



Report of the Chief Planning Officer

NORTH & EAST PLANS PANEL

Date: 5th November 2020

Subject: 18/06617/FU - Proposed extension and alteration of Leeds Golf Centre including an annexe building (extension to clubhouse) and 37 holiday lodges; change of use of agricultural land to golf course at Leeds Golf Centre, Wike Ridge Lane, Wike.

Applicant: The Park Lane Foundation

Electoral Wards Affected:	Specific Implications For:
Harewood	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes Ward Members consulted	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>

POSITION STATEMENT: Members are requested to note this report on the proposal and to provide views in relation to the questions posed to aid the progression of the application.

INTRODUCTION:

1. The application is presented to North and East Plans Panel as it is a significant application within the Green Belt which is a departure from the Development Plan. The application also has potential wider public benefits which warrant consideration by Members. This report is a Position Statement meaning that the application is not being reported for determination at this point in time. The purpose of this Position Statement is to inform Members of the proposal, to report on the progress of the application and to seek Members comments on key planning issues associated with this particular development.
2. Planning Officers and the Chief Planning Officer have previously met with the applicant and planning agents at an early stage in the planning process to discuss the proposals at the applicant's request. At the meeting the Chief Planning Officer outlined the key Green Belt issues relating to the proposal and the need for very special circumstances to be demonstrated. It was agreed that it could be beneficial for the

application to be discussed at Plans Panel as a Position Statement for the reasons set out at para. 1 above.

3. Since the meeting several iterations of revised plans have been received largely covering technical issues in response to consultee comments in relation to highways, landscape and ecology matters. The applicant has also made a case for 'very special circumstances' in an attempt to justify this inappropriate form of development in the Green Belt. This matter is addressed at paragraphs 62 to 64 of this report.
4. A representation has also been received from Councillor Stephenson on behalf of the Harewood Members requesting that the application is determined at Plans Panel. The representation states 'we have received representations in opposition and in favour of this application and it is felt by Ward Members that the balance between Green Belt arguments and economic ones should be made by the Plans Panel, at which the applicant and objectors can be questioned in detail'

PROPOSAL:

5. The proposal includes the following key elements:
 - A 37 unit 'Eco-lodge' development with car parking and landscaping (including the formation of lakes)
 - Redeveloped and extended clubhouse including a two storey (30 bay) driving range.
 - Relocated 9 hole foot golf course
 - Relocated 9 hole Par 3 Academy course
 - Re-aligned driving range
 - An adventure golf course
6. The application is a hybrid planning application. A 'hybrid' application is one which seeks outline planning permission for one part of the proposed development and full planning permission for another part of it. This application seeks to obtain detailed (Full) planning permission for the clubhouse extension and holiday lodges proposals and outline permission for the remaining elements including the footgolf course, adventure golf, academy course and realigned driving range.
7. The 37 unit 'Eco-lodge' development is proposed on a 3.93 hectare site to the south of the existing clubhouse and School Lane upon the existing Par 3 and Footgolf course. The units are a mixture of four bed (Woodland Lodges) and two bed lodges (Lakeside Lodges). The Lakeside Lodges are orientated around a purpose built central lake. Whereas the Woodland Lodges are centred around the former quarry / beck to the south. The four bed units are two storey in height and the two bed units single storey. The lodges incorporate green roofs, an outside terrace and a golf buggy store. A 41 space car park is provided to the northern edge of the lodge scheme, as well as extensive landscaping throughout. The use of lodges will not be restricted just to users of the golf course, but the applicant states that the lodges will most likely be utilised by golfers.
8. The redeveloped and extended clubhouse proposals are located on the site of the existing clubhouse and incorporate significant changes creating a largely glazed three storey building with accommodation across four floors. Briefly the accommodation comprises of:

- **Lower ground floor:** Male /& Female changing rooms (inc sauna and spa), Golf shop store, plant room, Driving range ball collection vehicles store, kitchen Adventure golf room, W.C's and an outside terrace.
 - **Ground floor:** Pro shop, gym, W.C's. golf club bar area, bar kitchen, reception. 15 driving range bays, 2 teaching bays, Footgolf sports bar with balcony terrace.
 - **First floor:** Large function room with balcony terrace, Meeting space (x2) with balcony terrace, kitchen, health club, W.Cs, 15 driving range bays, a teaching bay, multi-functional studio class / teaching space, golf simulation area.
 - **Second floor:** Large administrative area with balcony terrace, board room, 2 x office and meeting room with balcony terrace, lounge with balcony terrace, W.C's.
9. The proposed relocated nine hole footgolf course is sited on the existing par 3 course to north-east of the existing clubhouse and car parking area. The proposed relocated 9 hole academy par 3 course is proposed to the north of the existing car parking area. This area currently comprised of mainly open agricultural fields, albeit it includes part of the existing driving range area. The re-aligned driving range re-orientates the range further to the south-west, whilst the proposed adventure golf area is proposed directly to the north of the existing over-flow car park. Detailed plans for these elements of the proposal have not been provided as only outline consent has been applied for.
10. A range of documents have been submitted to support the proposals including:
- Planning Statement
 - Design & Access Statement
 - Leeds Golf Centre 'Our Vision' document
 - Statement of Community Involvement
 - Transport Statement
 - Travel Plan
 - Arboricultural Report
 - Ecological Appraisal (inc various species surveys)
 - Flood Risk Assessment
 - Geo-Environmental Appraisal
 - Sustainability Statement
 - Community Benefits Statement
 - Sequential Test (Main Town Centre Use)
 - A draft memorandum of understanding between the Park Lane Foundation, Sports Foundations and Leeds Beckett University.
 - Economic Benefits Assessment
11. A financial appraisal has also been submitted, however the applicant has requested that information within this document remains confidential, albeit some of the headline issues are covered within the submitted Economic Benefits Statement and Planning Statement addendum. Furthermore, the club have made the following statement in relation to the current funding position of the golf club/Foundation. *'The challenges of the current pandemic have put the finances of the Park Lane Group under some serious strain and pressure. With businesses in the student accommodation and leisure sectors respectively, the group is constantly reviewing all its operational commitments. As outlined previously in the submission documents, the applicant, the Park Lane Foundation relies on surplus revenues from the wider group to be able sustain and plug the losses made by the club. These losses have been articulated in the viability submission provided this summer. In summary, LGC'*

needs to become independent and financially viable through the proposed development. If this is not the case, the club cannot rely on its financial subsidy from the wider group, which in itself is now not sustainable'.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS:

12. The site is a 20 hectare mainly greenfield site formed by the existing Leeds Golf Centre and adjacent agricultural fields to the north. The site is located towards the western edge of the small village (hamlet) of Wike which has no services and limited community facilities. The golf club is located around 6 miles north of Leeds City Centre within land defined as Green Belt and Special Landscape Area. The site is located close the Harrogate Road (A61) between Harewood and the northern edge of the main urban conurbation of Leeds (Alwoodley). The site is accessed via School Lane which is a generally narrow country lane with some passing points.
13. The Golf Club was created in the early 1990's with the current owners taking over in 2011. The clubhouse building (inc driving range) and a large car park are situated at the centre of the site and form the only brownfield elements of the site. The existing clubhouse is a two storey building of traditional rural design and materials (stone and slate). The building appears to have been extended previously. The driving range is a single storey annex to the clubhouse which extends to the east containing 15 bays. The extensive car park is situated to the south-east of the clubhouse and driving range and is floodlit containing electric vehicle charging points and disabled spaces. An overflow car park formed of grass-crete is located further to the east of the main car parking area.
14. The main 18 hole golf course is situated to the west of the site and will be unchanged by the proposals. The south of the site is in use as a Footgolf course and part of the Par 3 golf course. The remainder of the Par 3 course is situated to the north of School Lane and to the east of the driving range which slopes steeply upwards (north). The northern extent of the site is formed by open agricultural fields which undulate steeply. The site generally slopes upwards from south to north although there are some areas of sharp undulations within the site. Wike Ridge Lane which is a country road is situated to the south of the site, on a lower land level. Open fields lie further to the north of the site.
15. The northern edge of the main urban area of Leeds contains a belt of several other golf courses situated within the Green Belt, including Moor Allerton GC, Scarcroft GC, Alwoodley GC, Brandon GC, Sandmoor GC, Headingley GC, Horsforth GC and Cookridge Hall GC.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

16. The planning history for the site dates back to the early 1990's when the golf course and club were originally formed. Since then the site has obtained numerous permissions, largely relating to extensions to the clubhouse:
 - 14/01556/FU – Single storey 'hall-way house' to golf course shelter and store (Approved – 2014)
 - 12/05133/FU - Three storey front/side/rear extension (including use of roof space) to clubhouse and alterations to car parking layout (Approved - 2013)
 - 11/04543/FU - Construction of 3 lakes to golf course and enhancement works (Approved - 2012)

- 11/04217/FU - Side and rear extensions and new second floor to golf club house – (Approved - 2012)
 - 11/01303/FU – Single storey extension to side, enclosed porch to front, conservatory with terrace over to rear of golf clubhouse (Approved - 2011)
 - 30/204/02/FU – Single storey extension to side of club house (Approved - 2002)
 - 30/431/95/FU – Single storey extension to side of club house (Approved - 1996)
 - 30/139/94/FU – Single storey rear extension (Approved - 1994)
 - 30/5/94/FU – Two storey and single storey extensions (Approved - 1994)
 - 30/105/93/FU – Addition of lights to golf driving range (Approved – 1993)
 - 30/447/92/FU – Laying out of access and erection of two storey club house with residential flat and driving range (Approved - 1993)
 - H30/570/91 – Use of agricultural land as 18-hole golf course (Approved – 1992)
17. Notably the 2013 permission (12/05133/FU) related to a substantial increase in the size of the original clubhouse. This permission has only been partially implemented. Consequently, this permission remains extant and forms a potential fallback position.

PUBLIC/LOCAL RESPONSE:

18. The application was advertised as a major development and a Departure from the Development Plan. Site notices were posted around the site and the application has been publicised in the Yorkshire Evening Post.
19. A total of 103 representations have been received to the application, 86 in support, 15 objecting and 1 general comment.
20. A large number of the letters of support appear to be from existing members of the golf club / visitors including junior members. The letters of support also include representations from several organisations including the Childrens Heart Surgery Fund, Yorkshire County Cricket Club & Yorkshire Cricket Foundation, Leadbetter Gold Academy, Welcome to Yorkshire, St Georges Crypt, Candlelighters Charity, Carr Manor Primary School and the On Course Foundation.
21. The letters of support include the following comments:
- Improved facilities (world class) / International golfing destination
 - Increased employment
 - Will attract visitors to the city and region (golf tourism)
 - Economic benefits for the area
 - Improved financial stability of the club
 - Increased inclusive participation in golf
 - Quality architectural design
 - Social / Health benefits
 - Impacts on nature are well considered.
22. The letters of objection are generally from local residents, albeit an objection has also been received from Leeds Civic Trust. One of the letters, which includes a highways impact report is from Walton & Co Planning Lawyers on behalf of 'Wike residents'.

23. The letters of objection raise the following concerns:

- Impact on the Green Belt / Insufficient Very Special Circumstances
- Impact on wildlife / Ecology
- Increased traffic / Highway safety issues
- Out of character with the area
- Overdevelopment / Detrimental to the village
- Landscape impact
- Light pollution
- Lack of public transport / Unsustainable location
- Noise impact from lodges (stag parties) / Function rooms (weddings)
- Impact of the extended golf course on the safety and privacy of residents
- Insufficient parking
- Drainage concerns from the extended golf course
- Appropriateness of adventure golf in the Green Belt
- Proposal constitutes EIA development
- Development could set a precedent for neighbouring clubs.

24. The general comment was received from Harewood Parish Council. The representation states that the Parish Council do not object to the application, although they have concerns in relation to increased levels of traffic. The representation also seeks assurances that the Eco Lodges will not be sold for permanent residency in the future.

25. Ward Members: As previously outlined a representation has also been received from Councillor Stephenson on behalf of the Harewood Members requesting that the application is determined at Plans Panel. The representation states 'we have received representations in opposition and in favour of this application and it is felt by Ward Members that the balance between Green Belt arguments and economic ones should be made by the Plans Panel, at which the applicant and objectors can be questioned in detail'.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES:

26. Local Plans: The built parts of the scheme (extension and alteration to the clubhouse and driving range and the creation of eco lodges) are considered inappropriate development in the Green Belt and should be refused unless exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated. The change of use of agricultural land to golf course is considered appropriate development in the Green Belt (albeit intrinsically linked to the need created by the proposal itself to relocate existing parts of the course).

27. Highways Team: Detailed comments have been provided by the Highways Officer. In general the proposal is considered to be acceptable in principle subject to some further amendments and clarification in relation to a few outstanding technical issues.

28. Landscape Officer: Remaining concerns include:

- Cut and fill impacts on retained trees (existing level plans required)
- The balance of allowing views out from the lodges looking south and screening / integrating the scheme into the landscape / Green Belt is a delicate one.

- Still a concern over the visual impact of the new clubhouse which has greater mass and height
 - More screening to the west side likely to be required.
 - Technical guidance in relation to planting specification also offered.
29. Nature Officer: Revised plans acceptable subject to the insertion of planning conditions in relation to bat roosting and bird nesting, the submission of a Biodiversity Enhancement and Management Plan and the submission of a lighting design strategy for bats,
30. Flood Risk Management: FRM are satisfied that the Flood Risk Assessment adequately demonstrates that the proposed development will not be at significant risk of flooding. FRM are generally satisfied with the proposed surface water drainage strategy, however, soakaway testing is required, to determine whether or not infiltration SuDS can be used. The FRA includes a letter from Yorkshire Water which states that the surface water should discharge to the 600mm diameter culvert, located to the East of the site, but our records do not show any watercourse downstream of this culvert. Should soakaway tests prove negative, the proposed development should connect into the same drainage system, which currently serves the site. Given that this is a Major development, greenfield discharge rates will apply. FRM supports the idea of utilising the proposed amenity lakes to balance the surface water runoff from the site, provided that the levels work. Planning conditions suggested.
31. Design Team: Concerns in relation to the clubhouse, appears to be a massive increase in development and becomes perhaps excessive massing and scale. No further comments at this stage as there are significant policy issues to be addressed.
32. Contaminated Land: The Phase 1 Desk Study submitted in support of the application identifies the needs for a Phase 2 Site Investigation Report on part of the site. Ideally this should be provided prior to determining the application, however, should approval be recommended or there be insufficient time to obtain the recommended information then conditions are recommended.
33. Environmental Studies: We have no objection to this application in relation to transportation noise.
34. Yorkshire Water: YW objected to the development's layout because of the likely adverse impact on a 300mm strategic water main running east from Wike Ridge Lane. Unfortunately the recently submitted Master Plan and the landscape drawing suggest that the "eco-lodgings" and it appears trees will still be located over or close to the main. We are therefore maintaining our objection to the site layout.
35. West Yorkshire Police: Various comments provided in relation to incorporating the principles of Secured by Design. Including comments in relation to boundary treatments, access control measures, external lighting, CCTV, specifications of doors and windows and intruder alarms.
36. Travel Wise Team: Planning conditions suggested in relation to cycle parking, motorcycle parking, car share spaces, showers, ev charging points. The travel plan should be secured by condition.
37. Public Rights of Way (PROW) Team: No response at the time of drafting the report.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION:

Relevant Legislation

38. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act states that for the purpose of any determination to be made under the Planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan comprises of the Core Strategy as amended by the Core Strategy Selective Review (2019), Site Allocations Plan (2019), Natural Resources and Waste DPD (2013), Aire Valley Area Action Plan (2017), saved policies of the UDPR (2006) and any made Neighbourhood Plan.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES:

National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

39. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally-prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework must be taken into account in preparing the development plan, and is a material consideration in planning decisions.
40. The most relevant chapters of the NPPF in relation to the proposed development are considered to be:
- 2. Achieving sustainable development
 - 6. Building a strong competitive economy
 - 7. Ensuring the vitality of town centres
 - 8. Promoting healthy and safe communities
 - 9. Promoting sustainable transport
 - 12. Ensuring well designed places
 - 13. Protecting Green Belt Land
 - 15. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment.

National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)

41. Provides further detailed guidance relating to the importance of good design and Green Belt issues amongst others.

Local Planning Policy

Core Strategy, as amended (2019)

42. Spatial Policy 1 - Seeks to concentrate the majority of new development within the main urban areas and ensure that development is appropriate to its context
Spatial Policy 2 – Hierarchy of Centres and spatial approach to retailing, offices, intensive leisure and culture.
Spatial Policy 8 – Economic Development Priorities

P8 - Sequential and impact assessments for town centres uses
P9 - Community facilities and other services
P10 - Seeks to ensure that new development is well designed and respects its context
P12 - Landscape
T2 - Seeks to ensure that new development does not harm highway safety.
G1 - Enhancing and extending green infrastructure
G9 - Biodiversity improvements
EN1 - Climate change – Carbon Dioxide reduction
EN2 - Sustainable Design and Construction
EN5 - Managing Flood Risk
EN8 – Provision of electric vehicle charging points
ID2 – Planning obligations and developer contributions

Natural Resources and Waste DPD (2013)

43. General Policy 1 - General planning considerations
Water 4 - Development in Flood Risk Areas
Water 6 - Flood Risk Assessments
Water 7 - Surface Water Run Off
Land 1 - Land contamination
Land 2 - Development and trees

Saved UDP (2006) Policies:

44. GP5 - General planning considerations
N24 - Development proposals abutting the Green Belt or open countryside
N25 – Development and site boundaries
N33 – Development in the Green Belt
N35 - Agricultural land
N37 – Special Landscape Areas
N37A – Development in the Countryside
BD5 - Design considerations for new builds.
LD1 - Landscape schemes
GB19 – Outdoor sport and recreation
GB20 – Buildings for sport and recreation
GB21 – Holiday accommodation
GB22 – Holiday accommodation and minor works

MAIN ISSUES:

45. Given that a Position Statement is under consideration and the application is not at Plans Panel for determination at this moment in time, only the key planning issues will be covered in order to focus discussion. The key planning considerations for the current proposal are considered to be:
- The principle of the development / Green Belt impact
 - Very Special Circumstances
 - Special Landscape Area / Landscape impact
 - Economic / Tourism considerations
 - Main Town Centre uses / Sequential Test
 - Ecology / Nature / Trees
 - Highways considerations
 - Climate Emergency

- Representations
- Planning Balance / Conclusions

APPRAISAL:

Principle of development / Green Belt impact

46. The site is not allocated for any particular form of development within the adopted Site Allocations Plan and the whole site lies within the Green Belt.
47. There is a presumption against inappropriate development within the Green Belt. The NPPF advises that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Local planning authorities should also ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt.
48. Paragraph 145 of the NPPF outlines that local planning authorities should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. However, the paragraph lists a few exceptions to this including *b) the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use) for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments; as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it and criteria C) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;*
49. Paragraph 146 of the NPPF also lists certain other forms of development which are also not inappropriate in the Green Belt (provided that they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it). These include part e) *material changes in the use of land (such as changes of use for outdoor sport or recreation, or for cemeteries and burial grounds).*
50. Several of the Green Belt exceptions within paragraphs 145 and 146 of the NPPF require an assessment as to whether the proposal would preserve the openness of the Green Belt. The concept of openness means the state of being free from built development and the impact on openness is an assessment of how built up the Green Belt is now and how built up it would be if the re-development occurs.
51. The NPPG also provides some useful further guidance on the factors which can be considered when assessing the impact on the openness of the Green Belt. These include:
- “*Openness is capable of having both spatial and visual aspects – in other words, the visual impact of the proposal may be relevant, as could its volume;*
 - *The degree of activity likely to be generated, such as traffic generation”.*
52. The proposed development contains several distinct elements (which will be considered in turn), with outline permission sought for some aspects and detailed (Full) permission for others.
- (i) Relocated golf course (Par 3) / Relocated Footgolf course / Re-aligned driving range:

53. Given the aforementioned key NPPF considerations, the relocated Par 3 golf course, relocated Footgolf course and realigned driving range (not including the additional bays), are considered to constitute appropriate development which is likely to preserve the openness of the Green Belt and are acceptable in principle. Only outline consent is sought for these elements at the present time and the detailed elements of the proposals, such as the course layout would be subject to a full planning application at a later date.

(ii) Holiday Lodges:

54. The proposed holiday lodges do not meet any of the Green Belt exceptions outlined within paragraphs 145 & 146 of the NPPF, as such they are considered to form inappropriate development.

55. The proposed lodges are considered to result in considerable harm to the Green Belt in terms of loss of openness. Firstly, the development has a sprawling low density layout and will result in a 3.93 hectare area of Green Belt land effectively becoming brownfield. The proposal cannot be considered modest in nature and will result in 37 units of accommodation and a large car park being constructed, alongside other ancillary development such as footpaths which will have pronounced impact on the spatial aspects of the openness of the Green Belt in terms of the amount of built development (volume) and overall increase in the level of the hardstanding. The development also have a visual impact and will be apparent to users of the PROW along School Lane whilst the development will also be more apparent at night than the existing golf/Footgolf course. Furthermore, the lodges will also result in a marked intensification in the level of activity at the site in particular in relation to traffic movements, parked cars and urban paraphernalia. As such it is considered that the resultant site will appear distinctly more urban in nature than at the present time and the proposal will have a pronounced detrimental impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

56. Furthermore saved UDPR Policy GB21 relates to holiday accommodation developments within the Green Belt and states '*new static caravan sites (for residential or holiday use), hotels, and other permanent holiday accommodation will not be permitted within the green belt*'. The proposed development would clearly be at odds with this policy.

(iii) Clubhouse extension and alterations:

57. As previously outlined paragraph 145 (part C) permits '*the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building*'. As can be seen within the planning history outlined within the report the Council has previously shown flexibility in allowing numerous smaller extensions to the existing clubhouse which was originally a modest two storey building or rural character.

58. The proposal includes large scale extensions and alterations to the existing clubhouse which will considerably increase the height and bulk of the building creating a largely glazed three storey building with accommodation across four floors and a two storey driving range. Taking into account the existing additions to the original clubhouse the proposed changes would clearly constitute disproportionate additions to the original building. The proposal would create a significant increase in the built volume, footprint and general height of the original building and would be detrimental to openness. The design of the building is also much more urban in

nature and would be at odds with the wider countryside character. This harm would be clearly viewed from the adjacent PROW.

59. There are also concerns that the proposed new accommodation within the clubhouse extensions is excessive and not ancillary to the golf club. The proposed development does not try to minimize Green Belt harm. In particular, the proposed extended clubhouse incorporates spa facilities, several separate bars, several functions rooms and kitchens with extensive outside terraces. It is not uncommon for sports clubs within the Green Belt to have one bar area which doubles as a function room. The proposed uses are considered to fall outside the general functional requirements of a golf course.
60. The applicants contend that a 2013 permission (12/05133/FU) which is part implemented forms a realistic fallback position for the clubhouse proposals. It is noted that the 2013 permission related to a substantial increase in the size of the original clubhouse. However, the current proposals would vastly exceed the scale of this permission and cannot be considered similar. Furthermore, the current proposal also incorporates additional elements such as the lodges, and the Green Belt impact of the development needs to be considered holistically.

(iv) Adventure Golf:

61. The proposal also seeks permission for an adventure golf area. An adventure golf use is considered to be more akin to a leisure use than a sport use. Consequently, the adventure golf area is considered to constitute inappropriate development as it does not meet any of the exceptions outlined in paragraphs 145 or 146 of the NPPF. It is noted that only outline consent is sought for this aspect of the development and only limited details have been provided, however an adventure golf use is likely to incorporate some man-made surfaces and small scale structures whilst increasing the level of activity at the site. Consequently the adventure golf area would also be detrimental to the openness of the Green Belt.

Very Special Circumstances

62. As noted above the development contains several elements which are considered to form inappropriate development within the Green Belt (holiday lodges, clubhouse extensions and adventure golf). Planning policy is clear that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.
63. The applicants have put forward several matters which they consider to constitute very special circumstances with their Planning Statement Addendum. These are:
 - The creation of a regional golf facility;
 - Will create facilities not found elsewhere in Leeds, with few in the region or UK as a whole.
 - Welcome to Yorkshire in their supporting letter the proposed facility '*will be a first for Leeds and will deliver an international golfing destination and centre of excellence attracting visitors from across the world*'.
 - The Leadbetter Golf Academy "*see large potential for Leeds Golf Center to be one of the most sought-after golf destinations in northern England*".

- Economic and Tourism benefits:
 - 30 new jobs.
 - Construction value of approximately £8 million, delivered through largely 'local' companies.
 - Predicted annual spend of approximately £1.5-2.2 million in the local economy from the lodges alone.
 - 10,000-15,000 additional visitors to the centre / area.
 - An increase in local community engagement and health and well-being benefits.

- Community / Public benefits:
 - The club currently offers a variety of open days, school visits, charity support days in addition to other golf days that directly raise money for local charities.
 - The level of support that can be offered by the Park Lane Foundation through a club that is not currently financially viable is severely limited. The proposed development will greatly increase the viability of the club and therefore increase the ability to support the local community and local charities and deliver more public benefits.

- Local support:
 - Level of support from members of the public and organisations is highlighted.

- Health and well-being benefits:
 - Reducing childhood obesity.
 - Helps to bridge the 'pay-and play gap' left following the closure of public courses.

- Viability of the club:
 - The golf club is making significant losses of over £100k per annum.

- Climate emergency:
 - Expansion of existing facility as opposed to new development.
 - New buildings of the highest build quality, meeting targets to reduce energy consumption and carbon production.
 - Eco lodges: Green roofs / Sustainable methods of construction.
 - Commitment to sustainable modes of travel.

64. In response, whilst these matters are noted, Officers presently have concerns that these very special circumstances do not individually or cumulatively clearly outweigh the aforementioned significant Green Belt harm as a result of the development. Notably the 'local support' benefits are questioned given that these need to be balanced against the local objections (mentioned previously within this report), which include a detailed representation on behalf of 'Wike Residents'. The Climate Emergency benefits are also noted, however these need to be balanced against the fact that the proposal relates to large scale development within a relatively unsustainable location. The proposal will also develop a considerable area of the countryside which is not identified for future development (i.e. not needed to meet current identified needs). Furthermore, a lot of the outlined community / public benefits whilst these are welcomed, they are already occurring and would not be new benefits, more continuing benefits. Likewise the health and well-being benefits. Balanced against this the viability issues are noted and the issue is whether these, combined with the identified benefits, justify considerable Green Belt harm. The Council has also previously shown flexibility to the golf club in allowing considerable extensions to the clubhouse and allowing a larger range of services. Furthermore,

whilst there will be some economic and tourism benefits from the development, it could be argued that these are also not unique and could be attributed to similar developments elsewhere across Leeds.

Do Members wish to comment on the suggested Very Special Circumstances advanced by the applicant and whether they clearly outweigh the Green Belt harm?

Special Landscape Area / Landscape impact

65. The site is situated within a Special Landscape Area which are considered to be the most attractive areas of countryside in Leeds. Development proposals in the areas of best quality landscape must show particular regard to conservation of the landscape. The proposed holiday lodges development provides some mitigation in relation to the landscape impact such as the units being built in the topography where possible, the inclusion of green roofs, use of natural materials as well as significant landscaping proposals which will largely screen the development from Wike Ridge Lane. Notwithstanding, there will be some visual harm from the development, in particular the large car park will be very prominent from the adjacent PROW.
66. In contrast the proposed clubhouse extensions do not appear to have been designed to show particular regard to conservation of the landscape. The resultant building is very tall and bulky and is of an urban appearance with modern materials. The submitted photomontages from the applicant show that the clubhouse will be more pronounced when viewed from Wike Ridge Lane. There are concerns that the clubhouse due to its scale, form and detailing will appear at odds with the wider rural landscape character, especially when viewed at close quarters from the adjacent PROW.

Do Members have any comments to make in respect of the landscape impact of the proposed development?

Economic / Tourism considerations

67. The applicants have submitted an Economic Benefits Statement which outlines some of the benefits the development will have. These include millions of pounds worth of benefits to the construction industry, both directly and indirectly, creating jobs. The development will also result in the creation of 30 new jobs at the golf club (£0.9m uplift in GVA). The development will attract more visitors to the club with a forecast increase in revenue of 37%. It is also argued that the overnight visitors will lead to additional spend and economic impact outside the club within the local economy leading to indirect job growth and increased GVA.
68. In relation to the rural economy, the Core Strategy states that a balance needs to be struck between providing local employment opportunities, promoting sustainable patterns of development and protecting the character of the countryside and reflecting Green Belt purposes. Part v) of Policy SP8 (Economic Development Priorities) states a competitive local economy will be supported through...
'Supporting the growth and diversification of the rural economy, consistent with the Settlement Hierarchy and the protection and enhancement of a high quality rural environment. Outside the Main Urban Area, Major Settlements and Small Settlements, the following proposals should be supported, where appropriate, conversion of existing buildings, promote the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses, support provision and expansion of tourist and cultural facilities in appropriate locations , retention and development of local services and community facilities'.

69. Whilst the likely economic benefits are noted, the proposed development is not consistent with the settlement hierarchy and it is not considered to protect and enhance the high quality rural environment, nor form an appropriate location for tourist facilities. The Development Plan does not make any specific provision for golf tourism which additional weight can be attributed to.

Do Members have any thoughts or comments relating to the economic benefits of the development?

Main Town Centre Uses / Sequential Test

70. The NPPF makes it clear that main town centre uses should be located within town centres, then in edge of centre locations; and only if suitable sites are not available (or expected to become available within a reasonable period) should out of centre sites be considered (para 86). When considering edge of centre and out of centre proposals, preference should be given to accessible sites which are well connected to the town centre (para 87). Local planning authorities should apply a sequential test to planning applications for main town centre uses which are neither in an existing centre nor in accordance with an up-to-date plan (para 86). Where an application fails to satisfy the sequential test or is likely to have significant adverse impact on one or more of the considerations in paragraph 89, it should be refused (para 90). Leeds Core Strategy Policy SP2: '*Hierarchy of centres and spatial approach to retailing, offices, intensive leisure and culture reflects this by promoting a centres first approach where retailing, offices, intensive leisure and culture, and community development will be focused in the City Centre and designated town and local centres in order to promote their vitality and viability as the focus for shopping, employment, leisure, culture, and community services*'. Core Strategy Policy P8: '*Sequential and impact assessments for main town centre uses*' sets out detailed sequential and impact assessment requirements depending on the size of development and the mix of uses.
71. The proposed scheme includes spa facilities (D2, approx 250 sqm) and eco lodges (C1, 3,271 sqm) both of which are, technically, caught by the planning policy definition of town centre uses therefore a sequential test is necessary. Following previous advice the applicant submitted an initial sequential test (July 2019) and a further addendum (May 2020) to assess the impact of the proposal on a larger number of town and local centres as well as the City Centre. The first document states that there are no suitably sized vacant units or available development sites in, or within 300m of the edge, of the following town and local centres:
- Moor Allerton Town Centre
 - Chapel Allerton Town Centre
 - Meanwood Town Centre
 - Alwoodley King Lane Local Centre
 - Slaid Hill Local Centre
 - Moortown Corner Local Centre
 - Street Lane Local Centre
72. The second document gives more details of sites considered in the centres (+300m) above and assesses impacts on Wetherby Town Centre, Boston Spa Local Centre and Collingham Local Centre. A number of available properties are mentioned however often the floorspaces are not given, just that "the unit is not of adequate size or layout to accommodate the proposed spa facilities and eco lodges". It may be that some e.g. the units at 52-56 Street Lane which provide 6,285 sq ft (583 m²) of floorspace, are big enough for at least the spa (approx 250 sqm). Spas can certainly

be accommodated in smaller properties and may be over a number of floors. It is accepted that there are no suitable sites for the eco lodges, however there is scope to provide accommodation in an alternative format which would require less land, such as a hotel. The sequential assessment document states there are no available large sites that could accommodate the 37 lodges that do not already have a planning approval or are being built out in the City Centre and further argues that low-rise development would not be viable.

73. The applicant has also provided a high-level Impact Assessment relating to the impact of the proposed uses on the viability of existing town and local centres and the City Centre. As the 37 lodges and the associated spa/leisure facilities are specifically linked to the golf course, they would not have a detrimental impact on other such hotel or leisure uses that serve alternative and specific users such as pay-as-you-go gyms, hotel facilities and leisure clubs such as David Lloyd which are tailored to suit specific markets.
74. Whilst it's considered reasonable to seek to disaggregate the spa facilities from the eco lodges in line with the guidance in the NPPF that states "*Applicants and local planning authorities should demonstrate flexibility on issues such as format and scale, so that opportunities to utilise suitable town centre or edge of centre sites are fully explored*", on balance it is felt that the applicant has satisfied the Sequential Test in demonstrating that there aren't any suitable alternative sites in or on the edge of town/local centres or the City Centre. The balance on flexibility to the disaggregation of the town centre uses is the argument put forward by the applicant that the town centre uses are 'ancillary' to the non-town centre uses with the need to be located together being one of the fundamental principles put forward by the proposal in that you "stay near where you play golf and relax in the spa after playing golf".

Do Members have any comments to make in respect of the provision of the spa and eco lodge uses in this rural location?

Ecology / Nature / Trees

75. An ecological impact assessment, biodiversity impact calculator and several species surveys have been undertaken by the applicants. The proposed development generally takes place upon the existing golf course which is an intensively managed setting, notwithstanding some pockets of mixed deciduous woodland, scrub and semi-improved grassland are present which will be safeguarded. The lodge development in particular incorporates green roofs, the formation of new lakes and significant landscaping. The Nature Conservation Officer is satisfied that the development can demonstrate a biodiversity net gain with the insertion of planning conditions. In particular the Nature Conservation Officer has requested that the central lakes are designed for wildlife and are not stocked or used for fishing. The green roof should also be a wildflower meadow turf.
76. In terms of trees there will be a significant net gain in tree coverage across the site, with a limited number of trees to be removed. The Councils Tree Officer is generally content with the proposal at this stage, subject to some minor refinements and the insertion of planning conditions.

Do Members have any concerns or comments relating to ecology / nature / trees?

Highways considerations

77. A Transport Assessment and Travel Plan have been provided to support the application. The Transport Assessment indicates that in terms of traffic generation there would be an increase in peak hour trips (18 two-way trips in the AM peak hour, 61 two-way trips in the PM peak hour and 78 two-way trips in the Saturday peak hour), however, this is considered to be a worst-case assessment of the operation of the development. A review of local accident data also identified no concerns relating to road safety. The assessment also shows that when the function room is in use (max 300 capacity), there is sufficient car parking proposed on site to meet the demand.
78. The Highways Officer is generally content with the latest proposals, subject to some refinements and further confirmation previously detailed within the Consultation responses section of this report.
79. The proposal will increase the size of the existing golf club car park from 204 spaces to 230 spaces, whilst 41 separate spaces will be provided for the proposed 37 unit holiday lodge proposal. This level of parking provision is considered to be acceptable on balance by the Highways Officer.
80. The site is accessed using School Lane. School Lane is a single two-way carriageway that is rural in nature, School Lane is accessed from Forge Lane around 380m to the east of Leeds Golf Centre via a simple priority junction. The lane is adopted for a length of approximately 110m from its junction with Forge Lane beyond which, it is effectively a private access road serving the golf centre. The proposal will result in improvements to School Lane along the site frontage, which is currently unmade. The highway will be improved to a similar standard to the eastern end of School Lane.
81. In summary, no severe highway impacts are anticipated from the development, subject to further works taking place in line with the Highways Officers comments.

Do Members have any concerns or comments relating to highway issues?

Climate Emergency

82. A Sustainability Statement has been submitted to support the development. The proposal incorporates several elements which will assist in mitigating the impacts of climate change. These include the buildings achieving a BREEAM rating of Excellent and the development complying with Core Strategy Policies EN1, EN2 and EN8. Alongside BREEAM, a range of design features have also been considered, including:
 - Carbon Emissions reductions through extensive passive design measures and adoption of renewable energy technologies to reduce climate change impacts.
 - Ability to offset Embodied Carbon via extensive tree planting and Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG's) reductions within the site boundary itself.
 - Opportunity to create and further enhance existing ecological and biodiverse habitats encouraging increases in native species and local biodiversity strategy implementation.

- Incorporation of Green Roof's and living walls to further enhance ecological improvement, reduce visual impact on the rural landscape and create means of water attenuation.
 - Use of SMART technologies such as responsive heating controls, intelligent metering systems and lighting systems.
 - Consideration of resource impacts such as waste, sourcing of new materials, transportation and sustainable transport solutions.
83. Whilst these benefits are welcomed and noted as previously outlined they need to be balanced against the fact that the development is situated within an unsustainable location and will almost entirely be accessed by car. The lodge development also develops a large greenfield site which is not identified for development.

Do Members have any other comments to make over the environmental impact of the proposed development?

REPRESENTATIONS

84. Members are requested to note the considerable amount of matters raised both in support and objection to the proposals previously outline within this report.

PLANNING BALANCE / CONCLUSIONS

85. Officers have presently have concerns regarding the Green Belt impacts of the proposed development, in particular in relation to the holiday lodges, clubhouse extensions and adventure golf elements of the proposal which are considered to constitute inappropriate development within the Green Belt. The very special circumstances advanced by the applicant are noted, however Officers have concerns whether these clearly outweigh the considerable Green Belt harm which has been identified. Additional harm to the Special Landscape Area has also been identified by officers. Whilst it is noted that the development will have some economic benefits. The issue is whether the harm caused by the development is considered to be outweighed by other material considerations.
86. Members are respectfully requested to provide answers to the questions posed in the main body of this report, all of which are reproduced below for ease of reference and to offer any additional comments that they consider are appropriate regarding this development proposal:

- **Do Members wish to comment on the suggested Very Special Circumstances advanced by the applicant and whether they clearly outweigh the Green Belt harm?**
- **Do Members have any comments to make in respect of the landscape impact of the proposed development?**
- **Do Members have any thoughts or comments relating to the economic benefits of the development?**
- **Do Members have any comments to make in respect of the provision of the spa and eco lodge uses in this rural location?**
- **Do Members have any concerns or comments relating to ecology / nature / trees?**
- **Do Members have any concerns or comments relating to highway issues?**

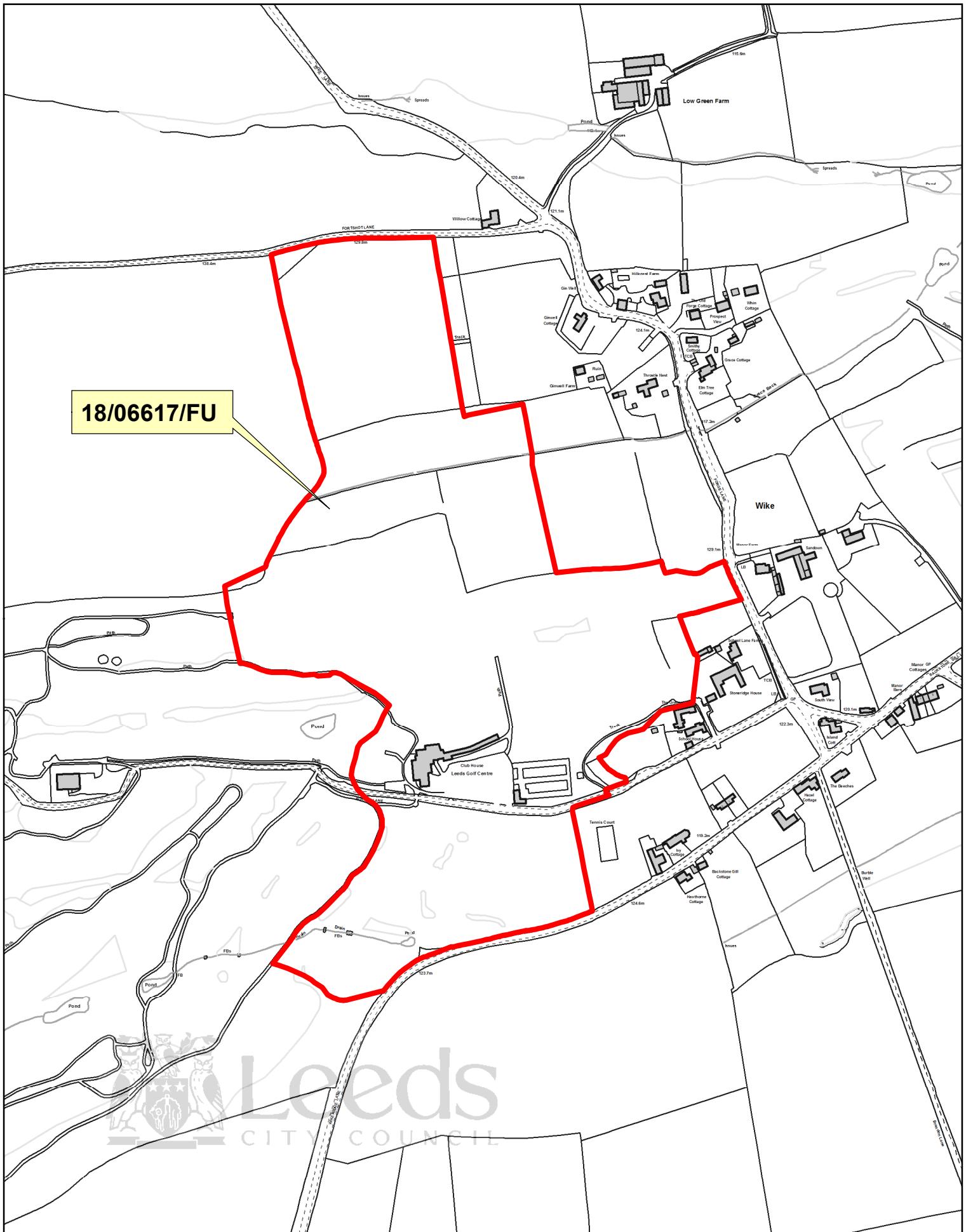
- **Do Members have any other comments to make over the environmental impact of the proposed development?**
- **Do Members wish to raise any other matters at this point in time?**

Background Papers:

Application file: 18/06617/FU

Certificate of Ownership: Signed by applicant

18/06617/FU



NORTH AND EAST PLANS PANEL

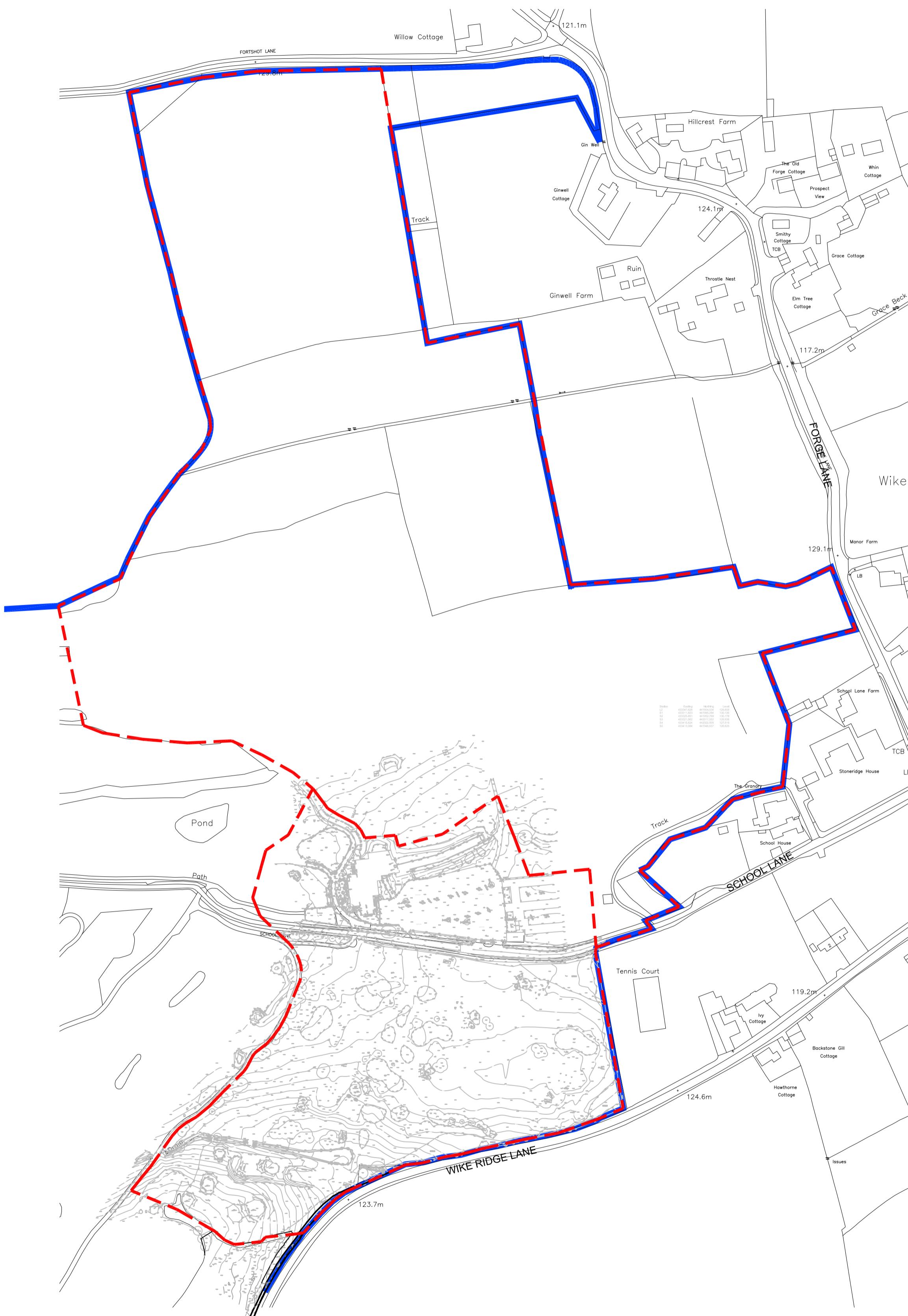
© Crown copyright and database rights 2020 Ordnance Survey 100019567

PRODUCED BY CITY DEVELOPMENT, GIS MAPPING & DATA TEAM, LEEDS CITY COUNCIL

SCALE : 1/5000



 Site ownership
 Red Line Boundary (Planning Application)



REVISIONS
This design is copyright ©

LEEDS GOLF CENTRE REDEVELOPMENT

WIKE, LEEDS

Site Location Plan

Drawn: AC	Scale: 1:2000 @ A2
Date: 16.05.18	Checked: CA

brewsterbye architects
 5 NORTH HILL ROAD
 HEADINGLEY
 LEEDS
 LS6 2EN
 Tel: 0113 2754000
 fax: 0113 2644250
 email: info@brewsterbye.co.uk

Dwg No: 241/19(02)001 #



REVISION: A DRAWN: MA DATE: 17/06/2018 CHECKED: AC

GREEN roof added per comments from the planning

REVISIONS

This design is copyright ©

LEEDS GOLF CENTRE
REDEVELOPMENT
WIKE, LEEDS

PROPOSED MASTERPLAN

Drawn: WH Scale: 1:1000 @A0 Date: 04.04.18 Checked: AC

brewsterbyer architects
5 NORTH HILL ROAD
HEADINGLEY
LEEDS
LS6 2EN
0113 2467000
0113 2646500
email: info@brewsterbyer.co.uk

Dwg No: 241/19(02)001 A