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App No : 18/06215/FUL App Type : FUL

Application for : Change of use of land used as an ancillary car park for Marlow Rugby Club to allow the car park to be used by Globe Business Park Monday to Friday (8am-6pm) and solely by Club Members outside of these times with new cycle parking for Marlow Rugby Club

At Marlow Rugby Club, Riverwoods Drive, Marlow, Buckinghamshire SL7 1QU

Date Received : 11/05/18 Applicant : Marlow Rugby Club

Target date for decision: 06/07/18

## 1. **Summary**

- 1.1. Permission is sought for the change of use of the car park of Marlow Rugby Club (MRC) to allow the car park to be used by Globe Business Park. The use sought is for Monday to Friday (8am-6pm) with the car park being solely for the use of MRC Members outside of these times. New cycle parking is also proposed for the MRC.
- 1.2. The car park is a triangular area of land located to the west of the club house and south of the Marlow branch line. It currently comprises an area partly tarmacked and partly gravel/unbound surface. Operational works include a reduction in the area that is tarmacked, a new entrance gate and enhancements to footpath Marlow 19 which runs along the northern edge of the car park. The site would remain as a car park, albeit that the proposal would involve an intensification in the use of the car park.
- 1.3. The application site is located in the Green Belt, a Green Infrastructure Area and the floodplain (Flood Zone 2/3 – High /Low –Medium Risk), is part of the area known as the Marlow Gravel Pits and is in non-residential parking Zone 2.
- 1.4. On balance, the proposal is considered to accord with Green Belt policy and the intensification in use would not be considered to have a significant impact on openness, as the site is relatively visually self-contained. It would also accord with development plan policies aimed at resolving the parking issues at Globe Business Park (GBP), potentially making the park more attractive to potential occupiers, with the economic and social benefits this would bring. It would not frustrate proposals to establish a Country Park on the former Marlow Gravel Pits and would help to support MRC outreach programme, notably the junior programme of activities.
- 1.5. Subject to conditions the proposal raises no issues with regards to:
  - Green Belt
  - SuDS and flooding
  - Highway safety
  - Highway capacity
  - Ecological
  - Landscape
  - Establishment of a new country park at Marlow Gravel pits
- 1.6. However, the proposal would concentrate additional traffic on the limited number of largely residential roads that can provide access to Marlow Rugby Club. This concentration would lead to an unacceptable loss of amenity for local residents and other users of the highway, by means of increased inconvenience and disruption caused by additional noise, fumes and congestion. The proposal is considered to be contrary to policies CP9 (Sense of Place), DM33 (Managing Carbon Emissions: Transport and Energy Generation) and DM35 (Placemaking and Design Quality) of the

Adopted Wycombe District Local Plan (Adopted August 2019).

- 1.7. This loss of amenity is, on balance, considered to outweigh the planning benefits of the development and the application is therefore, recommend for refusal.

## **2. The Application**

- 2.1. Permission is sought for the change of use of the car park of Marlow Rugby Club (MRC) to allow the car park to be used by Globe Business Park. The use sought is for Monday to Friday (8am-6pm) with the car park being solely for the use of MRC Members outside of these times. New cycle parking is also proposed for the MRC.
- 2.2. The car park is a triangular area of land located to the west of the club house and south of the Marlow branch line. It currently comprises an area partly tarmaced and partly gravel/unbound surface. The land is generally level with a very gentle slope to the south. MRC is separated from Globe Business Park (GBP) by the railway line, although there is a pedestrian level crossing at the end of Grossmore Lane which leads into Fieldhouse Lane.
- 2.3. The proposal is to refurbish the existing surfacing and mark out the spaces to provide a total of 136, including 11 disabled spaces in rows which run from north to south across the site. Along the northern side of the spaces a 2m wide footway would be delineated with white lines. A barrier with keycode/fob access panel is proposed at the entrance. Parking for 32 cycles is shown to be located at the north east corner of the car park.
- 2.4. The application site is located in the Green Belt, a Green Infrastructure Area and the floodplain (Flood Zone 2/3 – High /Low –Medium Risk), is part of the area known as the Marlow Gravel Pits and is in non-residential parking Zone 2.
- 2.5. The application is accompanied by:
- a) Planning Design and Access Statement
  - b) Transport Assessment
  - c) Flood Risk Assessment
  - d) Covering Letter
- 2.6. The application has been amended a number of times in response to comments made by statutory consultees including the Buckinghamshire County Highway Authority (CHA), the County Rights of Way Officer and the Local Lead Flood Authority (LLFA).

## **3. Working with the applicant/agent**

In accordance with paragraph 38 of the NPPF (2019) Wycombe District Council (WDC) approach decision-taking in a positive and creative way taking a proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions and work proactively with applicants to secure developments. WDC work with the applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by offering a pre-application advice service, and as appropriate updating applications/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application. In this instance the applicant/agent was updated of issues after the initial site visit and was provided the opportunity to submit amendments to the scheme/address issues. The application was considered by the Planning Committee.

## **4. Relevant Planning History**

- 4.1. The MRC site has a long history of temporary permissions for the siting of residential caravans and extensions to the club house dating from the 1990's and before. More recent applications relate to lighting of the pitches and adverts. None are relevant to this current application part from:
- 4.2. 14/07360/FUL - Change of use of ancillary storage building from Class B8 (storage and distribution) to be used as taxi booking office (sui-generis) and provision of 2 x parking spaces. Permitted and implemented
- 4.3. The following permissions granted and implemented on neighbouring sites are so of relevance:

- 4.4. 17/06833/FUL - Creation of car park providing 200 spaces with associated lighting, landscaping and access for a temporary period of 5 years at Land between A404 and Clubhouse Water Sports Club, Fieldhouse Lane, Marlow. (Permission granted until 31<sup>st</sup> January 2023). An extension was sought to this car park under application No. 19/06567/FUL but was withdrawn before determination.
- 4.5. 16/08396/FUL - Change of use of land to a car park providing 102 spaces with 8 x 6m high single lighting columns and 9 x 6m high twin lighting columns, associated drainage and alterations to access at site of Former Chelton Building, Thames Industrial Estate, Fieldhouse Lane, Marlow.
- 4.6. 17/07956/FUL - Change of use of land to car park and the erection of single decked car park and associated alteration to access at site of Former Chelton Building, Thames Industrial Estate, Fieldhouse Lane, Marlow.

## 5. **Issues and Policy considerations**

### **Principle and Location of Development**

Wycombe District Local Plan (August 2019): CP1 (Sustainable Development), CP3 (Settlement Strategy), Policy MR7 (Globe Business Park), DM33 (Managing Carbon Emissions, Transport and Energy Generation), DM42 (Managing Development in the Green Belt)

DSA: DM1 (Presumption in favour of sustainable development), DM6 (Mixed-use development)

### **Development Plan Framework**

- 5.1. For the purposes of considering this application the relevant parts of the Development Plan are the Wycombe District Local Plan (August 2019) and the Delivery and Site Allocations Plan (July 2013).

#### **Green Belt**

- 5.2. The NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework) indicates at paragraph 133 the great importance attached to the Green Belt, the fundamental aim of which is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. Development is inappropriate the exceptions to inappropriate development are set out in paragraphs 145 and 146 of the NPPF. This reflected in the policy DM42 (Managing Development in the Green Belt) regard there is a degree of inconsistency between the development plan and the NPPF.
- 5.3. The proposal relates to the use of the land and therefore paragraph 146 is applicable. The applicant's planning statement indicates that land already operates as a car park and that it will continue to do so under this application. The difference, as proposed through this application, relates to how the car park will be used and to deliver a more formalised parking arrangement which can allow the car park to be used both to serve the needs of the Rugby Club and to provide commercial parking (Monday - Friday, 8am-6pm) for Globe Park employees.
- 5.4. A change of use of land is no longer one of the exceptions within Green Belt policy. However, given that the land already functions as a car park it is questionable whether or not the use of the land is changing per se as it will remain a car park albeit one which is used in a different manner.
- 5.5. Alternatively, the planning statement suggests that the proposal could be considered as a local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location. As such it would be not inappropriate in the Green Belt provided it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.
- 5.6. What might constitute "local transport infrastructure" in paragraph 145 is not defined in the NFFP or the PPG. Neither is it defined in any Development Plan policies.

- 5.7. The main purpose of the car park is to provide an income stream for the Rugby Club and to provide parking to address some of the significant parking problems in GBP. Wycombe District Council helped established a Business Improvement District (BID) for GBP in 2015. The BID Board of Directors is made up of senior management from the Business Park and associated Stakeholders. Their remit is to develop schemes to improve and add value to GBP and the local area. Poor access and lack of parking are key issues identified as making the Business Park less attractive to potential occupiers and investors. This has been reflected in Policy MR7 (Globe Business Park) which seeks to support opportunities to improve access and provide new car parking both on and off-site.
- 5.8. The BID Board commissioned the Globe Business Park Parking Survey (April 2017) which concluded that there was a shortfall of around 350 parking spaces for the then current level of occupancy. At that point there was a 37% vacancy rate of floor space within GBP and future parking requirements based on full occupancy would require a further 600 spaces giving rise to an overall requirement of 950 spaces.
- 5.9. While the permission granted on the Former Chelton Building and Land between A404 and Clubhouse Water Sports Club, both in Fieldhouse Lane between them provide some 375 spaces. There remains a shortfall of parking to serve the needs of GBP.
- 5.10. It is understood that this current proposal has evolved through discussions with BID as a way of assisting in alleviating traffic congestion on surrounding residential roads whilst delivering a car park that is within short walking distance, or by shuttle bus to GBP, managed through a Parking Strategy between the BID and MRC.
- 5.11. Based on this assessment, the parking will only be available to businesses which have a long term agreement with BID and/or the landowner and therefore provides only a localised parking facility. As such, there are no wider public benefits arising from this car parking facility and cannot be considered as local transport infrastructure. Furthermore to meet the requirements of a local transport infrastructure it would need to demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location. The evidence presented does not demonstrate that the site has to be in the Green Belt but merely that the site benefits from being already used as a car park, has capacity on weekdays to accommodate more parking and is in a convenient location adjacent to GBP albeit on the other side of the railway line and somewhat remote from businesses located within the Business Park.

Effect on Openness and the purposes of including land within the GB

- 5.12. Openness of the Green Belt can generally be described as an absence of built form, and having both a spatial and visual aspect. The land is currently used as a car park with an informal hard surface and has some street furniture, such as lighting columns, which are proposed to be retained. Surface finishes would be refurbished and parking spaces better defined, given the site more formality. This will not impact openness and in any event the owners could resurface the car park, without permission being required, providing they replace like for like.
- 5.13. In terms of the visual aspect, the site is visible from the entrance gate and from the railway line, it is largely open with trees and vegetation to the south. Existing vegetation will be unaffected. A new entrance barrier is proposed but as the site is already gated this will have no impact on openness. On this basis it is considered that the proposal 'tidies up' the site which will otherwise remain as existing.
- 5.14. Taking these factors together officer's consider the car park will not reduce the openness of the Green Belt.
- 5.15. In conclusion, the development does not constitute an exception to inappropriate development within paragraph 146 of the NPPF. It therefore falls to be considered as "inappropriate development" which, by definition, is harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. These will be considered at the end of the report. However, it is noted here that the proposal is not considered

to erode the openness of the Green Belt.

### **Transport matters and parking**

Wycombe District Local Plan (August 2019): CP7 (Delivering the infrastructure to support growth), MR7 (Globe Business Park), DM33 (Managing Carbon Emissions, Transport and Energy Generation)

DSA: DM2 (Transport requirements of development sites)

Buckinghamshire Countywide Parking Guidance.

- 5.16. Adopted policy is generally supportive of proposals aimed at supporting or serving existing developments. The supporting text of Policy MR7 recognises that GBP is currently not fulfilling its full potential and that the shortage of parking may be a contributory factor. It therefore supports the principle of the provision of new car parking on and off the business park to serve the needs of the park.
- 5.17. The site accesses onto Gossmore Lane adjacent to the junction with Riverwoods Drive. Gossmore Lane is an unclassified predominantly residential road, with no parking or waiting restrictions in place. It is a road that benefits from a pedestrian footway to one side of the carriageway, but does not benefit from street lighting.
- 5.18. Gossmore Lane is essentially a cul-de-sac with the MRC and Riverswood Drive at the end on the east side the bridge which carries the A404. In order to gain access to Gossmore Lane from the A4155, the main arterial route through Marlow, vehicles would have to travel through what is largely a residential area. The most direct routes being via Glade Road/Lock Road/River Park Drive or via the High Street/Station Road/Mill Road or Lock Road into Gossmore Lane.
- 5.19. The County Highway Authority was consulted on the application and initially raised a number of concerns and objections, concluding that while a number of these could be overcome, it ultimately had insufficient information on which to be able to fully judge the highway implications of the proposals. In particular the application lacked information on the impact of re-routing traffic originally detained for GBP on the wider network within the town.
- 5.20. The applicant responded by providing additional information which the CHA duly assessed. This second assessment concluded that the proposal raised no issues of highway capacity. The only highway safety concern was the suitability of the informal pedestrian crossing of Gossmore Lane along the desire line between the application site and GBP to safely accommodate the additional pedestrian activity generated by the development. The applicant subsequently discussed improvements to this crossing, including dropping the kerb and providing lighting.
- 5.21. In commenting on congestion the CHA has concluded that the impacts of the development would not approach a severe residual cumulative impact upon the public highway. Consequently, an objection based on this could not be reasonably sustained on the basis of highway safety or capacity. The impact that would result from the proposed development is considered to be a highway amenity impact, a matter that falls outside the remit of the CHA, but does have to be considered by the Local Planning Authority. This is discussed below.
- 5.22. The access to MRC is considered to be able to function safely and in accordance with national guidance on sight stopping distances.
- 5.23. The parking spaces proposed within the site meet the size requirements of the Buckinghamshire Countywide Parking Guidance.

### **Raising the quality of place making and design**

Wycombe District Local Plan (August 2019): CP9 (Sense of place), DM34 (Delivering Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity in Development), DM35 (Placemaking and Design Quality)

DSA: DM11 (Green networks and infrastructure),

- 5.24. Policies CP9 and DM35 of the Adopted Local Plan seek high standards of design and

layout to be achieved through the creation of positive, attractive and safe public and private environments, with locally distinctive qualities of place to be reinforced by enhancing landscape and built characteristics of the site and wider context.

- 5.25. The proposed layout of the car parking is regimented and a more organic layout with additional landscaping would be desirable. However, introducing this could actually lead to a reduction in the number of spaces available on a site and cannot be insisted upon, when the site has been used for parking for a period in excess of 30 years.
- 5.26. The nature of the car park is that of an open area, with areas of tarmac and gravel in various states of repair. The proposal would reduce the amount of tarmac limiting this to the circulation areas in the northern section of the car park. The remainder of the site would be finished in unbounded gravel. This surfacing will have a softer impact than a more traditional hard surfacing material.
- 5.27. All existing vegetation and boundary treatments are to be retained with a new car park barrier provided at the entrance.
- 5.28. As the alterations amount to little more than upgrading the existing car park, the impact of the proposal is considered acceptable.

### **Amenity issues**

Wycombe District Local Plan (August 2019): CP9 (Sense of Place), DM33 (Managing Carbon Emissions: Transport and Energy Generation) and DM35 (Placemaking and Design Quality),

- 5.29. Policy CP9 recognises that the district is very varied and seeks to achieve a high quality of design, improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions. Developments should optimise the density of development to make best use of land whilst respecting the distinctive character of the area.
- 5.30. Policy DM33 seeks to provide safe, direct and convenient access for all modes that meets the needs of the development; provide for parking sufficient to meet the needs of future occupants and to ensure there is no significant adverse impact from overspill parking, whilst ensuring that any material adverse impacts on existing and forecast traffic conditions are mitigated.
- 5.31. Policy DM35 requires all development to improve the character of the area and the way it functions. Developments are expected to respond positively to their surroundings, through an understanding of the functions, qualities and character of the of the developments natural and built context. Opportunities for improvements and enhancements should be maximised and significant adverse impacts on the amenities of neighbouring land and property should be prevented.
- 5.32. The site is too far from neighbouring residential properties for the parking to have any impact in terms of loss of privacy, light or outlook.
- 5.33. The impact will instead stem from the additional traffic which will be re-routed throughout streets which are largely residential, causing additional noise, fumes and congestion.
- 5.34. With the more intensive use of the car park there will be a general increase in activity and, with so few access routes available to MRC, traffic will be channelled through streets, some of which, at least anecdotally, already suffer from a degree of congestion that causes distress and inconvenience to residents. This distress would be increased by the development and have an impact on people's quality of life; whether that be difficulty in accessing or parking near their house; or highway safety fears caused by more traffic travelling at times above the speed limit. It would be a retrograde step to encourage traffic, that currently either by-passes the town or only passes through on the main road, onto some of the town's most congested streets, with the implications this would have for the quality of life of local residents and other road users who already use these streets.
- 5.35. These streets are often heavily parked, whether that be by residents, those who work

in the area, or visitors. The recently added yellow lines around key junctions provide some additional control, but do nothing to alleviate the volume of traffic that the development would generate, or the resulting increased congestion.

- 5.36. The proposal is thus considered to be contrary to adopted policies CP9 (Sense of Place), DM33 (Managing Carbon Emissions: Transport and Energy Generation) and DM35 (Placemaking and Design Quality).

### **Environmental issues**

Wycombe District Local Plan (August 2019): CP7 (Delivering the infrastructure to support growth), DM20 (Matters to be determined in accordance with the NPPF)

- 5.37. The traffic generated by the development would increase noise and add to air pollution. Given that we are in an urban area, a certain amount of traffic noise is to be expected, however in residential streets which lead to a cul-de-sac noise levels would be expected to be low. While the additional traffic resulting from the proposed development may not constitute a statutory noise nuisance under environmental legislation, that does not mean to say that local residents will not experience increase traffic noise which may cause them annoyance, concern or distress.
- 5.38. It is recognised that parts of Marlow experience high levels of air pollution. However the Council's Control of Pollution unit have raised no objection to the proposal in terms of noise or air quality.
- 5.39. The proposal is thus considered to accord with development plan policies in these regards.

### **Flooding and drainage**

Wycombe District Local Plan (August 2019): DM39 (Managing Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage Systems)

- 5.40. The site is mainly in Flood Zone 3 with only the northern edge in Flood Zone 2. The site is subject to fluvial flooding. The ground water levels are high however groundwater flooding is only likely to occur when the site is already at risk of fluvial flooding.

#### **Sequential Test**

- 5.41. A sequential test is normally required when a site is within flood zones 2 and 3. However, in this instance there is no change in the overall use of the site which is and will remain a car park, so a sequential test is not required. In any event as the proposal is seeking use to use the car park to serve the Business Park, so it needs to be located close to or within the business park. Therefore any search area would need to be in the immediate locality.
- 5.42. In the NPPF Technical Guidance car parks are not identified within a particular vulnerable category and are considered as Less Vulnerable. Therefore subject to the sequential test where relevant, this type of development is appropriate within these flood zones and there is no exceptions test required.
- 5.43. It is not proposed to change the levels on the site which will remain as existing. The northern section of the car park is currently tarmacked and while it is proposed to retain this on circulation routes, this will be removed and replaced by gravel/unbound surfacing to match the remainder of the car park.
- 5.44. The site is considered to be at a higher risk of groundwater and fluvial flooding. Due to the permeable nature of the soils in the area, groundwater flooding incidents are likely to be closely linked to fluvial flood events. The site is not considered to be at risk from any other sources of flooding.
- 5.45. The geology of the site a chalk bedrock with superficial deposits of sand and gravel, allows for the utilisation of infiltration drainage techniques on the site. The infiltration techniques proposed are intended to provide storage for the 1 in 100 +40% climate change storm event. As such, flood risk will not increase either on-site or elsewhere

as a result of the development.

- 5.46. A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has been provided with the application and the Environment Agency is satisfied that the development will not increase flood risk, subject to a condition requiring the development to be completed in accordance with the FRA which would include agreeing a floor warning system and floor evacuation plan in times of flood.
- 5.47. In terms of surface and groundwater flooding the Local Lead Flood Authority (LLFA) have considered the drainage strategy. They have requested amendments to ensure that they are satisfied with the strategy proposed and have removed their objection subject to conditions.
- 5.48. The proposal is considered to comply with the requirements of the Flood Risk Management policy.

### **Landscape Issues**

Wycombe District Local Plan (August 2019): RUR4 (Little Marlow Lakes Country Park), DM34 (Delivering Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity in Development)  
DSA: DM11 (Green networks and infrastructure), DM12 (Green space), DM13 (Conservation and enhancements of sites, habitats and species of biodiversity and geodiversity importance), DM15 (Protection and enhancement of river and stream corridors)

- 5.49. The Little Marlow Gravel Pits (SPG) considered the landscape character of the larger area. It is defined as falling within the Valley Floodplain. There is considerable variation in landscape quality due to the extraction of gravel and urban influences. This particular site is designed as an informally surface car park sandwiched between the business park/rail line to the north and development in River Drive to the south and the flyover of the A404 to the west and the rugby club house to the east. The site is relatively visually self-contained and separated from the wider landscape by the structures and buildings described above and the trees and scrubland which sweep around the lower part of the site. The SPG identifies the site as a car park.
- 5.50. The proposals for the car park represent a soft touch and are limited to rationalising surfacing as described above in para. 5.39 and the updating of the entrance gate and street furniture on the route of the public footpath, to improve access at the eastern end of the carpark where the footpath starts to cross the pitches. Lighting is to remain as existing.
- 5.51. Parking is potentially a type of development (depending on the scale) that could fit into the site and have more limited impact on landscape character. The proposed layout like the existing is very car dominant with no structural planting. While a softer appearance could be achieved through the introduction of soft landscaping this would be at the expense of the space efficient layout the car park currently provides and could lead to an increase in the displaced parking that a number of local residents have complained about on match day.
- 5.52. Given that the site is relatively visually enclosed it is considered that an intensification in its use proposed by in this application will not result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the area.

### **Ecology**

Wycombe District Local Plan (August 2019): RUR4 (Little Marlow Lakes Country Park), DM34 (Delivering Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity in Development)  
DSA: DM13 (Conservation and enhancement of sites, habitats and species of biodiversity and geodiversity importance), DM14 (Biodiversity in development)

- 5.53. No ecological information has been provided with the application, but given the established use of the site as a car park, it is likely to be of limited interest. Because the site is a Biological Notification Site and to ensure compliance with policies DM14 and RUR4, ecological improvements should be sought.



- 5.54. Should permission be forthcoming a condition is recommended which will require an ecological management plan to be submitted and approved for the wider MRC site.

### **Recreation and Community facilities**

Wycombe District Local Plan (August 2019): RUR4 (Little Marlow Gravel Lakes Country Park), DM29 (Community Facilities)  
Little Marlow Gravel Pits SPG  
Community facilities SPD

- 5.55. The site lies within the Little Marlow Gravel Lakes Country Park area allocated by Policy RUR4 of the newly Adopted Local Plan. RUR4 proposes the creation of a new country park in the Green Belt between Marlow and Bourne End along the Thames. The detailed background and justification for this is set out in the supporting text to RUR4 and the associated SPG.
- 5.56. RUR4.1 states that the land is allocated for outdoor recreation, with RUR4.4 specifying that development should not frustrate the objective of establishing a country park and RUR4.5 states that any development is required to provide safe, convenient and direct access to Marlow and Bourne End.
- 5.57. The SPG sets out a detailed vision and masterplan for the Country Park. This site is identified as an existing car park with no further designations or proposals suggested.
- 5.58. The use of the club car park for parking by business users during weekday is unlikely to have a negative impact on the recreational uses of the rugby club which are focused at the weekends and evenings. The club runs a youth programme encouraging young people to participate in physical activity and have indicated that the income generated from allowing businesses to use the car park will help fund these activities. This will help improve the health and wellbeing of the participants.
- 5.59. In the planning balance, this counts as a benefit, and would not frustrate the aims of establishing the proposed country park.

### **Infrastructure and Developer Contributions**

Wycombe District Local Plan (August 2019): CP7 (Delivering the infrastructure to support growth)  
DSA: DM19 (Infrastructure and delivery)  
BCSNP: Policy 13 (Connecting the Parish)

- 5.60. The development is not the type of development where CIL would be chargeable. The proposed off site highway improvements can be secured by a Grampian condition should permission be forthcoming.

### **Weighing and balancing of issues – overall assessment**

- 5.61. This section brings together the assessment that has so far been set out in order to weigh and balance relevant planning considerations in order to reach a conclusion on the application.
- 5.62. In determining the planning application, section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In addition, Section 143 of the Localism Act amends Section 70 of the Town and Country Planning Act relating to the determination of planning applications and states that in dealing with planning applications, the authority shall have regard to:
- a) Provision of the development plan insofar as they are material
  - b) Any local finance considerations, so far as they are material to the application (in this case, CIL)
  - c) Any other material considerations
- 5.63. As set out above it is considered that the proposed development would provide the following benefits in the planning balance:

- Help to relieve parking issues in GBP, making it potentially more attractive to potential occupiers with the economic and social benefits that that this would generate. Such proposals are supported by policy MR7
- Help to support MRC outreach programme, notably the junior programme of activities. Such proposals are supported by policies RUR4 and DM29

This can be given considerable weight in the planning balance.

5.64. The following issues are considered to have a neutral impact in the planning balance:

- Green Belt
- SuDS and flooding
- highway safety
- highway capacity
- Ecological
- Landscape
- Establishment of a new country park at Marlow Gravel pits

5.65. As set out above it is considered that the proposed development would provide the following disbenefits in the planning balance:

- Encourage additional traffic into a limited number of residential streets causing increased inconvenience, annoyance and stress to residents who fear for the health and wellbeing of local residents and other road users.

This can be given great weight in the planning balance.

5.66. In weighing and balancing the pros and cons of the development it is considered, on balance, that the negative impact of the development on the amenities of local residents and users of the streets leading to MRC outweighs the benefits of providing increased parking for GBP and maintaining/enhancing the community benefit provided by MRC.

5.67. The proposal is thus recommended for refusal.

### **Recommendation: Application Refused**

- 1 The proposal will concentrate additional traffic on the limited number of largely residential roads that can provide access to Marlow Rugby Club. This concentration will lead to an unacceptable loss of amenity for local residents and other users of the highway by means of increased inconvenience and disruption caused by additional noise, fumes and congestion. The proposal is considered to be contrary to policies CP9 (Sense of Place), DM33 (Managing Carbon Emissions: Transport and Energy Generation) and DM35 (Placemaking and Design Quality) of the Adopted Wycombe District Local Plan (Adopted August 2019).