

**5 PLANNING CONSULTATION BY EAST HERTS
DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Paper RP/52/21

Redevelopment of the site to provide new community leisure and sports hub, comprising: removal of the existing speedway track and installation of new artificial grass football pitch with perimeter ball stop fencing, pitch divider net system and floodlights; conversion of existing spectator stand to provide new changing room block and clubhouse facilities; change of use of existing buildings to Class E for use as gymnasium, dance studio and sports and fitness centre; construction of new hospitality building; retrospective extension to the existing gymnastics club; and associated parking for all facilities at Rye House Stadium, Rye Road, Hoddesdon.

Presented by the Head of Planning

- 6 Such other business as in the opinion of the Chairman of the meeting is of sufficient urgency by reason of special circumstances to warrant consideration.**
- 7 Consider passing a resolution based on the principles of Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, excluding the public and press from the meeting for the items of business listed on Part II of the Agenda, on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in those sections of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act specified beneath each item. (There are no items currently listed for consideration in Part II.)**

28 July 2021

**Shaun Dawson
Chief Executive**

LEE VALLEY REGIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

**REGENERATION & PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
25 MARCH 2021**

Members in remote presence:	David Andrews (Chairman) Chris Kennedy (Vice Chairman) John Bevan David Gardner Denise Jones	Heather Johnson Graham McAndrew Gordon Nicholson Paul Osborn Mary Sartin
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Apologies Received From: Valerie Metcalfe

Officers in remote presence:	Claire Martin Beryl Foster Jon Carney Cath Patrick Marigold Wilberforce Paul Roper Sandra Bertschin Lindsey Johnson	- Head of Planning - Deputy Chief Executive - Corporate Director - Conservation Manager - Head of Property - Head of Project and Funding Delivery - Committee Services Manager - Committee Services Officer
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Also Present:	Steve Harrington Will Edmonds	- Planning Director, Regal London - Partner, Montagu Evans
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Part I

118 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Name	Agenda Item No.	Nature of Interest	<i>Prejudicial</i> ✓
<i>Denise Jones</i>	5	<i>Member from London Borough of Tower Hamlets and Trustee of Trinity Buoy Wharf</i>	<i>Non-Pecuniary</i>

119 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

THAT the Minutes of the Regeneration & Planning Committee meeting held on 21 January 2021 be approved and signed.

120 PUBLIC SPEAKING

Will Edmonds from Montagu Evans (applicant for the next agenda item) addressed Members and made the following points:

- We have been in discussion with Lee Valley officers for two years over the proposals for Orchard Wharf and how to develop the site.
- The site has been vacant for 30 years and is a safeguarded wharf. We have been looking at how to reactivate the wharf and create long term viability for the site.
- We envisage the site being less industrial, the wharf will be enclosed within a box to help mitigate any adverse impacts from the activities of the wharf. This is

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supported by the London Plan, along with delivering new logistics facility, improving air quality and creating new housing, 35% of which will be affordable.

- Our aspiration is to both reflect the marshland of East India Dock Basin (EIDB) and restore the historical link either physically or visually.
- The site is in the Leamouth tall building zone, where we can have up to 30 storey buildings. We have chosen 30 storeys as the tallest building on the site, which step down in height as you reach the Thames.
- Environmental impacts are in the Environmental Impact Assessment, and Lee Valley officers have raised a number of issues which are being considered further.
- We are committed to working with you for wider projects and enhancement of EIDB and would be willing to contribute with CIL monies.

121 PLANNING CONSULTATION BY LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

Paper RP/51/21

Hybrid application – Part A – Full planning application for redevelopment of site following demolition of all existing buildings and enabling works to provide a mixed use development consisting of the erection of five buildings between 15 and 30 storeys above a raised safeguarded wharf box and one standalone 20 storey building which would deliver:

- (i) a total of up to 826 dwellings (Class C3) and ancillary accommodation;
- (ii) up to 8,212m² gross internal area (GIA) of general Industrial/storage or distribution floorspace (Class B2/B8) including ancillary office accommodation; and
- (iii) 135m² (GIA) of flexible commercial floorspace (Class E).

Associated works include hard and soft landscaping; private amenity space; vehicular access and servicing facilities; car parking and cycle parking; and other works incidental to the proposals including works to the river wall.

Part B – Outline planning application for external waterborne freight infrastructure and all other related works (including marine works) for which all matters are reserved at:

Orchard Wharf, Orchard Place, Poplar, London, E14 0JY

The Head of Planning introduced the report, making the following points:

- This will be a lengthy consultation due to the applicants engaging a large number of stakeholders. There are likely to be revisions to the application in May and a re-consultation, so it is important that the Authority gets its formal comments through.

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- We are currently working with London Borough of Tower Hamlets (LBTH) on a partnership to develop a shared vision for EIDB, a report on this was heard at the Executive Committee today.
- The Authority supports the reactivation of the wharf with housing, however, there are concerns over the impact on EIDB, and the height and mass of the development. We would like to see a reduction in height of the buildings adjacent to EIDB and that these be set back further from the boundary to allow a larger landscape buffer.
- We agree that it makes sense to have a link into EIDB from Orchard Wharf, however, we have concerns over security at night and the impact of visitor use with the ecology of EIDB.
- We believe the surveys for birds and bats are insufficient, the applicant has agreed to look at them again.

Members agreed that the heights of the blocks adjacent to EIDB were too high and that they should be set back further from the boundary. One Member suggested allowing Blocks D & F to be higher in exchange for lowering Blocks A, B & C. The Chairman added that he felt the buildings should pick up on the cues of the surrounding landscape, such as curves in the river and roads. A Member also questioned whether the height of the buildings may create wind problems for EIDB.

A Member asked about connectivity and any plans to put in bridges or open up the Thames path. Steve Harrington replied that they aspired to open up the Thames path, however, they would be constrained by the requirements of the wharf. It is likely that some operations at certain times of day would make it unsafe for pedestrians. They are also looking at bridge connections, which is part of the wider GLA and Royal Docks initiatives. They will be giving £20 million in CIL monies and would be happy to see the money spent on this.

A Member asked whether there had been any interest from an operator for the wharf and wondered about the impact on the wider area in regards to HGV movements, noise and air pollution. It was also pointed out that there is already a working pontoon at Trinity Buoy Wharf and wondered if there might be a conflict of two working pontoons nearby.

Will Edmonds responded stating that it is a highly accessible wharf in London. They have had positive discussions with GLA over reactivating it for logistics. The creation of the box allows control over the activity within in regards to noise and air quality. They do expect a planning condition that the wharf must be brought back into use before the rest of the site is developed. Steve Harrington added that the Port of London Authority had wanted the whole site to be used as a wharf, they have agreed that 'last mile logistics' use could work and will support use of the river for freight. They approached delivery companies such as DHL in 2017 who were supportive of the idea, but could not commit as the development will not be ready until 2025 and their industry may have changed in that time. They are in talks with Tilbury Docks, where barges would move freight to Orchard Wharf for ongoing distribution north of the river.

A Member queried how the logistics would work at the wharf when the Thames is a tidal river, would that result in the site being operational 24 hours per day. Steve Harrington responded that there would be a management plan for the site, but it was anticipated that barges would arrive on the tide, with goods unloaded within the wharf and vehicle movements limited to set times of day.

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Members expressed concern over the impact on ecology of EIDB with more visitors. One Member suggested that the developers should be asked to pay to maintain the site for a set number of years.

Members agreed that it would be helpful to add an extra recommendation which highlighted their concerns over air pollution, climate change, noise pollution and the health and safety of pedestrians.

The Chairman thanked both Steve Harrington and Will Edmonds for coming in and answering questions and asked them to come back to the Head of Planning with any clarification on any of the points raised in the meeting. He also thanked the Head of Planning for her work.

- (1) that the London Borough of Tower Hamlets be informed that the Authority places a holding objection on the current hybrid application for Orchard Wharf in order that further consideration can be given to the relationship between the proposed development and East India Dock Basin in relation to:
- a) the height, mass and combined design treatment of blocks A, B and C and the proposal to lower the development alongside the Basin thereby reducing the impact of the residential blocks on the open, waterside character of the Basin;
 - b) the need for a greater set back between Block A and the boundary of East India Dock Basin both to provide additional landscaping/buffer planting and to safeguard bird flight paths;
 - c) the provision of additional planting and landscaping alongside the boundary with the Basin in front of Block B linking with and strengthening the proposed public realm area around Block C;
 - d) the proposed boundary treatment alongside the Basin and the options for future access into the Park from Orchard Place;
 - e) wintering bird and bird movement surveys and the need to update these taking into account the spring/autumn migration for which the valley is so important;
 - f) bat surveys and the need to undertake these on East India Dock Basin to ascertain use of the site by foraging and commuting bats, and to inform a sensitive lighting strategy both for the Construction Management Plan and for the lighting plan for the development;
 - g) further information required on overshadowing and any impacts this may cause to species that use the Basin;
 - h) enhancements and site improvements for the Basin to be funded via S106 contributions in order to help mitigate the impact of the development and the increased use of the Basin by local residents – a Schedule of projects is attached at Appendix G to this report;

**REGENERATION & PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
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- i) further details for the Safeguarded Wharf preferred option as this is developed;
 - j) further clarification is needed in regards to air pollution, climate change, noise pollution and the health and safety of pedestrians;
- (2) that the London Borough of Tower Hamlets be informed that the Authority would wish to see the detail and be consulted on any revisions in relation to the above matters prior to any grant of consent;
- (3) that should the London Borough of Tower Hamlets be minded to approve the planning application then the following matters should be secured by conditions or via planning obligations:
- a) the delivery of the Schedule of mitigation projects as listed in Appendix G to this report, which are considered necessary to protect East India Dock Basin from increased use and footfall;
 - b) detailed landscape conditions to include additional planting and habitat creation alongside the western boundary of the site between Blocks A and B and the Basin;
 - c) further ecological surveys for wintering bird and bird movements, including spring/autumn migration;
 - d) bat surveys on East India Dock Basin to identify foraging and commuting behaviour and inform lighting strategies both for the construction and final operational phase of the development;
 - e) wayfinding and access strategies for pedestrians and cyclists both during the construction phase and once development is complete to demonstrate how safe movement between the Regional Park, the development and main other local sites and transport hubs is to be maintained;
- (4) that the Authority be consulted on the above details in due course.

Chairman

Date

The meeting started at 12.30pm and ended at 12.45pm.

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**PLANNING CONSULTATION BY
EAST HERTS DISTRICT COUNCIL**

REDEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE TO PROVIDE NEW COMMUNITY LEISURE AND SPORTS HUB, COMPRISING: REMOVAL OF THE EXISTING SPEEDWAY TRACK AND INSTALLATION OF NEW ARTIFICIAL GRASS FOOTBALL PITCH WITH PERIMETER BALL STOP FENCING, PITCH DIVIDER NET SYSTEM AND FLOODLIGHTS; CONVERSION OF EXISTING SPECTATOR STAND TO PROVIDE NEW CHANGING ROOM BLOCK AND CLUBHOUSE FACILITIES; CHANGE OF USE OF EXISTING BUILDINGS TO CLASS E FOR USE AS GYMNASIUM, DANCE STUDIO AND SPORTS AND FITNESS CENTRE; CONSTRUCTION OF NEW HOSPITALITY BUILDING; RETROSPECTIVE EXTENSION TO THE EXISTING GYMNASTICS CLUB; AND ASSOCIATED PARKING FOR ALL FACILITIES AT RYE HOUSE STADIUM, RYE ROAD, HODDESDON

Presented by Head of Planning

SUMMARY

This planning application seeks to obtain permission for the creation of a new community leisure and sports hub at Rye House Stadium with the removal of the existing Rye House Speedway track and installation of new artificial grass football pitch, the conversion of existing buildings and spectator stand and construction of a new hospitality building. Certain elements of the application are retrospective. This proposal follows the withdrawal of the retrospective application submitted in December 2020 (Ref 3/20/2563/FUL) for removal of the speedway track and formation of grassed football pitches which Members had been due to consider at Regeneration & Planning Committee on the 21 January 2021 (Ref RP/50/21).

The Authority owns the Rye House stadium site and it is the tenant that has submitted the current application. Whilst the proposed sports pitch and new leisure and sporting uses are considered appropriate in terms of the Park Development Framework (PDF) Area Proposals, Green Belt and Local Plan policy there are some concerns about the lack of landscaping within the site and potential disturbance to the adjoining Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)/Special Protection Area (SPA) habitat and nocturnal wildlife corridors from the use of floodlighting and lighting in general and any light pollution they might cause. Conditions are suggested to overcome this matter.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Members Approve:
- (1) that East Herts District Council be informed that the whilst the Authority does not object to the development proposed the following conditions should be attached to any planning permission requiring that:
 - a) a landscape scheme be provided for the site, and in particular in association with the new hospitality suite and the conversion and extension of buildings close to the River Lee Navigation; this should seek to protect the existing willow tree along the Navigation corridor;
 - b) biodiversity enhancements are provided on site incorporated within the landscape scheme together with an appropriate management plan; this could include for example native tree or scrub planting along the site boundary, or the creation of wildflower meadow;
 - c) the provision of the new floodlighting and lighting in general should be accompanied by an ecological appraisal to assess any impacts on nocturnal wildlife, carried out in accordance with 'The Institution of Lighting Professionals (ILP) practical guidance note 08/18 Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK';
 - d) the hours of operation are limited to a set time in the evening in order to minimise disturbance from noise and light pollution; in particular, the use of floodlighting should be restricted and turned off by 10pm. This is to limit disturbance to the surrounding habitats and their use by protected species (for example bats); and
 - (2) the Authority would wish to be consulted on the landscape scheme and proposed biodiversity enhancements in due course.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND ITS HISTORY OF USE

- 1 The application site, known as the Rye House Stadium, is located in the north of the Regional Park to the east of Hoddesdon. It lies to the south east of Rye Road and covers an area of approx. 2.57 ha. The site comprises the Rye House speedway track, associated outbuildings and structures, spectator seating and extensive areas of hardstanding, a large proportion of which forms car parking (259 spaces in total). The River Lee Navigation runs alongside the western boundary of the site and to the east lies the Rye House Showman's Caravan Park. The Rye House Gatehouse and quayside are situated opposite

to the north together with the Rye Meads Nature Reserve and SSSI, part of the Lee Valley SPA which extends south of Rye Road to the east of the Stadium site. Please refer to the plan at Appendix A to this report.

- 2 **Access to the site is via Rye Road with a turning off adjacent to the Rye House pub. The adjacent pub has rights reserved to use a section of the entrance car park for car parking, a large proportion of which sits adjacent to the road frontage. As Landlord, the Authority also has rights reserved to use the car park (the Authority's moorings business currently use the southern section of the car park). The Rye House Kart Raceway is located immediately to the south of the application site. Both the speedway and the karting site are located within the Green Belt.**
- 3 **Site History**

The application site consists of the Speedway motorcycle track and forms part of a well-established leisure and sporting venue consisting of the Rye House Speedway Stadium and the Rye House Kart Raceway (Karting). The whole site including the application site falls within the Authority's ownership and is leased to Carter and Bailey Ltd. The current lease commenced on 17th July 1980 and is for a term of 50 years, thereby expiring in 2030. The Karting venue is operated under a sublease.
- 4 **The tenant also owns and operates the adjacent Rye-Assic Adventure Park site which opened in 2012 and is understood to be a popular venue for families. The land was initially leased from Thames Water and its freehold was subsequently acquired in 2014.**
- 5 **In 2019 the owners of the Karting attraction purchased shares of Carter & Bailey Limited and became directors and thereby took over the ownership of the lease of the Rye House Speedway stadium. They are effectively now the only operator of the whole site.**
- 6 **In November 2020 the tenant started to clear material previously deposited on site and commenced works to remove the speedway track without first obtaining planning consent or Landlord's consent for the change of use. Enforcement action was initiated by East Herts District Council (EHDC) in early December 2020, and then paused to allow for the consideration of a retrospective planning application submitted late December 2020 (Ref 3/20/2563/FUL). For various reasons this application was then withdrawn and was not therefore considered by Members at the Regeneration and Planning Committee in January 2021.**
- 7 **Change to the permitted use in the lease to allow the use of new facilities is yet to be formally considered by the Authority. This report deals purely with the Authority's response to a planning application for a change in type of leisure use and in its statutory role as planning consultee. In November 2020, the Authority became aware of the Rye House Action Group (RHAG). It is understood this is a group formed opposing the change of leisure use and it has been active in raising the profile of the Speedway venue, promoting the site as a valuable part of motor racing sporting heritage and objecting to the current application.**
- 8 **Currently two enforcement actions remain in relation to the application site one in relation to unauthorised works to the stadium track (E/20/0423/ENF) and the second relating to an unauthorised extension to an existing building, the 'Old**

Grand stand' (E/21/0015/ENF) which is not in accordance with Planning Consent 3/20/0650/FUL. The applicant has sought to address both the above matters within the current application.

POLICY BACKGROUND

- 9 Local Plan policy GBR1 states that applications within the Green Belt will be considered in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Paragraph 145 b) of the NPPF states that the construction of new buildings is inappropriate in the Green Belt except for the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use) for outdoor sport, outdoor recreationas long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.

Paragraph 146 of the NPPF, whilst placing the same emphasis on preserving openness identifies certain other forms of development which are not considered to be inappropriate in the Green Belt including d) the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction and e) material changes in the use of land (such as changes of use for outdoor sport or recreation...).

- 10 Local Plan policy is supportive of the Lee Valley Regional Park and the PDF, Policy CFLR51. The District Council seeks to support and work with the Park Authority and other stakeholders to deliver the PDF Area Proposals where these improve leisure and sporting opportunities for local communities, enhance access to open space and nature, and help expand educational, volunteering and health related activities.
- 11 Policy CFLR1 Open Space, Sport and Recreation offers support for proposals that provide "new open space, indoor and outdoor sport and recreation facilities which meet identified needs". These will be encouraged in suitable locations, served by a choice of sustainable travel options and should include measures to integrate such facilities into the landscape, including the creation of features which provide net benefits to biodiversity (CFLR1 III).
- 12 **Park Development Framework**
Sport and Recreation Proposals for Area 8.A.1 'Rye Meads and Stanstead Abbots' identify the need to work with operators and other stakeholders to consolidate and enhance leisure activities at Rye House Stadium and the Rye House Kart Raceway with substantial environmental improvements at the road frontage.
- 13 Landscape Strategy Proposals (A2 Rye Meads) aim to conserve and enhance the areas valued qualities, particularly its value for biodiversity and recreation and its rural, tranquil character, whilst seeking opportunities to improve and re-integrate areas that are more fragmented such as around the sewage works, depot and stadium which currently detract from the setting.

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

- 14 **Football Pitch**
The application proposal for a 'new community leisure and sports hub' comprises a number of elements the central piece of which is the new 100m by 62m competition size artificial grass pitch (AGP) specified as per Sports England and Football Association standards. This is to be installed in the

location of the existing speedway track. The details submitted state that the pitch surface will be formed of a "premium, long pile monofilament 3G synthetic surface suitable for football". This will provide an all-weather pitch better able to withstand high usage and which requires less maintenance and less water than traditional grass pitches.

- 15 The AGP will be enclosed with 4.5m high ball stop fencing to regulate access and prevent unauthorised use, contain footballs (goals will be placed around the field of play during different types of football matches and training), and protect the playing surface from contamination. The fence elevations will consist of a see-through steel mesh, polyester powder coated in a moss green colour; a fencing type commonly installed around artificial sports pitches. The application also includes the installation of a pitch divider post and curtain net system to enable the large pitch to be divided into multiple smaller pitches for use at the same time. This system can be removed and stored away during professional matches.

16 **Floodlighting**

Eight 15m high floodlight masts, each mounted with single luminaires are also proposed around the perimeter of the AGP. These will comprise relatively slim profile tubular steel shafts with a galvanised self-coloured finish. The existing 18 flood light standards which served the speedway track and which are fitted with two levels of lighting luminaires will be reduced in height with the removal of the upper higher level lighting. The smaller low-level luminaires which provided lighting to the existing access roadway, car park and pedestrian areas will be retained.

- 17 The other components of the application include:

Changing Rooms and Club House - The existing spectator stand on the south west edge of the site is to be converted to form new changing room and club house facilities. Primarily within the existing footprint of the spectator stand structure, a single storey extension will also be added to the back of the building at first floor level in order to provide the required servicing areas for the club house. This extension will be supported on stilts. The simple pent roof will give space on its South Westerly facing aspect to install a 49.5KWp solar energy system serving the development. The new building will be 6.7m in height, with the addition of a second storey, compared to the existing stand at 4.6m. Materials used in construction will match the existing buildings with a brick plinth and light grey Hardie Plank cladding at the lower level and at first floor level will include full height glazing, and smooth silver-grey cladding with Iron Grey accent panel.

The main clubroom and sports bar are to be located on the first floor, accessed via both stairs and accessible lift from within the reception hall. A viewing deck is provided on the northern elevation of the proposed building, giving spectators views over the proposed pitch, and also provides a deck link to the adjacent Hertfordshire Gymnastics Club building.

- 18 **Life Change Fitness and Hertfordshire Gymnastics Club** - Planning permission was granted in June 2020 (ref 3/20/0650) for the change of use of two outbuildings to gymnasiums (use class D2) and the retention of works for refurbishment of elevations to all buildings. No further changes are proposed to the first of these gymnasiums – the Life Changes Fitness building as part of this application. The second gymnasium, which houses Hertfordshire Gymnastics Club was formed from the conversion of the former main spectator stand

(concrete portal frame building) with a steel frame two storey extension to the south in the place of the former storage sheds and scaffold stand. As part of the current proposal retrospective planning permission is sought for the extension element.

Internally, on the ground floor the building now comprises a large open gymnasium area with sprung floor and competition standard runway, gymnast holding area, toilet and changing facilities, and reception area. Stairs lead up to a small mezzanine level which provides a café area, viewing gallery and access to raised terrace which will ultimately link to the viewing deck of the proposed changing rooms and club house facility.

- 19 **CRE8 Gym** - The building now occupied by CRE8 Gym was built and intended to be used as a motorcycle showroom by the previous owners of the site. This application seeks to change the use of the building from Sui Generis use to Class E (formerly Class D2). There are no proposed changes to the exterior of the building.
- 20 **Former Turnstile Building** - Planning permission was granted for the refurbishment of this building in June 2020 as part of planning permission reference 3/20/0650. This building was formerly used as the turnstile entrance to the speedway track and now forms a security office for the new community sports hub.
- 21 **Proposed Dance Studio** - To the south of the site is an existing small complex of buildings, most of which are to be demolished and a total of 139sqm floorspace removed. The Dance Studio will be housed in the existing pit building which will be externally and internally refurbished to facilitate its change of use with a small extension added to the east elevation to provide toilet facilities and reception area. This building will be also be refurbished and finished with a brick plinth and clad in light grey Hardie Plank cladding to match the other buildings on site. The proposed external elevations were previously approved as part of planning permission 3/20/0650.
- 22 **Hospitality Suite** – this proposed new building is identical to the building previously approved under planning permission reference 3/13/0756 in July 2013 which was never implemented. The applicant proposes to relocate this building to the south east boundary of the application site, placing it in a central location where it can be accessed by users of both the go-kart track and the new community sports hub. In order to facilitate the construction of the building in its new proposed location, two earth bunds of approximately 1.8m - 2.4m high will need to be removed. It is stated that these bunds "do not serve any environmental or flood protection purposes and were formed of surplus waste from other former projects by the previous owner in order to create a boundary between the go-kart and speedway sites. Their removal will help facilitate an increased surface area for run off within the Flood Plain".

The building will be a steel portal frame construction with silver grey / iron grey smooth cladding to match the proposed upper lift of the club house building. It will comprise a single storey of accommodation, built on a structure of stilts and will sit at first floor level. The ground floor void will provide additional parking spaces. The building will be a maximum of 8.5m in height, with the majority of the building standing between 5.8m and 7.2m high with a curved roof feature between two towers. The first-floor accommodation will include a 233sqm open plan hospitality/function suite, kitchen and toilet facilities with stairs and an

accessible lift to provide access. The northern elevation will be predominantly glazed to provide views over the proposed football pitches. Likewise, the southern elevation will also be glazed to allow views over the existing adjacent Go-Kart track and will provide access to the external terrace. Please refer to Appendices B, C and D to this report, for location of the buildings detailed above and examples of materials used in refurbishment under existing permissions.

23 Flood Risk

The application is located within Flood Zone 3 and accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment. This has considered flood risk from various sources such as fluvial, sewers, groundwater reservoirs and drains and concluded that there is a medium risk from surface water flooding, and a low risk from reservoir flooding. The site operators were considered to be well prepared in terms of a flood management plan for the site and additional guidance on emergency response procedures in the event of flooding to the site has been provided. The assessment found that as the proposal will retain existing ground levels, there will be no displacement of flood waters. The drainage for the proposed pitches will mimic and utilise the natural process and as such it is considered that the development will not impact on flood risk elsewhere

24 Transport

The application includes provision for a total of 259 car parking spaces (including 12 spaces for disabled parking) to service all proposed facilities, for use by both staff and visitors. 52 long term, secure, covered cycle spaces are also included and 5 active electric charging spaces will be provided, with passive provision for an additional 5 should the need arise. This is considered sufficient to accommodate the peak demand for all proposed uses on-site.

25 A Transport Assessment accompanies the application which found that the only expected increase in vehicle trip generation is likely to be associated with the proposed new football pitch as Hertfordshire Gymnastics Club, CR8 Gym and Life Change Fitness are already in use on site. The Dance Studio will run classes after school during the week and all-day Saturday and with a membership of 200 students the number of trips split across these sessions is considered to be low and unlikely to impact on proposed uses. The football pitch is likely to generate an increase in the number of vehicle trips, with the peak total occurring on a Saturday between 13:00-14:00 and 18:00-19:00. This will generate in the region of an additional 22 vehicle trips across both peak hours on a Saturday, not taking into consideration spectators and other members which will increase the figure. This has been compared to the former speedway track use, which generated approximately 3,000 spectators for events on one day of the week. The football pitch is expected to generate a significantly lower number of trips to that of the former use of the site and a much smaller number of trips from outside the area, except when tournaments take place and teams travel in from further afield.

26 The majority of trips generated by the hospitality building and club house are considered likely to be linked trips, i.e. trips already being undertaken for the other uses on-site, and therefore it is unlikely that these elements will create their own material additional trip generation. These elements will also help to spread the departure profile of the users of the other facilities.

27 Viability and Statement of Need

The applicant makes reference in the Planning and Economic statement to the demise of the speedway business following poor spectator attendance and the

fact that the business went bankrupt despite attempts to diversify uses on site to support the sport financially. The applicant also makes a case for the economic and community benefits that the investment in the site to date has achieved citing the number of locally owned, sports enterprises now on site, the 950 paying clients who use the facilities, and the 25 members of staff employed across the various businesses. The applicant is proposing that a community use plan will be drawn up between all the interested sports clubs and partners to ensure the future use of the proposed community sports hub by the widest possible demographic.

- 28 The Planning and Economic Statement provides an assessment of need highlighting the importance of sport and personal fitness as part of a healthy lifestyle and setting out more detail on the use and membership of each leisure and sporting component proposed or already operating on site. It also includes a specific Statement of Need in relation to the use of the AGP, detailing potential users, methods of operation and an indicative proposed user time table.

PLANNING APPRAISAL

29 Principle of Development

Park Plan proposals identify a need to work with operators and other stakeholders to consolidate and enhance the leisure focus at the Rye House Stadium site. However, successive operators have failed over more recent years to reverse the decline of the speedway venue, and/or to reinvigorate what was a regional sporting and leisure use. This application is seeking to replace the speedway facility with another sporting and leisure use. Although the proposed use is more locally focused there are elements that provide for sub regional activity such as the football tournaments and it is understood the Hertfordshire Gymnastics Club provides competition level facilities allowing gymnastics meets and competitions up to a national level to be hosted.

- 30 In terms of Green Belt policy, the proposed football pitch would be considered appropriate development, providing for outdoor sporting use and preserving openness. The built components of the proposal are also likely to be considered as exceptions to Green Belt policy, and a precedent has been set with the recent planning consents for the conversion of 3 of the buildings on site and also in relation to the older 2013 consent achieved for the development of the new hospitality suite, albeit this was proposed on the adjoining Karting site.
- 31 Local Plan policies also support the creation of new sporting opportunities where they provide for local communities and the applicant has demonstrated support for the proposed football facilities from the locally based Hoddesdon Town Youth Football Club and provides additional detail in the statement of need. It is understood that this is part of the applicant's aim to engage with the local community and offer a range of family based sporting and leisure activities.
- 32 In relation to the Regional Park the conversion of the existing spectator stand to form new changing room and club house facilities, the refurbishment of, and small extension to the pit building to form the Dance Studio, the change of use associated with the CRE8 Gym and the retrospective element of the Hertfordshire Gymnastics Club are all acceptable in principle, bringing existing buildings back into sporting and leisure uses as part of a comprehensive proposal for the site. Views of the floodlights will be possible to some extent from the opposite side of the River Lee Navigation towpath between the buildings but would be read as part of the sporting related environment and in

association with the Karting circuit.

- 33 The proposed hospitality suite will be a significant new building within the site although its central location and dual function servicing both the football and karting activities is arguably more appropriate than its previous location within the southern part of the Karting site close to the River Lee Navigation. In this location it forms part of the established sporting and leisure landscape and will be viewed within the context of the football pitch and karting circuit. The building design is identical to the previous proposal to which the Authority raised no objections and will complement the other refurbished and proposed buildings on site.

34 **Design, Landscaping, and Boundary Treatment**

The approach to the refurbishment of buildings and the wider application site, which is evident on site in those structures already converted, demonstrates a use of quality materials and adherence to a unifying design concept, appropriate to the practical requirements of the various proposed and established sporting and fitness uses.

- 35 Further detail on landscaping is however required and a landscape plan for the site should be sought. The buildings are set within extensive areas of paving, a large proportion of which is given over to parking, but there are other areas of the site which would benefit from a 'softer' landscape treatment and some attention to boundary treatment especially with the River Lee Navigation. A small 'paved garden' area provided in association with the existing Life Change Fitness Centre (permission granted in 2020), includes raised planters and seating and provides an example of how other landscape elements and planting could be introduced onto the site to help break up the paved treatment. There are also opportunities in association with the new hospitality building; given the requirements for ground works to remove the existing mounds; a more imaginative scheme could be brought forward in this area.

- 36 It would also be appropriate to seek some additional planting as part of the proposals to convert the remaining stand into the football club house and changing rooms; there is more space to the south of the building and east of the River Lee Navigation to facilitate some planting. Elsewhere the existing buildings sit within close proximity to the River Lee Navigation which runs along the south west boundary of the application site and there is limited space between to provide planting or otherwise soften the building edge in relation to the waterway corridor. The canal side edge provides a number of mooring points with little canal side vegetation apart from one large willow tree which is located within close proximity to the existing HGC building. This should be retained and protected particularly whilst further construction works take place.

- 37 Biodiversity enhancements within the site or along its boundaries should also be considered as an integral part of the landscape scheme; tree or scrub planting, or wildflower meadow creation for example would be appropriate and provide a net gain to the development of the site. These would need to be managed appropriately, potentially in association with the wider landscape enhancements.

38 **Lighting and Floodlighting**

The application site will be more intensively used than previously, with additional opportunities for lighting and light spill – for example a number of the buildings incorporate first floor terraces and glazed frontages introducing new areas of

lighting on site. The site lies within close proximity to the SSSI at Rye Meads which also forms part of the Lee Valley Special Protection Area (SPA), and the wildlife corridor created by the River Lee Navigation to the west. However, the change in use from Speedway circuit to football pitch and new community sports and leisure hub is unlikely to have a negative impact on these areas providing potential issues of conflict relating to lighting, floodlighting and noise disturbance can be controlled via planning conditions and modes of operation.

- 39 Where new floodlighting or an increase in other forms of artificial lighting is planned this should be accompanied by an ecological assessment for impacts on bats carried out in accordance with The Institution of Lighting Professionals (ILP) practical guidance note 08/18 'Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK'. It is noted that the applicant is following the recommendations of ILP in the design and location of the floodlights for the AGP and has demonstrated through the accompanying Floodlighting Design document that the 15m mounting height for the new floodlight masts will ensure minimal horizontal and vertical overspill and avoid sky glow whilst providing good uniform coverage over the field of play and perimeter. Further assessment is required in relation to ecological factors.
- 40 Restricting the hours of operation would also help to minimise disturbance from noise pollution and this should be considered in tandem with the restrictions on night time use of the floodlights. Currently the applicant proposes floodlight use until 22.00hrs and this should be controlled via condition.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 41 These are addressed in the body of the report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 42 There are no financial implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 43 Planning applications referred to this Authority are submitted under the consultative arrangements of Section 14 (4-7) of the Lee Valley Regional Park Act 1966. The Act requires a local planning authority to consult with the Authority on any planning application for development, whether within the designated area of the Park or not, which might affect any part of the Park.
- 44 The Park Act enables the Authority to make representations to the local planning authority which they shall take into account when determining the planning application.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 45 There are no risk management implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 46 There are no equality implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

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BACKGROUND REPORTS

Application Papers 21.055

July 2021

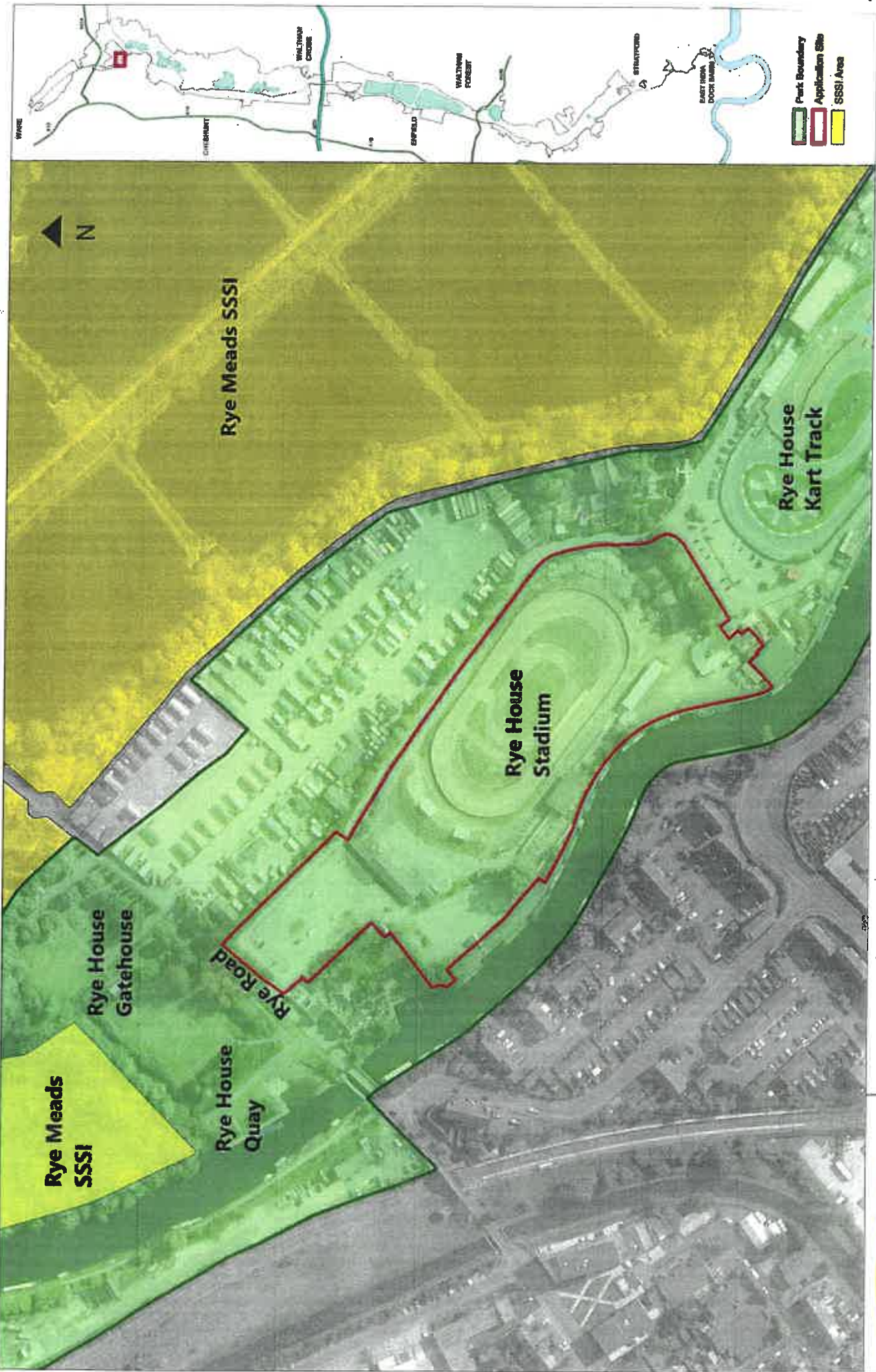
APPENDICES ATTACHED

Appendix A	Plan of the application site
Appendix B	Existing site layout plan
Appendix C	Proposed site layout plan
Appendix D	Images of converted and proposed buildings

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

PDF	Park Development Framework
SPA	Special Protection Area
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
AGP	Artificial Grass Pitch
HTYFC	Hoddesdon Town Youth Football Club
RHAG	Rye House Action Group
ILP	Institution of Lighting Professionals
EHDC	East Herts District Council
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework

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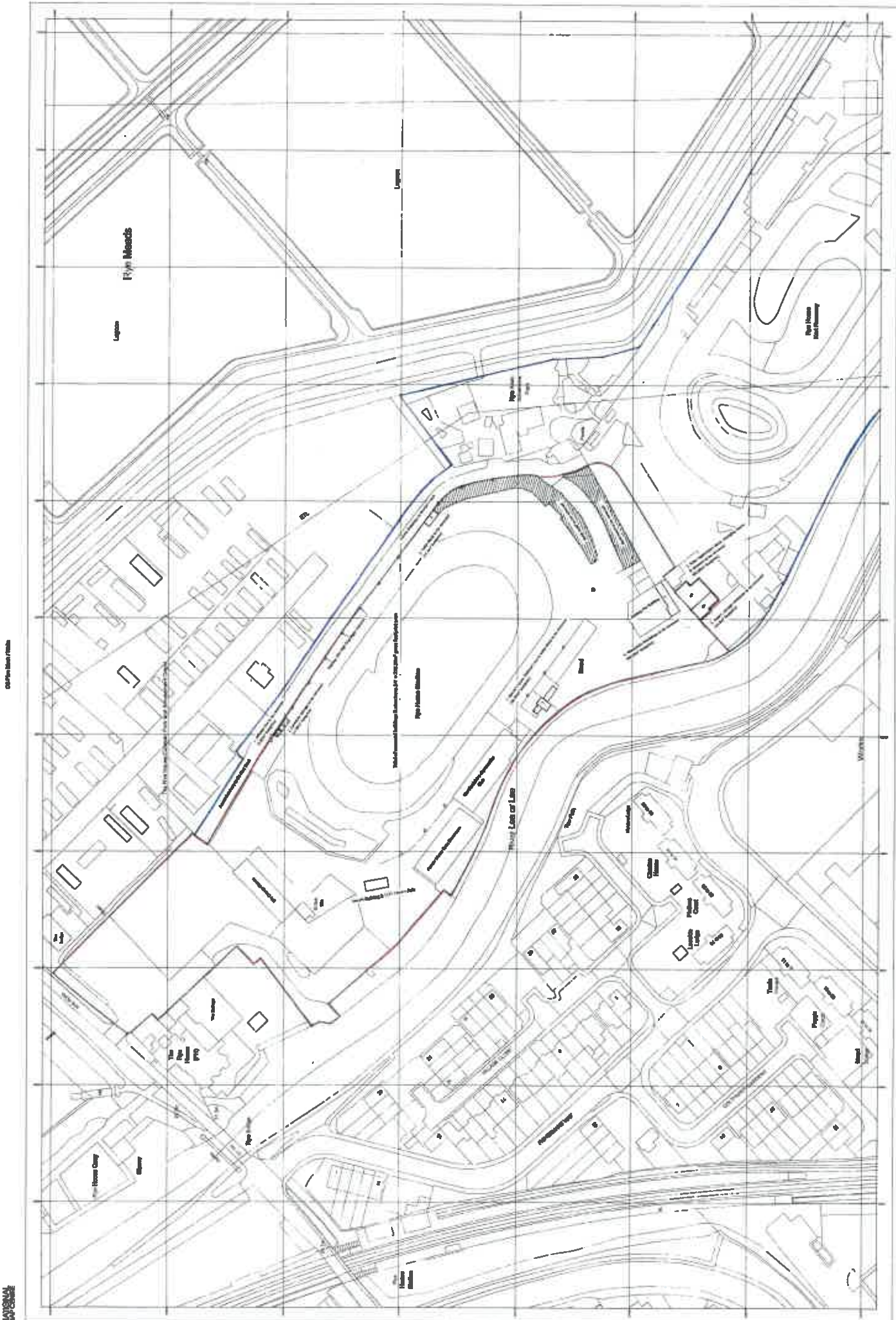
Proposed New Community Leisure and Sports Hub, Rye House Stadium, Rye Road

1:2500 @ A4
28.07.21

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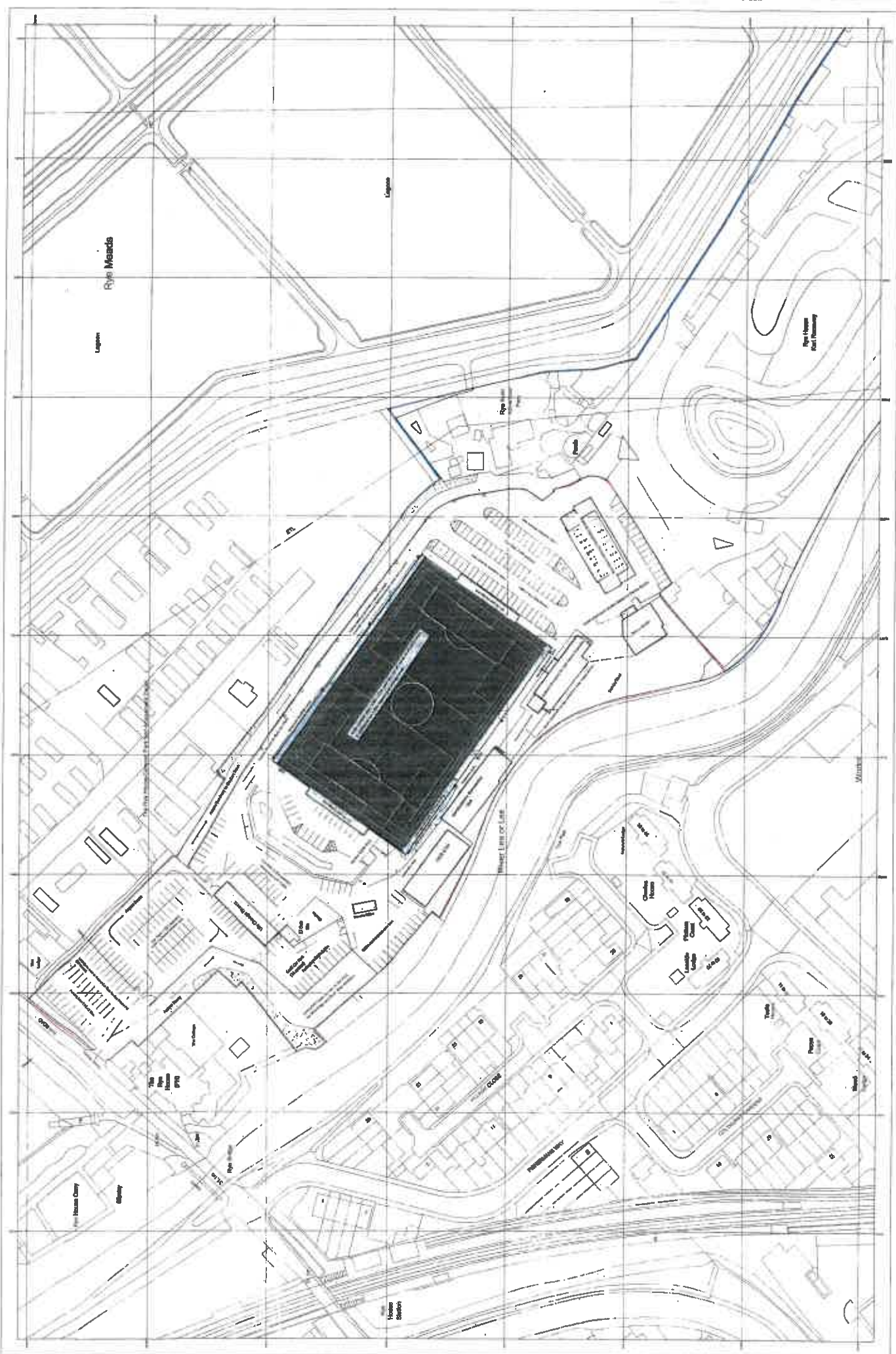












Examples of existing buildings that have been converted – extract from Design and Access Statement



Proposed Hospitality Building

