>30</sup> Background Paper: Approach to Accommodating the Land Supply Shortfall, Greater Manchester Combined Authority (October 2016)

<sup>31</sup> These representations can be made available to BMBC upon request.

8.33 The proposed allocation of the Site cannot be afforded any material weight at the present time given that the draft GMSF remains at an early stage of preparation. Nevertheless, in the context of a clear need for Bolton to identify new sources of housing land and to identify a viable proposal which can reverse the long term decline of the Registered Park, the draft GMSF provides a clear indication that the Site – or parts of it – are considered to be suitable for Green Belt release and residential development in principle. This is particularly the case because sites identified for Green Belt release in the draft have been selected to meet three principal objectives, including:

- *“Choosing locations primarily adjacent to the existing urban area, to minimise the effects on open countryside and the Green Belt; to make the best use of any spare infrastructure capacity in the urban area and to complement the strategy of regenerating the urban area;*
- *Ensuring a clear logical approach to release of Green Belt that provides a strong defensible boundary, avoids fragmentation and ensures that retained/new Green Belt is able to meet its purposes and maintain its essential characteristics of openness and permanence; and*
- *Choosing sites where locally known environmental, physical, ownership and/or viability constraints do not significantly limit sustainable development potential.”<sup>30</sup>*  
(paragraph 4.16)

8.34 The draft GMSF considers that the Site accords with the above objectives, such that it is suitable for development in principle, is a sustainable location for the delivery of new homes, and is deliverable within the plan period.

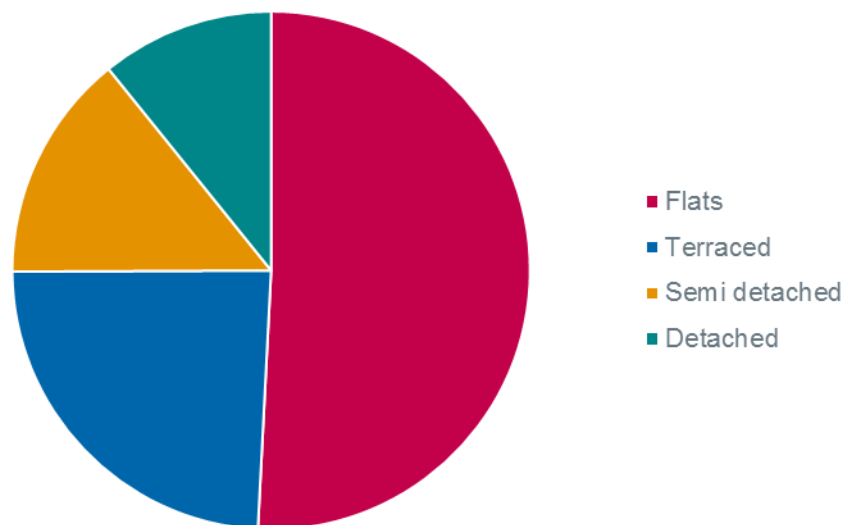
### **Contribution to housing need and supply**

8.35 As discussed above, there is a significant and growing undersupply of new homes in Bolton. The undersupply is particularly acute in respect of new family homes. Evidence from BMBC<sup>32</sup> demonstrates that between 2008/09 and 2014/15 over half (50.82%) of the new homes built in the Borough were flats. Conversely, only a quarter (25.07%) of new homes were detached or semi-detached. This is illustrated in Figure 8.2 below.

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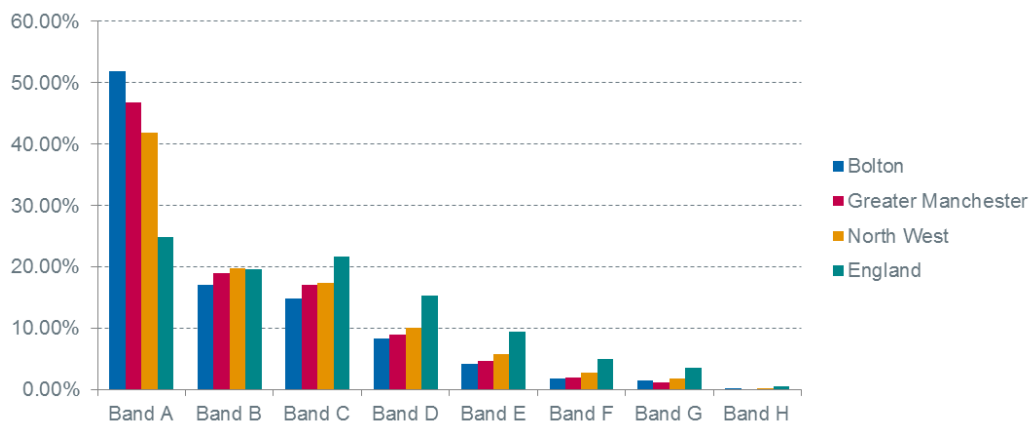
<sup>32</sup> Bolton's Authority Monitoring Report 2014/15: Volume 2 Bolton Housing Land Requirements and Supply Briefing Note, Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council (November 2015)

**Figure 8.2: Housing delivery by type, 2008/09 to 2014/15<sup>32</sup>**



- 8.36 There is a growing need for the delivery of family homes in Bolton. This is particularly the case because the Borough's housing is already imbalanced in favour of smaller, lower value homes. For example, 52% of existing homes are in Council Tax Band A – significantly more than across Greater Manchester (47%), the North West region (42%) or England (25%) (see Figure 8.3). The housing is clearly dominated by smaller and lower value terraced and apartment properties.

**Figure 8.3: Dwelling stock by Council Tax band**



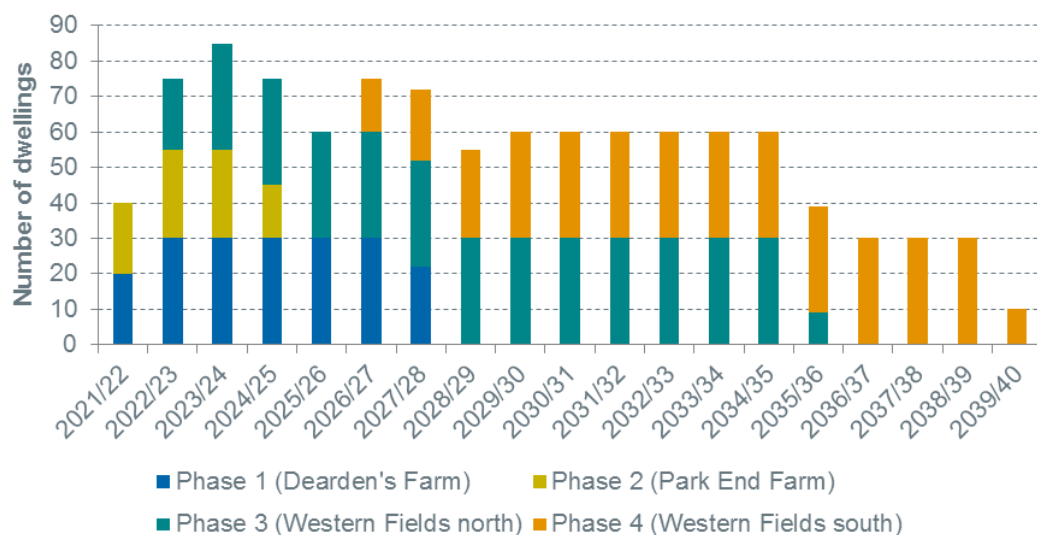
- 8.37 The proposed development will make a significant contribution towards meeting the Borough's housing needs. Whilst the proposals for the residential development at the Site are submitted in outline and are therefore illustrative, it is envisaged that it will deliver approximately 1,036 dwellings of mixed size, type and tenure, with a focus on semi-detached and detached family homes which contain predominantly three or four bedrooms. This is illustrated by the *Illustrative Masterplan* (drawing ref: 15191 (PL) 001 P). The proposed development will clearly boost the supply of new family homes in the market, thereby helping to redress the imbalance in the Borough's dwelling stock.

8.38 In terms of phasing, as outlined in Section 4 the Applicant is prepared to accept a planning condition on the grant of planning permission which ties delivery of the development as a whole to securing the Ryder Cup. It is anticipated that the outcome of the bidding process for the 2026 Ryder Cup will be known in late 2019. Allowing for an appropriate lead-in time to secure reserved matters consent, dispose of the land to housebuilders and undertake site preparation works, it is anticipated that:

- Development in the two eastern areas of residential development (Dearden's Farm and Park End Farm) will commence in late 2021;
- A first phase of development in the western area (Western Fields) will commence in late 2022; and
- A second phase of development in the western area (Western Fields) will commence in 2026, after the land has been used as a staging area for the Ryder Cup tournament.

8.39 A trajectory which illustrates the phasing and build-out rate of the residential development is presented in Figure 8.4 below. It assumes that each phase will deliver new homes simultaneously at a rate of between around 30 or more each. This reflects the strength of the market in and around Westhoughton and Bolton, the scale of pent up for new homes, and Peel's experience of delivery of other similar and nearby housing markets.

**Figure 8.4: Estimated housing delivery trajectory**



8.40 It is estimated that as a worst case the new homes will be delivered by 2040. The development will make a contribution to housing delivery within the relevant 5-year period (2017/18 to 2021/22); whilst the scale of this contribution is limited to 40 dwellings given that the delivery of the development will be tied to securing the Ryder Cup, it is nevertheless a benefit of the proposed development. The development will also make a very substantive contribution towards the supply of housing over the longer-term. In particular, it is anticipated that the Site will deliver approximately 897

new homes by 2034/35, equating to approximately 5.46% of the Borough's OAN over the draft GMSF plan period.

## Locational Sustainability and Accessibility

- 8.41 As noted in Section 4, the three areas of the Site which are proposed for residential development adjoin – or are situated in close proximity to – the existing urban area. A wide range of services and facilities are located in close proximity of the Site, as summarised in Table 8.2 below.

**Table 8.2: Table of approximate walking distances to nearby services/facilities<sup>33</sup>**

Service / Facility	Site A	Site B	Site C
Primary School	1.59km (St. Thomas Primary School, Chequerbent)	850m (St. Andrew's Primary School)	730m (Rowan Tree Primary School)
Secondary School	2.49km (Westhoughton High School)	3.1km (Westhoughton High School)	2.12km (Atherton Community School)
Shop	1.45km (SPAR at Petrol Station, Manchester Road, Westhoughton)	920m (Co-op on Newbrook Road / A579)	1.32km (ASDA on Bolton Road)
Retail Parade / Local Centre	n/a	900m (Newbrook Road)	850m (Marlborough Road)
Doctors Surgery	1.07km (Unsworth Medical Practice, Westhoughton)	2.41km (Unsworth Medical Practice, Westhoughton)	1.63km (Seven Brooks Medical Centre)
Pharmacy	1.07km (Peter House Surgery, Captain Lees Road, West Houghton)	940m (Pharmacy on A579)	1.60km (Pharmacy on Church Street, Atherton)
Public House / Restaurant	850m (The Fat Pig, Westhoughton)	600m (Hulton Arms, Newbrook Road)	700m (The Far Pavillion)

*Source: Turley assessment*

- 8.42 It is generally accepted that a walking distance of up to 2km to jobs and schools and up to 1,200m to other locations (such as local shops and services) is sustainable and acceptable<sup>34</sup>. As such, it is clear that the Dearden's Farm and Park End Farm areas of residential development at the eastern boundary are sustainably located within

<sup>33</sup> These distances have been measured from the centre of the relevant residential development area, along roads, footpaths and public rights of way (whichever is the shortest walking route). Walking distances have been measured cognisant of infrastructure which is included within the proposed development (should as new or diverted roads and public rights of way), but has not had regard to new services and facilities which are included within the proposed development (such as the local centre).

<sup>34</sup> *Guidelines for Journeys on Foot*, The Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation (2000), and various relevant appeal decisions.

reasonable walking distance of a range of services and facilities, such as local shops and primary schools. They adjoin the existing urban area and are situated within an established residential location, and are therefore no less sustainable than existing homes in the local area. Whilst some services – such as secondary schools or doctor’s surgeries – are located beyond a reasonable walking distance, they are readily accessible via sustainable modes of transport given the proximity of the two residential areas to existing bus routes (see below).

- 8.43 The Western Fields area of residential development is adjacent to an area of land between the Site and Westhoughton to the west, which is identified as a residential development allocation in the draft GMSF<sup>7</sup>. However, this land is currently undeveloped, such that the Western Fields area is at the present time less well-related to the existing urban area, albeit the walking distances of some of the proposed homes to services and facilities in Westhoughton are not unreasonable given the relatively extensive Public Right of Way (PRoW) network in this area. Notwithstanding, given the size of the Western Fields area and the number of new homes proposed there, it is considered that new small-scale services and facilities in close proximity to the new homes are required to cater for the increased demand for such services/facilities and to ensure that all local residents are able to undertake such journeys to them on foot rather than by the private car. It is therefore proposed to provide a Local Centre to serve the Western Fields area of residential development, which will also enhance the vibrancy and attractiveness of the development for residents and visitors. The proposals for this Local Centre, including its scale and location, are discussed below.
- 8.44 The Site is highly accessible by sustainable transport modes and is particularly well served by bus stops on the A6 and Newbrook Road as identified in Table 8.3 below.

**Table 8.3: Accessibility via bus services**

Development area	Distance to nearest bus stop <sup>33</sup>	Bus service	Key destinations
Dearden's Farm	320m	516, 521, 540, 559, 715	Blackrod, Horwich, Middlebrook, Lostock, Westhoughton, Atherton, Leigh, Bolton Hospital, Daisy Hill, Wigan, Ince, Hindley and Bolton
Park End Farm	450m	582	Leigh, Atherton, Daubhill, Bolton
Western Fields	650m	521, 559	Blackrod, Horwich, Middlebrook, Lostock, Westhoughton, Atherton, Leigh, Bolton Hospital

*Source: Transport Assessment*

- 8.45 It is acknowledged that some of the new homes proposed to the south of the Western Fields area are beyond an acceptable walking distance to existing bus stops. As such, and as set out in the accompanying *Transport Assessment*, it is proposed that a public transport strategy will be developed for later phases of residential development in this area alongside future reserved matters applications. It is envisaged that this will involve



an enhancement to existing services in the local area – such as new bus routes – to serve the Site.

- 8.46 The local area is also well-served by rail stations, including at Daisy Hill, Hag Fold and Atherton. All of these stations are on the Wigan-Manchester line and provide access to regular train services to Wigan, Manchester and Salford. The Park End Farm area is located 750m to the north of Atherton rail station, such that this can be accessed on foot within a 10 minute walk. Whilst the Dearden's Farm and Western Fields areas are not within walking distance of the rail stations, the stations have Park and Ride facilities which encourage local residents to drive to them and use the rail services for the purposes of the commuting, thereby reducing car-trips to employment locations. The rail stations are also accessible via bus services, from the bus stops referred to above.
- 8.47 The accompanying *Transport Assessment* provides further detailed evidence regarding the Site's location and accessibility. It concludes that the residential development areas within it are sustainably located and are accessible by sustainable modes of transport, and the accompanying *Travel Plan* sets out a series of proposals to encourage journeys by such means.

### **Affordable Housing**

- 8.48 Policy SC1 of the CS both establishes the overarching housing requirement for the Borough and sets out that 35% of new homes should be affordable, subject to viability. As noted above, the housing requirement figure was not derived to meet the OAN for housing as required by the NPPF and BMBC is currently unable to demonstrate a deliverable 5-YHLS. As such, Policy SC1 is considered to be out-of-date in line with paragraph 49 of the NPPF. This includes the affordable housing target given that it is inextricably linked to both the housing requirement and BMBC's 5-YHLS position, and derived from an outdated and superseded evidence base. Policy SC1 should not therefore be afforded full weight in the determination of the accompanying application.
- 8.49 Nevertheless, the NPPF places great weight on the delivery of new affordable homes. The SHMA<sup>35</sup> prepared in respect of the draft GMSF identifies that there is a net annual housing need for 569 affordable homes in the Borough. It is therefore acknowledged that there is a need for affordable housing in Bolton.
- 8.50 As set out above, the development of the international-standard golf resort at the Site (including heritage restoration) entails a major capital investment that is not viable without cross-funding from greater value-generating development. The lasting legacy that the development and management regime would create is not realisable, not commercially viable, without a significant additional source of funding. As such, whilst the residential development will convey other significant benefits, it is included within the proposed development to provide essential cross-funding to make the project commercially realisable.
- 8.51 The viability appraisal submitted to BMBC has tested the implications of affordable housing provision and has determined that it would increase the costs of the

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<sup>35</sup> *Background Paper: Greater Manchester: Strategic Housing Market Assessment*, Greater Manchester Combined Authority (October 2016)

development whilst reducing its value. This would mean the residential development proposals would be incapable of providing the necessary funding stream to secure the delivery of the golf resort. The inclusion of affordable housing provision would therefore render the proposed development unviable. The proposed development does not therefore include provision for the delivery of affordable homes.

8.52 Policy SC1<sup>36</sup> states that:

*“A lower proportion and/or different tenure split may be permitted where it can clearly be demonstrated that development would not be financially viable and affordable housing provision is being maximised.”*

8.53 This approach is in line with that set out in the NPPF which makes clear that the cost of policy requirements, including for affordable housing, must “...ensure viability...” (paragraph 173). The policy therefore enables the provision of affordable housing from new development proposals to be reduced if such provision would compromise viability, as it would in this case. Whilst the proposed development does not therefore include provision for affordable homes, it remains in accordance with the relevant policies of the local development plan, including Policy SC1<sup>37</sup>.

#### **Review mechanism**

8.54 The viability appraisal for the proposed development is based on current market conditions. This is the standard accepted approach, which ensures that the appraisal is realistic and based on accurate and transparent evidence. It is feasible that there will be a material change in market conditions during the build period, which might improve the financial viability of the project beyond its current position. The Applicant is therefore prepared to accept a planning obligation which requires that the viability of the proposed development is reviewed at an appropriate future date(s), such that its ability to viably provide affordable housing can be re-assessed.

8.55 Such an approach has previously been taken by BMBC in respect of other development proposals in the Borough, including in particular the re-development of the former Horwich Loco Works<sup>38</sup> which was granted planning permission in September 2015.

8.56 In respect of the proposed development at Hulton Park, a similar approach is appropriate. Therefore, the Applicant proposes that a requirement to review scheme viability upon the completion of an appropriate percentage of the dwellings – to be agreed with BMBC – is the subject of an obligation on the planning permission. This will allow for an accurate reappraisal of revenues and costs at a future point in time and for any necessary planning obligations towards affordable housing to be attributed if it is viable to do so. The precise form of the planning obligation can be agreed in due course, but proposed *Heads of Terms* are submitted alongside the application.

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<sup>36</sup> Notwithstanding the applicant's view regarding the weight to be applied to it in the determination of the planning application.

<sup>37</sup> Notwithstanding the reduced weight to be applied to Policy SC1.

<sup>38</sup> Application reference: 91352/14

## Supporting Social Infrastructure

8.57 It is important to ensure that the delivery of new homes is accompanied, where necessary, by new or expanded infrastructure. This is an essential component of ensuring that residential development can result in the creation of sustainable communities. BMBC's *Infrastructure and Planning Contributions SPD*<sup>39</sup> – which is a material consideration in the determination of the application – sets out a need to consider the following types of infrastructure provision alongside residential development proposals:

- Open space and children's play space;
- Education;
- Health and well-being;
- Community and cultural facilities;
- Public art and public realm improvements.

8.58 Each of the above is discussed in turn below and, where relevant, in the accompanying *s106 Agreement Heads of Terms and CIL Compliance Statement*. The need for local shops and services is also considered.

### Open space and children's play space

8.59 Policy IPC1 of the adopted CS sets out that new residential development will be expected to contribute to open space provision and maintenance. The *Infrastructure and Planning Contributions SPD*<sup>39</sup> informs that development that will accommodate 600 or more occupants should provide open space provision within the site. It establishes a requirement of 2.8ha of open space provision per thousand population of the development, of which 1.2ha should be playing fields and 1.6ha of informal open space, including children's play space.

8.60 Using the average household size for Bolton, it is estimated that the development will accommodate up to 2,445<sup>40</sup> residents. On this basis, the total amount of on-site open space required is 6.8ha, of which 2.93ha should be playing fields and 3.91ha should be informal open space, including children's play space.

8.61 The residential development is submitted in outline. As such, the precise number of new homes and hence the open space required will be confirmed at a later date via the reserved matters process. Nevertheless:

- The *Illustrative Masterplan* (drawing ref: 15191 (PL) 001 P) includes 6.8ha of informal open space, which will provide the land necessary for amenity greenspace and children's playspace, the precise scale and location of which will be determined at the reserved matters stage; and

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<sup>39</sup> *Infrastructure and Planning Contributions: Adopted Supplementary Planning Document*, Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council (July 2016)

<sup>40</sup> Proposed residential dwellings (1,036) x Bolton average household size (2.36)

- There is sufficient land under the Applicant's control for the provision of playing fields, should such provision be deemed necessary. The playing fields could be located either within the Site to the south of the Western Fields area or within the immediate vicinity of the Site if such an off-site location would enable the provision to meet other needs arising in the local area.

8.62 It is therefore clear that sufficient open space can be provided to meet BMBC's requirements in this respect. The requirement for open space and the submission of a comprehensive management and maintenance plan for those areas will be secured via an appropriately worded condition on the planning permission. This will ensure that the open space is retained and maintained to a high standard, ensuring continued use of the provision.

### Education

8.63 Policy IPC1 of the adopted CS sets out a requirement for residential development to contribute to the delivery of educational facilities where it is expected that there will be a shortage of school places to accommodate the demand likely to arise from the new homes. BMBC has advised in pre-application discussions that existing schools within the vicinity of the Site do not have any capacity to accommodate additional pupils. This lack of capacity relates to both primary and secondary school provision. As such, it is necessary for the proposed development to provide financial contributions in respect of the delivery of new educational facilities.

8.64 The residential development is submitted in outline. The dwelling yield and housing mix is therefore illustrative. The number of pupils likely to reside at the Site – and the scale of financial contribution required for education facilities – will be determined alongside the reserved matters approval process. The approach to doing so is set out in the accompanying *s106 Agreement Heads of Terms and CIL Compliance Statement*. Nevertheless, the estimated pupil yield based on the Illustrative Masterplan (drawing ref: 15191 (PL) 001 P) for the residential development is set out in Table 8.4.

**Table 8.4: Estimated pupil yield**

	1 bed	Apartments 2-bed+	Houses 2- bed+	Total
Dwellings by type	40	139	857	1,036
Primary pupil multiplier	0	0.04	0.232	-
<b>Primary pupils</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5.6</b>	<b>198.8</b>	<b>204.4</b>
Secondary pupil multiplier	0	0.01	0.187	-
<b>Secondary pupils</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>160.3</b>	<b>161.7</b>

*Source: Turley assessment*

8.65 Using the approach set out in BMBC's *Infrastructure and Planning Contributions SPD*<sup>39</sup>, the estimated financial contributions derived from the above pupil yields are:

- £2,694,930 in respect of primary school provision; and

- £2,517,378 in respect of secondary school provision.
- 8.66 Notwithstanding that these figures are illustrative only, they are contained within the financial viability assessment for the proposed development to ensure that there is confidence that the appropriate level of contributions can be provided.
- 8.67 In respect of primary education, BMBC – as the local education authority – has advised that it is necessary to identify a new site for the educational facilities. In this regard, the primary school pupil yield identified above broadly equates to a need for a one-form entry primary school. The land requirement for this scale of provision is approximately 1ha.
- 8.68 The land to the west of the Site is included within the proposed “Hulton Park and Chequerbent” development allocation identified by the draft GMSF (see Section 5). It is considered necessary that new primary provision for the Site should be planned in such a way that it can serve both sites. Peel therefore proposes to reserve and provide land for a primary school in close proximity to the western boundary of the Site, such that it is within a reasonable walking distance of the new homes in the Western Fields area of residential development. Alongside the financial contribution referred to above, this will facilitate the delivery of a one-form entry primary school to meet the demand arising from the new homes at the Site. It could in due course be expanded to meet the additional demands arising from the Chequerbent site.
- 8.69 In respect of secondary education, the secondary school pupil yield identified above broadly equates to a need for an additional classroom per secondary age group<sup>41</sup>. Secondary schools typically comprise at least six or more classes per age group and a one-form entry secondary school to serve the Site will not be planned for. Instead, the need arising from the Site must be taken into account alongside a comprehensive proposal which is sufficient to address the wider needs arising in the local area, including from other sites proposed for residential development in the emerging Development Plan. The Applicant does not therefore propose to provide land for secondary school provision at this stage, but a commitment will be made to provide a financial contribution (calculated on the basis referred to above) towards the delivery of the necessary secondary school places.
- 8.70 The approach outlined above is set out in the accompanying *s106 Agreement Heads of Terms and CIL Compliance Statement*. It demonstrates that the Applicant will both provide the financial contributions required to facilitate the delivery of the necessary school places and the land necessary for the primary education facilities. In this regard, the proposed development is in accordance with CS Policy IPC1 and the *Infrastructure and Planning Contributions SPD*.

### **Health and well-being**

- 8.71 Policy IPC1 of the adopted CS sets out a requirement for residential development to contribute to the delivery of health facilities where it is expected that there will be a shortage of such facilities to accommodate the demand likely to arise from the new homes. The requirement for such a contribution in this respect is related to built health facilities rather than the level of service provision or number of doctors (which is

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<sup>41</sup> Assuming five year groups with c.30 pupils per form.

controlled by the relevant NHS Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) in response to demands). It may be necessary to facilitate an increase in the built health facilities if existing facilities in the local area are too small to accommodate an enhanced level of service or increased number of GPs. The Applicant has sought information in respect of this issue from BMBC and the CCG, but at the present time it remains unclear whether or not existing built health facilities are sufficient in size. As such, it cannot currently be demonstrated that a financial contribution in respect of health services is necessary, in accordance with the tests at paragraph 204 of the NPPF. However, discussions in respect of this issue are ongoing.

### **Community and cultural facilities**

- 8.72 CS Policy IPC1 states that residential development may need to contribute to community facilities, which may include:

*“...community centres, places of worship and premises for cultural and social activities...”<sup>42</sup>*

- 8.73 Existing community facilities are located in close proximity to the Site. In particular, the Over Hulton Conservative Club is located approximately 450m to the east of the Site. Among other facilities, this includes a function room which is available for a range of activities and can accommodate 150 people for various community activities. It is therefore considered that there are sufficient community facilities located within close proximity of the Site.

### **Public art and public realm improvements**

- 8.74 Strategic Objective 11 of the adopted CS seeks to *“...improve the quality of open spaces and the design of new buildings...”*. As such, Policy IPC1 sets out a requirement for new development to incorporate public art, which may involve:

*“...specially designed details or features incorporated into the structure of buildings, decorative lighting schemes or aesthetic street furniture...”<sup>43</sup>*

- 8.75 The residential development proposals are submitted in outline only and the detailed design will be considered at the reserved matters stage. Nevertheless, the accompanying *Design and Access Statement* sets out that the indicative proposals for the residential development comprise high quality design which will significantly enhance the quality of the built environment in the local area. In this respect, it is considered that the proposals can be aligned with the aspirations of Strategic Objective 11 of the CS. The incorporation of public art may therefore be unnecessary to ensure that the residential development proposals are acceptable in planning terms.
- 8.76 Public art will, however, be incorporated into the route of the Hulton Trail which runs around the western and southern edge of the Site, immediately adjacent to the Western Fields and Park End Farm areas of residential development. As set out in Section 4, it will incorporate features such as:

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<sup>42</sup> *Infrastructure and Planning Contributions: Adopted Supplementary Planning Document*, Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council (July 2016), paragraph 4.31

<sup>43</sup> *Infrastructure and Planning Contributions: Adopted Supplementary Planning Document*, Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council (July 2016), paragraph 4.35



- A range of sculptural elements which could draw inspiration from and reflect the history of the Site, including its mining heritage;
- Opportunities for interpretation of the Site's characteristics and heritage, which could be interactive; and
- Aesthetic features and street furniture, including seating, railings and opportunities for natural play.

8.77 It is therefore considered that the proposed development will accord with the requirements of CS Policy IPC1 for new development to incorporate public art.

### **The Local Centre**

8.78 The NPPF sets out that for large scale developments key facilities such as local shops “...*should be located within walking distance of most properties...*” (paragraph 38) where practical. This is to ensure that local residents have access to local services and facilities which they may need to use on a day-to-day basis, whilst reducing the number of trips made by the car in favour of walking or cycling. This is a key consideration in establishing communities which are able to cater for the needs of local residents in a sustainable manner.

8.79 As identified in Section 4, the proposed development includes the provision of a Local Centre to serve the Western Fields area of residential development. The following paragraphs discuss the scale, proposed uses, location and impact of the Local Centre.

### ***Size, Layout and Mix of Uses***

8.80 The proposed Local Centre is approximately 0.52ha in size and encompasses:

- Up to 1,382sqm of floorspace; and
- 0.16ha of car parking (approximately 79 spaces).

8.81 Matters relating to the detailed design of the Local Centre are reserved for future approval. Nevertheless, as illustrated by the *Illustrative Masterplan* (drawing ref: 15191 (PL) 001 P), it is currently envisaged that it will be comprised of one larger unit and a parade of up to four smaller units, all of which would be approximately one-storey in height. The precise size and use of different ‘units’ within the Local Centre – and hence the type of operations which they could accommodate – will be determined prior to its construction and will have regard to the demands of the market and the need to ensure a sustainable mix of operations which can cater for the needs of local residents. However, the scale and mix of uses for which outline planning permission is sought could enable the following operations to be provided:

- Local shops and community amenities, including:
  - Convenience retail, such as a local foodstore;
  - A range of small-scale shops or services, such as a newsagent, hairdressers, dry cleaners, estate agency, bank, etc;
- A pub, wine bar, restaurant and/or café;

- A health centre or clinic.

8.82 The above operations offer the potential to meet the basic day-to-day needs of new residents in the Western Fields area. It will provide a range and choice of local amenities which will complement and support the development as a whole, whilst enhancing its vibrancy and attractiveness for residents and visitors.

#### ***Location***

8.83 The *Illustrative Masterplan* (drawing ref: 15191 (PL) 001 P) proposes that the Local Centre will be provided adjacent to the western boundary of the Site, immediately north of the proposed access into the Western Fields area from the Platt Lane-Chequerbent link road. Such a location would ensure that all new homes in the Western Fields area are within a c.900m walk of the Local Centre, which is a reasonable walking distance (see paragraph 8.42 above). The accompanying *Parameters Plan* (drawing ref: 15191 (PI) 500 Q) includes provisions to 'fix' this location.

8.84 As identified in Section 5, the Site is part of a proposed development allocation in the draft GMSF<sup>7</sup> which also encompasses land to the west, referred to as "land south of Chequerbent", which is identified as having the potential to deliver approximately 1,700 new homes. It is considered appropriate that the Local Centre should be planned in such a way that it is able to serve both sites. This is encouraged by the draft GMSF, which states in relation to the Chequerbent site that:

*"Consideration should be given to the provision of local shopping facilities on this part of the site to serve the whole of the Hulton Park and Chequerbent area..."*

8.85 The draft GMSF remains at an early stage, such that there is no certainty regarding the layout of the Chequerbent site and the timing of its delivery. Nevertheless, if the Local Centre is provided within the Chequerbent site but within 250m of the western boundary of Hulton Park, it will be within a reasonable walking distance (1,200m) of the majority of new homes within the Western Fields area. As such, it is proposed that the Local Centre will be delivered<sup>44</sup> according to one of the following two scenarios:

- (a) 'Off-site' within the Chequerbent site, no more than 250m from the western boundary of the Hulton Park site. Under this scenario, the area shown as a Local Centre within Hulton Park on the *Illustrative Masterplan* (drawing ref: 15191 (PL) 001 P) will instead be developed for residential uses, as proposed by the *Parameters Plan* (drawing ref: 15191 (PI) 500 Q); or
- (b) In the event that it has not been delivered within the Chequerbent site upon the completion of an agreed proportion of the dwellings within the Western Fields area (specific figure to be agreed with BMBC), it will be delivered 'on-site' within the Hulton Park site, in the area shown on the *Illustrative Masterplan* and *Parameters Plan* (drawing refs: 15191 (PL) 001 Q and 15191 (PI) 500 P respectively).

8.86 This approach will secure the delivery of the Local Centre either 'on-site' or 'off-site' but in either case in a location in close proximity to the new homes in the Western Fields

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<sup>44</sup> i.e. constructed and made available for occupation.

area. This provides the necessary certainty that the new homes will have sustainable access to local services and facilities. The approach and scenarios set out above will be secured via s106 Agreement or planning condition in the event that planning permission is granted.

### **‘Town Centre First’ policies**

- 8.87 The uses within the Local Centre fall within the definition of “main town centre uses” within the NPPF. The NPPF establishes ‘town centre first’ policies in respect of such uses, including a sequential approach which sets out a preference for those uses to be located within existing centres and a requirement for an impact assessment if the scale of the uses exceeds 2,500sqm. The town centre uses proposed within the golf resort, including the Local Centre, are considered against these policies at Appendix 7. This establishes that:
- It would be inappropriate to undertake a sequential test for the Local Centre, given that it is a direct response to the need and demand arising from the new homes at the Site. Nevertheless, even if such a test were required and alternative sites were available which would be capable of accommodating the it, none would be suitable as they would result in the Local Centre being located beyond a reasonable walking distance of the new homes, such that it would fail to satisfy the need and demand arising from the Site.
  - The Local Centre falls below the threshold at which an impact assessment is required. In any event, the Local Centre is only of neighbourhood significance and will not result in any adverse impacts for existing retail facilities in the local area.
- 8.88 It is therefore considered that the provisions of the NPPF and the local development plan are satisfied in respect of the ‘town centre uses’ within the proposed Local Centre.

### **Conclusion**

- 8.89 The residential development proposals will create a sustainable community at Hulton Park which both provides essential cross-funding to make the golf resort project commercially realisable and conveys other significant benefits to Bolton. The proposed development will contribute positively to and “...boost significantly...” (paragraph 47) the supply of new homes, helping to meet the urgent housing needs in the Borough in the context of a longstanding and growing shortfall of housing supply, the need for a step-change in housing delivery in the Borough, and a chronic shortage of land in both the short- and longer-term. It will help to redress the imbalance in Bolton’s housing stock, attracting much-needed working age families who can underpin the economic growth and vitality of the Borough. The Site itself is suitable for residential development and is in a sustainable location, and the new homes will be accompanied by necessary infrastructure, such as high quality public open space and schools places.

## 9. Achieving Sustainable Development

### Summary Points

- The proposals represent sustainable development across the social, economic and environmental dimensions.
- The proposed development will result in substantial net benefits beyond those extensive benefits identified above in respect of socio-economic impacts, heritage and housing. This includes enhancements in respect of trees, biodiversity and relieving highway congestion.
- The proposed development will contribute positively to the achievement of high quality and inclusive design, creating a safe, accessible and visually attractive environment which responds to the local character, history and identity of the Site.
- The proposed development aims to meet the highest standards of sustainable performance, which will conserve and enhance the natural environment, use resources efficiently and support health and well-being of local residents.
- With the exception of visual effects, which are inevitable for a development of this scale on a largely undeveloped site and do not arise to an unacceptable degree, the proposed development will not result in any adverse environmental impacts which cannot be satisfactorily mitigated.

- 9.1 The preceding sections have demonstrated the contribution the proposal will make to achieving sustainable development, as expressed in the NPPF, in relation to the multiple and notable positive effects it will have on heritage, socio-economic conditions and housing need. With the exception of Green Belt considerations, which are dealt with subsequently, this Section draws in these findings and those of the application documents as a whole, and considers and appraises the extent to which the proposal represents sustainable development in all respects.

### The Economic Dimension

- 9.2 The proposed development provides Bolton with an unparalleled opportunity to capitalise upon its position within Greater Manchester to establish a world-leading golf and leisure resort, host one of the largest and highest profile global sporting events, deliver a long-term investment programme to increase sports participation, support local businesses, and strengthen the visitor economy. It represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity growth opportunity, which is aligned with local, regional and national policy objectives, including in respect of growing and re-balancing the economy.
- 9.3 As identified in the accompanying Economic Impact assessment prepared by Ekosgen<sup>45</sup> and in Section 7 of this Statement, it will deliver “*unique*” and “*transformational*” benefits as part of a long-term legacy, with the potential to change lives and open up new opportunities for local benefits. The proposed development will strengthen and diversify the economy in a sustainable manner, particularly in respect of an enhanced tourist offer. It provides an opportunity to raise the international profile of the region and city region, and to align activities with inward investment priorities across key economic

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<sup>45</sup> *Economic Impact of Hulton Park and the 2026 Ryder Cup*, Ekosgen (March 2017)

sectors, and to boost local producer businesses linked to a growing visitor economy. It can provide a focal point for enhanced tourism and business development across the North West.

- 9.4 An assessment of the ‘town centre uses’ included within the proposed development against the relevant policies of the NPPF – in respect of the sequential approach and impact assessment – is provided at Appendix 7. It demonstrates that the proposed development accords with the town centre first approach set out in the NPPF.

## **The Social Dimension**

- 9.5 The new homes which are included within the proposed development will make a meaningful contribution towards meeting the needs of present and future generations in the Borough, as discussed in Section 8. They will contribute positively to and “...*boost significantly...*” (paragraph 47) the housing supply, helping to meet the urgent housing needs in Bolton in the context of a longstanding and growing shortfall of new homes, the need for a step-change in housing delivery, and a chronic shortage of land in both the short- and longer-term. It will help to redress the imbalance in Bolton’s housing stock, attracting much-needed working age families who can underpin the economic growth and vitality of the Borough. The Site itself is suitable for residential development and is in a sustainable location, and the new homes will be accompanied by necessary infrastructure, such as high quality public open space and schools places. It will result in a sustainable new community, with accessible services and facilities that meet its needs.
- 9.6 The proposed development will result in cultural enhancements as a result of the heritage restoration of Hulton Park. The HIA identifies that there will be “...*overwhelming benefits to heritage assets...*” within the Site and its immediate surrounds. The proposed development will enable a substantial package of interventions and investment which will enable the Registered Park and heritage assets within it to be restored to their former condition after decades of decline.
- 9.7 The proposed development will also significantly enhance the leisure and recreational “offer” of the local area, as a result of:
- The new world-class and publically-accessible sporting and hotel facilities within the golf resort; and
  - The extension and formalisation of the Public Right of Way network, including through the delivery of the new Hulton Trail.
- 9.8 As identified in Section 11, the proposed development and associated Ryder Cup commitment programmes will generate significant social value of approximately £123m (gross) as a result of, *inter alia*, increased sports participation, volunteering, and savings and increases in tax revenues. It will also deliver a range of significant social and cultural benefits, including:
- a sporting legacy, including an exceptional level of opportunities for sports participation and volunteering;

- a health and wellbeing legacy resulting from the ongoing health benefits of regular exercise, with associated savings for health services;
- an education legacy, with children being introduced to the sport via coaching lessons which will have a positive impact from an educational perspective; and
- a place-making and community legacy, engendering feelings of connectedness to the local area and developing a sense-of-place.

9.9 Overall the proposed development will support a strong, healthy and vibrant community, helping to meet housing needs and supporting social, health and cultural well-being.

## The Environmental Dimension

9.10 The technical documents and ES which are submitted alongside the application have assessed the impact of the proposed development in respect of all relevant environmental issues. The content and findings of these assessments is summarised at Appendix 7, in the context of relevant policies of the Development Plan and other material considerations such as the NPPF. The key conclusions by environmental 'topic' are summarised in Table 9.1 below.

**Table 9.1: Environmental considerations – outcome of assessment**

Issue	Key conclusion
Archaeology	It is deemed unlikely that any below-ground archaeological remains will require preservation in situ. Evaluation trenching and archaeological recording will enable appropriate preservation 'by record'.
Sustainable Design	The proposed development comprises sustainable design which will conserve and enhance the natural environment, use resources efficiently, and support the health and well-being of local residents. Key buildings target the highest standards of sustainable performance.
Transport and Access	A range of enhancements to the local highway network – including the Chequerbent roundabout to Platt Lane link road – will have a material and positive impact for traffic conditions in the local area. The average delay across Chequerbent roundabout will reduce from 207 seconds to 9 seconds.
Landscape and Visual Impact	The impacts of the proposed development on landscape character will be variable within the Site (positive and negative effects across different parts of the Site), but the impact will be contained and the effect on the wider area will not be significant. The proposed development will have significant adverse impacts on various visual receptors, but none of those impacts will have an unacceptable effect on living conditions of nearby residential properties, such as in respect of privacy or other amenity considerations.
Ecology	The proposed development will result in disruption to habitats at the Site. However, a range of mitigation measures will be implemented including replacement habitat provision. The biodiversity impact of the proposed development has been carefully assessed by Environment Bank, using the DEFRA pilot methodology for calculating habitat value. The assessment



Issue	Key conclusion
	identifies that the proposed development will have a net positive residual impact on the Site.
Arboriculture	The proposed development requires some tree removal, including within the Registered Park, and will have adverse impacts on the arboricultural quality of the Site in the short and medium term, as a result of the reduction in average tree maturity. However, woodland management will have an immediate positive effect and will halt the current decline in the remaining woodland, whilst replacement planting will deliver a net gain in canopy cover at the Site within the construction period. The new planting will also deliver a qualitative benefit, in terms of connecting currently fragmented areas of woodland.
Water Management	With the exception of existing water features, such as the Mil Dam Stream and Carr Brook, the Site is of only low risk from tidal, fluvial or surface water flooding. A comprehensive drainage strategy, including SUDS which are integrated with the design of the proposed development, will ensure that there is no increase in flood risk either at the Site or downstream.
Noise	The residential development can be designed to ensure that the new homes have a satisfactory level of amenity. Mitigation measures are proposed to ensure that the potential for any significant adverse impacts on existing properties within the vicinity of the Site are removed.
Air Quality	The operation of the proposed development will not give rise to any significant impacts on air quality and effects will be reduced via embedded mitigation, such as the preparation of the Travel Plan. Appropriate management measures will mitigate the potential for adverse impacts during construction.
Ground Conditions	The Site is suitable for the use proposed. Whilst there are a number of mine shafts around the periphery of the Site associated with former coal mining activities, these will be stabilised using appropriate engineering methods and stand-off zones will be applied, such that they are made safe and are appropriately 'designed into' the proposed development.
Minerals	The need for the development outweighs that of extracting any minerals at the Site. Such extraction would not be environmentally acceptable or economically viable given the ecological and historic value of the Site. In any event, the quality of mineral provision is of a poor standard. The proposed development will not result in the loss of any best and most versatile agricultural land.
Lighting	External lighting proposals have been formulated to ensure that the proposed development can be safely operated, achieves a satisfactory level of amenity for new and existing residents, and minimises the impact of light spill on the Registered Park and ecological habitats. There will be no residual significant adverse impacts as a result of the external lighting proposals.
Utilities	Adequate utilities can be provided at the Site to facilitate the proposed development. Foul sewer pumping stations will be provided where necessary.

- 9.11 The assessments and ES demonstrate that for each consideration overall the proposed development will not result in any significantly adverse environmental impacts which cannot be sufficiently mitigated and accords with relevant policies of the Development Plan and NPPF. Whilst there will be adverse visual effects, such effects are inevitable given that the Site is currently open and undeveloped in nature. Wherever possible, the visual effects of the development have been minimised or mitigated, for instance through measures such as landscape planting. It has been necessary to balance this consideration against other considerations in masterplanning, such as respecting the sensitivity of the heritage and biodiversity of the Site, and the realisation of a viable proposal which can deliver long-term positive outcomes. In any event, the adverse visual effects are not considered to be unacceptable. None of the changes in outlook from nearby properties will be so overbearing or dominating as to result in an unacceptable effect on living conditions.
- 9.12 In many respects the proposed development will result in substantial net environmental benefits, including:
- Reduced congestion in the local highway network;
  - An increase in the number of trees at the Site; and
  - The enhancement of the biodiversity value of the Site.
- 9.13 It is evidenced in the accompanying *Design and Access Statement* that the proposed development will comprise sustainable design. In particular:
- The overall masterplan proposals have been formulated having regard to the key sensitivities of the Site, including the significance of key character areas within the Registered Park and the environmental constraints and opportunities present;
  - The retention and restoration of key historic structures is integrated into the proposed development (see Section 6). They add to the quality of the golf resort, provide it with a sense of place, and ensures that the proposed development reflects and respects the Site's identity and distinctiveness;
  - The design of key buildings within the golf resort responds to local character and history. For example, the appearance of the hotel complex is influenced by the former Hulton Hall, the clubhouse takes inspiration from Edwardian architecture which was in use at the time of the Hulton family's ownership of the Registered Park, and the Academy responds both to the historic context of the Site and takes visual cues from nearby residential properties.;
  - The residential development will establish a strong sense of place, using bespoke character areas within different parts of the Site to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit. New homes will be integrated with new and existing open spaces, green corridors and Public Rights of Way to ensure that they promote well-being and function well over the long term. This includes features such as the Hulton Trail and Pretoria Park, which help to ensure that the

residential development is connected to the natural environment and offers opportunities for recreation; and

- The proposed development takes into account the need to reduce crime and fear of crime. A *Crime Impact Statement* has been prepared in respect of the proposed development by Greater Manchester Police. It informs that it is “...acceptable in principle, from a crime prevention perspective...”, but provides recommendations for further measures, such as CCTV and building security, which it is proposed will be secured via a planning condition.

9.14 As required by relevant Development Plan policies, the proposed development will therefore contribute positively to the achievement of high quality and inclusive design, in respect of the overall masterplan proposals, the quality of the buildings proposed within the golf resort and the character of the residential development proposals. Hulton Park will retain a strong sense of place, whilst ensuring that the proposed development creates a safe, accessible and visually attractive environment which responds to the local character, history and identity of the Site.

9.15 The sustainable approach to design is also evidence in the *BREEAM and Sustainability Planning Report*, which in turn draws upon:

- A *Sustainability Blueprint* of the golf resort, which has been prepared by the Golf Environment Organisation (GEO). The Blueprint considers the proposed development in accordance with the OnCourse Developments programme, which represents the highest industry standards of sustainable golf developments; and
- A *BREEAM Communities Pre-Assessment* which identifies that key buildings within the golf resort, such as the hotel complex, could achieve an ‘excellent’ rating and are targeting a ‘very good’ rating as a minimum.

9.16 The documents demonstrate that the proposed development at Hulton Park aims to meet the highest standards of sustainable performance and will comprise sustainable design, which will conserve and enhance the natural environment, use resources efficiently and support health and well-being of local residents.

## **Conclusion on Sustainable Development**

9.17 The proposed development is of significant scale and entails areas of substantial built development on what is predominantly an undeveloped Site. It also entails other significant interventions through the creation of the golf facilities, involving alterations to the existing landscape. However, as a reflection of the uses proposed, the careful, iterative design process which has been undertaken and the fundamental principles which underpin the project – to breathe new life in to a valued asset and realise significant benefits for the local area and wider region – very few significant adverse effects are identified. Rather, when appraising the proposals against a broad range of social, economic and environmental considerations, informed by the approach endorsed by the NPPF (paragraph 6), significant and wide-ranging benefits are found to arise. The proposals represent sustainable development and therefore directly align with the support afforded to such development within national and indeed local policy.

## 10. Protecting Green Belt Land

### Summary Points

- The proposed development entails a mix of inappropriate and appropriate development in the Green Belt.
- There will be Green Belt harm arising beyond definitional harm, including to openness and purposes of the Green Belt. This harm will in some respects be substantial.
- The proposed development will introduce beneficial uses to the Green Belt, in accordance with policy.
- To justify the proposed development very special circumstances need to be proven, taking in to account the acknowledged Green Belt harm and all other harm.

10.1 This Section provides an assessment of the proposed development against national and local planning policies for the Green Belt. It draws upon a *Green Belt Study*<sup>46</sup> for the Site which has been prepared by Land Use Consulting (LUC) which is provided at Appendix 9.

10.2 In respect of Green Belt, the NPPF identifies that:

- The construction of new buildings within the Green Belt is (in policy terms) inappropriate, unless such buildings are associated within, *inter alia*, the provisions of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport and recreation providing that the openness of the Green Belt is preserved and there is no conflict with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt<sup>47</sup>. The change of use of Green Belt land is also considered to be inappropriate.
- Engineering operations are not inappropriate subject to the openness of the Green Belt being preserved and there being no conflict with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt<sup>48</sup>.
- Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances (VSC), which will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of its inappropriateness and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations<sup>49</sup>.

10.3 The considerations which justify the grant of planning permission are discussed in Section 11.

### Context

10.4 The entire Site is located within the Greater Manchester Green Belt. The broad extent of the Green Belt was established in the 1981 Greater Manchester Structure *Plan*, with

<sup>46</sup> *Hulton Park Green Belt Study: Final Report*, LUC (January 2017)

<sup>47</sup> NPPF, paragraph 89

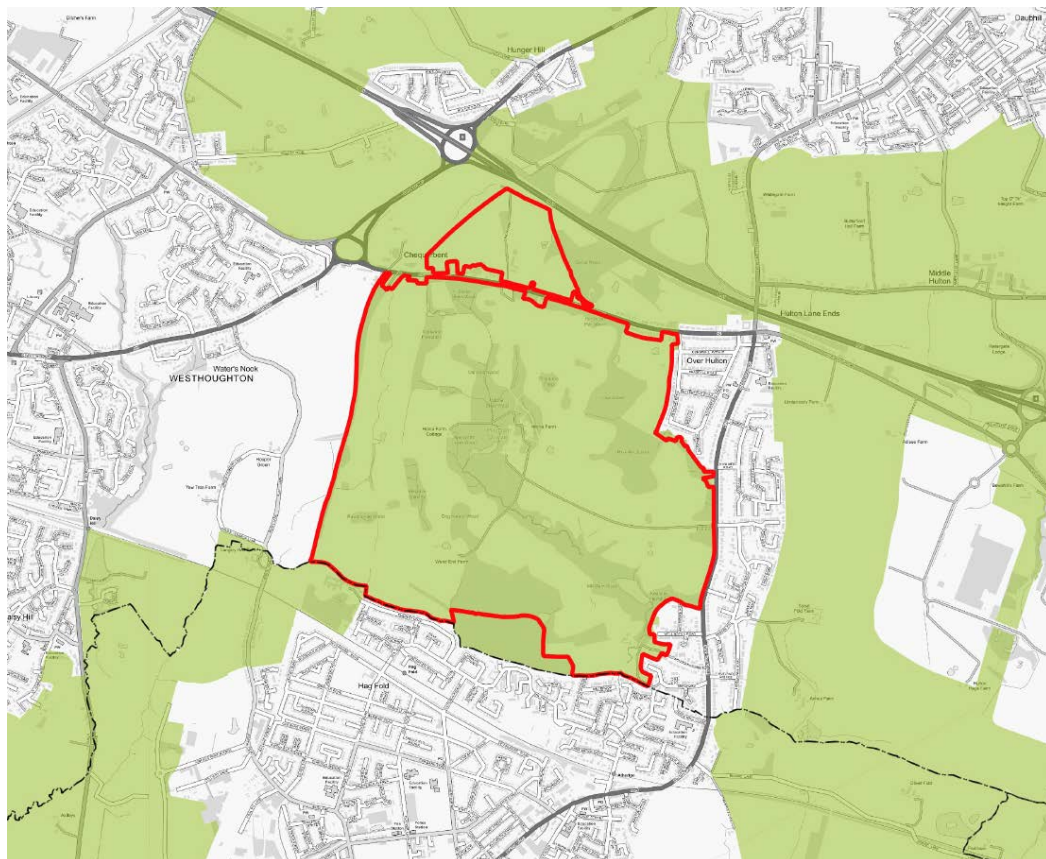
<sup>48</sup> NPPF, paragraph 90

<sup>49</sup> NPPF, paragraphs 87 and 88

more detailed boundaries being defined within the *Greater Manchester Green Belt Local Plan* which was adopted in 1984.

- 10.5 A plan of the Green Belt and the location of the Site is included at Figure 10.1 below. From this plan it is clear that the Site is set within a wider area of land which is situated between three established residential towns – Over Hulton to the east, Atherton to the south, and Westhoughton to the west. This wider parcel of land fulfils the strategic Green Belt purpose of maintaining the separation of neighbouring towns.

**Figure 10.1: The location of the Site and its Green Belt designation**



- 10.6 There have been no significant changes to the extent of the Green Belt within Bolton since its designation in 1984, although some adjustments were introduced through the 1987 *South West Fringe Local Plan* which added land to the Green Belt in the south-west of the Borough. More recently, Bolton's *Allocations Plan* (adopted 2014) proposed the deletion of some Green Belt land around Cutacre to allow for employment development and the addition of land to the Green Belt to the south of the Cutacre site, adjacent to the boundary with Wigan.
- 10.7 A full assessment of Green Belt boundaries across Greater Manchester was undertaken in 2016 on behalf of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority<sup>50</sup>. The purpose of the study was to assess the extent to which Greater Manchester's Green Belt contributes to the five purposes of including land within the Green Belt, as set out in the NPPF. In general terms the area of Green Belt within which the Site is located was found to play a

<sup>50</sup> Greater Manchester Green Belt Assessment: Final Report, LUC (July 2016)

strong role in preventing urban sprawl, preventing the merging of settlements and safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. Its role in preserving the setting and special character of historic towns was considered to be less strong.

- 10.8 This *Green Belt Assessment* has subsequently informed preparation of the draft GMSF which, as noted in Section 5, identifies the Site as forming part of the wider “Hulton Park and Chequerbent” allocation (reference M61C2) for a high quality leisure destination and heritage restoration project, including around 1,000 homes. The draft GMSF proposes to release the western part of the Site – which broadly corresponds to the proposed Western Fields area of residential development – from the Green Belt.

## Key Considerations

- 10.9 The scale of potential adverse impacts to the Green Belt by the proposed development must be considered in respect of the following:
- The definitional harm resulting from any inappropriate development in the Green Belt;
  - The impact on the openness of the Green Belt; and
  - The impact on the purposes of including land within the Green Belt.
- 10.10 It is also necessary to consider the extent to which the proposed development is aligned with national policy objectives which encourage the beneficial use of Green Belt land<sup>51</sup>. Each of these issues is now considered in turn.

## Definitional Harm

- 10.11 The proposed development comprises a number of component elements, each of which is essential to the overall proposition. Having had regard to the effect of each component element on the openness of the Green Belt and purposes of including land within it (see below), Table 10.1 summarises which components of the proposed development can be considered to be either “appropriate” or “inappropriate” in Green Belt terms.

**Table 10.1: Development which is appropriate or inappropriate in Green Belt terms**

Appropriate development	Inappropriate development
Use of land for the championship golf course and practice golf course	Change of use of the land for the championship golf course and practice golf course
Re-grading of parts of the Site to create championship and practice golf courses	Clubhouse building <sup>52</sup>

<sup>51</sup> NPPF, paragraph 81

<sup>52</sup> Whilst an appropriate facility which is provided in support of outdoor sport and recreation, it is rendered inappropriate by virtue of harm to openness to the Green Belt.



Construction of ancillary structures and facilities to the golf uses, including maintenance building, footbridges, halfway house and the underpass-linking main course to Academy facilities	The Academy buildings, adventure golf and driving range
Internal roads, car parks and pathways, including the Hulton Trail	The hotel complex, including the spa and conferencing facilities
Heritage restoration works, including the re-construction of the walled kitchen garden	Residential development

*Source: Turley assessment*

- 10.12 The inappropriate development is by definition harmful to the Green Belt.

### **Impact on Openness**

- 10.13 The fundamental aim of national Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open<sup>53</sup>. This is achieved by protecting its intrinsic openness. The inappropriateness of development in respect of impact on “openness” has been considered in case law. In particular, the *Europa Oil and Gas* judgement<sup>54</sup>, which sets out that:

*“...considerations of appropriateness, preservation of openness and conflict with Green Belt purposes are not exclusively dependent on the size of buildings and structures but include their purpose...”.*

- 10.14 The physical presence of development is not in itself harmful to the openness of the Green Belt and nor is it inimical to the fundamental aim of Green Belt to keep land permanently open. Instead, the impact on openness must include a rounded consideration of matters such as the type, scale, volume, visibility and location of development. As such, given the different attributes of the individual components of the proposed development against these matters, each will have a varying level of effect on the openness of the Green Belt. The effect of each and the scheme as a whole is considered below.

### **The golf course and practice facilities**

- 10.15 As is noted in Section 4 and within the accompanying *Design and Access Statement*, the proposed championship-grade golf course and practice golf course have both been designed in a sensitive manner which responds to the existing environment of the Site, such that the individual golf holes follow the overall contours of the land and use the existing topography where possible. However, in some areas of the Site re-grading of land is necessary to create the innate features typical of a golf course of the standard proposed, such as mounds, bunds, bunkers and water bodies. The need for such features to be incorporated is explained in Section 4 and within the accompanying

<sup>53</sup> NPPF, paragraph 79

<sup>54</sup> *Europa Oil and Gas Limited v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and Others* [2014] EWCA Civ 825, [2014] JPL 1259

*Design and Access Statement.* Re-grading is also essential to create positive surface drainage throughout the golf course so that it can quickly become playable after heavy rain events. Some re-grading of land to the west of the golf course (for the residential development) is also proposed.

- 10.16 In total approximately 915,656m<sup>3</sup> of earth will be moved within the Site. Generally, existing levels will only be increased by a maximum of 4.6m, with the exception of mounding at the northern end of the driving range to provide noise screening to the M61 motorway which will have a height of 7.1m. Despite this re-grading, there will not be any harmful concentrations of incongruously undulated ground. Moreover, the re-grading works will not involve built development with the areas of Site subject to these works being grassed / replanted as shown by the proposed landscape scheme illustrated within the *Landscape Masterplan Site Wide (Full Development)* (ref: LUC\_6628\_LD-\_PLN\_103 Issue C).
- 10.17 The golf facilities will include essential structures such as flags, tee-markers and signage, but such elements are likely to be modestly sized and sparsely distributed, such that their effect on openness will be negligible. As such, the openness of the Green Belt will be preserved.

### **Hotel, Spa and Conference Facilities**

- 10.18 The proposed hotel complex will be located centrally within the Registered Park broadly on the site of the former Hulton Hall, which was demolished in 1958, and on the site of existing agricultural buildings including associated barns and outbuildings, which are proposed to be demolished. The proposed hotel building will be up to four-storeys in height and provide approximately 10,469sqm of floorspace. The justification regarding in respect of its size is provided in Section 4 and in the accompanying *Design and Access Statement*.
- 10.19 The hotel complex will not preserve the openness of the Green Belt. However, views of it will be somewhat contained within the Site due to its central location and the surrounding pleasure grounds which are comprised of mature woodland, including Back o' th' Lawn wood. Moreover, the adverse effect on openness will be offset, to a degree, by the proposed demolition of the aforementioned agricultural buildings which have a combined footprint of 8,507sqm) and by extension the removal of the effects which these buildings presently have on the openness of the Green Belt. Nevertheless, the hotel complex will have a moderate impact on the openness of the Green Belt, particularly given the extent to which it will be visible from the east.

### **Clubhouse**

- 10.20 The proposed clubhouse is located to the north of the Registered Park and is to be accessed from the A6 Manchester Road. It is situated in an area of the Site which displays a strong sense of openness at present, albeit there are several residential properties at the site entrance, one of which (Hulton Cottage) is proposed to be demolished. The clubhouse building will have a total floorspace of approximately 2,414.5sqm over two floors (lower ground and ground).
- 10.21 The clubhouse will not preserve the openness of the Green Belt. The impact of the clubhouse on the openness of the Green Belt will be moderate, given its position in an area which is currently open and the extent to which it will be visible, including to the

north from the A6. The adverse effect will to a degree be off-set by the demolition of the aforementioned residential property, which has a footprint of 480sqm and height of up to 6.6m. Views of the clubhouse from the west will also be contained due to screening provided by existing and proposed woodland areas.

### **Driving Range and Academy Buildings**

- 10.22 The proposed Academy buildings, adventure golf, driving range and associated car parking will be located on land to the north of the A6, the openness of which is compromised by the presence of existing agricultural buildings and visibility of both the M61 Motorway and A6 (Manchester Road) (see ES Volume 2, chapter 7). The Academy facilities will be contained within a single-storey building with a total floorspace of c.2,127.5sqm.
- 10.23 The proposed driving range and Academy buildings will not preserve the openness of Green Belt given the extent to which they will be visible from both the A6 and Public Right of Way at the western boundary. The impact on the openness of the Green Belt will be moderate given the relatively small scale of the buildings within the Site and, to a degree, offset by the demolition of the aforementioned agricultural buildings).

### **Ancillary Structures and Facilities**

- 10.24 The proposed maintenance buildings will be located to the west of Back o' th' Lawn wood, in an area of the Site which displays a strong sense of openness at present. The building will be single-storey standing to 5.5m with a total floorspace of c.1,009sqm, in addition to an external compound. It will provide essential facilities for the storage and maintenance of equipment related to the operation and maintenance of the golf course. Views of the building will be contained to within the golf course by virtue of its inconspicuous positioning adjacent to Back o' the' Lawn wood. It will have a limited visual impact on openness given the proposed diversion of Public Rights of Way and proposed landscape planting. Its size and scale has been determined by its ancillary role, supporting the functionality of the golf resort. It will be an efficient, practicable and pared-back building, with a largely agricultural appearance representing its practical function.
- 10.25 The underpass is a feature located principally underground and does not extend above current ground levels;
- 10.26 The halfway house is approximately 27.04sqm in size. It is therefore a relatively modest structure located to the north of the Site, immediately south of the woodland along the southern side of the A6 Manchester Road. It will be clad in timber such that it is not conspicuous in the landscape and appears natural in its woodland setting. It is in a position in which it will be readily visible from within the golf course, but views of it from publicly access areas will be contained by existing woodland planting;
- 10.27 In respect of the bridge structures:
- The 13<sup>th</sup> hole bridge crossing will be visually lightweight such that it allows for unimpeded views along the valley at the south of the Site, particularly when viewed from the Mill Dam. Existing mature woodland will enable the bridge to integrate into the valley setting and the materials proposed – weathering steel –

are sympathetic to its woodland setting, enabling it to sit comfortably in its context; and

- The 18<sup>th</sup> hole bridge crossing has a span of c. 20m and a width of c.6m. It is a relatively small structure, which will be clad in stonework which is appropriate to its parkland setting. It will be low-lying such that the degree of landscape change will not have detrimental impact on openness.

- 10.28 As such, the ancillary structures and facilities will not harm the overriding sense of greenness and freedom from development at the Site, and in spatial and visual terms they will each preserve the openness of the Green Belt.

### **Internal Roads, Car Parks and Pathways**

- 10.29 Throughout the Site there will be a hierarchy of roads, tracks and pathways as well as car parks serving the various component elements of the development. Each of these will be flat surfaces at ground level. They will preserve the openness of the Green Belt and as engineering operations can be considered to be appropriate development within the Green Belt.

### **Residential**

- 10.30 Up to 1,036 new homes are proposed to be provided in three areas of the Site. The majority of the new homes will be up to 2.5-storeys in height, albeit some three-storey apartment buildings are proposed.
- 10.31 In totality the proposed residential development will have a substantial impact on the openness of the Green Belt, irrespective of the proposed demolition of existing buildings in some parts of the proposed residential development areas.
- 10.32 Efforts have been made to minimise the potential effects of the residential development on Green Belt land which will remain open (i.e. the golf course). In this respect, the *Green Belt Study* (Appendix 9) recommended “...*Limiting the height of new properties in key open areas, e.g. to a height of up to 2.5-storeys...*” (paragraph 4.11). As such, the majority of the new homes are proposed to be up to 2.5-storeys in height; indeed, 80.7% (836 no. dwellings) shown on the Illustrative Masterplan (drawing ref: 15191 (PL) 001 P) are proposed to be 2.5-storeys or less. However, whilst this helps to minimise the effects of the residential development on the Green Belt land at the Site which is proposed to remain open, it does not reduce the substantial impact which will result from the residential development.

### **Conclusion on Openness**

- 10.33 The proposed development will, as a whole, have a moderate impact on the openness of the Green Belt. The majority of this impact will derive from the residential component of the scheme, which in itself causes a substantial impact. The clubhouse, hotel complex and academy facilities will each have a moderate impact on openness, with the effects offset to a degree by the proposed demolition of a number of existing residential properties and agricultural buildings. Views of the clubhouse, maintenance buildings and hotel will largely be contained within the Site. Other proposed ancillary structures such as bridges over watercourses, maintenance building and the halfway house will not have any notable adverse impact on openness. The re-grading of land to create the championship-grade and practice golf courses and some areas of residential

development will preserve the openness of the Green Belt, as will the provision of the surface roads, tracks, pathways, car parking facilities and the underpass between the golf course to the south and Academy to the north. There will remain a significant degree and extent of openness across the majority of the site, excluding the residential areas.

### **Impact on Purposes of Including Land within the Green Belt**

10.34 Paragraph 80 identifies the five purposes of Green Belt as follows:

- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- To safeguard the countryside from encroachment;
- To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- To assist urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other land.

10.35 The impact of the proposed development on each is discussed in turn.

#### **(i) To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas**

10.36 As noted above, the Site is set within a wider area of land which is situated between three established built-up areas – Over Hulton to the east, Atherton to the south, and Westhoughton to the west. In this context, the *Green Belt Study* (Appendix 9) confirms that the Green Belt at the Site generally makes a strong contribution to checking the unrestricted sprawl of these settlements. The proposed development includes various elements – particularly the residential component - which constitute a form of sprawl that this purpose is seeking to constrain. However, its implementation within clearly defined physical boundaries will not amount to “unrestricted sprawl”, nor will it negate the role of the Green Belt at the Site in checking sprawl in this area.

10.37 The eastern boundary of the largest parcel of residential development – the Western Fields area at the western edge of the Registered Park – will comprise strong mature landscape planting which could function as a new defensible Green Belt boundary. Moreover, the *Green Belt Study* (Appendix 9) identifies in relation to the residential development at the east of the Site – the Dearden’s Farm and Park End Farm areas – that there are “...no strong barrier features along the urban edge to prevent urban sprawl from occurring within the parcel...”, such that the contribution which these two parcels of land make in checking unrestricted sprawl is not considered to be strong. The proposed development will establish much stronger Green Belt boundaries in the north-east and south-east corner of the site, utilising existing mature woodland features as defensible boundaries. Nevertheless, there is conflict with this policy purpose overall.

#### **(ii) To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another**

10.38 The proposed development will not result in the merging (physically, visually, or perceptually) of neighbouring towns. There will, however, be some reduction in the gap between settlements as explained further below.

- 10.39 The western area of the Site, which is proposed for residential development, forms a part of the settlement gap between Westhoughton in the west and Atherton in the south, with the majority of the gap being provided by a neighbouring area of farmland around Hooper Green<sup>55</sup>. Whilst residential development in this area of the Site will result in a reduction in the settlement gap between Westhoughton and Atherton, it will not result in the merging of settlements either physically, visually or perceptually. In this regard, the contribution of this area of land to the “merging” purpose is only identified as “moderate” by the *Green Belt Study* for the Site (Appendix 9). The same area of the Site also forms part of the settlement gap between Westhoughton in the west and Over Hulton in the east, but the majority of the gap is provided by the remainder of the Site which – save only for the hotel complex, clubhouse, Academy and maintenance buildings – will remain undeveloped.
- 10.40 Residential development is also proposed in the north-east and south-east corners of the Site. These locations are immediately adjacent to the existing built up area. Their development will reduce the gap between neighbouring settlements but the majority of the existing gap (i.e. the remainder of the Site) will be retained. Development in these locations will not result in the merging of settlements. As with the western area, these two areas of land are identified as making only a “moderate” contribution to the “merging” purpose by the *Green Belt Study* (Appendix 9).
- 10.41 The proposed Academy to the north of the A6 is located on a site which forms part of a settlement gap between Westhoughton and Over Hulton. The proposed Academy buildings / driving range will result in a reduction in the gap. However, the reduction will be minor and adjoining areas of Green Belt to the west, south and east, which also contribute to the existence of the settlement gap, will be retained.
- 10.42 Other component elements of the proposed development, namely the hotel, clubhouse and associated facilities will also contribute to a physical reduction in the settlement gap although this will be comparatively limited given their relative scale and their positioning in the centre of the Site.
- 10.43 Overall, it is concluded that whilst the proposed development will result in a reduction in the settlement gaps between Atherton and Westhoughton and Westhoughton and Over Hulton, the majority of the existing gap – comprised of the land proposed for use as the golf course – will be retained. The proposed development will not result in the merging of settlements. As such, there is no conflict with purpose.

### **(iii) To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment**

- 10.44 The accompanying *Green Belt Study*<sup>46</sup> confirms that the Site is largely free from encroachment and/or urbanising development at the present time and generally displays strong characteristics of the open countryside, although in places it lacks a strong rural character.
- 10.45 The proposed development will therefore result in the physical encroachment of development onto land which can be regarded as countryside. This encroachment will principally arise from the residential components of the scheme. Whilst other elements, such as the hotel, clubhouse and golf academy facilities, will also encroach they will be

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<sup>55</sup> Page 28, *Hulton Park Green Belt Study: Final Report*, LUC (January 2017)



sited in areas of the Site which contain clusters of agricultural buildings or residential properties which will be demolished. Overall, there is a conflict with this policy purpose.

**(iv) To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns**

- 10.46 The term 'historic town' is not defined within the NPPF. The *Greater Manchester Green Belt Assessment* (2016) identifies a range of historic settlements across the conurbation and assesses the extent to which the Green Belt contributes to the preservation of their setting and special character. The identified settlements include Atherton and Westhoughton.
- 10.47 The accompanying *Green Belt Study* (Appendix 9) presents a detailed assessment of the extent to which the various parcels of Green Belt land within the Site contribute to preserving the setting and special character of the aforementioned settlements. It identifies that the various parcels of land within the Site which are proposed for residential development make no contribution to this purpose, although the area of land which will accommodate the golf course, hotel and clubhouse is assessed as making a (low) moderate contribution.
- 10.48 Given that the Green Belt in this location does not contribute to preserving the setting or special character of historic settlements to any significant degree, it is concluded that the proposed development, which will be of limited height and screened by existing and proposed landscape planting, will not undermine this policy purpose and will not give rise to a direct conflict with it.

**(v) To assist urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other land**

- 10.49 This purpose will not be compromised by the proposed development because it is locationally fixed, i.e. it is not 'footloose' and there is no alternative to it as is explained in Section 11. As such, the proposed golf resort – including the key buildings associated with it, such as the clubhouse, hotel complex, Academy and maintenance building – is specific to this Site. On this basis it clearly cannot be accommodated on a brownfield site within the existing urban area. Moreover, the proposed standard of the hotel complex is such that it will not compete in the same market place as any hotel located within nearby town centres, whilst the facilities which are proposed to be provided within the local centre are of a size intended to meet the day-to-day needs of the future residential community.
- 10.50 In respect of the proposed residential development, the draft GMSF recognises that there is insufficient brownfield land available in the Borough which is capable of accommodating the projected growth in population and demand for new housing in Bolton. As such, it proposes the release of Green Belt land for this purpose, including at the Site itself (see Section 4).
- 10.51 The proposed development will not undermine this policy purpose and will not give rise to a direct conflict with it. Conversely, as is set out in Section 7 and within the *Economic Impact of Hulton Park and The 2026 Ryder Cup*, the proposed development will give rise to very significant direct and indirect economic effects of a beneficial nature in the local area, during both its construction and operation, which will support and grow activity within the broader supply chain and encourage development on land that is the

subject of this purpose (particularly in the event of the rights to host the Ryder Cup 2026 and subsequent European Tour events being awarded).

### **Use of land within the Green Belt**

10.52 In considering the impact of the proposed development on the Green Belt, it is also necessary to assess it against the opportunities for enhancing the beneficial use of land within the Green Belt. Paragraph 81 of the Framework advises that Local Authorities should plan positively for:

- Providing access;
- Providing outdoor sport and recreation;
- Retaining and enhancing landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or
- Improving damaged and derelict land.

### **Providing opportunities for access, outdoor sport and recreation**

10.53 The Site is privately owned by Peel. Whilst there are a number of Public Rights of Way which pass through its western and southern extents in particular, public access to the majority of the Site is not presently permitted.

10.54 The proposed development will deliver a new golf resort of an international standard. Whilst designed to be capable of accommodating major international tournaments, such as the Ryder Cup and European Tour events, the golf facilities will be made available for use by golfers from the local area and further afield, including international visitors. Moreover, the proposed golf Academy and practice course are key components of the facility and will provide a high quality opportunity for golfers of all standards to receive professional tuition. The practice course will be targeted at beginners, principally junior golfers, providing them with an introduction to golf and a pathway into the sport (see Section 4).

10.55 In addition:

- Within the main golf course there will be an extensive network of roads and pathways which shall provide access to the principal facilities (i.e. clubhouse and hotel complex) and to each of the individual holes (for use by buggies and maintenance vehicles). Each of these will also be available for use by those staying at the hotel complex.
- The proposed hotel complex will offer a range of outdoor recreational activities, including clay pigeon shooting, fishing, archery, horse riding, cycling, running and walking routes.
- There will be a net increase of almost 2.5km of PRoW within the Site. This is discussed in detail in Section 4. In summary, the increase in the PRoW network results from:

- The retention of existing PRowWs (on adjusted alignments where necessary) within green corridors, which will be available for walkers, cyclists and horse riders; and
- The delivery of sections of an extensive new ‘trail’, referred to as the “Hulton Trail”, which will be provided around the western and southern edges of the Site. This will provide new high quality facilities for walking and cycling. Further details are presented in the accompanying *Design and Access Statement* and the *Public Right of Way Strategy* document.
- A new community informal open space will be created at the southern aspect of the Site and known as Pretoria Park. It will contain informal seating, amenity grass and species rich meadows.

10.56 In view of the above it can be concluded that the proposed development will provide significant opportunities for access and outdoor sport and recreation for local residents and those from a wider area. It will therefore contribute to the beneficial use of land within the Green Belt.

#### **Retaining and enhancing landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity**

10.57 The iterative design process has sought to ensure that the impact of the proposed development on local landscape character and visual amenity of the Green Belt and biodiversity is minimised and where possible a net benefit is achieved. The impact of the proposed development in respect of landscape character, visual amenity and biodiversity are discussed in detail at Appendix 7 and can be summarised as follows:

- In respect of visual amenity, the proposed development will have an adverse impact on some visual receptors including properties in close proximity to the Site. However, none of those impacts will be so overbearing or dominating as to result in an unacceptable effect on living conditions;
- In respect of landscape character, the proposed development will have:
  - Adverse impacts on some character areas, such as those which are currently comprised of greenfield and open land which are proposed for residential development; and
  - Beneficial impacts on other character areas, such as the pleasure grounds, woodland plantations and water bodies which are proposed for restoration.

Overall, the LVIA concludes that the adverse impacts are well contained to within the Site and the effect on the wider LCA will not be significant.

Moreover, the proposed development will restore and regenerate the Registered Park, which is comprised of a historic landscape and other associated assets. In particular, there will be positive effects for various landscape features within it, including the pleasure grounds, woodland plantations and lakes (see Section 6); and

- In respect of biodiversity, the proposed development will result in adverse impacts on some habitats and species. However, a programme of mitigation will make up for any losses. Overall, the proposed development will have a net positive residual impact which will enhance the biodiversity value of the Site.

10.58 The proposed development will therefore have adverse impacts on visual amenity and in some parts of the Site on landscape character, but will enhance key features of the historic landscape and the biodiversity value of the Site. Overall it will have a positive effect on the Green Belt objective in this respect.

### **Improving damaged or derelict land**

10.59 As set out in Section 3, the Registered Park which comprises a large part of the Site has experienced decades of under-investment and limited management. This has resulted in the degradation of a number of features. In particular, the woodland plantations are overgrown, unmanaged, and have been invaded by non-native species, whilst some of the built complexes have significantly deteriorated. The proposed development is a response to the threats the Park faces as a result of its decline and it will have beneficial effects for several parts of it, including the woodland plantations and the sites of derelict built form. The proposed development will therefore have a positive effect on this Green Belt objective.

### **Overall conclusion on the use of land within the Green Belt**

10.60 Overall the proposed development will have a significant positive effect upon the opportunity to secure the beneficial use of land within the Green Belt. In particular, opportunities for access, outdoor sport and recreation will derive from the provision of the championship-grade golf course and Academy facilities, the Hulton Trail and other PRow improvements, and the activities to be offered by the hotel operator. The proposed development will also enhance the biodiversity of the Site. The effect upon the improvement of damaged / derelict land will also be positive, whilst there will be adverse effects on visual amenity and, in some areas, landscape character, albeit the latter will be largely contained within the Site and other beneficial impacts arise.

### **Conclusion on overall assessment of harm to the Green Belt**

10.61 The Green Belt at the Site was established over 30 years ago. As such, it is entirely appropriate to re-appraise the role and function of the Green Belt cognisant of current development needs. This is acknowledged by the draft GMSF, which identifies numerous areas of land – including the western part of the Site which relates to the Western Fields area of residential development – to be released from the Green Belt and allocated for development.

10.62 Some aspects of the proposed development are considered to be appropriate development in the Green Belt (golf courses, roads, paths and car parks and ancillary structures). However, it is acknowledged that other elements of the scheme (residential development, hotel complex, clubhouse and Academy), including the change of use of the land to create the golf course, are inappropriate development. This represents definitional harm, which requires justification by proving very special circumstances.

10.63 The assessment has established that the proposed development will give rise to harm to the openness of the Green Belt, which mainly arises from the proposed residential

development. However, this will be largely contained within the Site. There will also be some conflict with the Green Belt purposes of checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas and safeguarding the countryside from encroachment; no conflict with the other purposes Green Belt (merging of neighbouring settlements, assisting urban regeneration, or preserving the setting and character of historic towns) has been found. This overall assessment of harm has “...*substantial weight*...” (NPPF, paragraph 88) in the determination of the application.

- 10.64 It is also concluded that the proposed development will make a significant contribution to providing opportunities for access and for outdoor sport and recreation. In this regard it is aligned with the objectives of the NPPF to encourage the beneficial use of Green Belt land. Given the unique circumstances associated with the proposed development, it will not give rise to any harm in terms of establishing a precedent for future planning applications in the Green Belt.
- 10.65 The following Section sets out the material considerations which are considered to comprise very special circumstances in this particular case and which clearly outweigh the aforementioned harm to the Green Belt and all other harm (as summarised in Section 9, Appendix 7 and referred to further below).

# 11. Very Special Circumstances

## Summary Points

- Very special circumstances may comprise a number of considerations which equate to more than the sum of their individual parts.
- A series of considerations weigh in favour of the proposed development and weigh against the acknowledged harm to the Green Belt and the limited identified any other harm. These include: the significant heritage benefits of the proposals; the extensive and wide-ranging socio-economic benefits of the proposals; the beneficial use of the Site as a Green Belt resource; the net positive effect on the local highway network and the local environment; and the contribution made to meeting pressing housing need.
- Together these and other evidenced considerations clearly outweigh the acknowledged harm and represent very special circumstances justifying the grant of planning permission and ensuring accordance with Green Belt policy.

11.1 The preceding section identified the extent and degree of harm to the Green Belt as a consequence of the proposed development. Section 9 and Appendix 7 provides a means of identifying whether any other harm arises. As evidenced by cross reference to the technical documents and ES that accompanies the application, Section 9 and Appendix 7 demonstrate that limited other harm is caused by the development. Whilst in respect of some matters there is a balance of positive and negative effects, of all the social, economic and environmental considerations the only significant overall adverse effect or harm arises in respect of visual impact. In accordance with paragraph 88 of the NPPF, that harm must be considered alongside Green Belt harm in determining whether the proposal is justified.

11.2 Taking the identified Green Belt harm and other harm together, there are eight main areas of consideration identified by the Applicant to justify the grant of planning permission for the proposed development. These circumstances comprise compelling very special circumstances (VSC) in the context of Green Belt policy, in that they clearly outweigh the identified harm. Mindful that each attracts a different level of weight in the planning balance, some of the considerations comprise VSC individually whilst others only have this effect when considered cumulatively. The considerations are as follows:

- The restoration and enhancement of Hulton Park, a Grade II listed Registered Park and Garden, and the Grade II listed Dovecote (VSC1);
- The absence of an alternative location (VSC2);
- The economic and legacy benefits of the proposed development and the proposed hosting of the Ryder Cup (VSC3);
- The social, cultural and tourism impacts of the proposed development (VSC4);
- Increased beneficial use of the Green Belt across the Site (VSC5);
- Meeting the Borough's housing needs (VSC6);



- Reducing congestion in the local highway network (VSC7);
  - Net environmental enhancements to the Site as a result of the proposed development (VSC8).
- 11.3 Court judgements have ruled that there is no prescribed list of VSC and the question of whether a particular consideration is very special has to be considered not in the abstract, but in the context of the application proposals under consideration<sup>56</sup>. VSC also describe an overall state of affairs and may therefore comprise a number of considerations which equate to more than the sum of their individual parts<sup>57</sup>.
- 11.4 Each of the VSC considerations listed above are examined in greater detail in the remainder of this Section (including by cross-reference to earlier Sections and accompanying application documents) and are to be considered, together with other material considerations, as a whole.

### **VSC1: The restoration and enhancement of Hulton Park, a Grade II listed Registered Park and Garden, and the Grade II Listed Dovecote**

- 11.5 As set out in Section 3, the majority of the Site comprises Hulton Park, a Grade II Registered Park on the Historic England Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest. The Registered Park has experienced decades of decline and is now somewhat degraded. Hulton Park is now at a critical point in its 1,000 year history. Action is required to reverse the decline it has experienced and secure the future of this significant designated heritage asset by identifying a viable use which can facilitate its long-term management and maintenance. This is a key driver and objective of the proposed development.
- 11.6 The impact of the proposed development on the Registered Park and other designated and non-designated heritage assets both at and within the vicinity of the Site has been appraised in detail within the application and is discussed at Section 6. It is necessary to consider the heritage of the Site as a whole, the threats that exist to its future condition, and the overall outcomes that can be achieved as a consequence of the proposed development. Whilst the proposed development will cause harm to some areas of the Registered Park and non-designated heritage assets of lesser significance, this will be clearly outweighed by the significant benefit achieved for other parts of the Registered Park and specific assets within it, with major beneficial effects for:
- The Grade II Listed Dovecote. The re-use and restoration and significant enhancement in the setting of this listed structure will be a significant benefit in its own right, made more so by its contextual position within the Registered Park. Given its listed status, these benefits carry significant weight.
  - The site of the former Hulton Hall, with the hotel complex renewing the design and landscape focus of the Park and reintroducing a hub of social activity to it;

<sup>56</sup> Chelmsford BC v SoS and Another [2003] EWCH Admin 2978

<sup>57</sup> R (Basildon BC) v SoS and Temple [2004] EWHC 2549

- The pleasure grounds, which will be reclaimed for leisure and recreational uses. The relationship with the site of the former Hall will be reinstated;
- The woodland plantations, which will be restored to their former condition, managed in perpetuity and additional planting introduced which is respectful and complementary to the original design;
- The lakes, which will be restored to their original form, depth and size; and
- various historic structures throughout the Registered Park, including the Park Entrance, Ha-Ha and Walled Kitchen Garden.

11.7 The HIA identifies that overall the proposed development will result in “...*overwhelming benefits to heritage assets...*” within the Site and its immediate surrounds. It will enable a substantial package of interventions and investment, which will enable the Registered Park and heritage assets within it to be restored to their former condition after decades of decline.

11.8 The NPPF recognises the value of putting heritage assets to viable use consistent with their conservation, as it provides a means of sustaining and enhancing the significance of those assets. That is the case here. The development of the golf resort will introduce a single activity which makes widespread use of all areas of the Registered Park. This is of critical importance, given that the absence of a single and/or viable use to manage it in recent decades has been a key cause of the fragmentation of the landscape and the decline of key historic features. The creation of the golf resort therefore encourages single ownership, meaning that a whole-site ‘Vision’ for the future maintenance and management of the whole Registered Park – including key character areas and historic structures within it – over the long-term is achievable. It will allow for enjoyment of and greater awareness of the asset, therefore returning it to its original status as a focus for the local area.

11.9 The NPPF 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. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be...”* (paragraph 132).

Given the national significance of the Registered Park, and indeed the Grade II listed Dovecote, the beneficial heritage effects of the proposed development should be afforded very substantial weight in favour of the grant of planning permission.

## **VSC2: The absence of an alternative location**

11.10 As has been explained, the proposed development is specifically designed to realise the restoration of and provide a viable future for Hulton Park, a highly valued historic landscape, by delivering a championship-grade golf resort capable of hosting the Ryder Cup tournament. The latter provides the means of realising the former, but is also a means of conveying significant social and economic benefits for the local area and wider region, aligned to the social and economic context of the area. The location of the proposed development, in addition to its scale, composition and quality, has been

determined by reference to these two inter-related objectives: restoration of the historic parkland; and making a material contribution to the social and economic well-being of the area.

- 11.11 There are no other locations that could achieve the intended purpose and realise the same significant benefits. The proposed development is not 'footloose'. Alternative locations may not be capable of having the same positive social and economic effect that delivery of this proposal will have in the Greater Manchester context, but certainly the proposed development can only be accommodated on this Site if it is to realise the restoration of Hulton Park and the material benefits that this entails.
- 11.12 In respect of prospective alternative proposals for the Site aimed at achieving the same benefits, the *Design and Access Statement* and Chapter 6 of the ES outline the design options that have considered. The proposals have been developed through an iterative design process which has taken in to account the constraints of the Site and prospective impacts of the proposed development, and sought to minimise and mitigate harm arising. As noted above however, the scale, composition and quality of the proposed development is determined by the dual objectives of the project, and any dilution of these elements would serve to undermine the prospects of the project and its associated extensive benefits from being realised. Reasonable alternatives have therefore been appraised, but would not achieve the same benefits. The absence of any reasonable alternative is a material consideration to weigh in the planning balance.

### **VSC3: The economic and tourism benefits of the proposed development and the proposed hosting of the Ryder Cup**

- 11.13 The proposed development is designed specifically to underpin a bid to host the Ryder Cup. The Ryder Cup is one of only four or five 'mega' events' with truly global media interest. It is the third largest global sports event, after the Olympics and FIFA World Cup. It is the highest profile golf event in the world.
- 11.14 As set out in Section 7, the proposed development provides Bolton with an unparalleled opportunity to capitalise upon its position within Greater Manchester to establish a world-leading golf and leisure resort, host one of the largest and highest profile sporting events in the world, deliver a long-term investment programme to increase sports participation, support local businesses, and strengthen the local economy. It represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity which will generate transformational economic benefits as part of a long-term legacy, both in the immediate area and regionally. The NPPF sets out a clear imperative for LPAs to "...respond positively..." (paragraph 17) to such opportunities for sustainable growth.
- 11.15 The economics benefits which will result from the proposed development are set out in detail in Section 7 and in the accompanying *Economic Impact of Hulton Park and The 2026 Ryder Cup*. In summary, they include:
- 1,111 FTE jobs as an annual average over a 20-year period. This includes jobs in construction, operation of the golf resort, the hosting of the 2026 Ryder Cup, and those arising from the extensive range of Ryder Cup commitment programmes. It

will result in reduced JSA claimants, provide employment and apprenticeship opportunities for young people, and support growth in key economic sectors.

- 39,400 annual overnight stays associated with visitors to the golf resort, generating annual spend of £3.0m (excluding accommodation) and supporting 21 FTE jobs per annum in the leisure and tourism sector.
- 318,367 overnight stays associated with the 2026 Ryder Cup, generating expenditure of £56.40m on accommodation and in local shops and services, in turn supporting 1,973 FTE jobs and £56.40m GVA.
- £19.3m of additional annual household expenditure;
- £5.2m of 'first occupation' expenditure by households moving into a new property;
- Additional public revenue to BMBC, comprising £4.5m New Homes Bonus, up to £2m additional annual Council Tax payments, and £400,000 annual business rate revenue.

- 11.16 The proposed development and the Ryder Cup commitment – explained in Section 7 and at Appendix 5 – will generate substantial economic value in Bolton, across Greater Manchester and within the wider North West region. It will deliver extensive economic benefits across a broad range of policy areas and for numerous target groups, such as young people and those who are currently out of work. It will provide a boost to economic productivity and tourism in the Borough, with associated uplifts in jobs and spending. Realising such opportunities is central to delivering the Northern Powerhouse ambition and enables Bolton to take full economic advantage of its position within Greater Manchester, in line with the strategic objectives of the adopted CS. Ekosgen has concluded that the proposed development will have a “...unique impact...” upon the Borough and will provide:

*“...a transformational opportunity for both residents and businesses. The local impact of hosting a global sports event, the many years of activity in advance of 2026 and the intensity of the event itself provides a once in a generation experience with the potential to change lives and open up new opportunities for local people...”*

- 11.17 The proposed development will strengthen and diversify the local economy in a sustainable manner, particularly in respect of an enhanced tourist offer. The benefits to local residents will be considerable. The economic benefits associated with the proposed development are highly material and are to be afforded substantial weight in the determination of the application.

#### **VSC4: The social and cultural value of the proposed development**

- 11.18 Social value refers to a much broader concept of value than that typically measured by financial and economic impact assessments, such as those identified above. It measures societal outcomes such as the reduction of social inequality and improvements to wellbeing. The accompanying *Social Value Assessment* (SVA) is determines the social value outcomes which will arise from the proposed development, based on what is likely to happen as a result of the investment in it, as well as the

outcomes which are likely to occur in terms of people's lives. These outcomes have the potential to persist over the longer-term as development is occupied, businesses operate, and social value continues to accrue to individuals and society as a whole. They include:

- £13.48m attributable to with two thirds of trained volunteers volunteering at least once at a sports event in the future.
- £53.05m resulting from savings and increases in tax revenues associated with people coming off JSA and gaining new employment.
- £2.56m associated with increased participation in sport over an indicative 10 year period.
- £42.62m associated with young people who are Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) gaining employment.

11.19 The SVA estimates that the proposed development will generate £123m (gross) of social value. This is a significant and ongoing contribution of social value to the communities of Bolton, Greater Manchester and nationally. In addition to these quantifiable social value outcomes, a range of significant qualitative social and cultural benefits will result from the proposed development, including:

- **Provision of new greenspace as a community resource** – leading to health and wellbeing benefits for residents and users of the greenspace.
- **An extensive programme of heritage restoration works to Hulton Park** – heritage parks are proven to generate social value in excess of the capital costs of investment.
- **Hulton Trail and Public Rights of Way** – the creation of a new public right of way will lead to health, social inclusion and social wellbeing benefits.
- **Sporting legacy** – published studies have shown that enhanced participation in sport will leave a legacy of reducing crime, improving educational attainment, enhancing human capital, volunteering and improving feelings of wellbeing. Indeed, as set out at Section 7, it is estimated that the Volunteer Recruitment and Training Programme forming part of a “Ryder Cup commitment” would train approximately 6,800 volunteers with an economic value of approximately £1.5m, resulting from what Ekosgen has identified to be an “...exceptional level...” of opportunities in respect of sports participation and volunteering.
- **Health and wellbeing legacy** – many published studies have demonstrated the health benefits of moderate exercise on a regular basis. The project will offer the local populace unprecedented opportunities for participation in golf, which is likely to result in health benefits for individuals and cost savings to the NHS. Indeed, as set out at Section 7, it is estimated that a Sports Participation Programme forming part of a “Ryder Cup commitment” would result in 225,000 additional participants, focused on priority groups such as young people and women, with associated NHS and mental health cost savings of approximately £2.6m.

- **Educational legacy** – a Ryder Cup commitment comparable to those associated with previous tournaments would lead to every school student in Bolton being introduced to golf, with older school students provided with coaching lesson at local clubs as part of the Ryder Cup commitment. Such exposure to sport is likely to increase sports participation rates across Bolton. A rise in participation in sport is likely to have a positive impact from an educational perspective including improved numeracy and other transferable skills, based on published research into the educational impacts of sport.
- **Place-making and community legacy** – consistent with previous tournaments, the 2026 Ryder Cup cultural programme would help spread the benefits across Greater Manchester as would the presence of Fan Zones in various locations. Published research has shown that providing activities and events that people can participate in and observe can engender feelings of connectedness to the area. This can help with the development of a sense of place. Live events in particular have been shown to be the most compelling means to knitting together existing and new communities.

11.20 The proposed development represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity for the Borough and beyond, with a far reaching legacy which can improve the lives of residents both in the locality and regionally over the longer-term. Considerable social value will result from its delivery, which will make a significant and ongoing contribution to the communities of Bolton, Greater Manchester and nationally. These benefits are highly material and are to be afforded substantial weight in the determination of the application.

### **VSC5: Increased beneficial use of the Green Belt across the Site**

11.21 The preceding Section of this Statement considered the contribution that the proposed development will make to this objective in the context of evaluating the overall impact on the Green Belt. It is also relevant to consider it in the context of matters which may outweigh the harms (Green Belt and otherwise) that will arise.

11.22 In respect of providing opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation, the proposal will convey very significant benefit. Aside from access along the PRoW network, the Site is not accessible to the general public other than by express permission. The majority of the Site presents no opportunity for formal or informal recreational activity, with the only other provision being restricted use by local archery and angling clubs. With the development in full operation, a wide range of sporting and recreational activities will be available to the public, namely:

- One of the leading golf courses in the UK, in terms of quality and profile. Designed to international tournament standards, the course will represent an opportunity for all to play on a facility at the very pinnacle of the game;
- A multi-functional golf Academy, providing teaching and practice facilities for all standards of golfer. The adventure and short courses are specifically designed to open up opportunities to all ages. The Academy will be open beyond daylight hours, offering the public the opportunity to use the facilities after the normal working day;



- Spa facilities within the hotel complex, which are anticipated to be accessible to visiting members of the public as well as residents/users of the golf resort;
- Activities offered by the operators of the hotel complex within the Park, which would be expected to include clay pigeon shooting, fishing, archery, horse riding, cycling and running;
- A series of public open spaces, including play areas, interspersed across the residential communities, serving new and existing residents;
- Enhanced recreational routes across and around the Site for the general public, through a net increase to the length of the existing PRow network, the upgrade of those routes (and their retention within an appealing natural setting), and the creation of the new Hulton Trail. There will be an overall increase in the length of the total PRow network by approximately 1,000m, plus the formalisation of an approximately 1,500m of path as a PRow.

The Hulton Trail will be a significant addition to the existing PRow network, connecting in to additional routes beyond the Site, serving a variety of users and offering interpretative material to aid appreciation of the Site's environment and heritage. The Applicant has undertaken pre-application consultation about the proposals with BMBC's PRow Officer and with the Footpath Liaison Group, which includes representatives from the Ramblers Association and other local walking groups. These stakeholders have expressed broad support for the enhancements to the PRow network which will result from the proposed development; and

- A public park, Pretoria Park, which will connect with the Hulton Trail and offer local people a valuable space for relaxation.

11.23 In combination these facilities and opportunities represent a very significant enhancement to the existing provision for sport and recreation in the area, of direct benefit to the local and broader community. They are directly aligned with Strategic Objective 1 of BMBC's adopted CS, which aims to maximise access to sporting and recreational facilities for the Borough's communities, and to increase opportunities for walking and cycling.

11.24 The proposed development will also enhance the biodiversity value of the Site. This will result from, *inter alia*:

- A net increase in the amount of woodland habitat at the Site and qualitative improvements associated with enhanced woodland connectivity (see Appendix 7);
- Landscape planting which:
  - Enhances the habitat quality arising from the areas of far rough and conservation grasslands to be created on the golf course;
  - Optimises strategic habitat connectivity on the Site and to the wider landscape. For example, new woodland planting will link areas of woodland which are currently fragmented; and

- A programme of habitat enhancement and management of the woodlands, involving the removal of non-native invasive plant species, such as rhododendrons.

11.25 These extensive enhancements are directly aligned with the objectives of the NPPF in relation to Green Belt, and will be viably secured as part of the proposed development. They are a material consideration in favour of the grant of planning permission and contribute to the considerations which comprise VSC.

### **VSC6: Meeting the Borough's housing needs**

11.26 The PPG sets out that the contribution of a development proposal towards unmet housing need is by itself "unlikely" to comprise VSC (reference ID: 3-032-20140306). It is nevertheless a material consideration which must be weighed in the overall planning balance and which therefore contributes towards a comprehensive VSC case.

11.27 The residential development – comprising up to 1,036 dwellings across three areas of the Site – is included within the proposed development to provide essential cross-funding for the golf resort (see Section 8). The new homes will nevertheless convey other significant benefits, including contributing positively to meeting identified housing needs. This is discussed in Section 8 and is summarised as follows:

- The nation is experiencing a housing crisis as a result of a severe and growing undersupply of new homes which is failing to meet needs and demands. The Government has therefore established a national imperative to "...boost significantly the supply of housing..."<sup>58</sup> and all local authorities are required to take action to address it.
- The delivery of residential development in Bolton is insufficient to meet needs, with delivery having failed to meet the requirement in every year since 2008.
- The persistent under-delivery of new homes is fuelling a growing housing shortage in the Borough, with housing becoming increasingly unaffordable.
- The supply of deliverable housing land in the Borough is insufficient to meet needs, with BMBC unable to deliver a 5-YHLS. As such, relevant policies for the supply of new homes in the extant local development plan are out-of-date and there is a clear and urgent need to identify new sources of deliverable housing land.
- The scale of existing housing land within the built-up urban area is wholly sufficient to meet housing needs. There is a critical imperative to find new sources of land to provide new homes over the short- and longer-term.
- The draft GMSF has identified that "...exceptional circumstances exist to amend the existing Green Belt boundaries...", including in Bolton. Indeed, the Site itself is the subject of a proposed development allocation in the draft GMSF, with part of it identified for Green Belt release;

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<sup>58</sup> NPPF, paragraph 47

- There is a particular need for new family homes in Bolton. Recent housing delivery has been focussed upon flats, exacerbating an existing imbalance in the Borough's dwelling stock, which is dominated by smaller, lower value homes.

11.28 It is clear from the above that there is a need for a step-change in housing delivery in the Borough and a chronic shortage of land in both the short- and longer-term. The draft GMSF is at an early stage of preparation and cannot be afforded any material weight at the present time; however, it provides a clear indication that the Western Fields area of residential development at the Site has met its principal objectives for site-selection and is considered to be suitable in principle for Green Belt release and residential development. It is anticipated that the proposed development will make:

- A contribution to housing delivery within the relevant 5-year period (2017/18 to 2021/22), albeit the scale of this is limited to 40 dwellings given that the delivery of the development will be tied to securing the Ryder Cup; and
- A very substantive contribution towards the supply of housing over the longer-term, delivering 967 new homes by 2034/35, equating to just under 6% of the Borough's OAN over the draft GMSF plan period.

11.29 The contribution of the proposed development to meeting housing needs within the Borough – and its alignment with the national imperative to “...*boost significantly the supply of housing*...” – is a material consideration of substantial weight in the determination of the accompanying application.

### **VSC7: Reducing congestion in the local highway network**

11.30 As set out in Section 9, a detailed *Transport Assessment* (TA) has been prepared by experienced transport specialists and is submitted alongside the application. It acknowledges that the local highway network is somewhat constrained, with significant levels of congestion being experienced by local residents during peak hours. This congestion is focussed on Chequerbent roundabout to the west of the Site, which in the AM peak handles a significant amount of traffic associated with commuters travelling through Westhoughton from areas to the south of the town towards the M61 motorway to the north (and vice versa in the PM peak). The delivery of additional development in the local area therefore needs to be accompanied by new and enhanced transport infrastructure to ensure that any adverse impacts are satisfactorily mitigated.

11.31 In this context, the TA proposes various enhancements to the local highway network, including:

- A new link road to the west of the Site, between Platt Lane and Chequerbent roundabout. It is comprised of a single carriageway road with footpaths along both sides and has an estimated construction cost of approximately £2.8m. It will enable the provision of an access to the Western Fields area of residential development, whilst providing additional road capacity in the local highway network; and
- Various other off-site improvements to the local highway network, including:

- Adding a third lane on the southbound carriageway of the A58 Snydale Way where it adjoins Chequerbent roundabout;
- Adding a third lane on the northbound carriageway of the A58 Snydale Way where it adjoins Junction 4 of the M61 motorway; and
- The extension of the two lane carriageway on the A6 both immediately to the west and to the east of Four Lane Ends.

11.32 The above enhancements and the link road in particular will have a material and positive impact for traffic conditions in the local area. The link road will spread the traffic accessing the Chequerbent roundabout on to an additional arm of that junction, diverting it on to the link road and away from the A58 Park Lane and A6 Manchester Road. This will enhance the capacity of the local network, thereby reducing congestion. In particular, the TA identifies that the current average delay across the Chequerbent roundabout is 207 seconds; this delay will reduce to 9 seconds following the delivery of the proposed development and the associated improvements to the local highway network. It is therefore clear that the highway improvements proposed to be delivered as part of or alongside the proposed development will not only mitigate its adverse impacts on the local highway network, but will deliver significant net enhancements to congestion of benefit to the local area.

11.33 The approach to the delivery of the link road is discussed in Section 4. As set out in the draft GMSF, BMBC recently accepted<sup>59</sup> the principle of “...a *Westhoughton bypass and link from the M61 into Gibfield Park Way in Atherton...*”<sup>7</sup> and is undertaking ongoing feasibility work to explore its delivery. This bypass could be on a more significant scale than the link road proposed by the application. The Applicant proposes either that the link road will be delivered at the appropriate time or that a financial contribution of commensurate value will be provided in respect of the delivery of BMBC’s wider bypass proposal if its delivery by the time it is needed in advance of the Ryder Cup 2026 can be assured. This will be secured by the s106 Agreement for the planning permission and in doing so BMBC can be assured that the proposed development will only proceed in full with those enhancements secured.

11.34 It is therefore evident that the proposed development will facilitate significant enhancements to the local highway network which will reduce congestion and journey times for the public, and that there is a clear mechanism to make sure that this benefit is realised either in the form of the delivery of the proposed link road or a financial contribution of commensurate value towards BMBC’s wider bypass proposal, achieving the same benefit. This is a material consideration of significant weight in favour of the grant of planning permission and contributes to the considerations which comprise VSC.

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<sup>59</sup> Westhoughton Bypass: Report to BMBC Cabinet (27<sup>th</sup> March 2017)

## **VSC8: Net environmental enhancements to the Site as a result of the proposed development**

11.35 The NPPF sets out that:

*“The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment...”* (paragraph 109).

11.36 The environmental impacts of the proposed development are considered in detail in the accompanying ES and an extensive range of associated technical assessments. It will deliver a net enhancements to the natural environment, which are summarised as follows:

- **Tree and hedgerow planting:** the design of the proposed development has sought to respect areas of woodland and individual specimen trees within the Site and the impact on trees has therefore been minimised as far as possible. Whilst the removal of some trees is unavoidable, particularly in respect of the creation of a world-class golf course of the length and challenge required for the Ryder Cup tournament, new trees and hedgerows will be planted to compensate for the loss. Approximately 10.7ha of woodland and 4km of hedgerows will be provided throughout the proposed development. Overall, there will be a net enhancement of tree and hedgerow provision within the Site, which is identified as a qualitative improvement in provision by the *Arboricultural Impact Assessment* included within the accompanying ES (Chapter 10).
- **Enhanced biodiversity value:** as noted above in relation to VSC5, the proposed development includes a comprehensive landscaping scheme which will improve the habitats at the Site. In addition to tree and hedgerow planting, this includes enhancements to the habitat quality arising from the areas of far rough and conservation grasslands to be created on the golf course, optimises strategic habitat connectivity on the Site, and enhances the woodland habitat through a programme of management. The biodiversity impact of the proposed development has been carefully assessed by Environment Bank, using the DEFRA pilot methodology for calculating habitat value before and after development proposals. The assessment identifies that the proposed development will have a net positive residual impact on the Site.

11.37 It is evident that in respect of several issues the proposed development will lead to the enhancement of the natural environment at the Site. Each of the enhancements identified above is, in its own right, a material consideration in favour of the grant of planning permission and therefore contributes to the considerations which comprise VSC.

## 12. Conclusion on the Planning Balance

- 12.1 The preceding Sections of this Planning Statement (including by cross reference to Appendices and accompanying documents) have considered the proposed development against the prevailing planning policy framework and other material considerations. This Section brings together those findings and considers whether, on balance, planning permission should be approved for the proposed development.

### **The planning appraisal**

- 12.2 Having regard to the relevant statutory and policy framework for the determination of the application, the following questions are posed and need to be considered in appraising the development and whether planning permission should be granted:

- Is the proposal in accordance with the Development Plan?
- Do other material considerations indicate that the application should be determined otherwise than in accordance weigh in favour or against the grant of planning permission in the context of the degree of compliance with the Development Plan?

- 12.3 Each is considered in turn below.

### **Is the proposed development in accordance with the Development Plan?**

#### ***Green Belt policy***

- 12.4 The principal issue to consider is whether very special circumstances (VSC) exist to justify the development proceeding in the Green Belt, as required by Policy CG7AP of BMBC's adopted *Allocations Plan* and reflected in the NPPF.
- 12.5 Section 10 of this Planning Statement demonstrates that whilst harm to the Green Belt will arise from the proposed development, it will not fundamentally affect the integrity and function of the wider Green Belt in fulfilling the five purposes set out in the NPPF. This is particularly the case given that:
- The majority of the Site – the area which is proposed for the development of the golf resort – will remain undeveloped, save only for the hotel complex, clubhouse, Academy and maintenance buildings; and
  - The areas of residential development – which will have the greatest impact on the openness of the Green Belt but which are necessary to underpin the viable delivery of the golf resort in order to secure, *inter alia*, the future conservation of the Registered Park – have a degree of containment and benefit from the presence of strong and defensible boundaries.
- 12.6 The proposed development will not create weaker boundaries between the urban area and the Green Belt than already exist and which may otherwise be penetrable, leaving the retained Green Belt open to sprawl and encroachment. Indeed, the proposed development will establish much stronger Green Belt boundaries for the areas of



residential development at the east of the Site, given that they do not currently benefit from strong barrier features along the urban edge to prevent urban sprawl. The retained Green Belt is therefore capable of enduring and will continue to fulfil its key functions, including in preventing neighbouring towns from merging. Moreover, the proposed development will make a significant contribution to providing opportunities for access and for outdoor sport and recreation; it is therefore aligned with the objectives of the NPPF to encourage the beneficial use of Green Belt land. Nevertheless, the overall impact of the proposed development on the Green Belt is deemed to be harmful.

12.7 Only limited other harmful effects have been identified. The proposed development will result in landscape harm to some character areas within the Site, albeit these are contained and must be balanced against beneficial impacts to other character areas. Moreover, there will be adverse impacts on some visual receptors, albeit these relate primarily to a change in outlook and will not be so overbearing or dominating as to result in an unacceptable effect on living conditions for nearby properties.

12.8 In terms of other considerations which weigh against the identified harmful effects, this Planning Statement has demonstrated that there is a clear synergy between the proposed development and a number of strategic economic and social policy drivers and objectives at the local, regional and national level, including around:

- The ambition of the NPPF to facilitate a “...*positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment...*” (paragraph 126);
- The requirement of the NPPF to respond positively to wider opportunities for growth, and to encourage and support sustainable economic growth;
- The vision for the Greater Manchester region to raise its profile on the world-stage and boost its profile and image, including by enhancing its sporting, tourist and recreational ‘offer’ and developing its role as a leading events destination;
- The Government’s ambition to re-balance the UK economy, grow the country’s reputation as the home for global sport, and to develop a strategy for the hosting of ‘mega-events’;
- Strategic Objectives for Bolton to pursue economic growth opportunities resulting from, inter alia, its position in Greater Manchester and enhancing access to sporting and recreational facilities; and
- The Government’s objective to “...*boost significantly the supply of new homes...*” (NPPF, paragraph 47) in order to tackle the worsening housing crisis.

12.9 The proposed development will evidently make a very significant and important contribution to fulfilling these policy objectives. This has been recognised by BMBC and the GMCA through the proposal to allocate the Site for a high quality leisure destination and heritage restoration project with associated residential development in the draft GMSF.

12.10 The proposed development provides the means by which to restore the Registered Park, following decades of decline. A thorough evaluation of the heritage significance of

the Site has been undertaken, culminating in the preparation of a *Conservation Plan* which establishes a series of policies for its restoration and conservation, and an action plan which identifies specific interventions aligned with those policies. This sound appreciation of significance and what is needed to realise the true heritage potential of the site has informed decisions on the design of the proposed development and how to minimise potential adverse impacts arising from essential interventions, whilst the specific works documented in the action plan – including the restoration of numerous historic structures which comprise both designated and non-designated heritage assets – form a critical part of the proposed development. The creation of the golf resort encourages single ownership, meaning that a whole-site ‘Vision’ for the future maintenance and management of the Registered Park over the long-term is achievable. It is concluded that the proposed development will deliver overwhelming benefits to the Site’s heritage assets.

- 12.11 The assessment has identified a range of direct and very significant economic and social benefits which the development will realise. In particular, Hulton Park as designed will be a world-class golf resort, providing facilities of an international standard. It has been designed to maximise the prospects of Hulton Park being selected as a Ryder Cup venue. In this context, Hulton Park represents a unique and game-changing opportunity for the Borough. The golf resort will raise the profile of Bolton and Greater Manchester on the world-stage, and the economic, legacy, social, cultural and tourist benefits which will result are identified as being of regional significance. In the context of the NPPF imperative of “...*responding positively to wider opportunities for growth...*” (paragraph 17), these must be given significant weight in the planning balance.
- 12.12 The proposed development will also give rise to other beneficial impacts, each of which must be weighed in the balance. These include:
- A substantial contribution towards meeting the housing needs of the Borough. This is significant given the conclusion at Section 8 that the policies of the Development Plan in respect of housing supply are out-of-date and that a step-change in delivery is required to meet the Borough’s growing housing needs;
  - The increased beneficial use of the Green Belt across the Site, including providing opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation via the golf resort, hotel complex and enhancements to the Public Right of Way network;
  - Reduced congestion in the local highway network; and
  - Net environmental enhancements to the Site, including in respect of tree planting and biodiversity value.
- 12.13 Finally, there are no other locations that could achieve the intended purpose and realise the same significant benefits.
- 12.14 Weighing these considerations alongside each other, it is clear that the considerations in favour of the proposal clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt and the other harm identified. Accordingly, VSC to justify the proposed development of the Site exist and compliance with Policy CG7AP of BMBC’s adopted *Allocations Plan* is achieved.

***Other Development Plan policy***

- 12.15 Section 9 and Appendix 7 of this Planning Statement consider the sustainability of the proposed development and its accordance with other policies of the Development Plan. It satisfies the requirement of relevant economic, environmental and social policies of the Development Plan, including those relating to design, ecological impacts, traffic and transport, minerals, flood risk and drainage, noise and air pollution, and residential amenity. Moreover, the proposed development is not in conflict with the housing supply policies of the Development Plan, notwithstanding that those policies are out-of-date such that they can be given little to no weight (see Section 8). No unacceptable impacts as measured against the requirements of relevant Development Plan policies will arise from the proposed development. The proposed development therefore satisfies relevant policies of the Development Plan.

**Do other material considerations indicate that the application should be determined otherwise than in accordance with the Development Plan?**

- 12.16 The overall purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development (NPPF, paragraph 6). The Government's definition of "sustainable development" is provided at paragraphs 18 to 219 of the NPPF. The appraisal in this Planning Statement has considered the proposed development against the NPPF as a whole. The proposed development's significant economic and social benefits have already been considered in demonstrating that VSC exist to justify development in the Green Belt. As such, the assessment in Section 9 and Appendix 7 has assessed the proposed development against those remaining policies in the NPPF and other non-statutory policy documents which are not drawn on in considering whether VSC exist, including Green Belt policies themselves as well as those relating to the achievement of positive economic, social and environmental outcomes.
- 12.17 The assessment has demonstrated that the proposed development comprises sustainable development and that its contribution to key objectives of the NPPF underpins the case that the proposed development presents VSC to justify development in the Green Belt. The appraisal has demonstrated significant compliance with policies of the NPPF and that the proposed development represents a local expression of many of the key social and economic objectives of the NPPF. Very limited harm against policies of the NPPF will arise, principally limited to harm in respect of the function and purposes of the Green Belt and specific and limited landscape impacts.
- 12.18 The NPPF must be considered as a whole and compliance assessed in this manner. Notwithstanding the isolated incidences of conflict, such as in respect of visual impact, the proposed development is substantially in accordance with policies of the NPPF when considered as a whole and contributes positively to its key sustainability objectives. In respect of the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out at paragraph 14 of the NPPF, it has been demonstrated that the proposed development is in accordance with relevant planning policies and that material considerations weigh further in favour of grant of planning permission. In this respect, the relevant limb of paragraph 14 is consistent with section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. In respect of both, the planning balance lies in favour of grant of planning permission and, mindful that the presumption applies, planning permission should be granted without delay.

## **Overall conclusion on planning balance**

- 12.19 Hulton Park is a nationally significant heritage asset. Following decades of decline, action is required to return it to its past glories and provide it with a lasting future.
- 12.20 Peel's proposal for realising this is the creation of a sporting hub of international standard and quality in the form of a championship-grade golf resort, with associated cross-funding residential development. This will enable the majority of the Site to remain open and undeveloped, whilst facilitating a substantial package of interventions and investment which will enable the Registered Park and heritage assets within it to be restored to their former condition. It will facilitate the delivery of a whole-site Vision for the future maintenance and management of Registered Park over the long-term, allowing enjoyment of and greater awareness of this important asset and returning it to its original status as a focus for the local area. It will simultaneously enable Bolton take full economic advantage of its position within Greater Manchester, raising its profile on the world-stage and enhancing its sporting, tourist and recreational 'offer' as a leading events destination.
- 12.21 The proposed development – which will only go ahead if the right to host the Ryder Cup at the Site is secured – will give rise to a substantial and wide-ranging package of benefits which clearly outweigh the acknowledged harms, including:
- Overwhelming benefits to heritage assets.
  - Significant economic value which will have a unique impact on the Borough and provide a transformational opportunity for local residents and businesses.
  - Significant social value as a result of a far reaching legacy which can improve the lives of residents over the longer-term.
  - A significant contribution towards the housing needs of the Borough, in the context of an acknowledged need for Green Belt release to address a chronic shortage of development land.
  - A range of other benefits, including enhanced beneficial use of the Green Belt, reduced traffic congestion and other environmental enhancements.
- 12.22 The proposed development represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity for Bolton, the realisation of which is directly aligned with the Northern Powerhouse ambition. The Applicant respectfully requests that BMBC grants planning permission for it without delay.

# Appendix 1: Application Documentation

The full range of plans/drawings and documentation which is submitted by the Applicant – and which will assist BMBC in its consideration and determination of the application – is set out in the following tables.

**Table 1.1 List of submitted documents**

Document title		Author
Application forms and certificates		Turley
Planning Statement		Turley
Design and Access Statement		Land Use Consultants, Leach Rhodes Walker, Calder Peel, and European Golf Design
Residential Design Code	Character Area 5	Calder Peel
	Character Area 6	
Economic Impact of Hulton Park and the 2026 Ryder Cup		Ekosgen
Social Value Assessment		Turley
Public Right of Way Strategy		Land Use Consultants
Statement of Community Involvement		Newington
Conservation Plan	Volume 1: An Assessment of the Heritage Significance	Land Use Consultants
	Volume 2: Conservation Strategy	
Historic Structures: Condition/Repair Issues		Lloyd Evans Pritchard
Viability Appraisal (Commercially sensitive and hence confidential)		Cushman & Wakefield
Transport Assessment		i-Transport
Travel Plan Golf Resort		i-Transport
Travel Plan Residential		i-Transport
Interim Event and Travel Management Plan		i-Transport
OnCourse Developments: Sustainability Blueprint		Golf Environment Organisation
BREEAM and Sustainability		Sustainable Assessments Limited
Environmental Statement Volume 1: Non Technical Summary		Various
Environmental Statement Volume 2: Technical Assessment	Chapter 1: Introduction	Turley
	Chapter 2: Site Location and Description	Turley
	Chapter 3: Project Description	Turley

Document title	Author
Chapter 4: Response to Environmental Statement Scoping Opinion	Turley
Chapter 5: EIA Methodology	Turley
Chapter 6: Consideration of Alternatives	Turley
Chapter 7: Landscape Character and Visual Amenity	Land Use Consultants
Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage	Peter de Figueiredo
Chapter 9: Archaeology	Salford Archaeology
Chapter 10: Ecology and Arboriculture	The Environment Partnership
Chapter 11: Traffic and Transportation	i-Transport
Chapter 12: Air Quality	Miller Goodall
Chapter 13: Noise	Miller Goodall
Chapter 14: Geology, Soils and Contamination	Aecom
Chapter 15: Water Environment	Aecom
Chapter 16: Socio-Economics	Turley and Ekosgen
Chapter 17: Environmental Management	Turley
Chapter 18: Conclusion and Summary	Turley
Environmental Statement Volume 3a: LVIA figures	Land Use Consultants
Environmental Statement Volume 3b: Other Assessment Figures	Various
Environmental Statement Volume 4: Technical Appendices	Various
Agricultural Land Classification	Reading Agricultural
Minerals Assessment	Aecom
Interim Level 2 Utility Study	Zerum
Lighting Assessment	Zerum
Crime Impact Statement	GM Design for Security
S106 Agreement Heads of Terms and CIL Compliance Statement	Turley

**Table 1.2 List of submitted plans and drawings**

Drawing/plan title	Reference
Site Location Plan	n/a
Areas for Detailed and Outline Approval	LUC-6628-LD-PLN-000 Issue E
Landscape Masterplan Site Wide (Full Development)	LUC_6628_LD_PLN_103 Issue C

Drawing/plan title		Reference
Illustrative Masterplan		15191 (PL) 001 P
Parameters Plan		15191 (PI) 500 Q
Demolition Plan		6628-LD-PLN-010 Issue E
Restoration Plan		6628-LD-PLN-011 Issue A
The Dovecote (Grade II Listed)	Elevations and Masonry Repairs	dov/lbc/001
	Plans & Sections	dov/lbc/002
Golf Course	Golf Grading Overview	1263.405.01 Rev E
	Golf Grading 1 of 3	1263.405.02
	Golf Grading 2 of 3	1263.405.03
	Golf Grading 3 of 3	1263.405.04
	Golf Grading Analysis	1263.415.01 Rev D
	General Arrangement Overview Plan	LUC_6628_LD_PLN_200 Issue A
	General Arrangement Plans Site Wide, drawings 1 to 19	LUC_6628_LD_PLN_201 to 219 Issue C
	Indicative Planting Schedule & Specification	6628-LD-SCH-705
	Detailed Area; Golf and Academy Entrance	LUC-6628-LD-PLN-231 Issue A
	External Lighting Layout	3023-(97)-EX-01 Rev P5
Clubhouse	Clubhouse Lower Ground Floor General Arrangement Plan	L(20)11
	Clubhouse Ground Floor General Arrangement Plan	L(20)12
	Clubhouse Roof General Arrangement Plan	L(20)13
	Clubhouse General Arrangement Elevations	L(20)14
	Clubhouse Section A-A	L(20)15
	Clubhouse Visualisation	7433-L(00)159
	Clubhouse Views, sheets 1 to 2	7433-L(00)145B and 146A
Academy	Academy Ground Floor General Arrangement Plan	L(20)16
	Academy Roof General Arrangement Plan	L(20)17
	Academy General Arrangement Elevations	L(20)18
	Academy Sections A-A B-B C-C	L(20)19
	Academy views, sheets 1 to 2	7433-L(00)147A and 148A
	9 Hole Adventure Golf & 9 Hole Ryder Cup Course	n/a



Drawing/plan title		Reference
Hotel Complex	Hotel Visualisation	7433-L(00)150
	Hotel Visualisation (rear)	7433-L(00)158
	Hotel Views, sheets 1 to 4	7433-L(00)141B to 144B
	Hotel Lower Ground Floor General Arrangement Plan	L(20)01
	Hotel Ground Floor General Arrangement Plan	L(20)02
	Hotel First Floor General Arrangement Plan	L(20)03
	Hotel Second Floor General Arrangement Plan	L(20)04
	Hotel Third Floor General Arrangement Plan	L(20)05
	Hotel Fourth Floor General Arrangement Plan	L(20)06
	Hotel Roof General Arrangement Plan	L(20)07
	Hotel General Arrangement Elevations North & South	L(20)08
	Hotel Elevations East & West	L(20)09
Associated structures and buildings	Hotel Sections A-A B-B	L(20)10
	Maintenance Shed General Arrangement Plan	L(20)20
	Maintenance Shed General Arrangement Elevations & Sections	L(20)21
	Maintenance Building Views	7433-L(00)149
	Halfway House General Arrangement Plans & Elevations	L(20)22
	Starters Hut General Arrangement Plans & Elevations	L(20)23
	Bridge 1	60484817-DR-BD-03.001-1D
	Bridge A	60484817-DR-BD-03.004-1D
	Bridge B	60484817-DR-BD-03.005-0D
	Bridge C	60484817-DR-BD-03.006-1D
	Underpass North & South Ramps	PSAM-ACM-XX-XX-DR-CE-00115
	Illustrative Golf Buggy Underpass Sections	PSAM-ACM-XX-XX-DR-CE-00002
Landscape	Illustrative Landscape Masterplan; Hotel & Pleasure Grounds	LUC-6628-LD-PLN-101 Issue A
	Illustrative Landscape Masterplan; Academy & Clubhouse	LUC-6628-LD-PLN-102 Issue A
	Detailed Area; Hotel and Pleasure Grounds, drawings 1 to 4	LUC-6628-LD-PLN-225 to 228 Issue C

Drawing/plan title		Reference
	Detailed Area; Clubhouse	LUC-6628-LD-PLN-229 Issue C
	Detailed Area; Golf Academy	LUC-6628-LD-PLN-230 Issue C
Hulton Trail Proposals Plans 1 to 5		507C 08 to 12 Rev A
Residential Development	Illustrative Masterplan for Dearden's Farm	15191 (PL) 002 J
	Illustrative Masterplan for Dearden's Farm	15191 (PL) 005 K
	Illustrative Masterplan for Western Fields 1	15191 (PL) 003 K
	Illustrative Masterplan for Western Fields 2	15191 (PL) 004 J
Highways and Access	Proposed Residential Access to Dearden's Farm Parcel from A6 Manchester Road	ITM10187-SK-145 Rev D
	Proposed First Phase Residential Access to Western Fields from A6 Manchester Road	ITM10187-SK-146 Rev D
	Proposed Residential Access from Broadway	ITM10187-SK-191 Rev C
	Proposed Residential Access from Woodlands Drive	ITM10187-SK-208 Rev A
	Proposed Clubhouse, Hotel and Academy Accesses from A6 Manchester Road	ITM10187-SK-197 Rev B
	Combined Proposed Road Layout	PSAM-ACM-XX-XX-DR-CE-00116
Drainage	Drainage General Arrangement	PSAM-ACM-XX-XX-DR-CE-00117
	Academy Drainage General Arrangement	PSAM-ACM-XX-XX-DR-CE-00108
	Clubhouse Drainage General Arrangement	PSAM-ACM-XX-XX-DR-CE-00107
	Hotel / Car Park General Arrangement	PSAM-ACM-XX-XX-DR-CE-00105
	Maintenance Building General Arrangement	PSAM-ACM-XX-XX-DR-CE-00106

## Appendix 2: Proposed planning conditions

In the event that BMBC is minded to approve the planning application for the proposed development, it is anticipated that the resultant planning permission will be granted subject to various conditions. The conditions will, *inter alia*, require additional approvals for specific aspects of the development or manage the construction and/or operation of the proposed development. The *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF) states that planning conditions should be:

“...necessary, relevant to planning and to the development to be permitted, enforceable, precise and reasonable in all other respects...” (paragraph 206)

The table below is intended to assist BMBC as the Local Planning Authority in determining the planning application by identifying suggested conditions which should be applied to the planning permission and which are considered to accord with the above NPPF policy. Some of the conditions are only relevant to the residential or golf resort elements of the scheme; the table below identifies where this is the case. The conditions can be refined with BMBC prior to the determination of the planning application.

**Table 12.1: Proposed planning conditions**

	Issue	Purpose	Relevant to Residential	Relevant to Golf Resort
Implementation and Procedural	Timescales for implementation	Excluding site preparation works (the scope of which shall be subject to prior agreement), the proposed development shall not be commenced until the right to host the Ryder Cup is secured	✓	✓
	Timescales for first Reserved Matters	First reserved matters application to be submitted within five years of the date of the outline planning permission	✓	
	Reserved matters details	Specify the details of residential reserved matters to be submitted for approval, in accordance with approved Parameters Plan and relevant Residential Design Code	✓	
	Approved details	Identify the documents and plans which are approved	✓	✓
	Phasing	Require details of the phasing of the proposed development	✓	✓
	Adventure Golf	Require relevant details of the adventure golf scheme in accordance with parameters		✓

	Issue	Purpose	Relevant to Residential	Relevant to Golf Resort
	Local Centre	Delivery of the Local Centre either on- or off-site in accordance with agreed phasing	✓	
Hulton Trail, Public Rights of Way and Open Space	The Hulton Trail	Specification and alignment to be submitted for approval where reserved, in broad accordance with the details in the Public Right of Way Strategy	✓	✓
		Detailed design of Hulton Trail sculptures and interpretative material to be submitted for approval	✓	✓
	Site maintenance	Require details of site maintenance measures for areas of public open space and PROWs	✓	
	Open space implementation and maintenance	Scale, arrangement and phasing of public open space, and maintenance plans to be submitted for approval	✓	
Heritage and Archaeology	Conservation Plan	Implementation of action plan set out in the CP Volume 2: Conservation Strategy	✓	✓
	Restoration of historic assets	Specification and phasing of restoration of historic structures to be submitted for approval, in broad accordance with the approved Historic Structures: Condition/Repair Issues	✓	✓
	Archaeological evaluation trenching	Implementation of trial trenching in accordance with written scheme of investigation	✓	✓
Tree planting, protection and Ecological Management	Protection of trees	Protective tree fencing to be erected prior to development	✓	✓
	Tree planting	Require an Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) and a Landscape and Habitat Management Plan (LHMP) which identifies tree and hedgerow planting, in accordance with the requirements identified in the Environmental Statement	✓	✓

	Issue	Purpose	Relevant to Residential	Relevant to Golf Resort
	Protection of bird breeding habitats	Bird breeding habitats are not to be removed between March and August, without the prior approval of a bird survey	✓	✓
	Bird and bat boxes	Details of bird and bat boxes to be submitted prior to development	✓	✓
	European Protected Species	Method statements to be implemented for Protected Species.	✓	✓
	Protection of sensitive habitats	Implementation of Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs), also known as Precautionary Methods of Working.	✓	✓
Drainage	Drainage	Require details of surface water drainage scheme to be approved	✓	✓
	Management	Implementation of management plans, including Water Management Plan, Water Framework Directive Mitigation and Enhancement Plan, and Lake De-silting and Restoration Plan.	✓	✓
	Foul drainage	Details of foul drainage scheme to be approved for residential development	✓	
Construction	Site investigation	Require sampling and analytical strategy of the investigation	✓	✓
	Construction management	Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) to be submitted for approval prior to development	✓	✓
	Construction traffic management	Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) to be submitted for approval prior to development	✓	✓
	Local Employment Framework	Local Employment Framework to be submitted for approval prior to development.	✓	✓
	Construction noise	Construction noise mitigation scheme to be submitted for approval prior to development. Construction work only to occur between the hours of Monday to	✓	✓

Issue		Purpose	Relevant to Residential	Relevant to Golf Resort
		Friday 08:00 to 18:00 and Saturdays 08:00 to 13:00, with no working on Sundays or Bank Holidays.		
	Construction waste management	Waste management plan to be completed for each phase of development	✓	✓
Highways and Event Management	Highways works	Off-site highways works to be implemented on a phased basis in broad accordance with the details in the Transport Assessment	✓	✓
	Event Management Plan	Event and Travel Management Plan to be submitted for approval prior to the hosting of the Ryder Cup, in broad accordance with the Interim Event and Travel Management Plan		✓
	Public Transport	Public transport strategy to be approved for later phases of residential development in the Western Fields area, in broad accordance with the Transport Assessment	✓	
Crime Prevention	Crime prevention	Detailed crime prevention scheme to be submitted for residential development	✓	
Noise	Noise mitigation	Implementation of relevant noise mitigation measures in accordance with approved details	✓	✓

## Appendix 3: Pre-Application Discussions and Community Engagement

This Section provides a summary of the pre-application discussions and community engagement undertaken in respect of the proposed development. Further details in respect of the latter are provided in the accompanying *Statement of Community Involvement* (SCI).

### Pre-Application Consultation

The Applicant has undertaken a pro-active and transparent approach to the project. The formulation and design of the proposed development has been informed by a comprehensive programme of pre-application engagement and consultation with a wide range of stakeholders. This has included extensive discussions with BMBC and various other statutory and non-statutory consultees identified in the following table.

Statutory consultees	Non-statutory consultees
Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council <sup>60</sup>	Association of Greater Manchester Authorities
Environment Agency	Historic England
Forestry Commission	Manchester City Council
Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service	Marketing Manchester
Greater Manchester Ecology Unit	New Economy
Greater Manchester Police	Ramblers Association
Highways England	West Lancashire Footpath Group
Lancashire Gardens Trust	Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council
Natural England	
Transport for Greater Manchester	
United Utilities	

Pre-application discussions with all stakeholders have been undertaken on a strictly factual basis and in line with the guidance of the NPPF sought to identify and resolve a range of fundamental principles relating to whether or not the proposed development would be considered acceptable in principle. As such, the pre-application discussions with BMBC encompassed the following matters, among others:

<sup>60</sup> Including in respect of planning, highways, landscape, drainage, trees, Public Rights of Way, design, housing strategy and environmental health.



- Design of the proposed development, including the layout, appearance and location of key buildings and the approach to the residential masterplans;
- Technical aspects of the proposed development, such as heritage, highways, drainage, ecology and landscape impacts;
- Issues relating to the principle of development, including development viability, necessary planning obligations and the very special circumstances in support of the proposals;
- The scope and content of the planning application and the required documentation.

Given the range of issues associated with the planning application, a number of “working groups” were established to discuss different aspects of the proposed development. The groups were formed with representatives from the project team and counterpart officers within BMBC and other external organisations. The working groups were as follows:

- Planning and Strategy
- Transport and Access
- Environment and Design
- Economy and Tourism

A schedule identifying the dates of the working group and other meetings is provided at Appendix 4.

## **Community Engagement**

Peel has endeavoured to build a relationship with the local community and has adopted an open, transparent and inclusive approach to engagement. A concerted effort has been made to enable all stakeholders to feel equally involved in the process and to work collaboratively with the local community regarding the content and design of the proposed development. The engagement process utilised a multi-faceted and multi-platform approach to maximise opportunities for participation. Local residents were able to receive information in a variety of ways, including online and through face-to-face discussions with Peel and the project team. A schedule of key meetings, presentations and briefings undertaken with the local community over a period of four months in late 2016, as reported in the accompanying SCI. The information which has been obtained through this process has been used by the Applicant and the project team to refine the proposed development.

The community engagement was undertaken in two stages.

- Stage One related to the issues associated with the Site, the key drivers of the project, and the vision for the proposed development;
- Stage Two consolidated the findings of the first stage and sought comments on the draft masterplan for the proposed development and various specific aspects of it.

In addition to various meetings and briefings with key community stakeholders, a total of six public exhibitions were held, with 1,373 people involved in the process. These involved a series of drop-in events taking place at various times and different locations in order to maximise the opportunities for local residents and interested parties to attend, hold discussions with the Applicant and the project team, and express their views.

The exhibitions were publicised extensively and a dedicated website has been updated regularly by Peel to ensure interested parties are regularly informed about the proposed development. Over the two days of the Stage One public exhibitions 1,108 people attended and 333 feedback forms were submitted. 265 people attended the Stage Two public exhibitions and 79 feedback forms were submitted. The following Tables provide an overview of key issues identified:

### **Stage One: Understanding issues, project drivers, and vision**

This stage was used to build an understanding of the site and the local area of Westhoughton and Over-Hulton. Top priorities identified were:

- Congestion in the local highway network
- Existing pressure on social infrastructure facilities, including schools and doctors surgeries

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Top priorities and concerns identified for the Site included:

- Retention of green space
- Impact on heritage assets
- Impact of new residential development on existing dwellings

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Other topics included Green Belt, the desirability of a new golf course with the potential of hosting significant events, job and training opportunities.

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### **Stage Two: Draft Masterplan proposals**

Draft design proposals were presented taking account of the feedback received and discussed during the Stage One public exhibitions. Key themes included:

- Traffic impact on surrounding roads
- Impact on surrounding local services and infrastructure
- Construction management
- Visual impact
- Impact on heritage assets
- Relocation of Pretoria Pit Memorial

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A number of participants at the consultation supported the proposed development in principle, including in particular in respect of the delivery of the Hulton Trail and/or a world class golf resort.

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Peel has responded to the community feedback wherever possible. Specific aspects that have influenced the application include:

- Retaining the position of the Pretoria Pit Memorial in its present location and developing the proposals for Pretoria Park;
- Improvement of public access and routes through the Site, including the delivery of the Hulton Trail;
- Provision of a Local Centre to serve the residential development;
- Reduced the amount of overall residential development, particularly at the south-east of the Site;
- Introduction of bungalows to within the Park End Farm area of residential development.

These matters have been developed to reflect community feedback and are included in the proposed development.

## Appendix 4: Schedule of key pre-application meetings

	Attendees
17 December 2015: Highways and Access	BMBC (Development Management)
	BMBC (Highways)
	Peel
	i-Transport
6 January 2016: Ecology Scoping	GMEU
	TEP
15 June 2016: Planning and Strategy Working Group	BMBC (Development Management)
	BMBC (Planning Strategy Unit)
	BMBC (Tourism and Business)
	Peel
	Brookes Sport
	Turley
20 June 2016: Highways and Access	BMBC (Development Management)
	BMBC (Highways)
	Peel
	Turley
	i-Transport
22 June 2016: Environment Working Group	BMBC (Development Management)
	BMBC (Highways)
	BMBC (Trees & Woodland)
	BMBC (Landscape Regeneration)
	BMBC (Public Rights of Way)
	BMBC (Design & Conservation)
	BMBC (Planning Strategy)
	BMBC (Tourism and Business)
	BMBC (Infrastructure and Drainage)
	BMBC (Neighbourhood & Regulatory Services)
	BMBC (Environmental Health)

	Peel
	Turley
	European Golf Design
	Leach Rhodes Walker
	Calder Peel
	LUC
	i-Transport
	TEP
	Miller Goodall
	Aecom
15 July 2016: Transport Working Group	BMBC (Highways)
	Aecom
	Peel
	i-Transport
26 June 2016: Planning and Strategy Working Group	BMBC (Development Management)
	BMBC (Planning Strategy)
	BMBC (Housing Strategy)
	Peel
	Turley
	Newington
3 August 2016: Site Visit	BMBC (Director of Place)
	BMBC (Development Management)
	BMBC (Highways)
	BMBC (Public Rights of Way)
	BMBC (Planning Strategy)
	BMBC (Tourism and Business)
	BMBC (Housing Strategy Unit)
	BMBC (Infrastructure and Drainage)
	Marketing Manchester
	Peel
	European Golf Design
	Leach Rhodes Walker

	LUC
	TEP
	i-Transport
8 August 2016: Archaeology	Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service
	Salford Archaeology
9 August 2016: Environment Working Group	BMBC (Development Management)
	BMBC (Trees & Woodland)
	BMBC (Public Rights of Way)
	BMBC (Infrastructure and Drainage)
	BMBC (Environmental Health)
	BMBC (Landscape Regeneration)
	BMBC (Design & Conservation)
	Peel
	LUC
	Salford Archaeology
	Turley
	TEP
	Miller Goodall
	Zerum
	Leach Rhodes Walker
17 August 2016: Transport Working Group	BMBC (Development Management)
	BMBC (Highways)
	Highways England
	Transport for Greater Manchester
	BMBC (Principal Environmental Health Officer)
	i-Transport
	Turley
	Miller Goodall
19 August 2016: Planning and Strategy Working Group	BMBC (Development Management)
	BMBC (Planning Strategy)
	BMBC (Capital Programme)

	Peel
	Turley
8 September 2016: Environment Working Group	BMBC (Development Management)
	BMBC (Trees & Woodland)
	BMBC (Landscape Regeneration)
	BMBC (Public Rights of Way)
	BMBC (Design & Conservation)
	Turley
	Peel
	TEP
	Salford Archaeology
	Peter de Figueiredo
	LUC
	Leach Rhodes Walker
22 September 2016: Transport Working Group	BMBC (Highways)
	BMBC (Environmental Health)
	Highways England
	Transport for Greater Manchester
	i-Transport
	Peel
	Turley
	Miller Goodall
	Persimmon
30 September 2016: Planning and Strategy Working Group	Croft Transport Solutions
	BMBC (Development Management)
	BMBC (Housing Strategy Unit)
	Peel
27 October 2016: Planning and Strategy Working Group	Turley
	BMBC (Principal Development Officer)
	BMBC Development Management)
	Peel



	Turley
08 November 2016: Transport Working Group	BMBC (Highways)
	BMBC (Development Management)
	Transport for Greater Manchester
	Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council
	BMBC (Environmental Health Officer)
	Peel
	Persimmon
	Turley
	i-Transport
	Miller Goodall
	Croft Transport Solutions
09 November 2016: Lancashire Gardens Trust	LGT
	Peel
	LUC
	Peter de Figueiredo
25 November 2016: Residential Design Code Meeting	BMBC (Development Management)
	BMBC (Environmental Health)
	BMBC (Capital Programme)
	Peel
	Turley
	Calder Peel
	LUC
25 November 2016: Ecological Briefing	GMEU
	Natural England
	Peel
	Turley
	TEP
29 November 2017: Public Right of Way Strategy	BMBC (Public Rights of Way)
	Bolton Ramblers Association
	Bolton HF Walking Club

	Peak & Northern FP Society
	Peel
	LUC
	Randall Thorp
19 December 2016: Ecology Site Meeting	GMEU
	TEP
6 January 2017: Ecology Scoping	GMEU
	TEP
16 January 2017: Environment Agency	Environment Agency
	Peel
	AECOM
18 January 2017: Heritage	BMBC (Development Management)
	BMBC (Design & Conservation)
	Peel
	Peter de Figueiredo
	LUC
	LEP
25 January 2017: Environment Working Group	BMBC (Development Management)
	BMBC (Landscape Regeneration)
	BMBC (Trees & Woodland)
	BMBC (Public Rights of Way)
	BMBC (Infrastructure and Drainage)
	BMBC (Design & Conservation)
	Peel
	Turley
	LRW
	LUC
	Calder Peel
	TEP
	European Golf Design
	Peter de Figueiredo
	Aecom

	i-Transport
31 January 2017: Lancashire Gardens Trust	LGT
	LUC
	LRW
29 March 2017: Viability	BMBC (Development Management)
	Peel
	Turley
	Cushman & Wakefield
31 March 2017: Ecology	GMEU
	BMBC (Development Management)
	BMBC (Trees & Woodland)
	TEP
	Turley
4 April 2017: Drainage	BMBC (Highways and Engineering)
	Aecom
7 April 2017: Arboriculture	BMBC (Trees & Woodland)
	TEP
	Turley
20 April 2017: Landscape	BMBC (Development Management)
	BMBC (Landscape Regeneration)
	BMBC (Public Rights of Way)
	LUC
	Peel
	Turley

## Appendix 5: The Ryder Cup: A Global ‘Mega Event’

This appendix discusses the context and requirements of the Ryder Cup tournament.

### A Global ‘Mega Event’

The Ryder Cup was originally conceived in the mid-1920s and first formally held in 1927. It is a biennial team golf event competed for between the US and Europe (originally the US and Great Britain). The cup is named after Samuel Ryder, an English businessman and golf promoter born in Lancashire, who sponsored the first event and donated the trophy.

The Ryder Cup is competed for over three days (following practice days) at alternate venues in the US and Europe. It was last held in Europe in 2014 at Gleneagles in Scotland and will return to Europe in 2018 and in 2022 at Paris Rome respectively. The event was last held in England in 2002. The event is jointly administered by the PGA of America and Ryder Cup Europe, the latter being a joint venture of the PGA European Tour, the PGA of Green Britain and Ireland, and the PGA of Europe.

Since its inception the Ryder Cup has grown dramatically and is now referred to as a ‘mega event’<sup>61</sup> – one of the greatest sporting tournaments in the world with true global appeal. This is illustrated by the statistics for the 2014 event:

- 45,000 spectators attended each day of the event, with more than 250,000 over the course of the week. This is significantly in excess of the total of 173,000 over eight days for the Open Golf Championship<sup>62</sup>;
- Over 60% of the general ticket holders came from outside the host nation of Scotland, with 96 different countries represented amongst the 250,000 attendees;
- Around 7,500 employed staff, marshals, volunteers, emergency service personnel and media worked at the event each day;
- Just under 17,000 people from 55 countries applied for the 1,800 volunteer spaces;
- Coverage of the event was conducted through 50 global broadcasters reaching more than 500 million homes across almost 200 territories;
- Through social media activity, it is estimated that the social media reach during the Ryder Cup week totalled more than three billion people.

The aspirations for future Ryder Cup tournaments are even greater as the interest in the event increases amongst spectators and sponsors. Ryder Cup Europe is now focusing on venues which are close to major cities and the infrastructure they offer (indicated by the selection of Paris and Rome) and envisages spectator numbers to grow to c.70,000 per day by 2026.

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<sup>61</sup> *Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation*, Department of Culture, Media and Sport (December 2015)

<sup>62</sup> Figure for the 2016 event.

The bidding process for the European venue for 2026 (explained below) has yet to commence proper, although the European Tour has given some consideration to the process and criteria. 2026 represents the next opportunity to secure the Ryder Cup tournament and it is this opportunity that Peel has focused on in developing the proposed development at Hulton Park.

## **The Bidding Process**

The European Ryder Cup venues are selected by Ryder Cup Europe. Only on two occasions have previous Ryder Cup tournaments taken place outside Great Britain – in Spain in 1997 and in Ireland in 2006. The selection process and criteria have historically not been clearly and formally defined, but Ryder Cup Europe introduced a formal bidding process with published selection criteria for the 2018 event and has since repeated that process for the 2022 event. Both of these events have been awarded to countries outside Great Britain – France in 2018 and Italy in 2022. It is unclear at this stage, since the process has not formally opened or otherwise formally been communicated, whether the same process and basis for selection will be maintained for the 2026 event. It is understood from discussions with the European Tour that the process may change again, but no further detail is yet available.

Under the process followed for the 2018 and 2022 Ryder Cup tournaments, all bids to host the event were required to be made through national Golf Federations, Golfing Unions or Central Government and only one bid per country was considered. Therefore, if the same process applies, in order to secure the 2026 Ryder Cup at Hulton Park, the commitment of those bodies will be needed to bid for England to host the tournament and Hulton Park will need to be selected as the proposed venue. Thereafter, the bid would be judged against Ryder Cup Europe's Key Bid Criteria. The criteria comprised the following for the 2022 selection process:

- (i) Demonstrable Government, Political, Institutional and Golfing Community support
- (ii) Commitment to the development of a world-class golf facility (new or existing) to host the Ryder Cup
- (iii) Provision of ancillary facilities, suitable access and infrastructure commensurate with the staging of an international sporting event, including proximity to a major international city
- (iv) Commercial opportunities available to the Ryder Cup
- (v) Contribution of the Bid Country to the development of golf, for example:
  - Legacy
  - Contribution to the professional game
  - Integration of golf within tourism and business communities
  - Development of levels of golf participation
  - Professional tournament golf at all levels
  - Contribution to The Ryder Cup, e.g. Player eligibility and participation

Selection therefore requires the widespread support (including of Government); the suitability and world-class quality of the proposed venue; the commercial opportunity (i.e. the profile and revenue that will be generated for Ryder Cup Europe); and the measures proposed to enhance the development of golf. The first and third aspects of this are not specific to the location or venue selected, but rather are driven by the commitments and financial support given by Government and the golfing federation/union, and crucially by the level of sponsorship that can be secured. The fourth aspect relating to the development of golf is also a national consideration, but can have an important local or venue-specific dimension. The second aspect (criteria ii and iii) is specific to the facility and the location of the facility.

Peel has employed the services of parties that have extensive experience in bidding for and realising Ryder Cup events. This includes:

- European Golf Design, the market-leading golf course architectural practice which designed the 2010 Ryder Cup venue at Celtic Manor and is remodelling the 2018 Paris venue. EGD has designed the golf course and proposed tournament staging at Hulton Park; and
- Brookes Sport, consultants to the European Tour and advisors to proposed Ryder Cup venues throughout Europe, such as the Spanish bid for the 2022 Ryder Cup. Brookes Sport has advised on the positioning of the Hulton Park proposal relative to the selection criteria.

With that experience and insight, and by direct reference to the anticipated bid criteria, Peel has formulated its proposals to give Hulton Park the best possible prospect of being selected as the 2026 venue and to be able to convey significant and lasting benefit.

Alongside, Peel has engaged with the European Tour throughout the course of the project to express its interest in hosting the Ryder Cup 2026 and to present its proposals as meeting the criteria. This has included the involvement of European Tour Properties in the preparation of the business case and review of the design proposals. Through this engagement it has been established that the process for awarding the Ryder Cup 2026 is likely to commence later in 2017 and be concluded through the course of 2018/19. No details of the programme have yet been confirmed. From the discussions to date with the European Tour, it is possible that the process will differ from that followed for the 2018 and 2022 tournaments.

The components of the proposal which have been considered critical to underpinning the prospects of securing the Ryder Cup at Hulton Park and conveying maximum benefit are:

- The location of Hulton Park, within the Greater Manchester conurbation and readily accessible to the motorway network and Manchester International Airport. Given the scale and international draw of the event, the bid criteria require venues to have excellent international accessibility and the infrastructure capable of accommodating the increasing number of spectators, support staff and media. Proximity to an international city is now an explicit expectation;
- A world-class golf course of sufficient length with 'returning nines'<sup>63</sup>, which provides a serious challenge to the elite golfer, has visual appeal and creates drama (by

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<sup>63</sup> The arrangement of an 18 hole golf course whereby the 9<sup>th</sup> hole (the half-way point) and 18<sup>th</sup> holes converge, usually in the location of the clubhouse or other facility.

encouraging risk and reward shot selection), and provides extensive spectator vantage points;

- High quality supporting golf facilities on site including a clubhouse, short course, driving range and practice area;
- A high-grade hotel facility on-site, which can host the two competing teams, their support staff and other VIPs;
- Adequate space and access arrangements to support the hosting of the event, including temporary VIP parking, bus terminus, grandstands, hospitality, retail concessions, and media compound;
- Government policy support to host mega events in the 2020's, including active assistance regarding the bid process and a commitment to underwrite the cost associated with hosting the event;
- The social, economic and environmental benefits of securing investment at the Hulton Park venue; and
- The track record, resources and expertise of Peel in delivering major investments and events in Greater Manchester, such as the Trafford Centre, MediaCityUK, EventCity and the City of Salford Stadium (AJ Bell Stadium) and that of local Greater Manchester partners in hosting major sporting events.

The formulation of and justification for the specific aspects of the golf resort at Hulton Park is discussed in Section and in the *Design and Access Statement*, and has been informed by a *Business Strategy* prepared by European Tour Properties which is provided at Appendix 6. Any dilution or reduction in the scale, function or quality of these facilities would impact upon the quality of the facility and the prospects of it being selected as the Ryder Cup venue through the competitive bidding process. The overall composition and quality of the proposed golf resort is therefore driven by the ambition to secure the Ryder Cup but, as is set out later in this Statement the consequent increased benefits associated with delivering this quality of facility will be significant.

## **Prospects and Timescales**

Securing the Ryder Cup event is a competitive process, with competitors across Europe likely to be vying for this opportunity given the scale of benefits that can be derived. However, it is considered that there is a good prospect of securing the tournament at Hulton Park for a number of reasons, which has given Peel the confidence to invest in the design and planning process such that Hulton Park can be positioned favourably.

England has not hosted the event since 2002. Wales, Scotland and Ireland have all hosted since then. 2018 and 2022 are being held in mainland Europe, in France and Italy respectively. 2026 will be the centenary celebration of Samuel Ryder's donation of the trophy and the hosting of the first formal tournament. Samuel Ryder came from North West England, a region which has a strong golf and heritage offer. It is apparent that an English bid will have merit, albeit there are numerous other considerations and a successful bid will almost certainly rely upon significant Government support.



Peel's intention is for the proposed development to provide the best possible prospects of success in the bid process. This has involved designing a venue that meets every expectation of the European Tour and Ryder Cup Europe, and working with key partners – such as England Golf, Government, and prospectively other public and private sector partners at the local and national level – to shape a competitive bid with Hulton Park as the proposed venue.

Certainty about the ability to deliver the venue and required facilities is essential if Hulton Park is to be considered and selected as the proposed English venue and then European Tour and Ryder Cup Europe's chosen venue. A critical component of that is a deliverable masterplan and scheme design with planning certainty.

This also drives the timescales. The specific timescales that the European Tour and Ryder Cup Europe will adopt in the bidding process for the 2026 event are yet to be established. However, using the 2022 bidding process as a guide, it can be expected that the invitation to bid will be issued by early 2018. The decision of the English golf federation and UK Government to prepare a bid for England and which venue to select in doing so would need to be made in advance of that. There is therefore an imperative to advance the planning certainty of the proposal as soon as possible in 2017.

Alongside the highest quality of design, an implementable masterplan and planning certainty, Peel will bring its commercial ability and track record in delivering transformational development projects to deliver the venue. As expanded upon elsewhere in this Statement, the scale of investment involved in delivering a facility of this standard is significant. The associated residential development will provide essential cross-funding to allow the proposed development to proceed, as explained elsewhere in this Statement.

## **Impact and Legacy: The Ryder Cup commitment**

Given its scale, profile and appeal, and the emphasis placed upon developing the game of golf in the selection process, hosting the Ryder Cup can have significant and lasting benefits for the host country and location. As with previous Ryder Cup events, such as the 2014 tournament at Gleneagles in Scotland, the years leading up to and immediately after the event will include extensive developmental work to maximise those benefits. This is referred to as the "Ryder Cup commitment" and, as outlined in the accompanying economic impact report prepared by Ekosgen, it will:

*"...include increased training, inward investment, and supply chain development work, as well as a number of tournament events to road test the new course..."*

In particular, the contribution of the bid country to the development of golf is a key area of consideration in the bid process and typically involves a contribution to the professional game and professional tournament at all levels. This requires a commitment to support a minimum of three professional events per annum for a period of 12 years, both preceding and succeeding the Ryder Cup itself. The rights to host the Ryder Cup 2026 is therefore likely to involve a Tournament Programme, with other smaller-scale European Tour events held at Hulton Park each year during both the build-up to 2026 and providing legacy benefits afterwards.

Other elements of the Ryder Cup commitment include the following:

- Sports Development Programme – to increase excellence, engagement and participation at all levels of the sport;
- Volunteer Recruitment and Training Programme – to recruit and train volunteers who can support major professional golfing tournaments, including the Ryder Cup itself;
- Apprenticeship Programme – to provide “jobs with training” to enable local residents, particular young people, to learn a profession and secure an occupation; and
- Business Development Programme – to increase the number of local firms and businesses involved in delivering the golf events; provide a successful showcase for food, drink, artisan and leisure industry businesses; increase the leisure and golf industry economy; and attract inward investment and tourist visitors to the area.

The scale of the benefits identified in relation to each of the above, as discussed in Section 7 of this Statement, are based on reasonable assumptions having regard to the benefits arising from previous Ryder Cup tournaments. In particular, economic and socio-cultural impact assessments<sup>64</sup> of the 2010 event at Celtic Manor in Wales and the 2014 event at Gleneagles in Scotland have evidenced the immediate and anticipated lasting effects of hosting those respective events – and the associated “commitment” programmes – for the immediate areas and wider countries. The effects extend to:

- Direct employment in the creation and hosting of the event;
- Direct spend by spectators and other attendees, in the venue, but also on their travel, accommodation, food and drink in the wider affected area;
- Consequent support for wider economic activity and employment in the affected area;
- Immediate boost to tourism as international visitors combine their visit with other activities and longer term boost as the profile of the host country / location as a visitor destination is increased;
- Opportunities afforded to local young people to act as volunteers and gain employability accreditation;
- Extensive media exposure to key tourism brands;
- Multiple golf events supported, with the associated positive economic and sporting benefits;
- Increased use of golf clubs in the host country during and around the time of the event and thereafter;
- Increased interest in taking up / increasing the frequency of participation in the game of golf;
- Introduction of school children to the game of golf, through focused, funded initiatives;

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<sup>64</sup> *The 2010 Ryder Cup, The Celtic Manor Resort, Economic Impact Assessment*, IFM (March 2011); *Gleneagles, Scotland 2014, The Economic Impact and Wider Benefits*, Sheffield Hallam University (August 2015)

- Sustainability outreach programmes; and
- Educational enhancement, including in tourism, hospitality and event management, through focused, funded initiatives.

The bespoke assessment undertaken for 2010 and 2014 events – the last to be held in the UK – show that the scale and reach of positive impacts and the lasting legacy that can be achieved from the hosting of the event are highly significant. This represents a very significant opportunity for the immediate locality, the borough of Bolton, the North West region and England as a whole. The prospective impacts of the development as a whole, assuming the Ryder Cup tournament is secured, is evaluated within the accompanying application documents and summarised in Section 7 of this Statement.

**Appendix 6: Hulton Park: Golf Business  
Strategy, prepared by  
European Tour Properties  
(March 2017)**

# Appendix 7: Assessment of proposed development impacts

This appendix assesses the proposed development against the relevant policies of the NPPF, the Development Plan, and other relevant material considerations, which are summarised at Section 9 of the Planning Statement. It does so in respect of each relevant topic area, aside from the following which are dealt with comprehensively in the main body of the Statement:

- Building a strong, competitive economy;
- Meeting housing needs;
- Achieving sustainable development; and
- Protecting Green Belt land.

Whilst the overall issue of conserving and enhancing the historic environment is dealt with in Section 6 of the Planning Statement, the appendix begins with the heritage impacts, to ensure a comprehensive consideration of the relevant policies in this regard. It is to be read alongside Section 6 of the Statement.

## Heritage

### Policy and Statutory Context

Section 12 of the NPPF considers the historic environment. The key policies therein which are relevant to the determination of the application is identified at Section 5 of this Statement and in the accompanying Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA), and includes those at paragraphs 126 to 134 of the NPPF.

Policy CG3 of the adopted CS sets out requirement to, inter alia, “*Conserve and enhance the heritage significance of heritage assets and heritage areas, recognising the importance of sites, areas and buildings of archaeological, historic, cultural and architectural interest and their settings...*”.

Given the presence of designated and listed heritage assets within the Site and the works proposed to them as part of the proposed development, it is necessary to consider relevant statutory provisions. This includes, in particular, sections 16 and 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

### Policy and Statutory Compliance

The paragraphs below summarise the conclusions of the accompanying HIA regarding the extent to which the proposed development accords with the relevant statutory and policy provisions against which it must be appraised.

#### ***Statutory provisions***

The Grade II listed Dovecote is retained and subject to restoration, as part of the wider restoration proposals outlined in the *Historic Structures: Condition/Repair Issues*. This will involve, inter alia, the repair of the roof structure, repointing of the brick work, repair and replacement of brickwork where necessary, and the fabrication and installation of an ornamental

gate. Moreover, the setting, which currently comprises modern farm buildings and structures associated with Home Farm, will be transformed with the Dovecote accommodated within a sensitively designed landscaped parking area associated with the hotel complex. The HIA concludes the designated asset will experience a major beneficial effect as a consequence of the proposed development.

The Grade II listed 791-793 Manchester Road building will not be directly affected by the proposed development given its location outside of the Site. It is located adjacent to the proposed Academy; however, the HIA concludes that the impact of the proposed development on its setting will be neutral.

As such, in respect of the statutory provisions the proposed development will preserve – and not harm – the listed buildings and their setting. Further, in respect of the Dovecote, there will be a major beneficial effect to its heritage significance.

### ***Policy provisions***

Chapter 10 of the HIA appraises the proposed development against the relevant policy provisions contained within the adopted Development Plan and the NPPF, in light of a detailed evaluation of its impact on the Registered Park overall, its component character areas, and the distinct designated and non-designated assets within and immediately adjacent to the Site. It is unnecessary to repeat those conclusions in full here, but in summary the HIA finds the following, including by reference to other assessments undertaken for the application.

Policy CG3 of the adopted CS is the key policy of the local Development Plan in respect of the impact of development on heritage assets. The HIA concludes that each of the seven listed objectives of the policy are respected and satisfied by the proposed development. In doing so, the HIA identifies, *inter alia*, that:

- the proposed development has been carefully designed to sustain the special character of the Park;
- the layout of the golf course has been designed to cause minimum change to the areas of landscape of highest value;
- the hotel complex will re-establish a focus for the historic designed landscape;
- the residential development is proposed in the least sensitive areas of the site (outside the Registered Park or in contained areas of it); and
- there will be “...*overwhelming benefits to heritage assets*...” within the Site and wider study area.

The proposed development is therefore found to be consistent with Policy CG3.

The HIA also provides an appraisal of the proposed development against all the relevant provisions of the NPPF from paragraph 128 onwards. In summary, this demonstrates that:

- The proposed development provides the Registered Park with a viable use consistent with its conservation, providing a means of sustaining and enhancing its significance. The protection and enhancement of the historic character of the Site has been central to

the formulation of the proposal, and the role it can play in contributing to its future economic vitality. The design of the proposal has directly reflected the value, historic significance and character of the Site. (NPPF paragraph 131);

- The significance of the designated heritage assets has been fully appraised and the appropriate weight afforded to their conservation in the formulation of the proposals and the assessment of effects. The listed Dovecote will be preserved and enhanced, whilst the listed property at 791-793 Manchester Road will be unaffected. The Registered Park will experience both positive and negative effects, but when considered overall – including the effects on assets within the RPG, such as the Dovecote – the cumulative effect is beneficial. ( NPPF paragraph 132);
- The assessment has not identified any cases of major adverse impacts to designated heritage assets. Thus demonstrating that the proposed development will not cause substantial harm to or loss of significance of a designated heritage asset. (NPPF paragraph 133);
- The proposed development is found to cause moderate (or less than substantial) harm to two of the identified character areas of the Registered Park. However, this must be balanced against the beneficial effects on other parts of the Registered Park and specific assets within it. The cumulative effects on designated heritage assets is found to be moderate / minor beneficial; hence less than substantial harm does not arise when the designated assets are considered as a whole. (NPPF paragraph 134);
- In respect of non-designated heritage assets, where the NPPF expects a balanced judgement to be applied when appraising effects, there would be an overall positive effect taking in to account the significance of each. Minor and negligible adverse effects would be experienced by some non-designated assets through harm or loss, for instance in the demolition of Hulton Cottage. However, the majority of the assets would experience neutral or beneficial effects, with a number experiencing a major beneficial effect. This includes, for instance, the restoration of the pleasure grounds and the two lakes in the centre of the Registered Park. The HIA also highlights the major contribution that the non-designated assets make to the significance of the Registered Park and that the cumulative net beneficial effects they will experience is important in that context. (NPPF paragraph 135);
- The significance and setting of heritage assets will be considerably enhanced and better revealed as a result of structural repairs, landscape restoration, improved management, managed public access and interpretation. (NPPF paragraph 137);
- Information will be gathered on the significance of assets through a programme of research, recording and evaluation, and will be actively shared, both through resources on-site and publication. (NPPF paragraph 141).

The proposed development is therefore found to be consistent with the provisions of the adopted development plan and the NPPF in respect of cultural heritage.



## Archaeology

### Policy Context

Section 12 of the NPPF considers the historic environment and states at paragraph 128 that, *inter alia*:

- Local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance;
- As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary; and
- Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

Policy CG3 of the adopted CS sets out requirement to, *inter alia*, “*Conserve and enhance the heritage significance of heritage assets and heritage areas, recognising the importance of sites, areas and buildings of archaeological, historic, cultural and architectural interest and their settings...*”.

### Policy Compliance

Archaeological assessments have been undertaken to identify the potential for below ground archaeological remains. In accordance with the NPPF's requirement for proportionate evidence, this has included both a desk-based assessment drawing upon documentary research and geophysical surveys within particular areas of the Site. The scope of the assessment work was agreed in advance with Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS). The findings, which are discussed in detail in the *Environmental Statement*, have informed the *Heritage Impact Assessment* in respect of the proposed development.

The assessment confirms that there are numerous non-designated below-ground heritage assets at the Site. The full details of these are confirmed within the *Environmental Statement*, including their specific location and quality of the assets. None are identified as having the equivalent significance of a scheduled monument. As such, none of the archaeological remains are considered to be of such significance that they would be suitable for designation.

The construction of the proposed development will result in the loss of below-ground archaeological remains. As such, the *Environmental Statement* confirms that mitigation measures will be implemented in advance of and during construction work. In particular, following the grant of planning permission, a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) will be prepared and agreed with GMAAS before each stage of construction. This will allow for a series of evaluation trenches, carried out in controlled archaeological conditions. This will enable the significance/value of the below-ground archaeological resource to be determined more accurately and enable an appropriate mitigation strategy to be formulated. Those areas that will require further investigation via evaluation trenching are detailed with the *Environmental Statement*.

The completion of the evaluation trenches will identify specific mitigation measures for each asset. The resulting mitigation measures will be provided to GMAAS and BMBC for their approval prior to works commencing on site. In the event of significant buried archaeological remains being encountered during the evaluation trenching, further archaeological investigation will be required. However, it is deemed as unlikely that any of the below-ground archaeological remains will be of sufficient importance to merit their preservation in-situ, and preservation 'by record' will be appropriate. A watching brief during earth-moving works associated with the construction programme can also be implemented. This will enable the potential for adverse effects of the proposed development on potential archaeological remains at the Site to be appropriately mitigated.

It is therefore concluded that there will be no significant effects on archaeological assets as a result of the proposed development during the construction and operation of the development, and during the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Ryder Cup. The proposed development is therefore compliant with the policies and requirements of the NPPF and Development Plan, and of other relevant material considerations.

## **Town Centre Impact**

### **Policy Context**

Paragraph 24 of the NPPF states, *inter alia*, that LPAs should apply a sequential test to planning applications for main town centre uses that are not in an existing centre and are not in accordance with an up-to-date Local Plan. They should require applications for main town centre uses to be located in town centres, then in edge of centre locations and only if suitable sites are not available should out of centre sites be considered. When considering edge of centre and out of centre proposals, preference should be given to accessible sites that are well connected to the town centre.

Paragraph 26 states that when assessing applications for town centre uses outside of an existing centre and which are not in accordance with an up-to-date Local Plan, LPAs should *"...require an impact assessment if the development is over a proportionate, locally set floorspace threshold (if there is no locally set threshold, the default threshold is 2,500 sqm). This should include assessment of:*

- *the impact of the proposal on existing, committed and planned public and private investment in a centre or centres in the catchment area of the proposal; and*
- *the impact of the proposal on town centre vitality and viability, including local consumer choice and trade in the town centre and wider area, up to five years from the time the application is made. For major schemes where the full impact will not be realised in five years, the impact should also be assessed up to ten years from the time the application is made....".*

The adopted CS does not establish a locally set threshold for an impact assessment, such that the default assessment of 2,500sqm applies.

## Policy Compliance: The Hotel Complex

### ***Sequential Approach***

The NPPF sets out a clear preference for town centre uses to be located within existing centres. This applies to all of the principal uses proposed within the hotel complex, including the hotel itself and the associated spa and conference facilities.

As set out above, the hotel complex is an integral part of the proposed development. Its inclusion:

- Is a direct response to the expected Ryder Cup bid criteria. The inclusion of the hotel complex is critical to maximise the prospects of a successful outcome for a bid to host the Ryder Cup at the Site; and
- Provides the means to reinstate the central design focus for the Registered Park and restore an active use to the surrounding landscaped pleasure gardens. These are critical aspects of achieving the heritage objectives of the project to restore the Park to its past glories and provide it with a lasting future. No other building required for the golf course could serve that purpose, and the hotel is needed in any event to support the golf course.

In this respect, the hotel complex is not 'footloose'. Its delivery in an off-site town centre or edge-of-centre location would not contribute positively to the standard of the venue and its attractiveness as a golf resort. Based on the bidding criteria and the characteristics of other successful venues, this could significantly reduce the prospects of the Site being selected as the venue for the 2026 Ryder Cup through the competitive bidding process and hinder the efforts to restore the Registered Park. As such, whilst alternative sites may be available in a town centre or edge-of-centre location, they would be unable to accommodate or deliver either the hotel complex or the golf resort as a whole. Such sites would not be suitable to meet the identified need. It is therefore considered that the requirements of a sequential approach are satisfied.

### ***Impact***

The hotel complex will provide up to 10,469sqm of net internal floorspace. There is therefore a requirement to consider its impact, in line with paragraph 26 of the NPPF, both on existing centres and planned investment in those centres. In this context, a *Feasibility Study* of the hotel complex has been prepared by an experienced market agent and is provided at Appendix 8. It provides a market assessment of the hotel complex, including its market position and expected trading performance. It identifies that, *inter alia*:

- The hotel offer within Hulton Park will comprise a "...differentiated product from existing businesses in the local market area...". It is proposed to provide 'upscale' hotel accommodation in a specialised and high quality resort setting. It will be:
  - The only Ryder Cup host venue resort in the North West; and
  - The only 'upscale' hotel in the local market area which offers a destination spa and conference venue.

It is therefore identified that Hulton Park will operate on a regional basis, drawing trade from across Greater Manchester, the North West region and beyond, rather than being reliant or impacting upon the local market area.

- There is a 'product gap' in the market area, with a "...*general shortage of upscale hotels and in particular golf and spa resorts...*". The market is instead dominated by three-star and limited service hotels, with accommodation rated four-star or above accounting for only 25% of the supply. Only three hotels which are targeting a similar market are located in the local market area – the Worsley Park Marriot, Bolton Whites and Bolton Holiday Inn. The hotel complex at Hulton Park will be differentiated from two of these existing hotels given that it offers a golf resort destination, whereas the Holiday Inn caters for visitors to Bolton town centre and Bolton Whites in the Macron Stadium is a more standardised and corporate product that caters for football visitors. The Worsley Park Marriot, also a Green Belt site, is the most similar hotel in the local market area.
- There are five identified hotel schemes in the pipeline. However, the majority of these are 'budget' or 'limited service' hotels. There are no similar schemes to Hulton Park in the pipeline. The only proposed new 'upscale' hotel in the local market area is the restoration of Haigh Hall, also a Green Belt site. However, this will deliver a relatively modest increase in hotel accommodation of just 30 bedrooms.
- The average cost of existing 'upscale' hotels in the market area is high. In particular, the cost of three-star accommodation is 52.4% lower than hotels rated four-stars or more. This clear differential in pricing – with 'upscale' hotels charging significantly higher costs – indicates strong demand in the market area for additional accommodation of this type.
- There are high occupancy rates in the local market area, with nearby 'upscale' hotels experiencing almost 90% room occupancy at weekends whilst also being busy on week days. Alongside the costs referred to above, this indicates strong demand in the market area for additional accommodation of this type.

The key determinants therefore on whether the hotel complex is likely to have a material impact on any existing centre are:

- That it will compete in a regional market place, given its scale, facilities and the fact it will be trade off both its golf resort setting and its association with the Ryder Cup tournament. Any trade diversion will therefore take place across a very wide catchment, meaning that it will be dispersed to a low level in any one locality;
- That it will operate in the 'upscale' part of the market, of which there is only one hotel in the local area which offers the golf context (The Worsley Marriot, which is out of centre) and only one hotel in the local area which is in the town centre (The Holiday Inn, Bolton). The town centre hotel, the Holiday Inn, is afforded policy protection, but has a distinctly different offer from the proposed Hulton Park development and much lower pricing strategy than envisaged for Hulton Park; the potential overlap in market appeal will be limited and hence, one can reasonably expect (together with the other factors cited here) the level of trade diversion will also be limited;

- The demand for 'upscale' accommodation is high, as reflected by capacity levels, and hence any trade diversion (which will be highly dispersed) will be at the margins and very unlikely to have a discernible impact.

In respect of planned investment, it is noted that additional hotels are planned in Bolton town centre, including:

- The redevelopment of the Palais de Danse/Ikon building to create a 150-bedroom hotel; and
- The development of the Trinity Gateway by BMBC at the junction of Trinity Street and Bradshawgate to deliver a mixed use scheme, which could include a hotel.

The former proposal secured planning permission in December 2016<sup>65</sup>. However, it is not an 'upscale' hotel and will therefore operate in a different market from the proposed hotel complex at Hulton Park. The latter proposal is at a very early stage, with the feasibility of the project and indeed its composition, including whether it comprises a hotel, uncertain. As such, it is not possible or necessary to appraise the particular effects on this prospective proposal. However, the points raised above in respect of the dispersed nature of trade draw and the distinctly different offer of a golf resort hotel will serve to ensure the feasibility of such a proposal is not undermined.

Given all of the above, and the expected growth of the tourism market over time, the *Feasibility Study* has concluded that there will be:

*"...very little displacement from other local business; [Hulton Park] will be a unique development of regional and national profile, drawing demand from a broad geographical base and from overseas..."*

The proposed hotel complex will not undermine the operation of any existing or planned developments in existing town centres, nor will it impact on the overall vitality or viability of those centres. It will enhance the quality of the visitor experience in Bolton, bringing in new domestic and international visitors who can boost the tourist economy in the local market area and support new jobs in this sector (see Section 7). It is anticipated that the proposed development will have positive economic impacts for other leisure and hotel facilities in the area. This is particularly the case given that the Ryder Cup is a global 'mega event' which will attract significant numbers of visitors to the area during the tournament and boost the tourist profile of the area on the world-stage over the longer-term. It is considered that the proposed development is directly consistent with local and national planning policy in this respect.

## **Policy Compliance: The Clubhouse and Academy**

### ***The Sequential Approach***

The provision of retail facilities in the clubhouse and Academy is a direct, local response to the need and demand arising from the operation of the golf resort. In particular:

- The 180sqm of retail floorspace in the clubhouse will provide essential items for golfers using the course (balls, tees, towels etc.) and opportunities for visitors to purchase souvenirs and other memorabilia, such as branded apparel and other keepsakes; and

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<sup>65</sup> Planning application reference: 97795/16

- The 433sqm (gross) retail floorspace in the Academy is proposed to comprise a trade specialist outlet which provides a range of golfing equipment, such as clubs and apparel. It will, in effect, enable visitors to the Academy to purchase the equipment they may need to support their use of the teaching and practice facilities.

There is therefore a direct relationship between the function and operation of the golf resort and the inclusion of the proposed retail outlets. The retail floorspace is required to support the operation of the golf resort, serving customers with a particular range of goods which are specific to the nature of the use of the clubhouse and Academy. The retail floorspace is entirely associated with the wider function of – and cannot therefore reasonably be disaggregated from – the golf resort.

It is self-evident that there will not be available, suitable sites within or on the edge of any designated centre that could serve this purpose (as they are not in immediacy of the golf resort) nor would be capable of accommodating the development as a whole. As such, the sequential test is satisfied.

### ***Impact***

The retail areas in the clubhouse and Academy will provide a combined total of 613sqm of floorspace. It therefore falls substantially before the 2,500sqm threshold, such that there is no requirement for an impact assessment.

Nevertheless, even if such a test were required, as highlighted above the proposed retail floorspace is entirely associated with and commensurate in scale to the golf resort, which negates or at least substantially reduces the prospect of any adverse impact on trading patterns or future investment. As the facilities will principally serve those using the golf resort facilities, which will be of international profile, it is expected they will draw trade from a very wide catchment, on a regional, national and international basis. This has two effects: it generates new spend not presently available in the locality and serves to spread over a very wide area the diversion of trade that would occur. This highly distributed trade diversion, coupled with the small scale of the proposals in any event, will ensure that no material impacts will be felt by any one retailer or any one centre. The provisions of the NPPF and the local development plan are therefore satisfied in respect of the retail elements of the golf resort.

## **Policy Compliance: Local Centre**

### ***Sequential Test***

The delivery of a Local Centre at the Site is a direct response to the need and demand arising from the new homes at the Site. It is an integral part of creating a sustainable mixed community within the Western Fields area. The scale of the uses proposed is commensurate with that of the residential development, such that it is of only neighbourhood significance. It is therefore considered that it would be inappropriate to undertake a sequential test given that the sole basis for including it within the proposed development is to serve the residential development at the Site.

Even if such a test were required, the Local Centre could not be situated within or on the edge of an existing Town Centre because to do so would result in it being located beyond a reasonable walking distance of the new homes, such that it would fail to satisfy the need and demand arising from the Site. There may well be sites in or on the edge of established centres capable of accommodating the whole or component parts of the Local Centre proposals, but

none would be suitable to accommodate the particular purpose and function of those proposals. The sequential test would therefore be satisfied.

### ***Impact***

The Local Centre will provide up to 1,382sqm of floorspace. It therefore falls substantially below the 2,500sqm threshold, such that there is no requirement for an impact assessment.

In any event, as set out above and in Section 8, the Local Centre is a direct response to the need and demand arising from the new homes at the Site and is of only neighbourhood significance. It is not expected that the amount of retail floorspace within the Local Centre would exceed 1,000sqm. The scale of turnover is therefore likely to be very limited, such that it would not have a material impact on the operation of other retail outlets in nearby town centres. This is particularly the case given that the turnover of the Local Centre would likely be underpinned by the residential development at the Site, rather than drawn from existing development in the area. In this regard, there will be a substantial increase in spending from the new homes at the Site, estimated to be c.£12.4m on convenience and comparison retail goods. The scale of any diversion of turnover from existing retail uses would therefore be very limited, and certainly not enough to undermine the vitality or viability of any existing town centres. As such, it is not anticipated that the Local Centre will result in any adverse impacts for existing retail facilities in the local area.

## **Sustainable Design**

### **Policy Context**

Paragraph 96 of the NPPF states that new development should:

- Comply with adopted Local Plan policies on local requirements for decentralised energy supply unless it can be demonstrated by the applicant, having regard to the type of development involved and its design, that this is not feasible or viable; and
- Take account of landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise energy consumption.

The adopted CS includes various policies regarding sustainability, including:

- Policy CG1 which states, *inter alia*, that BMBC will work towards minimising energy requirements, improving energy efficiency, lessening the reliance on fossil fuel-based energy and reducing carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions;
- Policy CG2 which states, *inter alia*, that:
  - All development proposals contribute to the delivery of sustainable development, being located and designed so as to mitigate any adverse effects of the development and adapt to climate change by incorporating high standards of sustainable design and construction principles;
  - Subject to viability, developments of 5 or more dwellings or 500sqm of non-residential uses shall a) achieve Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes or the “very good” BREEAM rating, b) incorporate appropriate



decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy, and c) demonstrate the sustainable management of surface water run-off from developments;

- Subject to viability, Developments of 5 or more dwellings or 500sqm of non-residential uses shall a) achieve the minimum targets for carbon reduction in the AGMA Decentralised Energy Study and b) connect to existing or planned/potential decentralised and/or power schemes, where appropriate.
- Policy CG3 states that BMBC and its partners will encourage the incorporation of design measures into new developments that allow adaptation and resilience to the impacts of climate change and extreme weather events and also to reduce the threat of fuel poverty, through the careful selection of aspect, layout and massing, and by making buildings increasingly energy efficient.

The Council's *General Design SPD* (June 2015) also sets out general advice on designing new development proposals. It covers the policies within the CS in more detail, including character and sense of place, legibility, well designed buildings, adaptability and future maintenance, community safety and inclusion, ease of movement and quality of public realm. It sets out standards for the distances between dwellings, balconies, amenity spaces, provision for waste and recycling storage.

The *Sustainable Design & Construction SPD* (2016) sets out guidance in relation to sustainability during the construction and operations stages of development. It advises that in order to minimise waste, developers should specify sustainable sourced materials where possible. It also states that development proposals for residential development over 5 dwellings should be made ready to connect to the network for district heating schemes, where they fall within the catchment of existing or planning approved district heat networks. The SPD sets out that development proposals greater than 500m<sup>2</sup> must reach BREEAM 'very good' standard.

### **Policy Compliance**

The sustainability of the proposed development has been assessed by:

- A *Sustainability Blueprint* of the golf resort, which has been prepared by the Golf Environment Organisation (GEO). The Blueprint considers the proposed development in accordance with the OnCourse Developments programme, which represents the highest industry standards of sustainable golf developments; and
- A *BREEAM Communities Pre-Assessment* which identifies that key buildings within the golf resort, such as the hotel complex, could achieve an 'excellent' rating and are targeting a 'very good' rating as a minimum.

The above assessments are submitted alongside the planning application as part of the overall *BREEAM and Sustainability report*. They demonstrate that the proposed development at Hulton Park will comprise sustainable design which will conserve and enhance the natural environment, use resources efficiently and support health and well-being of local residents. In particular, the proposed development:

- Encourages reduced reliance on golf course vehicles with walkable terrain, frequent stopping places for players, and regular maintenance of footpaths around the golf resort;

- Will use hybrid and electric on-site vehicles to minimise carbon emissions;
- Has sought to reduce 'artificial' habitats such as fairways and bunkers, instead encouraging the use of local and native species;
- Seeks to recycle resources. For example, surface water run-off will be captured and used to irrigate the golf course; and
- Encourages low energy, passive design and 'low or zero carbon' (LZC) technology in key buildings. For example, buildings within the golf resort are orientated to maximise solar gain in order to minimise energy consumption.

The proposed development does not currently include provision for decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy provision. The viability appraisal submitted to BMBC in respect of the proposed development demonstrates that the value of the residential development – without provision for such energy generation – is insufficient to provide the necessary cross-funding to deliver the golf resort. The inclusion of energy generation would increase development costs, which would render the proposed development unviable. The proposed development does not therefore include provision for energy generation. Nevertheless, it is in accordance with the policies of the adopted CS in this respect given that they make allowance for viability matters.

Energy efficiency is a key focus for the proposed development. A *BREEAM and Sustainability* report is submitted alongside the planning application. It draws upon the *Sustainability Blueprint* and *BREEAM Communities Pre-Assessment* to summarise the overall performance of the proposed development. It identifies that "...*Hulton Park aims to meet the highest standards of Sustainable Performance...*" with key buildings in the golf resort targeting a 'very good' BREEAM rating as a minimum. It is therefore considered that the proposed development accords with the policies of the NPPF and the Development Plan, and with other relevant material considerations, in this respect.

## **Transport and Access**

### **Policy Context**

Paragraph 32 of the NPPF requires that all developments which generate significant amounts of movement are supported by a Transport Statement or Transport Assessment. Plans and decisions should take account of whether:

- Opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up depending on the nature and location of the site, to reduce the need for major transport infrastructure;
- Safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people; and
- Improvements can be undertaken within the transport network that cost effectively limits the significant impacts of the development. Development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.

Similarly, paragraph 36 of the NPPF requires developments which generate significant amount of movement to provide a Travel Plan.

Policy P5 of the adopted CS ensures that developments consider different types of transport, giving priority to pedestrians, cyclists and public transport over motorised vehicles. It also encourages good design of development which will enable accessibility by public transport, servicing arrangements, parking to be in accordance with parking standards, and the preparation of a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan for major trip generating developments. Policy S1 promotes road safety within the design of new development. Guidance regarding transport and access matters is provided within BMBC's *Accessibility, Transport and Road Safety SPD* (October 2013).

The *Accessibility, Transport and Road Safety SPD* (2013) echoes the vehicular and cycle parking standards set out at Appendix 3 of the CS. It also states BMBC may require a contribution from new development to improve access to the cycle network. The Annex of the SPD also sets out policy for agreements under s278 of the Highways Act.

### **Policy Compliance**

A comprehensive *Transport Assessment* (TA) and two *Travel Plans* – one each in respect of the residential development and the golf resort – have been prepared by i-Transport and are submitted alongside the planning application. They have informed the preparation of the *Environmental Statement* (Chapter 11).

The points of highway access to the proposed development are described in Section 4 of the Planning Statement. Each proposed access has been the subject of a road safety audit and vehicle tracking, which has demonstrated that each is appropriately designed and will achieve a satisfactory level of safety.

The TA has assessed the baseline conditions of the highway network within the vicinity of the Site, including the traffic using Junction 5 of the M61 Motorway. Whilst the highway network is operating within capacity, it is acknowledged that significant levels of congestion can be experienced by local residents during peak hours. This congestion is focussed on Chequerbent roundabout to the west of the Site, which in the AM peak handles a significant amount of traffic associated with commuters travelling through Westhoughton from areas to the south of the town towards the M61 motorway to the north (and vice versa in the PM peak). The delivery of additional residential development in the local area therefore needs to be accompanied by new and enhanced transport infrastructure to ensure that any adverse impacts are satisfactorily mitigated.

In this context, the TA proposes various enhancements to the local highway network, including:

- A new link road to the west of the Site, between Platt Lane and Chequerbent roundabout. It is comprised of a single carriageway road with footpaths along both sides and has an estimated construction cost of approximately £2.8m. It will enable the provision of an access to the Western Fields area of residential development, whilst providing additional road capacity in the local highway network; and
- Various other off-site improvements to the local highway network, including:
  - Adding a third lane on the southbound carriageway of the A58 Snydale Way where it adjoins Chequerbent roundabout;

- Adding a third lane on the northbound carriageway of the A58 Snydale Way where it adjoins Junction 4 of the M61 motorway; and
- The extension of the two lane carriageway on the A6 both immediately to the west and to the east of Four Lane Ends.

The above enhancements and the link road in particular will have a material and positive impact for traffic conditions in the local area. The link road will spread the traffic accessing the Chequerbent roundabout on to an additional arm of that junction, diverting it on to the link road and away from the A58 Park Lane and A6 Manchester Road. This will enhance the capacity of the local network, thereby reducing congestion. In particular, the TA identifies that the current average delay across the Chequerbent roundabout is 207 seconds; this delay will reduce to 9 seconds following the delivery of the proposed development and the associated improvements to the local highway network. It is therefore clear that the proposed development will not only mitigate its adverse impacts on the local highway network, but will deliver significant net enhancements to congestion which will benefit the general public. The approach to the delivery of the link road – or a financial contribution of commensurate value towards an alternative wider bypass proposal – is discussed in Section 4 of the Planning Statement and will be secured by the s106 Agreement.

Section 8 of the Planning Statement and the *Transport Assessment* discuss the accessibility of the Site for sustainable – i.e. non-car modes – of transport. It is demonstrated that, *inter alia*, the Site is situated in close proximity to existing bus routes. However, given the scale of the proposed residential development it is noted that some of the proposed dwellings are somewhat remote from existing bus stops. As such, local public transport infrastructure will be subject to service enhancements to provide opportunities for sustainable connectivity. These are discussed in the accompanying *Transport Assessment*.

The *Travel Plans* prepared in respect of the residential development and golf resort will seek to encourage sustainable transport. In particular:

- In relation to the residential development, a range of measures will be implemented including the appointment of a travel plan co-ordinator, personalised travel planning sessions for residents, walking and cycling initiatives, new bus routes and accessible bus stops and promotion of car sharing.
- In relation to the golf resort, measures will include the appointment of a travel plan co-ordinator, personalised travel planning sessions, a website outlining sustainable travel options and links to journey planning websites, and promotion of sustainable travel and zero travel options (e.g. working at home) for staff.

Realistic Travel Plan targets will be set for both the residential development and golf resort, and an action plan with penalties will be drafted in the event that targets are not met which will be provided through a mitigation budget of £45,000 and £15,000 respectively.

Overall, the TA concludes that the impacts of the development on the local highway network will not be severe; rather, they will be beneficial, delivering a significant improvement in the level of congestion experienced at Chequerbent roundabout. It is therefore concluded that the proposed development is acceptable in respect of transport and access matters, and fully accords with the policies of the NPPF and Development Plan in this respect.

The hosting of golf tournaments could attract significant numbers of visitors to the golf resort. A bespoke transport strategy will be required for such events involving, for example, the use of Park & Ride facilities and temporary measures to control traffic movements in the vicinity of the Site. An *Interim Event and Travel Management Plan* is submitted alongside the planning application. It identifies the key issues which need to be considered prior to the staging of a tournament at the golf resort and establishes parameters for some of those issues. It is proposed that the preparation of a detailed Event and Travel Management Plan, prepared with relevant local stakeholders and based on the issues and parameters in the IEMP – will be secured via an appropriately worded condition on the planning permission.

It is therefore considered that the proposed development accords with the policies of the NPPF and the Development Plan, and of other relevant material considerations, in this respect.

## **Landscape and Visual Impact**

### **Policy Context**

Paragraph 109 of the NPPF states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment, including by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes. Paragraph 131 also highlights that local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. Paragraph 81 states that local planning authorities should seek to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt, including through the retention and enhancement of valued landscapes and visual amenity.

Policy CG1 of the adopted CS seeks to safeguard and enhance the rural areas of the Borough from development that would adversely affect, inter alia, its landscape character.

### **Policy Compliance**

A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been undertaken by LUC. It has informed the preparation of and is submitted as part of the accompanying *Environmental Statement* (Chapter 7). It assesses:

- the likely significant effects of the proposed development on the landscape character, including the character of the Registered Park and wider landscape; and
- the likely significant effects of the proposed development on the visual amenity of people

BMBC's *Landscape Character Appraisal*<sup>66</sup> (LCA) identifies Hulton Park as a site of particular interest. It is acknowledged that the Site is significant given its heritage and landscape character but, as discussed in Section 3, it has been in decline for a number of years. The LVIA has been prepared cognisant of the *Conservation Plan* (CP) for Hulton Park, which is submitted alongside the planning application and which has provided a detailed analysis of the landscape at the Registered Park. It identifies that it can be divided into a number of distinct character areas which have formed the basis of the assessment.

The LVIA notes that the Site is well defined by existing mature landscaping. Its undulating topography and highly wooded character limit views into the Site from the surrounding landscape, albeit there are opportunities to gain views of it, for example from the former

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<sup>66</sup> A *Landscape Character Appraisal of Bolton*, Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council (October 2001)

entrance gate to the Registered Park on Newbrook Road and from various Public Rights of Way.

The LVIA concludes that the proposed development will have a combination of both adverse and beneficial impact on landscape character. In particular:

- Significant adverse impacts will result from the proposed residential development areas, given the current greenfield and open nature of those areas, some of which are located within the Registered Park; and
- Beneficial impacts will arise from the restoration of some areas of the landscape within the Site, such as the pleasure grounds, woodland plantations and water bodies such as the Mill Dam Lake.

Adverse impacts will also arise during the construction of the proposed development. These effects are, however, temporary and unavoidable given the nature of construction activity. Overall, in respect of landscape character the LVIA concludes that whilst the proposed development will result in adverse impacts on some areas of the Site, those impacts are well contained and the effect on the wider LCA will not be significant.

In respect of visual impact, the LVIA concludes that the proposed development will result in significant adverse impacts on various visual receptors around the Site. This is particularly the case for existing properties which are located in close proximity to the Site, such as those along the A6 to the north of the Registered Park which will experience a change in outlook. For example, six properties located on the north side of the A6 will experience a loss of open views to the north as a result of the development of the Academy. Whilst those impacts are considered to be adverse, they are not considered to be unacceptable given that in planning terms there is no right to a view. Moreover, the LVIA has identified that none of the changes in visual outlook will be so overbearing or dominating as to result in an unacceptable effect on living conditions, such as in respect of privacy or other amenity considerations. Moreover, adverse impacts on some visual receptors will also be offset to an extent by beneficial impacts to others; for example, people travelling along Newbrook Road will experience positive impacts as a result of the restored condition of the entrance to the Registered Park and additional tree planting.

In conclusion, the impacts of the proposed development on landscape character will be contained and the effect on the wider area will not be significant. The proposed development will have significant adverse impacts on various visual receptors, but not of those impacts will have an unacceptable effect on living conditions of nearby residential properties, such as in respect of privacy or other amenity considerations. The proposed development therefore fully accords with the policies of the NPPF and Development Plan, and of other relevant material considerations, in this respect.

## **Ecology**

### **Policy Context**

Paragraph 118 of the NPPF states that when determining planning applications, local planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity by applying the following principles:

- If significant harm resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;
- Opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around development should be encouraged; and
- Planning permission should be refused for development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats, including ancient woodland and the loss of aged or veteran trees found outside ancient woodland, unless the need for, and benefits of, the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss.

Policy CG1 of the adopted CS states that BMBC and its partners will:

- Safeguard and enhance the rural areas of the borough from development that would adversely affect its biodiversity.
- Safeguard and enhance biodiversity in the borough by protecting sites of urban biodiversity including trees, woodland and hedgerows from adverse development, and improving the quality and interconnectivity of wildlife corridors and habitats.

### **Policy Compliance**

A range of comprehensive assessments of the Site's biodiversity have been undertaken by The Environment Partnership (TEP) and are submitted alongside the planning application. These include the following:

- Desk-based Ecology Assessment
- Phase 1 Habitat Survey
- Breeding Bird Survey
- Invertebrate Assessment
- Great Crested Newt Survey
- Bat Surveys, including in respect of roosts, building inspection, hibernation and activity
- Bat Inspection Surveys
- Mycology (Fungi) Report

The findings of the above and other assessments have informed the preparation of the accompanying *Environmental Statement* (Chapter 10) and pre-application discussions with the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU) and Natural England.

The assessments have identified a range of ecological constraints at the Site. These include, *inter alia*, the following:

- Several Sites of Biological Importance (SBI's) which comprise most of the woodland areas, including Mill Dam Wood, New Park Wood, Carr Brook Mere and Gorse Wood.

The Gorse Wood SBI is identified as 'Grade A' and is therefore valued at County level, whilst the remaining SBI's are Grade B and valued at Local level;

- A Local Nature Reserve (LNR) is located in the area around the former Pretoria Pit towards the south of the Site. It comprises part of New Park Wood and includes woodland and other associated habitats. It is valued at County level;
- A wide range of habitats of various types and values, including:
  - Extensive areas of mature, broadleaved, semi-natural woodland. Much of the woodland within the Registered Park is dominated by non-native rhododendron;
  - Approximately 6km of hedgerows;
  - Extensive areas of open improved and semi-improved grassland, with smaller areas of semi-improved grassland and marshy grassland;
  - An area of Ancient Woodland is located within the New Park Wood towards the south of the Site. It is comprised of mature broadleaved woodland with extensive rhododendron understory. It is valued at Local level; and
  - Numerous water bodies, including 33 ponds, approximately 26 ephemeral waterbodies (depending on the season) and the Mill Dam Stream.
- A wide range of species of various types and values. In particular:
  - Bat roosts in woodland areas and existing buildings, with areas of woodland providing high quality activity corridors for foraging;
  - Great Crested Newts and Common Toads have been identified in eight of the ponds across the Site;
  - A barn owl roost at the Site and within its immediate vicinity have been identified, with the open grassland areas providing good foraging opportunities;
  - Breeding birds are present at the Site, particularly those which favour woodland and woodland edge habitats; and
  - There is the potential for badgers to range across the Site, albeit no setts have been identified within it.

The proposed development will result in some disruption to existing habitats at the Site, particularly during the construction phase. For example, the creation of the golf course requires the re-grading of land which will disturb grassland habitats across the Site. Hedgerow and tree removal and building demolition is also necessary to facilitate the development. This is particularly the case towards the south of the Site, where removal of approximately 1.4ha of woodland within the Mill Dam Wood SBI is necessary to enable the creation of the 13<sup>th</sup> hole fairway, including the required bridge crossing. Some adverse impacts on flora and fauna are therefore inevitable, particularly in the short-term as a result of construction.



However, in line with Policy CG1 of the adopted CS, a range of mitigation measures will be implemented which seek to enhance the biodiversity value of the Site over the long-term. These measures have been identified in consultation with the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU) and Natural England. In particular:

- Hedgerow and woodland planting, including in relation to the SBIs, will mitigate for losses during the construction of the proposed development;
- The provision of alternate species roosts for bats and barn owls, and the creation of new ponds for Great Crested Newts and Common Toads which will enhance the species' conservation status as required by the Natural England license;
- Landscape planting which:
  - Enhances the habitat quality arising from the areas of far rough and conservation grasslands to be created on the golf course;
  - Optimises strategic habitat connectivity on the Site and to the wider landscape. For example, where the fragmentation of the Mill Dam Wood is necessary to enable the creation of the golf course, habitat connectivity is provided through appropriate species planting, such that the potential for adverse impacts is minimised;
- A programme of habitat enhancement and management of the woodlands will be implemented, involving the removal of non-native invasive plant species, such as rhododendrons; and
- Sensitive design of each component of the development. For example, the provision of external lighting has been minimised. Where such lighting is required it takes the form of, for example, low-level lighting bollards rather than standard lamps. Light spill is therefore minimised to limit disturbance to the activity and foraging patterns of species such as bats and barn owls.

The biodiversity impact of the proposed development has been carefully assessed by Environment Bank, using the DEFRA pilot methodology for calculating habitat value before and after development proposals. The assessment identifies that the proposed development will have a net positive residual impact on the Site. It will therefore enhance biodiversity at the Site and a programme of management and maintenance will ensure that this enhanced value is safeguarded over the long-term. The proposed development therefore fully accords with the policies of the NPPF and Development Plan, and of other relevant material considerations, in this respect.

## **Arboriculture**

### **Policy Context**

Paragraph 109 of the NPPF states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment, including by minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains where possible. Paragraph 118 states that planning permission should be refused for development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats, including ancient

woodland and the loss of aged or veteran trees found outside ancient woodland, unless the need for, and benefits of, the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss.

Policy CG1 of the adopted CS seeks to safeguard rural areas of the borough where development would adversely impact upon biodiversity including trees, woodland and hedgerows.

### **Policy Compliance**

An *Arboricultural Impact Assessment* (AIA) has been prepared by The Environment Partnership (TEP). It has informed the preparation of and is submitted alongside the accompanying *Environmental Statement* (Chapter 10). It identifies the arboricultural constraints at the Site and assesses the impact of the proposed development. The assessment has been undertaken in accordance with British Standard 5837:2012<sup>67</sup> *Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations*.

The Site is estimated to contain approximately 13,000 trees. These were sub-divided for assessment into trees, groups, woodland and hedges according to common characteristics. 649 individual trees, 337 groups of trees, 49 woodland areas and 89 hedges were recorded. Of the 1,124 surveyed features, 662 were in good condition, 394 were in fair condition, 54 were in poor condition, 11 were dead and three were veteran. It is therefore clear that the Site contains a significant tree population, with approximately 97ha of tree canopy principally in woodland compartments and complemented by specimen trees and hedgerows.

There are a range of arboricultural designations at or in close proximity to the Site. This includes seven Tree Preservation Orders. New Park Wood at the south of the Site is designated as an ancient semi-natural woodland and many of the other woodland areas are designated as a Site of Biological Interest (SBI) and/or as Deciduous Woodland Habitat of Principal Importance as described by the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2014). The Site is also designated as Wood Pasture and Parkland Habitat of Principal Importance, albeit the AIA and ecology surveys have identified that many of the characteristics associated with Wood Pasture are absent.

The AIA identifies that the woodland and specimen trees face challenges arising from a lack of management. Whilst there is substantial remaining arboricultural quality and value, action is required to halt and reverse a deterioration in the baseline condition. In particular, invasive species are widespread within the woodland, notably comprising rhododendron and Himalayan balsam. There are also occasional strands of Japanese knotweed. Intensive grazing, localised poaching and waterlogging, and a lack of new planting has led to a decline in the quality and longevity of many of the specimen parkland trees. Despite these issues, the arboriculture at the Site is identified as being high quality in the AIA, reflecting the good woodland connectivity, tree maturity and the landscape and habitat function of the woodland.

The proposed development requires some tree removal, principally in relation to the creation of the championship-grade golf course and the golf resort buildings. Clearance around the location of the former Hulton Hall and the reinstatement of the adjacent pleasure grounds accounts for a large proportion of the removals. However, some tree clearance is also required at other locations within the Site and is necessary to achieve the required golf course dimensions. In particular, a relatively significant number of trees are proposed to be removed at the south-east

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<sup>67</sup> *Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations* (April 2012)

of the Registered Park at the Mill Dam Stream, both to enable the golf course to play across the stream and to enable the construction of a bridge crossing. This is necessary to enable the golf course to achieve the required length and 'returning nines' approach to play. Smaller areas and individual tree removal is also proposed to enable level changes, access routes, engineering works and other layout elements.

The AIA has assessed the effects of the tree removal, using a points-based system according to tree quality (as defined by British Standard 5837). Under this system, the proposed tree removals have been scored according to the quality of the tree, group or woodland, with those in higher categories (A and B) having a greater weight than those in the lower categories (C and U). This system has been used to generate adjusted totals to better reflect the nature of the proposed tree removal and to underpin the general ambition to prioritise the retention of higher quality features. The adjusted scores have been used to inform the design and scope of mitigation planting that is included within the proposed development to offset the loss of existing trees. According to the methodology presented:

- high quality (Category A) trees would be replaced at a rate of 4:1 for trees and 2:1 by area for groups and woodland;
- moderate value (Category B) trees would be replaced at a rate of 2:1 for trees and 1.5:1 by area for woodland;
- low value (Category C and U) features would be replaced on a 1:1 basis; and
- Hedge (No Category) features would be replaced on a 1.5:1 basis.

The amount of tree and hedgerow planting within the proposed development is consistent with the objective of no net loss of tree cover and quality. Planting in areas for which outline planning permission is sought would be secured via a condition on the planning permission. The key figures are presented in the table below.

**Table 7.1 Summary of arboricultural effects of the proposed development**

	Removal	Proposed planting		Net change	Minimum planting to be proposed in outline areas at reserved matters stage
		In the golf resort	In the residential areas		
Tree	236	685	2,742	+3,191	2,600
Woodland	96,342sqm	97,444sqm	9,744sqm	+10,846sqm	9,744sqm
Hedgerow	2,908m	488m	4,150m	+1,730m	3,900m

*Source: Arboricultural Impact Assessment*

On the basis of the tree removal and tree planting that is assessed by the AIA, the proposed development will deliver a net gain in canopy cover at the Site within the construction period. The new planting will also deliver a qualitative benefit, in terms of connecting currently fragmented areas of woodland. For example:

- The western boundary of the Registered Park will be connected with blocks of woodland to infill existing gaps;
- New woodland would be planted to improve connectivity between New Park Wood and Mill Dam Wood; and
- The eastern boundary of the Registered Park will be strengthened and augmented to improve continuity of tree canopy between New Park Wood, The Firs and Park Pits Wood.

Overall the proposed development will have adverse impacts on the arboricultural quality of the Site in the short and medium term, as a result of the reduction in average tree maturity. However, woodland management will have an immediate positive effect and will halt the current decline in the remaining woodland. The proposed mitigation planting would give rise to a net increase in canopy cover and eventually arboricultural quality as new trees develop and as new woodland connectivity develops functionality. The AIA therefore concludes on balance that the proposed development will have a net positive effect on arboriculture. It therefore fully accords with the policies of the NPPF and Development Plan, and of other relevant material considerations, in this respect.

## **Water management**

### **Policy Context**

The NPPF includes various policies and requirements in respect of the flood risk associated with new development. In particular:

- Paragraph 100 states that development should be directed away from areas at highest risk of flooding.
- Paragraph 103 states that when determining planning applications local planning authorities should ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere and that development is appropriately flood resilient and resistant, including safe access and escape routes where required.

Policy CG1 of the adopted CS sets out that BMBC and its partners will reduce the risk of flooding in Bolton and other areas downstream by minimising water run-off from new development and ensuring a sequential approach is followed, concentrating new development in areas of lowest flood risk. Policy CG4 also states that development should not, *inter alia*, cause detrimental impacts upon water.

### **Policy Compliance**

A *Flood Risk Assessment* (FRA) regarding the Site and Drainage Strategy for the proposed development have been prepared by AECOM. These assessments have informed and are provided alongside the accompanying *Environmental Statement* (Chapter 15).

The FRA identifies that:

- The Environment Agency online flood maps indicate that the majority of the Site lies within Flood Zone 1 (i.e. low probability of fluvial and tidal flooding). However, an area of the land at the south east of the Site is identified as being located within Flood Zones 2

and 3; this is associated with the Mill Dam stream and lake. The land is located in a small valley and is not proposed for development, with the exception of the construction of a bridge which will enable access between the golf holes to the north and south. It is therefore of limited relevance to the proposed development.

- The Environment Agency Risk of Flooding from Surface Water map shows that the majority of the site is considered to be at 'very low' risk of flooding from surface water (i.e. it has a less than a 1 in 1000 (0.1%) probability of flooding in any given year). However, areas of increased risk – varying between 'low' and 'high' risk – are located predominantly along the course of Mill Dam Stream and associated tributaries, Carr Brook in the south eastern corner of the Site and with a number of small ponds in both the northern and southern parcels of land. The proposed development has been designed to direct development away from these locations.
- The FRA confirms that some surface water flooding occurs at the Site when rainwater does not drain away through the normal drainage systems or soak into the ground, but instead lies on or flows over the ground. This issue has been addressed by the proposed Drainage Strategy for the Site.

A comprehensive *Drainage Strategy* has been prepared for the proposed development, involving a combination of ponds, wetlands and below ground attenuation tanks. As noted in Section 4 of the Planning Statement, the golf course encompasses features such as ponds and wetlands which add to the drama and aesthetics of the playing and spectator experience; these water features also function as part of the drainage network for the Site, providing a Sustainable Urban Drainage Scheme (SUDS) which is integrated with the design of the proposed development. The water features are complemented by below ground attenuation tanks associated with key buildings in the golf resort, including the hotel complex and clubhouse in particular, which will provide additional surface water storage capacity. Surface water will be discharged from the Site at the current greenfield rate with an allowance for climate change, thereby ensuring that the proposed development will not result in a higher rate of discharge which might increase the risk of flooding either at the Site or downstream. Surface water will be discharged via the existing watercourses at the Site, such as the Mill Dam Stream or Carr Brook.

The proposed development includes the construction of an irrigation reservoir to the north west of the Back o' th' Lawn wood in the centre of the Site. This will enable the storage of water which is used to irrigate the golf course during the warmer months of the year. The reservoir will be fed by the attenuation tank associated with the hotel complex, thereby enabling surface water drainage to be recycled for irrigation purposes.

Foul water will be discharged to the existing sewer network and has been agreed with United Utilities. Gravity connections are proposed wherever possible, but the use of pumping stations is required in some locations.

The proposed development is therefore at low risk of flooding and will not exacerbate the risk of flooding in the surrounding local area. It therefore accords with the policies of the NPPF and the Development Plan, and of other relevant material considerations.

## Noise

### Policy Context

The NPPF considers the noise impacts of development and impacts upon health and quality of life (Paragraph 123). It states that planning policies and decisions should aim to:

- avoid noise from giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life as a result of new development;
- mitigate and reduce to a minimum other adverse impacts on health and quality of life arising from noise from new development, including through the use of conditions;
- recognise that development will often create some noise and existing businesses wanting to develop in continuance of their business should not have unreasonable restrictions put on them because of changes in nearby land uses since they were established; and
- identify and protect areas of tranquillity which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason.

The *Explanatory Note to the Noise Policy Statement for England*<sup>68</sup> provides further guidance regarding the meaning of “adverse” impacts in respect of noise.

Policy CG4 of the adopted CS also considers noise and amenity impacts arising from development. It states that:

- New development must be compatible with surrounding land uses and occupiers, protecting amenity, privacy, safety and security.
- Development should not generate unacceptable nuisance, odours, fumes, noise or light pollution, nor cause detrimental impacts upon water, ground or air quality.

### Policy Compliance

A *Noise Impact Assessment* has been prepared by Miller Goodall in respect of the proposed development and is provided as part of the *Environmental Statement* (Chapter 13). It identifies that the Site has a varied noise environment. While much of the Site is in a rural environment, existing noise levels at sensitive receptors are influenced by nearby existing noise sources such as the M61 and other road traffic routes around the Site. There are also existing noise sources such as aircraft noise, farm noise and animal noise.

As part of the *Environmental Statement*, the residual noise impacts of the proposed development are considered following the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures on the Site. It is considered that:

- In respect of construction noise, adverse impacts will not be significant on the proposed development or the surrounding area.
- In respect of the operational noise, the following mitigation measures are proposed:

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<sup>68</sup> *Noise Policy Statement for England (NPSE)*, Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (March 2010)

- Lower powered grass cutting machinery used at the golf Academy;
- Restriction on the hours of use of the adventure golf course to 07:00 to 23:00;
- Use of marquee structures with a sound reduction index of 20 dB;
- Restriction on deliveries to the golf Academy between the hours of 23:00 and 07:00; and
- Provision of a 1.8m high solid acoustic fence between the golf Academy and the existing properties on Manchester Road.

The *Noise Impact Assessment* confirms that despite the implementation of these measures, some of the new dwellings proposed within the Dearden's Farm area of residential development at the north east boundary of the Site will experience a moderate adverse effect as a result of grass cutting at the 10<sup>th</sup> fairway of the golf resort. The absolute level of noise which will be experienced by these dwellings is 40 dB  $L_{Aeq(1hour)}$ , which is well below the recommended external criteria for WHO guidelines and BS 8233:2014 which state a desired external noise level of 50 dB  $L_{Aeq(1hour)}$ . It is however confirmed that suitable design of the properties at this location – which will be determined at the reserved matters stage – will address any potential noise issues and ensure that the dwellings have a satisfactory level of amenity in respect of noise.

The *Noise Impact Assessment* also identifies that the noise resulting from the operation of the golf Academy could have adverse effects on existing properties on Manchester Road. This includes, for example, 765 Manchester Road. However, these adverse effects arise on the basis that all car parking spaces at the Academy are occupied as soon as it is operation in the morning, i.e. by 7am. It is highly unlikely that the Academy will ever operate in this manner. However, to ensure that the potential for adverse effects is removed, it is proposed that a planning condition will secure a noise mitigation strategy for the proposed development, which can include a restriction upon the extent of the Academy car park which shall be opened for use in the early hours.

The noise impacts associated with the proposed development are therefore considered acceptable and are in accordance with the requirements of both national and local planning policies, and of other relevant material considerations.

## **Air Quality**

### **Policy Context**

Paragraph 124 of the NPPF considers amenity issues with regards to air quality. It states that:

- Planning policies should sustain compliance with and contribute towards EU limit values or national objectives for pollutants, taking into account the presence of Air Quality Management Areas and the cumulative impacts on air quality from individual sites in local areas.
- Planning decisions should ensure that any new development in Air Quality Management Areas is consistent with the local air quality action plan.

Policy CG4 of the adopted CS considers noise and amenity impacts arising from development. It states that:

- New development must be compatible with surrounding land uses and occupiers, protecting amenity, privacy, safety and security.
- Development should not generate unacceptable nuisance, odours, fumes, noise or light pollution, nor cause detrimental impacts upon water, ground or air quality.

### **Policy Compliance**

An *Air Quality Assessment* has been prepared by Miller Goodall in respect of the proposed development and is provided within the accompanying *Environmental Statement* (Chapter 12). It has assessed the potential effects of the construction, operational and hosting of the Ryder Cup phases of the proposed development on air quality.

The *Air Quality Assessment* identifies that:

- The operation of the proposed development – including the anticipated increase in road traffic – will not give rise to any significant impacts on local air quality; indeed, the impacts on some air quality receptors will be beneficial. Effects on air quality are reduced through the use of embedded mitigation measures – including Travel Plans for both the golf resort and residential development – which will encourage travel via sustainable modes of transport and minimise journeys by car.
- The construction of the proposed development could give rise to significant impacts on air quality as a result of dust emissions associated with, *inter alia*, demolition, earthworks and other activities. However, the potential for such impacts can be mitigated, for example through the development and implementation of a dust management plan which will include measures to suppress and control emissions. The measures will be included within the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), the requirement for which will be secured via an appropriately worded condition on the planning permission.

It is therefore concluded that the proposed development is acceptable in respect of air quality issues and accords with the relevant policies of the NPPF and the Development Plan, and of other relevant material considerations.

## **Ground Conditions**

### **Policy Context**

Section 11 of the NPPF considers ground conditions and land instability issues. In particular:

- Paragraph 109 states that the planning system should prevent both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability.
- Paragraph 121 states that planning decisions should ensure that the site is suitable for its new use taking account of ground conditions and land instability issues.



In addition, Paragraph 143 states that local planning authorities should safeguard the long term potential of best and most versatile agricultural land, defined as land in grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification.

Policy CG4 of the adopted CS states that development proposals on land that is (or is suspected to be) affected by contamination or ground instability must include an assessment of the extent of the issues and any possible risks. Development will only be permitted where the land is, or is made, suitable for the proposed use.

### **Policy Compliance**

*Geo-Environmental* and *Geotechnical Phase I Assessments* have been prepared by AECOM in respect of the proposed development. The assessments collate and assess publically available data on the geology, soils and contamination issues at the Site. This informed the preparation of a detailed *Ground Investigation (Phase II Assessment)*, also prepared by Aecom, which summarises field data on the geology, soils and contamination status of the Site. A Mining Assessment Report has also been prepared to identify any constraints to the proposed development arising from mining activities. These documents inform and are provided alongside the *Environmental Statement* (Chapter 14) and identify the possible risks associated with and impacts of the proposed development.

From the various investigations undertaken on the Site, the following has been identified:

- The ground conditions predominantly comprise topsoil, with layers of Glacial Till. Deposits of made ground were found within the Western Fields area of residential development, with further areas of localised thick, shallow 'soft' and 'loose' spots in the cohesive Glacial Till in a further six areas across the Site. Coal seams have also been recorded in various locations but, with the use of deep piled foundations where necessary, will not prevent an obstacle to development.
- There is the potential for disturbance of shallow groundwater during excavations for Site preparation works. The potential for adverse impacts arising from such disturbance can be mitigated by ensuring that the construction works are carried out in accordance with relevant regulations and best practice exercises.
- There is for the most part limited presence of ground gas at the Site. Notwithstanding, there are examples of Amber 1 issues noted within the northern and southern areas of the Site. The risk is considered to be moderate/low with regards to enclosed developments, including residential and commercial areas of developments.
- There are a number of mine shafts around the periphery of the Site associated with former coal mining activities. These are located predominantly in areas proposed for residential development. They will be stabilised using engineering methods prior to development and stand-off zones will be applied, such that the former mine shafts are made safe and are appropriately 'designed into' the proposed development.

An *Agricultural Land Classification and Soil Resources* assessment has been undertaken in respect of the Site. It has informed the preparation of and is submitted alongside the *Environmental Statement*. It identifies that the only part of the Site which is comprised of "best and most versatile" agricultural land is an area to the west of the Back o' th' Lawn Wood. This land is proposed for development as part of the golf course and will therefore remain open. As

such, the proposed development will not result in the loss of any best and most versatile agricultural land.

The assessments have therefore concluded that the Site is suitable for the use proposed. Notwithstanding, a series of mitigation measures will be implemented during the construction phase of the development to ensure that the proposed development does not cause any significant adverse impacts in respect of ground conditions issues. These measures will be identified via discussions with BMBC and based upon legal, compliance associated British Industry Standards and best practices guidance when working with or around contaminated materials. They will be controlled through the adoption of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), which will be secured via an appropriately worded condition on the planning permission. The proposed development is therefore in accordance with the policies of the NPPF and Development Plan, and of other relevant material considerations, in respect of ground conditions matters.

## **Minerals**

### **Policy Context**

Paragraph 144 of the NPPF states that when determining planning applications, local planning authorities should, *inter alia*:

- Give great weight to the benefits of the mineral extraction, including to the economy; and
- Not normally permit other development proposals in mineral safeguarding areas where they might constrain potential future use for these purposes.

Strategic Objective 8 of the adopted CS seeks to ensure that Bolton ensures that Bolton provides minerals to support economic growth in an environmentally sustainable way. Policy P4 requires BMBC and its partners to, *inter alia*:

- Maintain a landbank of aggregates, which will contribute towards the maintenance of Greater Manchester's share of the regional production of aggregates.
- Safeguard known resources of minerals, and existing and planned infrastructure that supports mineral exploitation including facilities for manufacturing and the handling, processing and distribution of substitute recycled and secondary aggregate material.

Policy CG1 of the adopted CS states that the BMBC will safeguarded and enhance the rural areas of the borough from development that would adversely affect, *inter alia*, its agricultural value.

Policy 8 of the GMMP confirms that all non-mineral development proposals within a Mineral Safeguarding Area should extract any viable mineral resources present in advance of construction. Proposals for non-mineral development within a Mineral Safeguarding Area that do not allow for prior extraction will only be permitted where it meets one of the four criteria:

- The development need, outweighs the need to extract the mineral; or
- It is not environmentally acceptable or economically viable; or

- The mineral is either not present or of not economic value; or
- The development is limited and would not prevent future mineral extraction.

### **Policy Compliance**

A *Mineral Safeguarding Assessment* has been prepared by AECOM in respect of the proposed development. The assessment confirms that there are safeguards across the Site for the extraction of the following minerals:

- Surface Coal
- Sand and Gravel
- Sandstone
- Brick Clay

The assessment considers the extraction of the relevant minerals against the four tests identified within Policy 8 of the GMMP. It sets out that in respect of all minerals, the need for the development outweighs that of extracting the minerals. The assessment also clearly demonstrates that mineral extraction would not be environmentally acceptable or economically viable prior to the construction works taking place on the Site. This is primarily due to existing ecological and historic value of the Site. In respect of all the minerals identified within the Site, it is confirmed that the quality of the provision is of a poor standard; therefore the extraction of minerals from the site would not be economically viable. Moreover, the possibility of mineral extraction in future years is not precluded for the larger part of the Site which is proposed as a golf resort, given that it will remain open and undeveloped.

It is therefore considered that the proposed development accords with the relevant policies of the NPPF and the adopted Development Plan, including the GMMP, and of other relevant material considerations.

## **Lighting**

### **Policy Context**

Paragraph 125 of the NPPF encourages good design and states that planning decisions should, inter alia, limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.

Policy CG4 of the adopted CS requires that development will not generate unacceptable light pollution.

### **Policy Compliance**

Details of the external lighting proposals for the proposed golf resort are set out on the *External Lighting Layout* drawing (drawing ref: 3023-(97)-EX01 Rev P2) which is submitted alongside the planning application. The proposals are considered by a *Lighting Impact Assessment* (LIA). The impact of the external lighting has also been considered by the *Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment* (see above).

The external lighting proposals have been formulated to ensure that the proposed development can be safely operated, achieves a satisfactory level of amenity for new and existing residents

both at the Site and in the surrounding area, and minimises the impact of light spill on the Registered Park and ecological habitats, including bat activity corridors. In particular:

- External lighting is localised around the main buildings within the golf resort, including the clubhouse, hotel complex, maintenance building and Academy, and their respective parking and/or compound areas. The lighting within the Registered Park uses low-level lighting bollards rather than standard lamps to minimise light spill.
- No permanent lighting of the golf course is proposed, thereby ensuring that the majority of the Registered Park remains dark at night.
- The golf resort and other external areas of the Academy – such as the Adventure Golf facility – will not be lit after dark. This lighting will be operated by a solar time clock (or programmable astronomical time clock) to limit post-curfew light spill.
- Lighting for footpaths and highways within the golf resort will utilise low level LED bollards, thereby minimising light spill.
- The driving range will be illuminated to enable golf practice to take place in the evening. It will utilise berm, pit or side lighting which will minimise light spill and can be appropriately screening from view of both nearby properties and the M61 motorway to the north.

Given the mitigation measures proposed, the *Lighting Impact Assessment* identifies that there will be no residual significant adverse impacts as a result of external lighting associated with the operation of the development. This is particularly the case given that, due to both topography and the level of landscape screening at the boundaries of the Site, views into it are relatively limited.

Temporary lighting will also be used during the construction of the proposed development. The impact of such lighting will be reduced through a range of typical mitigation measures, in accordance with the recommendations of the Institution of Lighting Professionals (ILP) and Construction Industry Research and Information Association (CIRIA). The measures will be included within the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), the requirement for which will be secured via an appropriately worded condition on the planning permission. The *Lighting Impact Assessment* identifies that any residual impacts of external lighting associated with the construction will not be significant, particularly given that they are temporary and short-term.

The *Lighting Impact Assessment* therefore demonstrates that the external lighting proposals associated with the proposed development are appropriate and accord with the policies of the NPPF and the Development Plan, and of other relevant material considerations.

## **Utilities**

### **Policy Context**

Paragraph 162 of the NPPF confirms that local authorities should work with other authorities and providers to assess the quality and capacity of infrastructure for, inter alia, water supply, wastewater and its treatment, energy (including heat), telecommunications, utilities and waste.

Paragraph 180 states that local planning authorities should also work collaboratively with private sector bodies, utility and infrastructure providers.

Policy CG1 of the adopted CS notes that BMBC and its partners will, *inter alia*, work towards minimising energy requirements, improving energy efficiency, lessening the reliance on fossil fuel-based energy and reducing carbon dioxide emissions.

### **Policy Compliance**

A *Utilities Assessment* and *Utilities Strategy* have been prepared by Zerum in respect of the proposed development and are submitted alongside the planning application. It sets out the existing provision within the surrounding area, identifies the required provision in respect of the proposed development, and confirms that adequate utilities can be provided at the Site to facilitate the proposed development. This includes the provision of various foul sewer pumping stations are located within the proposed development to enable connections to the existing network where gravity connections are not feasible. The proposed development is therefore compliant with the policies of the NPPF and Development Plan, and of other relevant material considerations, and will not result in any constraints in respect of utilities.

### **Summary**

The technical documents and ES which are submitted alongside the planning application have assessed the impact of the proposed development in respect of, *inter alia*:

- Cultural Heritage
- Archaeology
- Sustainable Design
- Transport
- Landscape and Visual Impact
- Ecology
- Arboriculture
- Water management
- Noise
- Air Quality
- Ground Conditions
- Mineral Extraction
- Lighting
- Utilities

These studies confirm that the proposed development will not result in any unacceptably adverse impacts which cannot be satisfactorily mitigated. Indeed, in certain important instances – for example in respect of highways – the development will result in net positive impacts. This appendix has evaluated the proposal's accordance with Development Plan policy and the NPPG in respect of each of these topics, as well as considering other relevant policy considerations such as 'town centre first' policies. The implications of these findings for the planning balance, alongside those reached in the main body of the Statement, are discussed in Section 9 of the Statement.

## **Appendix 8: Hulton Park: Feasibility Study, prepared by GVA (November 2016)**

**Appendix 9: Hulton Park Green Belt Study,  
prepared by LUC (January  
2017)**

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