

**RAPLEYS**

Statement of Community Involvement for  
Jockey Club Racecourses Ltd

**SANDOWN PARK RACECOURSE  
PORTSMOUTH ROAD  
ESHER  
KT10 9AJ**

**22 February 2019**

**Our Ref: 385/12/6**

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This report has been prepared within the quality system operated at Rapleys LLP according to British Standard ISO 9001:2008.

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## 2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 This Statement of Community Involvement ('SCI') has been prepared by Rapleys LLP on behalf of Jockey Club Racecourses Ltd ('the Applicant') in respect of Sandown Park Racecourse, Portsmouth Road, Esher, KT10 9AJ ('the site'), in support of a masterplan-led hybrid application across a series of individual sites as follows:

Outline planning permission (with all matters reserved except for access to the development) is sought for:

- *Enhancement and rationalisation of existing racecourse facilities/infrastructure and car parking;*
- *Re-location of an upgraded children's nursery (Use Class D1);*
- *Development a hotel of approximately 150 rooms (Use Class C1), and*
- *Demolition of existing buildings/structures and residential development of approximately 318 dwellings (Use Class C3).*

Full planning permission is sought for:

- *Racetrack widening to the southwest and east sections of the existing racecourse track, including associated ground levelling/earthworks to the southwest section, and re-positioning of fencing, and improvements to a section of the existing internal access road from More Lane, and*
- *New bellmouth accesses serving the development.*

2.2 The application sites extend up to approximately a total of 17.68 ha and fall within the administrative area of Elmbridge Borough Council ('EBC'). The site is located in Esher, Surrey, within the existing settlement boundary of Esher and the Green Belt. Immediately to the south of the site is Esher Town Centre and to the west is Esher Railway Station.

2.3 The site location plan is attached at **Appendix 1**.

2.4 The site is a Jump and Flat racing venue, founded in 1875. It comprises a range of operational facilities including the grandstand, stables and paddock area, stable staff accommodation and car parking.

2.5 The site also contains established conference and banqueting facilities for holding conferences, public exhibitions and events.

2.6 In addition to the racecourse and its associated buildings and facilities, the site includes a dry ski slope/fitness centre/skywalk adventure at The Warren (south west of the racecourse), a karting circuit, golf centre including driving range (centre of the racecourse) and a children's nursery (off Portsmouth Road).

### PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

2.7 This SCI sets out the pre-application consultation that the Applicant has undertaken in order to inform the evolution of the proposals, and confirms that consultation has been carried out in accordance with national and local policies, including EBC's own Statement of Community Involvement (November 2018).

2.8 This SCI demonstrates the Applicant's commitment towards consultation throughout the pre-application process, and should be read in conjunction with the other submitted documentation submitted in support of this planning application (not least the Planning Statement by Rapleys, and Design and Access Statement by PRC).

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### 3 PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

#### LEGISLATION

- 3.1 Section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 introduced the requirement for each local authority to prepare a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The SCI sets out how communities will be engaged, not only in the preparation and revision of local development documents, but also in the consideration of planning applications.
- 3.2 Section 122 of the Localism Act 2011 sets out the process of carrying out pre-application consultation when planning permission is sought for certain types of development. It also identifies a duty to take account of responses to consultation in advance of the submission of an application.

#### NATIONAL CONTEXT

- 3.3 National Planning Policy in relation to pre-application engagement is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (the “NPPF”, February 2019).
- 3.4 In the context of decision taking, paragraph 39 of the Framework states that early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources, and improved outcomes for the community.
- 3.5 Paragraph 41 advises that the more issues that can be resolved at pre-application stage, the greater the benefits. For their role in the planning system to be effective and positive, statutory planning consultees will need to take the same early, pro-active approach, and provide advice in a timely manner throughout the development process. In addition, paragraph 42 explains the participation of other consenting bodies in pre-application discussions should enable early consideration of all the fundamental issues relating to whether a particular development will be acceptable in principle.

#### LOCAL CONTEXT

- 3.6 EBC’s SCI (December 2018) sets out how and when the community and other stakeholders will be consulted on at pre-application/application stage. It can require applicants to undertake public consultation before making a planning application to ensure early public involvement on major development proposals or locally sensitive schemes.
- 3.7 Specifically, paragraph 4.2.1 of EBC’s SCI explains pre-application consultation should provide all groups (including statutory, non-statutory and specialist interest groups) with an opportunity to participate in the evolution of development proposals.

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## 4 THE PRINCIPLES OF THE SCHEME

4.1 The principles of the scheme, as subject to consultation and evolution through the pre-application process comprises:

1. Enhancement to the racecourse facilities, and
2. Community improvements.

4.2 More specifically, the intent is to secure outline planning permission (with limited detailed elements) for:

- Enhancement of the operational racecourse facilities and infrastructure, including the car park areas;
- A new hotel;
- Provision of a new family/community zone;
- Re-provision of an upgraded children's nursery, and
- Facilitating residential development across five areas within the site.

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## 5 CONSULTATION WITH EBC AND STATUTORY BODIES

### PRE-APPLICATION ENGAGEMENT WITH EBC

- 5.1 The Applicant has worked collaboratively with EBC Officers from an early stage of the pre-application process, managed through a Planning Performance Agreement.
- 5.2 Principally, the pre-application process has involved:
- Four pre-application meetings with Officers at the Local Authority (Development Management, Planning Policy, Townscape, Landscape, Trees, Heritage and Conservation Environmental Health), and
  - On-going email and telephone correspondence with EBC Officers.
- 5.3 The above application engagement has enabled the Applicant to:
- Scope the application, including supporting documents required for validation;
  - Identify key consultees;
  - Define and review issues addressing the planning policy and other matters, and
  - Submit evolving drafts of the proposals for comment and feedback.
- 5.4 In summary, the following matters have been agreed with EBC Officers:
- Officers recognise the importance of securing Sandown Park's long term future, as one of the Borough's major, and important, economic and landmark assets.
  - The submission of a single hybrid planning application in predominately outline form, with accesses serving the development sites (bell mouths) and race track widening comprising the full element.
  - The submission of single technical reports to cover all sites, wherever possible and appropriate as part of the application submission.
  - The approach to public consultation - including holding the public exhibition(s).
  - Bat and great crested newts surveys once completed shall be submitted, prior to the determination of the application.
  - The Section 106 Agreement will likely cover affordable housing, with the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) to cover infrastructure matters including education and highways.

### PRE-APPLICATION ENGAGEMENT WITH STATUTORY AND OTHER BODIES

- 5.5 The Applicant's project team have also undertaken pre-application consultation with the following bodies to ensure their requirements, and expectations, are addressed as far as possible through the planning process:
- Surrey County Council relative to Environmental Impact Assessment, Highways, Historic Environment/Archaeology, and Local Lead Flood Authority;
  - Natural England;
  - Sport England, and
  - Surrey Wildlife Trust.
- 5.6 For further details, please refer to the Planning Statement and other application supporting documents.

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## 6 THE PUBLIC EXHIBITION

### PUBLICITY

6.1 Two public exhibitions were held. The first was held on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2018, with a follow up event on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2019. Both exhibitions displayed materials describing the principles of the development (reviewed in Section 4), and the second exhibition also responded to the feedback received at the first.

#### The First Exhibition - 15<sup>th</sup> December 2018

6.2 The first exhibition was widely publicised, and key dates are summarised as follows:

- 4<sup>th</sup> December 2018
  - A total of 2,140 invitations with project outlines and illustrations and personal contact details were posted, within a catchment area agreed with the local authority (see attached at **Appendix 2**).
  - A copy of the invitation is attached at **Appendix 3**.
- 5<sup>th</sup> December 2018
  - Hard copy and electronic invitations were sent to EBC Councillors, the SCC Councillor for Esher, Esher Business Guild and Dominic Raab MP inviting them to a VIP preview.
  - The Applicant's proposals and the public exhibition were also discussed face-to-face with managers of a number of local businesses on Esher High Street, with posters publicising the exhibition displayed in the following premises:
    - The Bear (public house);
    - The Albert (public house);
    - Waitrose and Partners (in the staff room as there was no community board);
    - McColls (mini mart and post office), and
    - Everyman Cinema (in the staff room as there were no community board/leaflets on tables, windows or walls).
  - Copies of the posters were also sent to the golf and ski centre at Sandown Park Racecourse.
  - Press releases were sent to the Surrey Advertiser, Surrey Live (Go Surrey) and Surrey Comet.
- 6<sup>th</sup> December 2018
  - Electronic invitations were sent to the racecourse's on-site occupiers (businesses and residents)
- 9<sup>th</sup> December 2018
  - Electronic invitations and additional invite to VIP preview on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2018, sent to Esher Residents Association.
  - Press release with invitation to VIP preview sent to 'What's In Esher', Hershaw Hub, Best of Esher, local community Facebook/Forum pages and the Twitter account @LivingInEsher.
- 10<sup>th</sup> December 2018
  - The Applicant's proposals were subject of an article in the Racing Post.

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- Hard copy invitation flyers placed on Sandown Park Racecourse's reception desk.
  - 13<sup>th</sup> December 2018
    - A member of the development team was interviewed by BBC Radio Surrey to promote the exhibition - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p06rn0c0>.
  - 14<sup>th</sup> December 2018
    - Hard copy invitations and feedback forms were placed on the staff desks at Sandown Park Racecourse.
    - The Applicant also contacted their sponsors, suppliers and Sandown Members and Racecourse Owners Association.
    - Face-to-face meetings with business on Esher High Street who could not attend the public exhibition, with feedback forms encouraged to be completed.
- 6.3 In addition to the above, BBC Surrey attended the public exhibition to film at the exhibition, and conducted interviews with the applicant and some attendees. The Racing Post also attended the public exhibition and wrote an article on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2018, which also publicised the second public exhibition taking place on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2019.

#### **The Second Exhibition - 15<sup>th</sup> January 2019**

- 6.4 The second exhibition was also widely publicised and, in addition to the Applicant's publicity, BBC Surrey promoted the second public exhibition event in January 2019 via social media.
- 6.5 On 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2019, 2,280 promotional invitations were posted to publicise the second exhibition (invitation attached at **Appendix 4**). Hard copy and electronic invitations were also sent to EBC Councillors, the SCC Councillor for Esher, Esher Business Guild, Esher Residents' Association, New Road Residents' Committee, inviting them to a VIP preview.

#### **THE PUBLIC EXHIBITIONS**

- 6.6 The two public exhibitions were held at The Owners and Trainers Suite at Sandown Park Racecourse, Portsmouth Road, Esher, Surrey KT10 9AJ, with timings below:
- Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2018, VIP preview session between 9.30AM - 10.30AM / public exhibition between 10.30AM - 7PM.
  - Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2019, VIP preview session between 6.30PM - 7PM / public exhibition between 7PM - 9.30PM.
- 6.7 These dates and times were chosen in order to encourage maximum attendance of people, including those working full time and those with parental responsibilities.
- 6.8 The venue site was immediately within the wider setting of the application site and accessible to people of all mobility. Directions were placed on the invitations and posters placed at the entrance of the exhibition, plus a dedicated staff member acted as personal guide for arrivals to allow easy navigation to the meeting room.
- 6.9 Details of the sites and proposals were detailed on 10 free standing banner boards for the first exhibition (attached at **Appendix 5**). These boards were also presented at the second exhibition, with four additional boards also included reviewing and responding to feedback received at the first exhibition (attached at **Appendix 6**).
- 6.10 In attendance from the team were the Applicant, Rapleys LLP (planning consultants), PRC (architects), TPP (transport consultants) and Seaxburh Partners (PR consultants).

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6.11 Attendees were asked to complete a feedback form for both exhibitions (attached at **Appendices 7 and 8 respectively**). Where requested, copies of the display banners were subsequently emailed and/or a link to the boards on the Sandown Park website was provided to view online (see below).

6.12 For those who were not able to attend the public exhibition, an online gallery was set up to allow the public to view the boards following each of the public exhibitions:

First public exhibition:

<https://www.thejockeyclub.co.uk/sandown/media/news/2018/12/sandown-park-racecourse-public-exhibition-on-proposed-enhancements-to-racing-and-community-facilities/>

Second public exhibition:

<https://www.thejockeyclub.co.uk/sandown/media/news/2019/01/sandown-park-racecourse-public-exhibition-on-planning-proposals/>

6.13 The contact details of a dedicated, named member of the Applicant's team was provided with these posts, to enable the public to ask questions, make requests and/or give their feedback to the proposals. These are still live.

6.14 Rapleys' London office postal address was provided for the public to post their feedback forms if they could not complete them at the public exhibitions. Circa 100 stamped addressed envelopes were also provided across the two public exhibitions.

## 7 SUMMARY OF COMMENTS AND RESPONSES TO THE PUBLIC EXHIBITION

### QUANTITATIVE MATTERS

#### Feedback Forms

- 7.1 A total of circa 400 people attended both public exhibitions. In total, 268 feedback forms were received at the exhibitions or in the post. The responses are provided in the following tables:

#### Question 1

	Do you live in Esher?		
	Yes	No	Not Answered
1 <sup>st</sup> Exhibition	123	8	3
2 <sup>nd</sup> Exhibition	122	12	0

#### Question 2

	Do you work, shop and/or use community facilities in Esher		
	Yes	No	Not answered
1 <sup>st</sup> Exhibition	127	2	3
2 <sup>nd</sup> Exhibition	128	3	5

#### Question 3

	Do you think the facilities/offer at Sandown Park Racecourse could be improved?			
	Yes	No	Don't Know	Not answered
1 <sup>st</sup> Exhibition	89	14	16	15
2 <sup>nd</sup> Exhibition	81	33	12	8

#### Question 4

	Do you think there is a need for more, improved community facilities in Esher?			
	Yes	No	Don't Know	Not answered
1 <sup>st</sup> Exhibition	92	29	4	9
2 <sup>nd</sup> Exhibition	69	53	9	3

**Question 5**

	Do you recognise the need to provide smaller (1-3 bed) homes in Esher?			
	Yes	No	Don't Know	Not answered
1 <sup>st</sup> Exhibition	66	49	10	9
2 <sup>nd</sup> Exhibition	36	70	16	12

**Question 6**

	Do you think pedestrian connections between Esher Station to Town Centre need to be improved?			
	Yes	No	Don't Know	Not answered
1 <sup>st</sup> Exhibition	87	27	12	8
2 <sup>nd</sup> Exhibition	57	65	7	5

**Question 7**

	Which of the following uses do you support for the new family/community zone?						
	Soft play area with café	Children-friendly cycle track	Garden	Younger children play area	Older children play area	Open park with picnic area	Other
1 <sup>st</sup> Exhibition	61	73	63	65	61	63	26
2 <sup>nd</sup> Exhibition	44	48	37	41	29	42	11

**Question 8**

	Do you support the proposals at Sandown Park Racecourse?				
	Support	Support with Reservations	Don't Know	Do Not Support	Not answered
1 <sup>st</sup> Exhibition	25	47	9	42	11
2 <sup>nd</sup> Exhibition	13	33	9	78	1

7.2 In addition, at the time of writing, six emails/ letters from the public and stakeholders have been received, subsequent to the exhibitions.

7.3 From the above responses, the following should be noted:

- 2,140 leaflets were distributed inviting the public to the first exhibition, and 2,280 leaflets were distributed to the second. The attendance represents less than 10% of the number of invitations extended.
- Most of the respondents either live and/or engage in Esher (work, shop and/or use community facilities). In this context, 64% of respondents recognised that the facilities and offer at Sandown could be improved, and the majority recognised a need for more, improved community facilities in Esher (with across the board support for a range of facilities in the proposed family/community zone).
- 102 respondents (38%) recognised the need to provide smaller homes (1-3) in Esher.
- Of those who completed the forms, 118 respondents (44%) supported the proposals in their entirety (including the facilitating element) with or without reservations.
- With regard to pedestrian connections between Esher Station to Town Centre, 144 respondents (54%) thought they need be improved, while 111 respondents (41%) felt otherwise, or did not know whether there is a need for improvements.

### QUALITATIVE MATTERS

7.4 Qualitative responses received at the exhibitions or thereafter have been collected and collated and, where possible, addressed.

7.5 The main areas raised as points to address are set out below, together with the Applicant's response.

#### Key Area 1: Impact on Existing Infrastructure

##### Highways, Access, Parking

7.6 The highway network's capacity to accommodate the proposals, traffic levels and congestion, particularly along Scilly Isles, Ember Lane, Esher Green, Portsmouth Road, High Street, Lower Green Road, Station Road and the junctions by Wheatsheaf and Café Rouge, and proposed car parking levels, were the most common concerns raised, as indicated by the examples below.

- *"We are worried about the impact on traffic around Site 4 (Station Road), which is already bad during commuting time."*
- *"Increase traffic would create a heavy burden on the already heavily congested roads."*
- *"Improve traffic flow, specifically top of More Lane junction with Lammas Lane and the area outside the Wheatsheaf. Provide adequate parking on site so not parking on More Lane."*
- *"Question impact on traffic generally and specific impact on Portsmouth Road from Site 5."*

##### Applicant Response

7.7 Transport, highways and access matters have been assessed in the Transport Assessment, prepared by TPP which accompanies this planning application and confirms the following in respect of the proposed development:

- The Racecourse is a highly sustainable location and well located for access to Esher Town Centre and in proximity to from public transport.
- The development will be located over a number of sites around the racecourse which has the effect of spreading traffic around the road network, reducing the traffic impact.

- The increase in daily traffic during the construction period will be minor/negligible on the surrounding roads and across the wider local highway network. Once the development is complete, the traffic generated by the development will have a permanent negligible effect on local traffic conditions.
- Portsmouth Road is to experience the highest increase in traffic, however the development is nevertheless expected to have a negligible impact on this road.
- Further, the number of additional trips on More Lane, Lower Green Road and Station Road is not expected to have a noticeable impact.
- There will be an uplift in vehicle generation on More Lane (via Site D) on large race days as a result of the proposed increase in parking provision, but this will be off-set by the removal of the trips from Portsmouth Road.
- The proposals include measures to improve the existing site-wide car parking strategy.
- Car parking/cycle provision will be provided in accordance with the Council's Parking Standards and considered against local car ownership levels, with details to be secured at the detailed design stage.
- A Travel Plan will be introduced to influence and widen future residents' modal choice. Further travel plans will also be implemented for racing/non-racing days.
- A range of mitigation measures for both the construction and operational phases are set out in further detail within the Environmental Statement and are to be secured via planning condition(s).
- Overall, the level of trip generation produced by the proposals is minimal compared to the traffic already on the local road network. With appropriate mitigation measures, the potential impacts of the proposals will be kept to a minimum.

7.8 In summary, through pre-application consultation with SCC Highways and the Applicant's transport consultants, TPP, it has been established that the proposals are acceptable in highway terms.

#### **Local Community Facilities and Services**

7.9 Another matter raised was the perceived insufficient amount of existing/proposed infrastructure in terms of education, doctor surgeries, Esher Railway Station and utilities to support both existing and future residents. For example:

- *"The scale of housing development is vast and the consequential impact on schools, doctors etc is potentially enormous."*
- *"All schools are heavily oversubscribed and doctor surgeries are full and have no appointments."*
- *"Extra density of housing and residents on the area will increase pressure on local amenities."*

#### Applicant Response

7.10 The proposed development will be Community Infrastructure Levy liable, which will make significant contributions to the Borough's range of infrastructure requirements, including education and highways.

7.11 A Utilities Report undertaken by Waterman to support the planning application has been informed by consultation with the relevant utility providers and regulatory bodies - Thames Water (Water/Waste Supply), SGN, UKPN and BT Open Reach.

7.12 From review of the existing infrastructure plans, current loading information and responses received from all utility providers, it has been confirmed that the foul water network has sufficient capacity and that the necessary on/off-site reinforcement connections will be feasible.

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- 7.13 In line with the Utilities Report’s recommendations, an updated development programme will be shared with relevant parties at an early stage, to ensure integration with any utility provider initiatives.

### Key Area 2: The Natural Environment

#### Loss of the Green Belt, open space and impact on local wildlife

- *“Residential development on the green belt should only be permitted in very special circumstances, this has not been demonstrated.”*
- *“Green Belt land should be protected for the good of Esher.”*
- *“Green spaces make Esher attractive.”*
- *“The erosion of the Green Belt is short-sighted.”*
- *“The ecosystem needs to be protected.”*

#### Applicant Response

- 7.14 The development on the Green Belt is addressed fully in the Planning and Green Belt Statements by Rapleys, and EDP’s Green Belt Review, that accompany this planning application.

- 7.15 In terms of wildlife and ecology, as confirmed in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment, prepared by Tyler Grange:

- None of the proposed sites comprise or are directly adjacent to any sites that are the subject of statutory or non-statutory protection and no such sites would be affected by proposals.
- The proposed residential sites are on either previously developed land or adjacent to existing developments, or both. Any habitat to be lost as a result of the proposed development is of negligible ecological importance and, further, the loss can be mitigated through suitable replacement planting.
- A requirement for further surveys for bats, Great Crested Newts and reptiles is recognised, with a commitment to mitigation should these protected species be present. These surveys will be undertaken prior to the determination of the application.

- 7.16 In summary, the application addresses the issue of Green Belt in full. The proposal as a whole can be considered as appropriate development in the Green Belt as it falls into the types of development described as exceptions to inappropriate development in the NPPF. In any event, the substantial planning benefits of the proposal would, collectively, be very special circumstances that outweigh any harm by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm resulting from the proposal. More broadly, the proposals represent sustainable development as set out in the NPPF, and ecological matters will be addressed in full to confirm that there is a net gain in biodiversity.

### Key Issue 3: Housing Mix and Affordability

#### Need for Housing

- 7.17 Queries were raised in respect of the type of proposed housing and provision of and access to affordable housing, particularly for younger residents.

- *“It is important for Esher, if housing is genuinely affordable.”*
- *“The development would cause an impact on the selling price of my home.”*
- *“We would like the right calibre of person in this stockbroker belt.”*
- *“Don’t put all social housing on one site.”*
- *“Don’t want low cost housing as it will lower the appeal of Esher.”*

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### Applicant Response

- 7.18 The Applicant has considered the proposed housing mix, taking into account the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2016) and Elmbridge Development Advice note (2018) identifying the need for smaller units (1, 2 and 3 bed units) and local market demand. During the pre-application consultation, it has been agreed with EBC, that the delivery of flatted development would allow for each residential site's capacity to be maximised, as well as providing smaller units (1 - 3 beds) in response to the identified housing need.
- 7.19 Although the primary driver behind the proposal is enhancement works, supported by facilitating development, the Applicant also recognises that the Borough is in need of affordable housing (as confirmed by planning policy and evidence base documents). In this context, the inclusion of affordable housing is being reviewed. However, the quantum of affordable housing needs to be carefully considered in the context of the Racecourse's location within the Green Belt. Therefore, a balance will clearly need to be struck between:
- Ensuring that the proposal contributes an element of affordable housing to meet the identified need within Elmbridge (if possible), and
  - Ensuring the quantum of residential development (in general) is minimised, and commensurate to the level required to deliver the benefits of the proposal.
- 7.20 This is the subject of ongoing review in terms of viability, but initial indicators suggest that the scheme will be able to deliver between 10% to 15% affordable housing.

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## 8 CONSULTATION WITH LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS AND STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

8.1 In addition to public exhibitions, extensive engagement has taken place with local elected officials and stakeholders. The timeline of this engagement is summarised below:

- 16<sup>th</sup> November 2018 - Meeting with EBC then - Leader and Local Ward Member Councillor Oliver.
- 19<sup>th</sup> November 2018 - Meeting with Borough Councillor Waugh (Local Ward Member).
- 26<sup>th</sup> November 2018 - Meetings with Surrey County Councillor Szanto, and meeting with Esher Residents Association.
- 27<sup>th</sup> November 2018 - Presentation to EBC Members.
- 28<sup>th</sup> November 2018 - Meeting with Council Communications Manager (Catherine Malloy).
- 18<sup>th</sup> December 2018 - Meeting with local Esher business - The Keltbray Group's facilities manager (Alison Darvill).
- 9<sup>th</sup> January 2019 - Meeting with local Esher business - Paragon's senior project manager (Simon Hobson).
- 10<sup>th</sup> January 2019 - letter from MP Dominic Raab (on behalf of a trustee of Elmbridge Heritage Trust);
- 10<sup>th</sup> January 2019 - Meeting with Walton North Borough Councillor Lake;
- 15<sup>th</sup> January 2019 - Private viewing of exhibition given to Richard John, Conservative candidate standing for (outgoing Cllr Oliver's) Esher seat in May 2018, and Amy Short, representative of New Road Residents' Committee.
- 15<sup>th</sup> January 2019 - The Applicant was approached by Butterfield Design, who have indicated their support for the scheme, and the potential for a community cycle facility.
- 24<sup>th</sup> January 2019 - Meeting with senior management team at Esher Church of England High School.

8.2 Further details are set out below:

### 16<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2018 - MEETING WITH BOROUGH COUNCILLOR OLIVER (EBC LEADER)

8.3 Councillor Oliver recognised Sandown Park Racecourse as a "landmark for the Borough" and that the proposed development is a logical way of sustaining its future.

8.4 In particular, the Councillor confirmed his support in respect of the following:

- Maintaining Green Belt openness (and the Applicant's acknowledgment of the need to demonstrate very special circumstances);
- Community orientated proposals, and
- The type of housing proposed.

8.5 The Councillor also raised the following as matters for the proposals to consider:

- The need to integrate Sandown Park and Esher in order to provide greater community benefits;
- The impact of Site 3 on neighbouring amenity, and
- Traffic related issues.

### Applicant Response

8.6 In terms of the proposals integrating Sandown Park with Esher to provide greater community benefits:

- All year round community facilities to be open to the local community are proposed at Site C, with an upgraded nursery located at Site 5. This provision is an addition to the retained facilities at The Warren that include a dry ski slope, gym/fitness centre and skywalk adventure;

- Site frontages have been carefully considered against the existing context, in particular careful design consideration has been given to the relationship of Sites 1 and 2 with their proximity to Esher High Street. Further landscaping details shall be secured at the reserved matters stage;
- As previously set out in Chapter 6, the proposed development will be CIL liable, and will make significant contribution to a range of infrastructure requirements/improvements to benefit the wider community, and
- The Applicant is also exploring opportunities for establishing exclusive benefits to local residents, including a Community Race Day initiative and other discounts on tickets for other fixtures.

8.7 The proposals at Site 3 have been subject to detailed assessment - including extensive landscaping input - to ensure that there will not be a detrimental impact on neighbouring amenity.

8.8 In terms of traffic related issues, please refer to the submitted Transport Assessment attached to this application, and the Applicant's response to feedback relative to this matter in Chapter 7 of this report.

#### 19<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2018 - MEETING WITH BOROUGH COUNCILLOR WAUGH (LOCAL WARD MEMBER)

8.9 Councillor Waugh (like Councillor Oliver) recognised the importance of Sandown Park and the need to maintain its competitiveness within the horseracing industry.

8.10 In particular, the Councillor confirmed his support in respect of the following:

- The re-use of previously developed land in the Green Belt, the locations of the sites on the periphery of the racecourse and the Applicant's acknowledgement of the need to protect and enhance the openness of the site as a whole;
- The provision of affordable housing (including smaller units) to meet housing targets, and
- Provision of a high quality hotel to support both Sandown Park and Esher as "destinations".

8.11 The Councillor also raised the following as matters for the proposals consider:

- The impact of Site 3 on neighbouring amenity;
- Provision of ground floor commercial space at Site 2;
- Improvements to the Portsmouth Road frontage;
- Traffic related issues, and
- Need to consult local businesses and residents' associations.

#### Applicant Response

8.12 The proposals at Site 3 have been subject to detailed assessment - including extensive landscaping input - to ensure that there will not be a detrimental impact on neighbouring amenity.

8.13 The provision of ground floor commercial space at Site 2 has been considered, however for both practical and viability reasons it has been decided to deliver residential development at ground floor level. Put simply, the return that would be provided by residential development on the ground floor of Site 2 is part of the overall package that delivers the enhancement works whilst ensuring that the quantum of development is minimised.

8.14 Site frontages have been carefully considered against the existing context, in particular careful design consideration has been given to the relationship of Sites 1 and 2 and their

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proximity to Esher High Street. Further landscaping details shall be secured at the reserved matters stage.

8.15 In terms of traffic related issues, please refer to the Applicant's response to feedback relative to this matter in Chapter 7.

8.16 As confirmed throughout the body of this report, the Applicant has clearly consulted widely, including seeking the views of local businesses and residents' associations.

#### 26<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2018 - MEETING WITH SURREY COUNTY COUNCILLOR SZANTO

8.17 Councillor Szanto confirmed his support in respect of the following:

- The re-use of previously developed land in the Green Belt, location of sites around the periphery and protection/enhancement of openness of the whole site.
- Delivery of new housing to meet a dire housing need in the area.
- The Applicant's aspirations to improving integration between Sandown Park and the town centre.
- The additional provision of community orientated proposals.

8.18 The Councillor also raised the following as matters for the proposals consider:

- Traffic related issues;
- Improvements to the public realm/frontages, and
- The impact of Site 3 on neighbouring amenity.

#### Applicant Response

8.19 In terms of traffic related issues, please refer to the Applicant's response to feedback relative to this matter in Chapter 7.

8.20 Site frontages have been carefully considered against the existing context, in particular careful design consideration has been given to the relationship of Sites 1 and 2 with their proximity to Esher High Street. Further landscaping details shall be secured at the reserved matters stage. As previously set out in Chapter 6, the proposed development will be CIL liable, and will make significant contribution to a range of infrastructure requirements/improvements to benefit the wider community.

8.21 The proposals at Site 3 have been subject to detailed assessment - including extensive landscaping input - to ensure that there will not be a detrimental impact on neighbouring amenity.

#### 26<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2018 - MEETING WITH ESHER RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

8.22 The representatives of Esher Residents Association were generally positive towards the proposals - including the introduction of new residents at Lower Green Road and subsequent community benefits in an area with few facilities.

8.23 The representatives also raised the following as matters for the proposals consider:

- Development creep;
- Traffic related issues;
- Need to maintain Green Belt openness;
- Visual impact of the proposed hotel and family zone café, and
- Building heights of Sites 1 and 2 (given proximity to the high street).

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### Applicant Response

- 8.24 The comprehensive Masterplan-led approach adopted by the Applicant under a single hybrid planning application delivers the vision for Sandown Park Racecourse to secure its long term future as a nationally and locally important racing and leisure/community venue is entirely appropriate in the context of the Green Belt setting. Utilising surplus areas contained within Sandown Park for a limited amount of residential development (including affordable housing) is necessary to secure investment for the racecourse operations.
- 8.25 In terms of traffic issues, please refer to the Applicant's response to feedback relative to this matter in Chapter 7.
- 8.26 The Applicant's response to Green Belt matters is set out in the Green Belt Statement and Green Belt Review attached to this application, and Chapter 7 of this report.
- 8.27 A Landscape/Townscape and Visual Appraisal (LTVA) has been prepared by EDP to support the Applicant's planning application. In summary:
- The appraisal has reviewed the townscape and visual effects predicted from each proposed development site, with recommended mitigation measures informing the development proposals.
  - The appraisal finds that each development site relates very well to in both landscape/townscape and visual terms to its existing context, and that the development within each Site represents a logical and easily assimilated development into this part of Esher.
  - The LTVA concludes that, following the maturation of the landscape mitigation proposals as set out in the supporting landscape strategy and design principles, there are no anticipated material adverse effects upon landscape designations or the underlying townscape character or wider landscape character, nor any material visual effects upon Public Rights of Way, roadside pedestrians or visitors to the Racecourse.
  - While there will be a small impact on residents adjacent to the Racecourse, the existing nature of the townscape context and the use proposed is considered to moderate any effect accordingly.

### **27<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2018 - PRESENTATION TO EBC MEMBERS**

- 8.28 At the evening presentation, a total of 17 members were in attendance.
- 8.29 In summary, members raised the following as matters for the proposals to particularly consider:
- Traffic related issues;
  - Drainage;
  - Clearly defining previously developed land within the Green Belt, and
  - Provision of ground floor commercial space at Site 2.

### Applicant Response

- 8.30 In terms of traffic issues, please refer to the Applicant's response to feedback relative to this matter in Chapter 7.
- 8.31 Following pre-application consultation with the Lead Local Flood Authority and consultation with Sandown Park Racecourse's Facilities Manager, a Drainage and Flood Risk Report has been produced by Hafren Water in order to inform the proposals and drainage requirements.
- 8.32 The provision of ground floor commercial space at Site 2 has been considered, however for both practical and viability reasons it has been decided to deliver residential development

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at ground floor level. Put simply, the return that would be provided by residential development on the ground floor of Site 2 is part of the overall package that delivers the enhancement works whilst ensuring that the quantum of development is minimised.

#### 18<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2018 - MEETING WITH LOCAL ESHER BUSINESS - KELTBRAY

8.33 A positive meeting was held with Facilities Manager Alison Darvill who in particular welcomed the hotel proposal because of the benefits it would provide Keltbray.

8.34 In addition, she raised the following matters for the proposals to consider:

- Traffic related issues

#### Applicant Response

8.35 In terms of traffic issues, please refer to the Applicant's response to feedback relative to this matter in Chapter 7.

#### 9<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2019 - MEETING WITH PARAGON

8.36 A meeting was held with Paragon, an established local business in Esher, and a subsequent follow up email from the Senior Project Manager was received on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2019 confirming the business's support for the Applicant's proposals.

#### 10<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2019 - LETTER FROM MP DOMINIC RAAB (ON BEHALF OF A TRUSTEE OF ELMBRIDGE HERITAGE TRUST)

8.37 The Applicant received a letter from MP for Esher and Walton, Dominic Raab on behalf of a trustee (Mr Nigel Abbott) of the Elmbridge Heritage Trust. Within the letter, Mr Raab confirmed his support for the trustee's request for the inclusion of a heritage centre within Sandown Park.

#### Applicant Response

8.38 The proposals for the community facilities are in outline form only at present. However, subject to outline planning permission being granted, the Applicant has advised the Elmbridge Heritage Trust that a follow up discussion should take place later this year.

#### 10<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2019 - MEETING WITH COUNCILLOR RACHAEL LAKE (WALTON NORTH BOROUGH COUNCILLOR)

8.39 Cllr Lake raised the following as matters for the proposals to consider:

- Traffic related issues;
- Green Belt considerations;
- Building heights at Site 4;
- More than one planning application should be made - including a separate application for the hotel;
- Improvements to the visual representation of the proposed development sites.

#### Applicant Response

8.40 In terms of traffic related issues, please refer to the Applicant's response to feedback relative to this matter in Chapter 7.

8.41 The Applicant's response to Green Belt matters is set out in Chapter 6.

8.42 The comprehensive Masterplan-led approach agreed with EBC and adopted by the Applicant under a single hybrid planning application delivers the vision for Sandown Park Racecourse

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to secure its long term future as a nationally and locally important racing and leisure/community venue is entirely appropriate in the context of the Green Belt setting. Utilising surplus areas contained within Sandown Park for a limited amount of residential development (including affordable housing) and hotel development is necessary to secure investment for the racecourse operations.

8.43 A Landscape/Townscape and Visual Appraisal (LTVA) has been prepared by EDP to support the Applicant's planning application. In summary:

- The appraisal has reviewed the townscape and visual effects predicted from each proposed development site, with recommended mitigation measures informing the development proposals.
- The appraisal finds that each development site relates very well to in both landscape/townscape and visual terms to its existing context, and that the development within each Site represents a logical and easily assimilated development into this part of Esher.
- The LTVA concludes that, following the maturation of the landscape mitigation proposals as set out in the supporting landscape strategy and design principles, there are no anticipated material adverse effects upon landscape designations or the underlying townscape character or wider landscape character, nor any material visual effects upon Public Rights of Way, roadside pedestrians or visitors to the Racecourse.
- While there will be a small impact on residents adjacent to the Racecourse, the existing nature of the townscape context and the use proposed is considered to moderate any effect accordingly.

15<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2019 - PRIVATE VIEWING OF EXHIBITION TO RICHARD JOHN (CONSERVATIVE CANDIDATE STANDING FOR ESHER SEAT IN MAY 2018) AND AMY SHORTT (REPRESENTATIVE OF NEW ROAD RESIDENTS' COMMITTEE)

8.44 Mr John recognised Sandown Park as "a significant attraction" that makes a major social, economical and cultural contribution to Esher. He highlighted however that the proposed development would need to contribute to reinvestment into the local area, and enhance the quality and character of the town.

8.45 Having previously attended the first public exhibition, Ms Shortt was generally supportive of the scheme and indicated that her neighbours are as well. In particular, she expressed the view that Sandown Park should be upgraded to be more prestigious and offer a 'country club' type membership for locals.

8.46 On behalf of the New Road Residents' Committee, Ms Shortt confirmed that the key matter residents raised relative to the proposals was traffic issues.

Applicant Response

8.47 As previously set out in Chapter 6, the proposed development will be CIL liable, and will make significant contribution to a range of infrastructure requirements/improvements to benefit the wider community.

8.48 Also as aforementioned, the Applicant is also exploring opportunities for establishing exclusive benefits to local residents, including a Community Race Day initiative and other discounts on tickets for other fixtures.

8.49 In terms of traffic related issues, please refer to the Applicant's response to feedback relative to this matter in Chapter 7.

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#### 15<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2019 - EMAIL FROM BUTTERFIELD DESIGN

8.50 The Applicant received an email from the Creative Director of Butterfield Design on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2019 offering up a further opportunity to discuss the inclusion of a community cycle based leisure academy at Sandown Park.

#### Applicant Response

8.51 The proposals for the community facilities are in outline form only at present. However, subject to outline planning permission being granted, the Applicant hopes to resume discussions with Butterfield Design later this year to discuss their aspirations further.

#### 24<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2019 - MEETING WITH SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM AT ESHER CHURCH OF ENGLAND HIGH SCHOOL

8.52 The management team confirmed their support for the Applicant's proposed development as follows:

- They fully understood and empathised with the drivers behind the Applicant's proposed development, given their similar challenges at maintaining ageing infrastructure and competitiveness;
- Provision of affordable housing;
- The Applicant's approach to ensuring Green Belt openness;
- Sandown Park's contribution towards maintaining the high street, and
- The potential for securing funding towards the school's improvement.

8.53 Traffic related issues were raised by the management team as the key matter for the proposals to consider.

#### Applicant Response

8.54 In terms of traffic related issues, please refer to the Applicant's response to feedback relative to this matter in Chapter 7.

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## 9 SUMMARY

9.1 In advance of submitting the planning application, the Applicant has undertaken extensive pre-application consultation with EBC Officers, statutory consultees and key stakeholders from an early stage.

9.2 This has included engagement with:

- Officers at EBC;
- Statutory and other consultees;
- The general public, through two well publicised public exhibitions;
- Local elected officials, including ward/borough councillors, and
- Other local stakeholder organisations and businesses.

9.3 This report details the comments received as a result of this engagement provides the Applicant's response and confirms how the planning application submission has, where possible, taken the feedback into consideration.

9.4 This SCI therefore demonstrates the Applicant's commitment to public consultation, in line with national legislation and policy, and more locally EBC's SCI requirements for community involvement. Throughout the application process, the Applicant will continue to engage, where appropriate, with local residents and stakeholders.