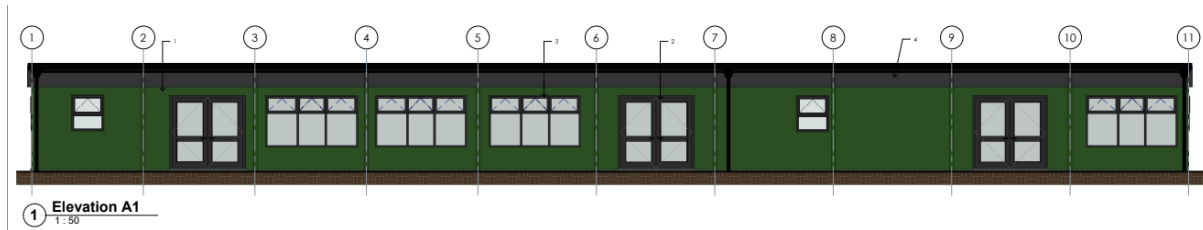


September 2021



Planning Policy Statement

Proposed Modular Pre-school Nursery building

St Marys Church in Wales V.A, Park Street, Ruabon LL14 6LE

On behalf of Elite Systems (GB) Limited

Prepared by:



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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Policy Statement has been prepared on behalf of Elite Systems (GB) Limited to support a planning application for a single storey modular building on hardstanding area to north of grounds of St Marys Church in Wales V.A School, Ruabon.
- 1.2 The proposed triple modular building will provide purpose built nursery / preschool classroom space with access to outdoor playspace. The modular building will serve 2 pre-school nurseries; one Welsh speaking only and the other English speaking.
- 1.3 The applicant for the proposed nursery building is Wrexham Borough County Council.

Background and Need.

- 1.4 The Welsh Government recognises that childcare is one of the biggest challenges facing working families in Wales. Supporting families with quality, flexible and affordable childcare supports economic regeneration, can reduce pressures on family income and help parents to participate in work, thus reducing a family's risk of poverty. It also supports the wellbeing of children through positive and rich childcare experiences. There are therefore clear social and economic benefits arising from the provision of this important nursery / pre-school provision.
- 1.5 Wrexham CBC are working with the school and their local communities to support this initiative and deliver new pre-school spaces for local children.
- 1.6 The proposed modular buildings are designed for pre-school children and will deliver an attractive indoor learning and play environment together with access to outdoor playspace. The buildings will also include necessary welfare (wc and cloaks) kitchen, store and office space for the effective operation of these childcare spaces.
- 1.7 Funding for this pre-school project is provided by the Welsh Government as part of its commitment to improving childcare in the wider community.

The Application Site

- 1.8 St Mary's Church in Wales V.A School is located off Park Street on the eastern edge of Ruabon. The site itself currently comprises an area of hardstanding to the north of the school grounds. High Street sits to the west beyond the dwellings which sit adjacent to the site. There is playground to the north with Ysgol Maes-y-Llan beyond whilst land to the east is used as a playing field / sports pitch.
- 1.9 The site sits on the edge of the settlement limit (as drawn in the Wrexham UDP Proposals Map) yet is closely related to the built development to the north, south and west.
- 1.10 The site is not subject to any designations or allocations in the Local Plan (Wrexham UDP).
- 1.11 Further details of the site are set out in Section 2.

Planning History

- 1.12 Planning consent was granted in 2014 for retention and continued use of a mobile classroom within the grounds of the school (LPA ref P/2014/0049). There was a condition on the consent requiring removal of the building by end of June 2019.

The Proposed Development

- 1.13 The proposed development comprises a new single storey, triple modular building located on an area of hardstanding to the north of the school.
- 1.14 The proposed modular building will be single storey and provide classroom / learning space together with welfare facilities, kitchen and office. The building will open out onto enclosed external playspace at the front (east facing) of the modular building. A bin store is also proposed to the rear.
- 1.15 Access will be via existing footpaths serving the site from High Street to the west, Park Street to the south and Maes-y-Llan Lane to the north. The playground and playing fields associated with the school are unaffected as is the existing car park. Similarly, the play area to the north of the site and playing pitch to the east are also unaffected.
- 1.16 The proposed modular building will be a simple, shallow pitch roof building clad in materials (plastic coated steel sheeting – colour heritage green) to create an attractive building on the site.
- 1.17 Further details on the proposed development are set out in Section 3.

The Planning Application

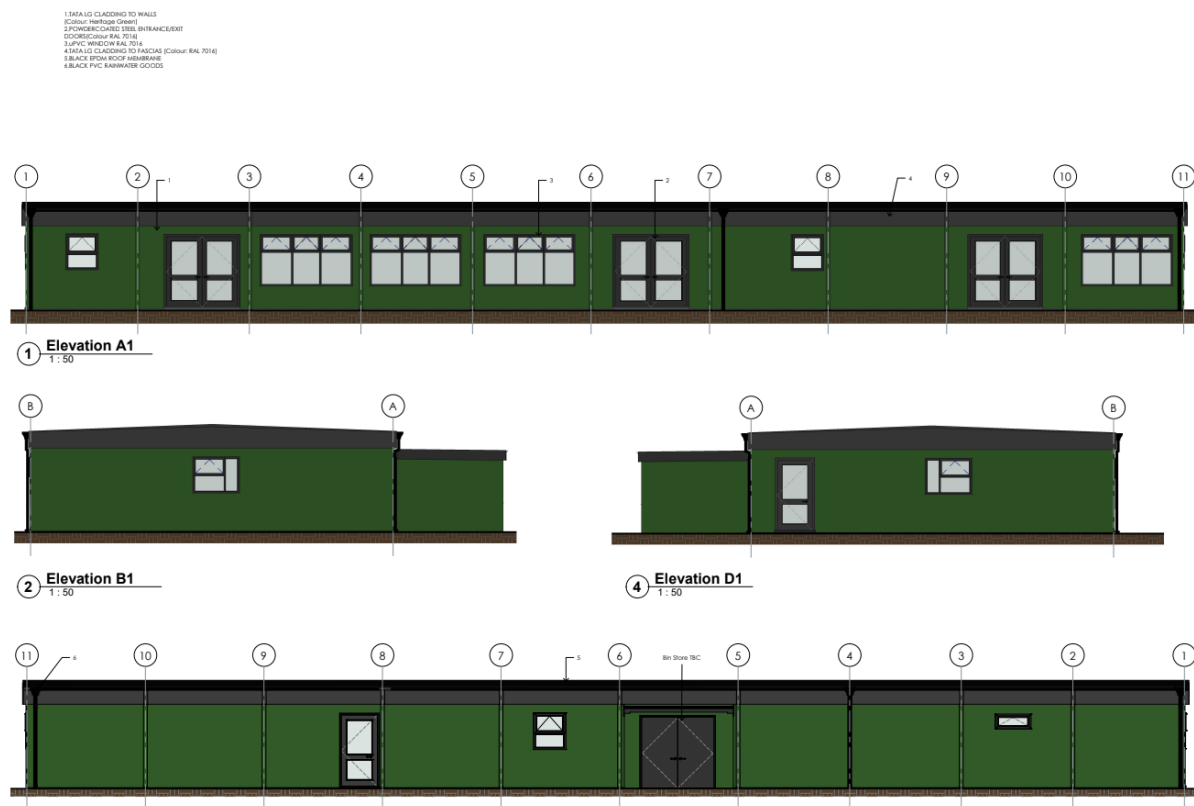
- 1.18 This statement describes the application site and nature of the proposal (Chapters 2 and 3) together with an assessment of planning policy issues (Chapters 4 & 5) of relevance to the application. Assessment of the planning application is set out in Chapter 5. Conclusions are set out in Chapter 6.
- 1.19 This statement will fully justify the proposal for the site and will advance justification for the proposed modular building.
- 1.20 On the basis of the information provided in this statement, the associated supporting documents and on the application drawings, a presumption in favour of development can be maintained in this particular instance, the application being in accordance with the advice set out in the Wrexham UDP.
- 1.21 The planning application is supported by the following:
- i. Completed application forms, with all certificates signed and dated;
 - ii. Site Location Plan prepared by Elite Systems;
 - iii. Site Layout Plan, Floorplans and elevations prepared by Elite Systems;
 - iv. Design and Access Statement prepared by Elite Systems;
 - v. Planning Statement prepared by Alistair Flatman Planning;
- 1.22 The submitted additional technical information is considered sufficient to enable the Local Planning Authority to determine the clear merits of the proposed development.

2.0 Site Description

- 2.1 St Marys Church in Wales V.A School is located on the north side of Park Road (B5097) on the eastern edge of Ruabon. Access to the school is taken from Park Road serving parking areas and school buildings. To the north of the school buildings are playgrounds and outdoor space associated with the school.
- 2.2 The site itself comprises an area of hardstanding to the north of the school grounds. The hardstanding comprises a mix of concrete and tarmac with ramps, steps and concrete planters and does not appear to have any formal or informal recreational use. Access to the site is by public footpaths from Park Street to the south, Maes-y-Llan to the north and High Street to the west. There are no trees on the site.
- 2.3 To the north of the site is a children's playground with playing pitch to the east. These are unaffected by the proposal.
- 2.4 Beyond the playground to the north is Ysgol Maes-y-Llan with its associated buildings, parking and playground. This is also unaffected by the proposal. To the west are the rear gardens of dwellings facing High Street.
- 2.5 Whilst the site sits outside the drawn settlement limit on the Wrexham UDP Proposals Map, it is clearly related to the main settlement with schools to the north and south and housing to the west. Beyond the playing pitch to the east of the site is the A483. The site forms part of a wider recreation space on the eastern edge of Ruabon with close association with the schools to the north and south and High Street to the west.
- 2.6 The site is not subject to any specific allocation or designation in the Wrexham UDP.
- 2.7 The site is not subject to any heritage, landscape or ecological designations and sits in Flood Zone 1.

3.0 The Proposed Development

- 3.1 The proposal comprises a new single storey modular building to provide nursery / preschool play area / learning space at the school. The proposed building is to be occupied by 2 pre-school childcare nurseries; one Welsh speaking only and the other English speaking. As such a triple modular building is proposed.
- 3.2 The building is to be located on an existing hardstanding to the north of St Mary's Church in Wales V.A School. This location can be easily accessed from existing footpaths linking the site to High Street to the west, Maes-y-Llan Lane to the north and Park Street to the south. The site is located within easy reach of High Street and sits between two existing schools.
- 3.3 The proposal consists of an 33m x 10.2m footprint (triple) modular building with shallow pitch roof including play / learning space, wc, kitchen, store, office and lobby. The design intention is to create a building of interest within the site which reflects its use – the proposed materials will be plastic coated steel sheeting (colour heritage green) whilst the roof will be a black EDPM membrane. Eaves, windows and doors will be dark grey.
- 3.4 The choice of materials reflect the use and the edge of settlement location of the building to create a building that is visually interesting. The modular building is a simple shallow pitch structure with height of 2.94m falling to 2.89m at eaves. The extract below shows the proposed elevations and materials.



- 3.5 The design and appearance of the building seeks to deliver an attractive building on the site that will sit comfortably with its surrounds.

- 3.6 Access to the building will be from the rear (west elevation) via existing footpaths linking the site to High Street to the west, Maes-y-Llan Lane to the north and Park Street to the south. To the rear of the building there will be a bin store whilst to the front (east) doors open out from the nurseries onto enclosed playspace (395 sqm total). The proposed site layout is shown in the extract below:



- 3.7 The proposed new building is of hybrid timber/steel frame. A large effort has been made in the design stage of the building to ensure that the building has as low carbon impact as possible (in line with current regulations set out in AD part L2). Examples of this are: LED lighting has been specified throughout, PIR controlled lighting to main areas with daytime dimming and a highly efficient A/Cs and heaters has been specified throughout the building. The building is sufficiently insulated with glass fiber quilt insulation, and polyurethane foam board to achieve significantly improve upon the elemental u-value standards as set out in the building regulations.
- 3.8 Level access is provided to the building along the rear / west elevation via an internal lobby area.
- 3.9 As stated, the proposal comprises a triple modular building. The internal space is divided to create two nurseries, a double unit comprising circa 194sqm of internal space with an attached single unit delivering 122sqm internal space.

The double unit shares lobby and kitchen space whilst the single unit is self-contained albeit attached to the double unit.

3.10 The proposed nurseries will deliver the following:

Double classbase:

- Shared lobby space – 13 sqm
- Shared kitchen facility 10 sqm
- 2 x play area / learning space at 63 sqm and 64 sqm
- 2 x store room at 3 sqm each
- 2 x wc including fully accessible wc at 13 sqm each
- 2 x office at 6 sqm each

Single classbase

- Lobby at 10 sqm
- Office at 10 sqm
- Kitchen at 9 sqm
- Wc and fully accessible wc at 15 sqm
- Store at 7 sqm
- Play area / learning space at 71 sqm

3.11 Further details are set out in the submitted Design & Access Statement

4.0 Planning Policy Review

Planning Policy Wales – Edition 10 (Dec 2018)

- 4.1 Planning Policy Wales (PPW) sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Government.
- 4.2 Paragraph 1.2 of PPW sets out its primary objective, namely to ensure that the planning system contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, as required by the Planning (Wales) Act 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and other key legislation. A well-functioning planning system is fundamental for sustainable development and achieving sustainable places.
- 4.3 Figure 3 in PPW sets out the Key Planning Principles to achieve the right development in the right places. Of these principles, the following is most relevant:

Creating & sustaining communities

The planning system must work in an integrated way to maximise its contribution to well-being. It can achieve this by creating well-designed places and cohesive rural and urban communities which can be sustained by ensuring the appropriate balance of uses and density, making places where people want to be and interact with others. Our communities need the right mix of good quality/well designed homes, jobs, services, infrastructure and facilities so that people feel content with their everyday lives.

- 4.4 The PPW also sets out guidance on Community Facilities. Paragraphs 4.4.1 and 4.4.2 advise:

4.4.1 Community facilities perform various functions which cover a broad range of activities and services that can be delivered by the public, private and third sectors. Community facilities contribute to a sense of place which is important to the health, well-being and amenity of local communities and their existence is often a key element in creating viable and sustainable places. They can include schools, cultural facilities, health services, libraries, allotments and places of worship.

4.4.2 Planning authorities should develop a strategic and long-term approach to the provision of community facilities when preparing development plans based on evidence. When considering development proposals planning authorities should consider the needs of the communities and ensure that community facilities continue to address the requirements of residents in the area.

Development Plan – Wrexham UDP

- 4.5 The site falls within Wrexham Borough County Council and as such the Development Plan for the site comprises the adopted Unitary Development Plan (Feb 2005). Whilst it is noted there is a draft Local Development Plan, it has yet to be adopted and so it has been afforded limited weight in assessing the proposal.

- 4.6 The UDP proposals map identifies the site as sitting adjacent to the settlement limits of Ruabon and is not subject to any allocations or designations.
- 4.7 The key issues are considered to relate to principle, community uses and design.
- 4.8 The relevant UDP policies are identified below;
- Policy GDP1 – Development Objectives – criteria based policy setting out key principles for assessment of planning applications
 - Strategic Policy PS2 - Development must not materially detrimentally affect countryside, landscape/townscape character, open space, or the quality of the natural environment.
 - Strategic Policy PS3 - Development should use previously developed brownfield land comprising vacant, derelict or underused land in preference to the use of greenfield land, wherever possible, particularly so where greenfield land is of ecological, landscape or amenity value, or comprises agricultural land of grades 1, 2 or 3a quality.
 - Policy T8 - Parking
- 4.9 The relevant policies are assessed in Chapter 5

5.0 Planning Assessment

Principle of Development

- 5.1 Planning Policy Wales (PPW) acknowledges the importance of community facilities and the contribution they make to a sense of place. Such facilities, such as schools and pre-school / nurseries are important to the health, well-being and amenity of local communities and their existence is often a key element in creating viable and sustainable places.
- 5.2 The Welsh Government recognises that childcare is one of the biggest challenges facing working families in Wales. Supporting families with quality, flexible and affordable childcare supports economic regeneration, can reduce pressures on family income and help parents to participate in work, thus reducing a family's risk of poverty. It also supports the wellbeing of children through positive and rich childcare experiences. There are therefore clear social and economic benefits arising from the provision of this important nursery / pre-school provision.
- 5.3 The proposed nursery building is located on an existing concrete hardstanding between St Marys Church in Wales V.A School (to the south) and Ysgol Maes-y-Llan (to the north) with housing to the west. The site is adjacent to the settlement limits of Ruabon but is surrounded on 3 sides by the aforementioned developments / uses. The proposal will provide a neat infill development on the edge of the settlement. The site has no formal recreation use and will not impact upon the playground to the north or playing field to the east.
- 5.4 The proposal will enhance the community offer within the village and is easily accessible from High Street to the west via existing footpaths. Furthermore, the site is not subject to any designations or allocations in the UDP that would preclude development.
- 5.5 The location of the nursery between existing schools and in an accessible location of the edge of Ruabon makes locational sense in terms of accessibility.
- 5.6 The building is well designed for its purpose with indoor and outdoor playspace together with welfare and kitchen facilities to ensure a high quality childcare facility can be offered for families.
- 5.7 The associated social and economic benefits arising from the proposed childcare facility are clear and the proposal will enhance community facilities in the village.
- 5.8 In terms of UDP Policies PS2 and PS3, the proposal is considered to be consistent with their aspirations in that it will not detrimentally affect countryside, landscape/townscape character, open space, or the quality of the natural environment (PS2) and will use previously developed brownfield land (PS3).
- 5.9 The proposal is therefore consistent with guidance set out in the PPW in respect of community facilities and the aspirations of the Welsh Government in terms of providing quality childcare together with Strategic Policies PS2 and PS3 of the Wrexham UDP
- 5.10 The principle of the proposal in this location is therefore considered acceptable.

Design

- 5.11 Wrexham UDP Policy GDP1 sets out development objectives listing a number of criteria against which proposals should be assessed. This includes matters of design and layout.
- 5.12 The submitted plans and Design and Access Statement which accompanies this application, provides details of the design of the scheme and demonstrates how development could be accommodated on the site and how this would fit with its surrounds. As stated above, the proposal comprises an infill development on a previously developed site adjacent to the settlement limits and easily accessible on foot from High Street, Park Street and Maes-y-Llan Lane.
- 5.13 The proposed nursery is a detached, single storey modular building finished in heritage green coloured wall panels to deliver an attractive building that sits comfortably on site and its surrounds. Its design reflects its purpose whilst the siting and layout delivers safe playspace internally and to the front of the building. The green colour reflects playing pitch to the front whilst location of outdoor play area to the front also sits comfortably with the aforementioned playing pitch.
- 5.14 The proposed building is located in the area currently set to concrete / tarmac with no formal or active use as sports pitch, games area, playing field or open space. This location ensures there is no loss of car parking, play ground or playing fields.
- 5.15 Taking the above into account it is considered the proposed nursery building is consistent with Policy GDP1 in that:
- The scale, design and layout of the proposal, together with its use of materials, accords with the character of this site and its surrounds and will make a positive contribution to the appearance of the nearby locality (criteria a of GDP1);
 - takes account of personal and community safety in the design and layout of development (criteria b of GDP1);
 - makes the best use of design techniques, siting and orientation in order to conserve energy and water resources (criteria c of GDP1);
 - ensures safe and convenient pedestrian access to and from the site as well as convenient access to bus stops on High Street to the west (criteria d & e of GDP1);
 - the development does not result in, or is subject to, flooding or contamination (criteria i of GDP1), and
 - secures the development of sustainable communities, through the promotion of the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area (criteria k of GDP1).
- 5.16 The scale, design and height of the proposed nursery building has therefore been appropriately considered in relation to the site and its surrounds and as such complies with requirements of UDP Policy GDP1.

Amenity

- 5.17 The siting and internal layout, together with provision of outdoor play space on the east side ensures it does not harm the living conditions of those residents living to the west of the site. The dwellings to the west face onto High Street with their rear gardens then abutting the western boundary of the site. The gardens are enclosed by fencing and the length of the garden ensures the actual dwelling is some distance from the site.
- 5.18 As such the design, siting and operation of the proposed nursery building ensures there will be no significant impact on living conditions of nearby residents.

Highways

- 5.19 The proposed nursery is to be located between existing schools in an accessible location to the west of High Street and will provide a new facility for the community. The nursery business will be operated independently of the school although there is a clear synergy between the two. Six additional staff are expected for the proposed nursery. This is not considered to generate any significant extra traffic movements. The site is in accessible location within Ruabon with bus services along High Street to the west.
- 5.20 The proposal will not result in any loss of onsite parking and it is expected that there will be a high percentage of linked trips as parents / carers drop off children to school and the nursery.
- 5.21 In light of the above, it is considered the proposed development will not give rise to any issues of highway safety and will not have a detrimental impact on the local highway network.

Trees and Landscaping

- 5.22 The proposed nursery building will not result in the loss of any trees.

6.0 Conclusions

- 6.1 This Planning Policy Statement has been prepared on behalf of Elite Systems (GB) Limited to support a planning application for a single storey modular building on hardstanding area to north of grounds of St Marys Church in Wales V.A School, Ruabon.
- 6.2 The proposed triple modular building will provide purpose built nursery / preschool classroom space with access to outdoor playspace. The modular building will serve 2 pre-school nurseries; one Welsh speaking only and the other English speaking.

Background and Need.

- 6.3 The Welsh Government recognises that childcare is one of the biggest challenges facing working families in Wales. Supporting families with quality, flexible and affordable childcare supports economic regeneration, can reduce pressures on family income and help parents to participate in work, thus reducing a family's risk of poverty. It also supports the wellbeing of children through positive and rich childcare experiences. There are therefore clear social and economic benefits arising from the provision of this important nursery / pre-school provision.
- 6.4 Wrexham CBC are working with the school and their local communities to support this initiative and deliver new pre-school spaces for local children.
- 6.5 The proposed modular buildings are designed for pre-school children and will deliver an attractive indoor learning and play environment together with access to outdoor playspace.

The Application Site

- 6.6 St Mary's Church in Wales V.A School is located off Park Street on the eastern edge of Ruabon. The site itself currently comprises an area of hardstanding to the north of the school grounds. High Street sits to the west beyond the dwellings which sit adjacent to the site. There is playground to the north with Ysgol Maes-y-Llan beyond whilst land to the east is used as a playing field / sports pitch. The site sits on the edge of the settlement limit (as drawn in the Wrexham UDP Proposals Map) and is not subject to any designations or allocations in the Local Plan.

The Proposed Development

- 6.7 The proposed development comprises a new single storey, triple modular building located on an area of hardstanding to the north of the school. The proposed modular building will provide 2 preschool childcare nurseries; one Welsh speaking only and the other English speaking.
- 6.8 The proposed modular building will provide classroom / learning space together with welfare facilities, kitchen and office. The building will open out onto enclosed external playspace at the front (east facing) of the modular building. A bin store is also proposed to the rear. The proposed modular building will be a simple, shallow pitch roof building clad in materials (plastic coated steel sheeting – heritage green) to create an attractive building on the site.

- 6.9 Access will be via existing footpaths serving the site from High Street to the west, Park Street to the south and Maes-y-Llan Lane to the north. The playground and playing fields associated with the school are unaffected as is the existing car park. Similarly, the play area to the north of the site and playing pitch to the east are also unaffected.

Planning Assessment

- 6.10 The proposed modular building is required to deliver clear aspirations of the Welsh Government to improve childcare facilities for families and the communities in which they live. The proposed nursery building sits in an accessible location to the north of the school grounds and will not result in loss of any parking, playground or playing field. The site comprises previously developed land adjacent to settlement limits and will not result in any harm to landscape / townscape, countryside, open space or the quality of the natural environment. The principle of such development is therefore acceptable.
- 6.11 The location of the modular building between two schools and within walking distance of High Street makes locational sense in terms of accessibility and providing best possible transition for children from pre-school into school. The building is well designed for its purpose with indoor and outdoor playspace together with welfare and kitchen facilities to ensure a high quality childcare facility can be offered for families.
- 6.12 The proposed modular building is a simple mono pitch building located on the eastern edge of Ruabon with built development to the north, south and west. The building provides internal playspace and welfare / kitchen / office space together with access to safe outdoor playspace. Materials comprise heritage green wall cladding panels to create an attractive building that sits comfortably on site and with its surrounds. As such the design is appropriate to the function of the building and its wider surrounds whilst its location ensures there is no significant harm to residential amenity.
- 6.13 As such it is considered the proposed modular building is appropriately designed with submitted drawings and supporting reports demonstrating how the proposal can be accommodated on the site and that there are no technical reasons preventing the proposal being developed.
- 6.14 In view of the above, it is considered the scheme satisfies national and local policy and represents a suitable and sustainable development proposal for the site that addresses all the relevant and material considerations. In this context, the proposal satisfies Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and it is considered that planning permission should be granted.