

Report of the Head of Development Management and Building Control

Address:	HILLINGDON SPORTS AND LEISURE CENTRE GATTING WAY UXBRIDGE		
Development:	Installation of 526 photovoltaic panels to the roof of the building. Installation of 4no ASHP evaporator units on raised frame, 1no thermal store, 1no ASHP compressor unit to the south of the site with associated landscaping including increased height of grassed mound by 1m and 2.4m high green Paladin security fencing. Installation of 1no ASHP unit and thermal store adjacent to the Idris track club building, surrounded by 2.4m high green Paladin security fencing.		
LBH Ref Nos:	2543/APP/2023/2972		
Drawing Nos:	0001 Rev 02 0002 Rev 02 1000 Rev 02 2001 Rev 02 0010 Rev 03 0011 Rev 03 1001 Rev 03 1002 Rev 03 Landscaping Plan 3001 Rev 01 Planning Cover letter Rooftop Solar design		
Date Plans received:	12-10-2023	Date(s) of Amendments(s):	12-10-2023
Date Application valid	12-10-2023		20-12-2023

1. SUMMARY

The application site comprises the Hillingdon Sports and Leisure Centre. The main building itself is not listed, however the site contains a number of heritage assets. The northern portion of the site is designated as Green Belt within the Council's Local Development Plan.

The application seeks planning permission for the installation of 526 photovoltaic panels to the roof of the building and 4no air source heat pump (ASHP) evaporator units on raised frame with 1no thermal store, 1no ASHP compressor unit to the south of the site with associated landscaping including increased height of grassed mound by 1m and 2.4m high green Paladin security fencing. In addition, the application seeks permission for the installation of 1no ASHP unit and thermal store adjacent to the Idris track club building, surrounded by 2.4m high green Paladin security fencing.

The proposal would result in some harm to the designated heritage assets due to the cumulative impact of the different aspects of the proposal. However, there is a clear public benefit in the

reduction of energy consumption and associated carbon savings that would outweigh the less than substantial harm in this case. The proposal would have an acceptable impact on the Green Belt and no other significant issues are identified. The proposal is considered to comply with the development plan and it is recommended that planning permission be granted, subject to the conditions set out below.

2. RECOMMENDATION

APPROVAL subject to the following:

1. COM3 **Time Limit**

The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

REASON

To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. COM4 **Accordance with Approved Plans**

The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out except in complete accordance with the details shown on the submitted plans

0001 Rev 02

1000 Rev 02

3001 Rev 01

2001 Rev 02

1001 Rev 03

1002 Rev 03

Termonova Heat Pump TER-MA-220

Rooftop Solar design

Panel Information

Module Layout

Landscaping Plan

and shall thereafter be retained/maintained for as long as the development remains in existence.

REASON

To ensure the development complies with the provisions of Hillingdon Local Plan Parts 1 (November 2012) and 2 (January 2020) and the London Plan (2021).

3. NONSC **Visual Screening**

The Air Source Heat Pump evaporator units shall be either directly coated in RAL6002 or a screen will be added on the lido side of the evaporator units in the form of thin metal sheeting coated in RAL6002 and shall thereafter be retained as such.

REASON

To ensure that the proposed development makes a satisfactory contribution to the preservation and

enhancement of the visual amenities of the locality with the provisions of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 1 (2012) and Part 2 (2020), and the London Plan (2021).

4. A5 New Planting

Prior to first use of the development hereby approved or within the next planting season (whichever is the earliest period) the landscaping scheme shall be implemented in its entirety. The new planting and landscape operations should comply with the requirement specified in BS 3936 (1992) 'Nursery Stock, Part 1, Specification for Trees and Shrubs' and in BS4428 (1989) 'Code of Practice for General Landscape Operations (Excluding Hard Surfaces)'. Thereafter, the soft landscaping shall be permanently retained and any trees or other planting which die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased within a period of 5 years from the completion of development, shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species in accordance with the details approved by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON

To ensure that the proposed development makes a satisfactory contribution to the preservation and enhancement of the visual amenities of the locality with the provisions of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 1 (2012) and Part 2 (2020), and the London Plan (2021).

5. RES10 Tree to be retained

Trees, hedges and shrubs shown to be retained on the approved plan(s) shall not be damaged, uprooted, felled, lopped or topped without the prior written consent of the Local Planning Authority. If any retained tree, hedge or shrub is removed or severely damaged during (or after) construction, or is found to be seriously diseased or dying, another tree, hedge or shrub shall be planted at the same place or, if planting in the same place would leave the new tree, hedge or shrub susceptible to disease, then the planting should be in a position to be first agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority and shall be of a size and species to be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority and shall be planted in the first planting season following the completion of the development or the occupation of the buildings, whichever is the earlier. Where damage is less severe, a schedule of remedial works necessary to ameliorate the effect of damage by tree surgery, feeding or groundwork shall be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. New planting should comply with BS 3936 (1992) 'Nursery Stock, Part 1, Specification for Trees and Shrubs' Remedial work should be carried out to BS BS 3998:2010 'Tree work - Recommendations' and BS 4428 (1989) 'Code of Practice for General Landscape Operations (Excluding Hard Surfaces)'. The agreed work shall be completed in the first planting season following the completion of the development or the occupation of the buildings, whichever is the earlier.

REASON

To ensure that the trees and other vegetation continue to make a valuable contribution to the amenity of the area in accordance with policy DMHB 14 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2 (2020) and to comply with Section 197 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

6. NONSC Noise Condition

For the lifetime of the development hereby permitted the rating level (LAr) of noise caused by its operation shall not exceed: 40 dB LAr 15 min for any fifteen-minute period between 2300 and 0700, and 50 dB LAr 1 hour for any one-hour period between 0700 and 2300, determined one metre free field external to any window or door of any permanent residential, or equivalently noise sensitive premises, in accordance with 'Methods for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound'

British Standards Institution BS4142 2014.'

REASON

To ensure that occupants of existing dwellings would not be exposed to noise caused by the permitted development that would be likely to cause a significant adverse effect on their health and quality of life. This has regard to the guidance set out in 'Guidance on Sound Insulation and Noise Reduction for Buildings' BS8233 2014, with windows open for the purposes of ventilation and cooling.

7. NONSC **Remove PV When Not Required**

The solar PV equipment on the main roof shall be removed as soon as reasonably practicable when no longer needed.

REASON

To safeguard the visual amenities of the area in accordance with Policies DMHB 2 and DMHB 11 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2 (2020).

8. RES26 **Contaminated Land**

No contaminated soils or other materials shall be imported to the site. All imported soils for landscaping purposes shall be clean and free of contamination. Before any part of the development is occupied, all imported soils shall be independently tested for chemical contamination, and the results of this testing shall be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. All soils used for landscaping purposes shall be clean and free of contamination.

REASON

To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecological systems and the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other offsite receptors in accordance with policy DMEI 12 of Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2.

INFORMATIVES

1.

The Equality Act 2010 seeks to protect people accessing goods, facilities and services from discrimination on the basis of a 'protected characteristic', which includes those with a disability. As part of the Act, service providers are obliged to improve access to and within the structure of their building, particularly in situations where reasonable adjustment can be incorporated with relative ease. The Act states that service providers should think ahead to take steps to address barriers that impede disabled people.

2. I52 **Compulsory Informative (1)**

The decision to GRANT planning permission has been taken having regard to all relevant planning legislation, regulations, guidance, circulars and Council policies, including The Human Rights Act (1998) (HRA 1998) which makes it unlawful for the Council to act incompatibly with Convention rights, specifically Article 6 (right to a fair hearing); Article 8 (right to respect for private and family life); Article 1 of the First Protocol (protection of property) and Article 14 (prohibition of discrimination).

3. I15 Control of Environmental Nuisance from Construction Work

Nuisance from demolition and construction works is subject to control under The Control of Pollution Act 1974, the Clean Air Acts and other related legislation. In particular, you should ensure that the following are complied with:-

A. Demolition and construction works which are audible at the site boundary shall only be carried out between the hours of 08.00 and 18.00 hours Monday to Friday and between the hours of 08.00 hours and 13.00 hours on Saturday. No works shall be carried out on Sundays, Bank or Public Holidays.

B. All noise generated during such works shall be controlled in compliance with British Standard Code of Practice BS 5228:2009.

C. Dust emissions shall be controlled in compliance with the Mayor of London's Best Practice Guidance' The Control of dust and emissions from construction and demolition.

D. No bonfires that create dark smoke or nuisance to local residents.

You are advised to consult the Council's Environmental Protection Unit (www.hillingdon.gov.uk/noise Tel. 01895 250155) or to seek prior approval under Section 61 of the Control of Pollution Act if you anticipate any difficulty in carrying out construction other than within the normal working hours set out in (A) above, and by means that would minimise disturbance to adjoining premises.

I53 Compulsory Informative (2)

The decision to GRANT planning permission has been taken having regard to the policies and proposals in the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 1 (2012) and Part 2 (2020) set out below, including Supplementary Planning Guidance, and to all relevant material considerations, including The London Plan (2021) and national guidance.

DMCI 6	Indoor Sports and Leisure Facilities
DMEI 10	Water Management, Efficiency and Quality
DMEI 2	Reducing Carbon Emissions
DMEI 4	Development on the Green Belt or Metropolitan Open Land
DMEI 9	Management of Flood Risk
DMHB 1	Heritage Assets
DMHB 11	Design of New Development
DMHB 12	Streets and Public Realm
DMHB 14	Trees and Landscaping
DMHB 2	Listed Buildings
DMT 1	Managing Transport Impacts
DMT 2	Highways Impacts
DMT 6	Vehicle Parking
DMTC 1	Town Centre Development
LPP D3	(2021) Optimising site capacity through the design-led approach
LPP D8	(2021) Public realm

LPP GG3	(2021) Creating a healthy city
LPP HC1	(2021) Heritage conservation and growth
LPP S5	(2021) Sports and recreation facilities
LPP T4	(2021) Assessing and mitigating transport impacts
LPP T6	(2021) Car parking
NPPF12	NPPF 2021 - Achieving well-designed places
NPPF13	NPPF 2021 - Protecting Green Belt Land
NPPF15	NPPF 2021 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
NPPF16	NPPF 2021 - Conserving & enhancing the historic environment
NPPF2	NPPF 2021 - Achieving sustainable development
NPPF4	NPPF 2021 - Decision-Making
NPPF7	NPPF 2021 - Ensuring the vitality of town centres

3. CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 Site and Locality

The application site comprises the Hillingdon Sports and Leisure Centre in Uxbridge, which is a large modern sports hall with indoor pools directly adjacent on the east side to the listed Uxbridge Lido complex of heritage assets which comprises the Grade II listed external pool, fountains, grandstand and entrance building.

The Hillingdon Sports and Leisure Centre was developed between 2000-2006 alongside the grade II listed Uxbridge Lido complex, which had been closed since the 1980s and had fallen into a poor state of repair. The structures were listed in 1998. During the redevelopment of the site, the lido was re-landscaped with an oval paved area around the pool and rolling grassy area to the south. The access road running along the south and west side was built in 2010 and there is a large public car park to the north. The lido is surrounded by high wire fencing.

The site occupies a raised position above the neighbouring farmland and nature reserve to the east and new housing development to the south / south-east. Uxbridge College is located to the west and south-west. The northern portion of the site (excluding the main sports and leisure centre building) is designated Green Belt within the Council's Local Development Plan.

3.2 Proposed Scheme

The application proposes:

1. Installation of 526 photovoltaic panels to the roof of the main building.
2. Installation of 4no ASHP evaporator units on raised frame, 1no thermal store, 1no ASHP compressor unit to the south of the site with associated landscaping including increased height of grassed mound by 1m and 2.4m high green Paladin security fencing.
3. Installation of 1no ASHP unit and thermal store adjacent to the Idris track club building, surrounded by 2.4m high green Paladin security fencing.

The planning application is accompanied by an application for listed building consent (also on this committee agenda) for the proposed installation of 526 photovoltaic panels to the roof of the main building, which is attached to the Grade II listed Grandstand and Cafeteria heritage asset (ref.2543/APP/2023/2973).

3.3 Relevant Planning History

2543/APP/2023/2973 Hillingdon Sports And Leisure Centre Gatting Way Uxbridge
Installation of 526 photovoltaic panels to the roof of the main building (in connection with full planning application ref: 2543/APP/2023/2972)

Comment on Relevant Planning History

No comment.

4. Planning Policies and Standards

Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Development Plan for the London Borough of Hillingdon currently consists of the following documents:

The Local Plan Part 1 - Strategic Policies (2012)
The Local Plan Part 2 - Development Management Policies (2020)
The Local Plan Part 2 - Site Allocations and Designations (2020)
The West London Waste Plan (2015)
The London Plan (2021)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023) is also a material consideration in planning decisions, as well as relevant supplementary planning documents and guidance.

Local Plan Designation and London Plan

The following Local Plan Policies are considered relevant to the application:-

Part 1 Policies:

PT1.BE1 (2012) Built Environment

PT1.HE1 (2012) Heritage

PT1.EM5 (2012) Sport and Leisure

PT1.EM1 (2012) Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation

PT1.CI2 (2012) Leisure and Recreation

PT1.EM2 (2012) Green Belt, Metropolitan Open Land and Green Chains

Part 2 Policies:

DMEI 2 Reducing Carbon Emissions

DMEI 4 Development on the Green Belt or Metropolitan Open Land

DMEI 9 Management of Flood Risk

DMEI 10 Water Management, Efficiency and Quality

DMCI 6 Indoor Sports and Leisure Facilities

DMT 1 Managing Transport Impacts

DMT 2 Highways Impacts

DMHB 1 Heritage Assets

DMHB 2 Listed Buildings

DMHB 11 Design of New Development

DMHB 12 Streets and Public Realm

DMHB 14 Trees and Landscaping

DMTC 1 Town Centre Development

DMT 6 Vehicle Parking

LPP S5 (2021) Sports and recreation facilities

LPP T4 (2021) Assessing and mitigating transport impacts

LPP GG3 (2021) Creating a healthy city

LPP T6 (2021) Car parking

LPP HC1 (2021) Heritage conservation and growth

LPP D3 (2021) Optimising site capacity through the design-led approach

- LPP D8 (2021) Public realm
- NPPF13 NPPF 2021 - Protecting Green Belt Land
- NPPF15 NPPF 2021 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- NPPF4 NPPF 2021 - Decision-Making
- NPPF2 NPPF 2021 - Achieving sustainable development
- NPPF7 NPPF 2021 - Ensuring the vitality of town centres
- NPPF12 NPPF 2021 - Achieving well-designed places
- NPPF16 NPPF 2021 - Conserving & enhancing the historic environment

5. Advertisement and Site Notice

5.1 Advertisement Expiry Date: **29th November 2023**

5.2 Site Notice Expiry Date: **6th December 2023**

6. Consultations

External Consultees

46 neighbouring properties and North Uxbridge Residents Association were consulted for 21 days. Following receipt of revised plans, a reconsultation took place for 21 days. A final reconsultation took place following receipt of further revised plans. Consultations expire on 6th January 2024. No public comments have been received to date. Any representations received following the publication of the report will be reported in an addendum.

Internal Consultees

The Council's Energy Officer, Conservation Officer, Noise Officer, Highways and Access Officer were consulted on 27th of October 2023.

NOISE OFFICER:

Sufficient information has been provided by the Applicant to make a recommendation with respect to noise. It is recommended that no objection is made on noise grounds subject to the inclusion of suitable conditions which should be met based on the design information provided and considering measurement and prediction uncertainty. 'For the lifetime of the development hereby permitted the rating level (LAr) of noise caused by its operation shall not exceed: 40 dB LAr 15 min for any fifteen-minute period between 2300 and 0700, and 50 dB LAr 1 hour for any one-hour period between 0700 and 2300, determined one metre free field external to any window or door of any permanent residential, or equivalently noise sensitive premises, in accordance with 'Methods for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound' British Standards Institution BS4142 2014.' Reason To ensure that occupants of existing dwellings would not be exposed to noise caused by the permitted development that would be likely to cause a significant adverse effect on their health and quality of life. This has regard to the guidance set out in 'Guidance on Sound

Insulation and Noise Reduction for Buildings' BS8233 2014, with windows open for the purposes of ventilation and cooling.

Planning Officer Comment: The recommended condition has been included in the Officer recommendation at Section 2 of this report.

ACCESS OFFICER:

I have considered the detail of this planning application and deem there to be no accessibility issues raised by the proposal. However, the following informative should be attached to any grant of planning permission: The Equality Act 2010 seeks to protect people accessing goods, facilities and services from discrimination on the basis of a 'protected characteristic', which includes those with a disability. As part of the Act, service providers are obliged to improve access to and within the structure of their building, particularly in situations where reasonable adjustment can be incorporated with relative ease. The Act states that service providers should think ahead to take steps to address barriers that impede disabled people.

Planning Officer Comment: The recommended informative has been included in the Officer recommendation at Section 2 of this report.

ENERGY OFFICER:

The proposals will result in a significant reduction in carbon emissions through the reduction of a gas based heating source. The overall saving is unclear from the documentation given there will be carbon emissions associated with the air source heat pumps that are not clearly set out in the report. However, on the whole, the project will result in a significant saving.

HIGHWAYS:

There are no specific transport/highway related issues raised save for the method of installation of the hardware which will need to be properly managed so as to not measurably disrupt 'day to day' activities at the leisure centre.

Although not specifically addressed within the submission, it would be expected that works would be undertaken in an expedient manner that would avoid substantial disruption both within and outside the site envelope. We could insist on a 'Installation management plan' to help secure this aspect, but the Highway Authority do not consider this to be crucial given that installation would be anticipated to be short-term in duration thereby minimising potential for any local disturbance. Hence there are no further observations.

Planning Officer Comment: The Highway Officer's comments are noted. An informative note has been included to draw the applicants attention to separate legislation which seeks to minimise the disturbance and pollution impacts of construction work. This is considered a suitably proportionate approach having regard to the site context and scale of development.

CONSERVATION OFFICER:

The proposal will not have a direct impact on the heritage assets, instead the consideration is the impact on the setting of the listed buildings.

The PV panels on the roof of the Sports Centre will not be visible from the Lido area and will therefore have no impact. The ASHP compressor unit next to the Idris Track Club is sufficiently far to the north of the listed entrance building that is also considered to have no impact on setting.

The compressor unit and thermal store will be at a lower level than the Lido in the service yard and will not be visible and again the impact on setting of the heritage assets will be negligible.

The real challenge of the proposal is mitigating the impact of the five ASHPs evaporator banks to the south of the listed pool area on the access road. This followed lengthy informal discussions on their location given their scale (10 x 2 x 4 metres) on frames of four metres. The access road slopes down from west to east and is largely below the paved area of the pool however the great scale of the ASHPs rising to about 8 metres high, would ensure that they remained visible when viewed along the important axis from the entrance with the pool and fountains in line and the soft green backdrop beyond. While originally built in the countryside there is very little greenery remaining around the pool and preserving this characteristic is important.

The applicants have convincingly shown that the landscaping at the south end is part of the early 2000 redevelopment and raising the height of the mound in order to screen the ASHPs is therefore acceptable. There will also be planting of trees to further screen the ASHPs, however there is a lack of detail on this aspect. This could either be conditioned or the applicants can provide further detail now. Finally, there is no information on the colour of the ASHPs, can these be in a colour that would blend with the green context?

Since the level of landscaping and colour of the ASHPs is still unclear a final assessment on the level of harm will need to wait. However, it is likely that the ASHPs will remain partially visible when there is less leaf cover and there is likely to be some harm to the setting of the Lido with this aspect of the proposal, although it is recognised and welcomed that the applicants are trying to mitigate this as far as possible. It is therefore likely that the NPPF 202 test with regard to public benefit will need to be applied.

It is noted that the Lido fell into disuse in the 1980s and that the redevelopment of the Sports Centre has allowed its preservation and therefore optimum viable use. Ensuring that the facilities of the Sports Centre are sustainable is vital in preserving the Lido.

Broadly acceptable impact on the setting of the heritage assets with the exception of the five ASHPs to the south of the Heritage Assets on the access road.

More information needed on the landscaping and the colour of the ASHPs before a final assessment on the level of harm can be made. It is likely that there will be some harm (which would be less than substantial) and this should be weighed against the public benefits which may include securing the optimum viable use of the heritage asset.

Planning Officer Comment: Following the above comments, additional information was sought regarding the landscaping and colour of the ASHPs. The Conservation Officer was consulted on the information received.

For clarity - the reference to NPPF paragraph 202 should now read paragraph 208 as a revised version of the NPPF has been published.

CONSERVATION OFFICER:

I've reviewed the new drawings and consider them to be acceptable.

However, there is no information on the particular kind of tree proposed but this might be conditioned.

The green paladin security fencing is acceptable but clearly won't screen the ASHPs. It would not make a material difference whether the ASHPs are RAL 6002 or a screen, although on balance the screen might mitigate the visual impact further. The key is that the ASHPs should blend in with the green surroundings. The combination of the green paint, additional planting and raising of the mound goes some way to mitigating the visual impact of the ASHPs. It reduces the harm to the setting of the Lido by a significant

degree but inevitably there will be some visual impact, particularly given the siting on the central axis of the pool.

The harm would be less than substantial at the lower end and the NPPF test should be applied. There are clearly wider public benefits with Hillingdon's project to achieve Net Zero by 2030 but making the adjacent Sports Centre more sustainable can only contribute to ensuring that the listed Lido remains open and viable in the long term.

Planning Officer Comment: The species of the planting are shown on the landscape strategy by Amersco on page 6. The proposed planting is either *Carpinus Hornbeam* to match the existing trees on the mound or *Photinia Standard* as an evergreen option common to the area, sourced from a local tree nursery.

7. MAIN PLANNING ISSUES

7.01 The principle of the development

The site is predominantly located in the developed area of the Borough, however the northern part of the site extends into the Green Belt. The principle and acceptability of development within the Green Belt is discussed at section 7.05 (below).

Setting aside consideration of the Green Belt for now, the proposals relate to the Hillingdon Sports and Leisure Centre and the improvement of a public building/complex to increase energy efficiency. The following planning policies are considered particularly relevant:

Policy GG3 of the London Plan (2021) seeks to create a healthy city, focussing on reducing health inequalities and improving Londoner's health. Healthy and active lifestyles should be promoted, alongside ensuring that buildings are appropriately equipped to ensure they are well insulated and sufficiently ventilated.

Policy S5 of the London Plan (2021) aims to protect existing sports and recreation facilities, as well as encouraging the provision of new facilities.

Policy EM1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One Strategic Policies (2012) seeks to reduce climate change and work with developers to provide efficiency initiatives and it further states that they will promote decentralised energy.

Policy EM5 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One Strategic Policies (2012) seeks to safeguard and enhance the network of sport and leisure spaces that meet local community needs and facilitate active lifestyles by providing active sport and leisure spaces within walking distance of home.

Policy CI2 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One Strategic Policies (2012) seeks to safeguard existing viable leisure and recreational facilities and supporting proposals for new and improved facilities.

Policy DMCI 6 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two - Development Management Policies (2020) further confirms that indoor sports and leisure facilities will be protected and enhanced provided proposals are not detrimental to the amenity of the surrounding area.

The proposal is for the provision of renewable energy technologies, which would support de-carbonisation and assist in securing the future of this important leisure facility in accordance with the

aims and objectives of the policies listed above. As such, the principle of development is considered acceptable, subject to compliance with other relevant policies as set out in this report.

7.02 Density of the proposed development

Not applicable.

7.03 Impact on archaeology/CAs/LBs or Areas of Special Character

The impacts on the setting of the listed heritage assets and the appearance of the area are addressed in sections 7.05 and 7.07 of this report.

7.04 Airport safeguarding

Not applicable.

7.05 Impact on the green belt

GREEN BELT

Policies in the Hillingdon Local Plan reflect national and London Plan guidance. The London Borough of Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 1 Policy EM2: (Green Belt, Metropolitan Open land and Green Chains) states that the Council will seek to maintain the current functions of the Green Belt and that any development proposed within the Green Belt will be considered against national and London Plan policies.

The London Borough of Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 Policy DME1 4 (Development in the Green Belt or on Metropolitan Open land) reiterates that inappropriate development will not be permitted unless there are very exceptional circumstances, while noting that redevelopment on sites will be permitted only where they would not harm openness or conflict with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt.

London Plan Policy G2 seeks to protect Green Belt from inappropriate development in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Development proposals that would harm Green Belt should be refused except where very special circumstances exist.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is also relevant. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-making. The document states that the Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence. As with previous Green Belt policy, inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

Paragraph 153 of the NPPF states that when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

Paragraph 154 of the NPPF sets out that the construction of new buildings on Green Belt should be regarded as inappropriate barring the limited exceptions to this:

a) buildings for agriculture and forestry;

- b) the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use) for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments; as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;
- c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;
- d) the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;
- e) limited infilling in villages;
- f) limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the development plan; and
- g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would:
 - not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development; or
 - not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, where the development would re-use previously developed land and contribute to meeting an identified affordable housing need within the area of the local planning authority.

Paragraph 155 states, certain other forms of development are also not inappropriate in the Green Belt provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. These are:

- a) mineral extraction;
- b) engineering operations;
- c) local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location;
- d) the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction;
- e) material changes in the use of land (such as changes of use for outdoor sport or recreation, or for cemeteries and burial grounds); and
- f) development, including buildings, brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.

Paragraph 156 states that when located in the Green Belt, elements of many renewable energy projects will comprise inappropriate development. In such cases developers will need to demonstrate very special circumstances if projects are to proceed. Such very special circumstances may include the wider environmental benefits associated with increased production of energy from renewable sources.

Green Belt - Assessment

The application site is partially designated as Green Belt (northern part of the site). The main policy issue in this respect is considered to be the principle of additional development within the Green Belt and its impact on the openness, character and appearance of the Green Belt.

It should be noted that the proposed 526 photovoltaic panels to the roof of the building, 4no ASHP evaporator units on raised frame, 1no thermal store, 1no ASHP compressor unit to the south of the site with associated landscaping including increased height of grassed mound by 1m and 2.4m high green Paladin security fencing, would all be situated outside of the Green Belt. Furthermore, it is considered that those proposals would not adversely impact upon the Green Belt (in respect of openness, character or appearance) despite the proximity.

It is proposed to install 1no ASHP unit and thermal store within the Green Belt adjacent to the Idris

track club building. The ASHP unit and thermal store would be surrounded by 2.4m high green Paladin security fencing.

As noted above, Paragraph 154 of the NPPF allows as an exception to inappropriate development in the Green Belt, the provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor recreation subject to the preservation of openness. The proposals are for equipment to support the continued sustainable operation of a sports and leisure facility. Related to this, it is noted that the Lido fell into disuse in the 1980s and that the redevelopment of the sports centre has allowed its preservation and therefore optimum viable use. Ensuring that the facilities of the sports centre are sustainable is vital in preserving the Lido.

Taking the above into account, it is concluded that the proposed development constitutes a valid exception under NPPF paragraph 154b, subject to consideration of the impact on openness. The proposed ASHP, thermal store and fencing would be sited adjacent to an existing building (east) and area of trees (north). As such, the proposed equipment and fencing would be screened from the north and east and from other directions would be viewed in the context of the existing building and trees. It is therefore considered that the proposal would not have any significant impact on the openness of the Green Belt in this location.

Notwithstanding the above, the applicant has put forward a case for Very Special Circumstances. In summary, the provision of the renewable energy technologies proposed would assist in securing the future of this important leisure facility in accordance with the recommendations of the NPPF, given the substantial operating costs of leisure centres.

In addition to the above, part of Hillingdon's strategic climate action plan is to become carbon neutral by 2030. Accordingly, the Council is proposing a number of energy saving retrofits to their public buildings within the Borough. In accordance with this objective the proposed development will allow Hillingdon Sports and Leisure Centre to work towards becoming carbon neutral in line with government and local policies.

It is considered that the very special circumstances outlined would in this case outweigh any minor harm to the openness (notwithstanding the above conclusion regarding impact on openness), character or appearance of the Green Belt arising from the siting of the proposed ASHP, thermal store and fence surround.

Taking the above points into consideration, the proposed development is acceptable in the Green Belt, in accordance with the aims of Policy EM2 of the Local Plan Part 1 (2012), Local Plan Part 2 Policy DME14 , Policy G2 of the London Plan (2021) and the NPPF.

7.07 Impact on the character & appearance of the area

This section of the report considers the street scene and character impact of the development, including the impact on heritage assets. It is noted that the proposal will not have a direct impact on the heritage assets, instead the consideration is the impact on the setting of the listed heritage assets.

POLICY CONTEXT:

Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, imposes a statutory duty on Local Planning Authorities requiring that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of

special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

The NPPF at Chapter 16, places great importance on the protection of heritage assets. Of particular relevance to this development proposal are the following two paragraphs:

'205. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.'

'208. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.'

Policy HC1 of the London Plan (2021) states, inter alia, that 'development proposals affecting heritage assets, and their settings, should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to the assets' significance and appreciation within their surroundings. The cumulative impacts of incremental change from development on heritage assets and their settings should also be actively managed. Development proposals should avoid harm and identify enhancement opportunities by integrating heritage considerations early on in the design process.'

Policy HE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One - Strategic Policies (November 2012) states that the Council will conserve and enhance Hillingdon's distinct and varied environment, its settings and the wider historic landscape (including locally and statutorily Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Areas of Special Local Character and Archaeological Priority Zones and Areas), and encourage the reuse, modification and regeneration of historic assets.

Policy BE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One Strategic Policies (2012) seeks a quality of design in all new development that enhances and contributes to the area in terms of form, scale and materials; is appropriate to the identity and context of the townscape; and would improve the quality of the public realm and respect local character.

Policy DMHB 11 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two - Development Management Policies (2020) states that new development will be required to be designed to the highest standards and incorporate principles of good design.

Policy DMHB 12 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two - Development Management Policies (2020) states that development should be well integrated with the surrounding area.

Policy DMHB 1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two - Development Management Policies (2020) states that the Council will expect development proposals to avoid harm to the historic environment and to prevent the loss of significance or harm to the character, appearance and setting of heritage assets.

Policy DMHB 2 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two - Development Management Policies (2020) will only permit developments that retain the significance and value of Listed Buildings whilst being appropriate in terms of the fabric, historic integrity, spatial quality and layout of the building. In addition, any alterations or additions to a Listed Building should be sympathetic in terms of scale, proportion, detailed design, materials and workmanship.

ASSESSMENT:

The proposal is part of a broader scheme of carbon reduction as part of the London Borough of Hillingdon's 2030 Net Zero Carbon commitment.

The application proposes (1) the installation of 526 photovoltaic panels to the roof of the building and (2) the installation of 4no ASHP evaporator units on raised frame, 1no thermal store, 1no ASHP compressor unit to the south of the site, with associated landscaping including increased height of grassed mound by 1m and 2.4m high green Paladin security fencing. In addition, the application proposes (3) the installation of 1no ASHP unit and thermal store adjacent to the Idris track club building, surrounded by 2.4m high green Paladin security fencing.

The proposed 526 solar PV panels would be sited on the modern Sports Centre roof. The roof itself has a parapet surrounding it and the proposed panels would be sited at least 1m from the edge of the roof, fitted in rows at 10 degrees tilt facing south. As a result of the parapet and proposed siting, the PV panels would be effectively screened from ground level and importantly from the Lido area which includes the Grandstand and Cafeteria.

The proposed ASHP compressor unit (and associated thermal store and fencing) next to the Idris Track Club is sufficiently far to the north of the listed entrance building, such that it is also considered that it would have no impact on the setting. Furthermore, as has been explained previously, this element of the scheme would have an acceptable impact in terms of the character, appearance and openness of the Green Belt. These elements of the proposal would therefore be acceptable and preserve the character and appearance of the area and setting of the heritage assets.

The four Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHPs) evaporator banks would be located to the south of the listed pool area on the access road. The access road slopes down from west to east and is largely below the paved area of the pool, however the scale of the ASHPs (circa 4m high from base level), would mean that they would remain visible when viewed along the important axis from the entrance with the pool and fountains in line. In order to acceptably mitigate against the scale and visual impact of the ASHP system, the applicant has proposed to raise the existing adjacent earth mound by 1m to help screen the proposed development. It has been demonstrated that the earth mound is part of the early 2000 redevelopment and therefore this is considered acceptable. In addition, the landscaping plan proposes the planting of trees to further screen the ASHP system.

In response to the Conservation Officer's comments, the applicant has clarified that the evaporator banks will be either directly coated in RAL6002 or a screen will be added on the lido side of the evaporators in the form of thin metal sheeting coated in RAL6002. The Conservation Officer has found either to be acceptable in ensuring the ASHPs are screened and blend in with the green surroundings. As a result, the combination of the green paint, additional planting and raising of the mound would help to sufficiently mitigate the visual impact of the ASHP system. It is considered that this would reduce the harm to the setting of the Lido by a significant degree, although inevitably there would remain some visual impact, particularly given the siting on the central axis of the pool.

The compressor unit and thermal store would be at a lower level than the Lido in the service yard and would not be visible and therefore the visual impact and the impact on the setting of the heritage assets would be negligible.

It is considered that cumulatively, the proposal would result in some harm, in particular, as a result of the proposed ASHP system proposed in the south of the site as described above. The applicant has

worked with Officers (including the Council's Conservation Officer) in order to minimise the impact of the proposals on the listed buildings/structures and their setting. It is concluded that the resulting harm would be 'less than substantial' at the lower end of the spectrum, requiring the NPPF paragraph 208 test (detailed above) to be applied. It is noted that the Lido fell into disuse in the 1980s and that the redevelopment of the Sports Centre has allowed its preservation and therefore optimum viable use. Ensuring that the facilities of the Sports Centre are sustainable is vital in preserving the Lido. It is therefore considered that there is a clear public benefit in the reduction of energy consumption, the associated reduction in carbon emissions and greater efficiencies in maintaining the public building. It is considered that the clear public benefits outweigh the identified less than substantial harm in this case.

The proposed works would be visible from the public realm, however they would not be unduly prominent, subject to the mitigation planting which is to be secured by planning condition. Therefore, for the reasons explained above, it is considered that the impact on the streetscene and character and appearance of the area would be acceptable.

Having regard to the above, it is considered that the proposal would have an acceptable impact on the character and appearance of the area and that the less than substantial harm caused would be outweighed by the public benefits of the scheme. Consequently, the proposal is considered to accord with Policies HE1 and BE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 1 (November 2012), Policies DMHB 1, DMHB 2, DMHB 11 and DMHB 12 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part Two - Development Management Policies (January 2020), Policies D3 and HC1 of the London Plan, and Chapters 12 and 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023).

7.08 Impact on neighbours

Policy BE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 1 - Strategic Policies (2012) states that all new development should seek to protect the amenity of surrounding land and buildings, particularly residential properties.

Policy DMHB 11 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two - Development Management Policies (2020) states that development proposals should not adversely impact on the amenity, daylight and sunlight of adjacent properties and open space.

It is noted that the proposed ASHP system proposed to the south of the site would be of substantial height and in addition, the existing earth mound would be increased in height. Nevertheless, given the separation from neighbouring properties, it is considered that the proposal would not have a harmful overbearing effect on neighbouring residential amenity.

In terms of noise, the Noise Officer has reviewed the proposal and suggested a condition that would protect neighbouring properties. The condition has been included in the Officer recommendation.

Therefore, the proposal is in accordance with Policy BE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One Strategic (2012) and Policy DMHB 11 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two - Development Management Policies (2020).

7.09 Living conditions for future occupiers

Not applicable.

7.10 Traffic impact, Car/cycle parking, pedestrian safety

The Highway Officer has reviewed the proposal and raises no concerns. It is considered that the

proposal accords with Policy DMT 6 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2: Development Management Policies (2020).

7.11 Urban design, access and security

Discussed where relevant in other sections of this report.

7.12 Disabled access

It is noted that the Council's Access Officer raises no objections to the proposal. No access issues are considered to be raised.

7.13 Provision of affordable & special needs housing

Not applicable.

7.14 Trees, landscaping and Ecology

Landscaping has been discussed above where relevant. A condition has been recommended to secure the implementation of the landscaping scheme.

7.15 Sustainable waste management

Not applicable.

7.16 Renewable energy / Sustainability

The proposal would make a positive contribution in terms of sustainability, as it would improve the energy efficiency of the leisure centre.

7.17 Flooding or Drainage Issues

Not applicable.

7.18 Noise or Air Quality Issues

Given the siting of the ASHP units and the distance to neighbouring residential properties, no harmful noise impacts would be considered to arise from the proposals, subject to the imposition of the recommended condition.

7.19 Comments on Public Consultations

None received.

7.20 Planning obligations

Not applicable.

7.21 Expediency of enforcement action

Not applicable.

7.22 Other Issues

Not applicable.

8. Observations of the Borough Solicitor

General

Members must determine planning applications having due regard to the provisions of the development plan so far as material to the application, any local finance considerations so far as

material to the application, and to any other material considerations (including regional and national policy and guidance). Members must also determine applications in accordance with all relevant primary and secondary legislation.

Material considerations are those which are relevant to regulating the development and use of land in the public interest. The considerations must fairly and reasonably relate to the application concerned.

Members should also ensure that their involvement in the determination of planning applications adheres to the Members Code of Conduct as adopted by Full Council and also the guidance contained in Probity in Planning, 2009.

Planning Conditions

Members may decide to grant planning consent subject to conditions. Planning consent should not be refused where planning conditions can overcome a reason for refusal. Planning conditions should only be imposed where Members are satisfied that imposing the conditions are necessary, relevant to planning, relevant to the development to be permitted, enforceable, precise and reasonable in all other respects. Where conditions are imposed, the Council is required to provide full reasons for imposing those conditions.

Planning Obligations

Members must be satisfied that any planning obligations to be secured by way of an agreement or undertaking pursuant to Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 are necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms. The obligations must be directly related to the development and fairly and reasonably related to the scale and kind to the development (Regulation 122 of Community Infrastructure Levy 2010).

Equalities and Human Rights

Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010, requires the Council, in considering planning applications to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunities and foster good relations between people who have different protected characteristics. The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The requirement to have due regard to the above goals means that members should consider whether persons with particular protected characteristics would be affected by a proposal when compared to persons who do not share that protected characteristic. Where equalities issues arise, members should weigh up the equalities impact of the proposals against the other material considerations relating to the planning application. Equalities impacts are not necessarily decisive, but the objective of advancing equalities must be taken into account in weighing up the merits of an application. The weight to be given to any equalities issues is a matter for the decision maker to determine in all of the circumstances.

Members should also consider whether a planning decision would affect human rights, in particular the right to a fair hearing, the right to respect for private and family life, the protection of property and the prohibition of discrimination. Any decision must be proportionate and achieve a fair balance between private interests and the public interest.

9. Observations of the Director of Finance

Not applicable.

10. CONCLUSION

For the reasons set out in this report, it is considered that the proposed development would comply with national, regional, and local planning policies and guidance. Therefore, it is recommended that the application be approved.

11. Reference Documents

Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One - Strategic Policies (November 2012)

Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two - Development Management Policies (January 2020)

The London Plan (2021)

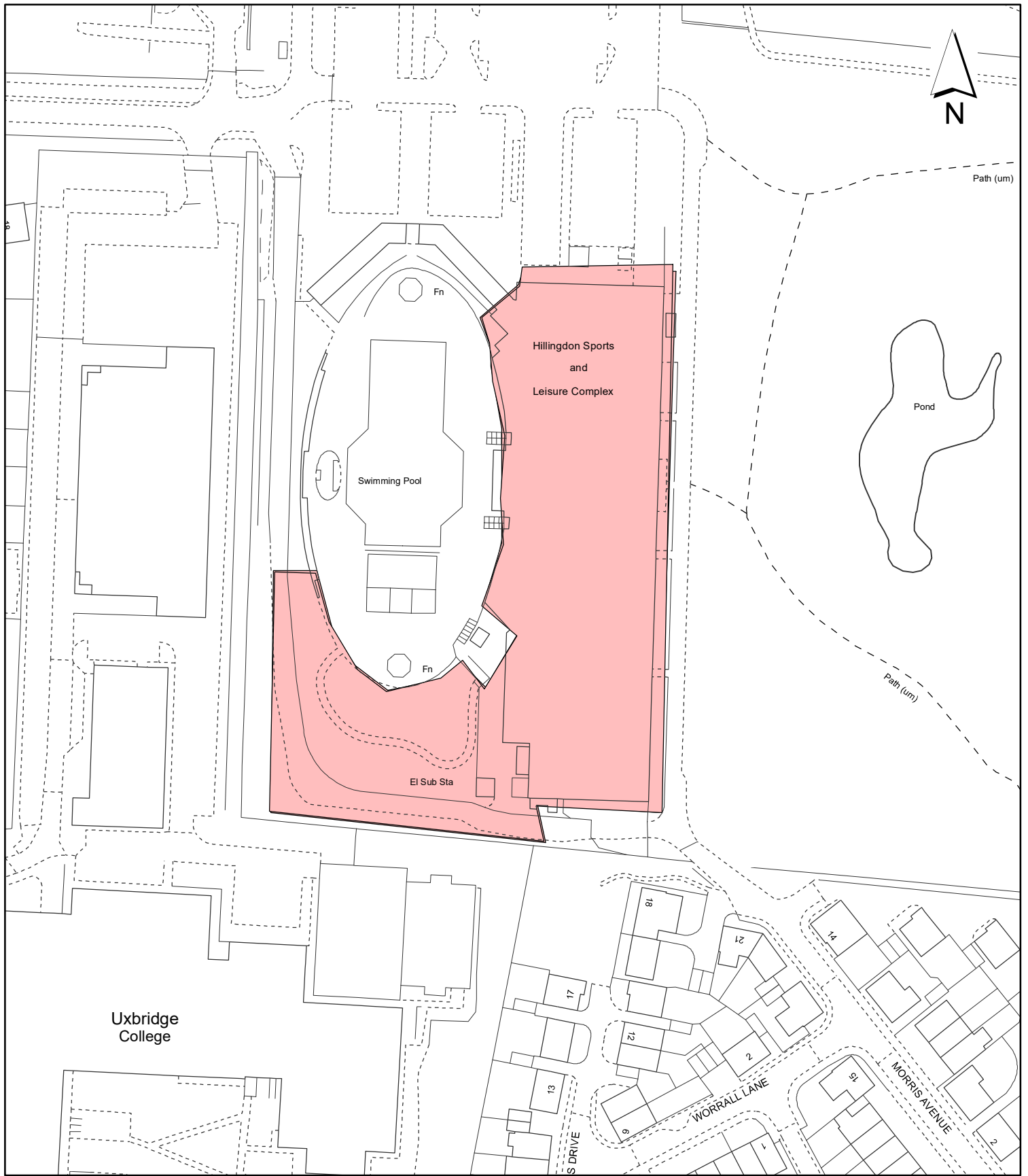
National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

Contact Officer:

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Notes:

 Site boundary

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Site Address:

Hillingdon Sports And Leisure Centre

LONDON BOROUGH OF HILLINGDON
 Residents Services
 Planning Section

Civic Centre, Uxbridge, Middx. UB8 1UW
 Telephone No.: Uxbridge 01895 250111

Planning Application Ref:

2543/APP/2023/2972

Scale:

1:1,250

Planning Committee:

Minor

Date:

January 2024



HILLINGDON
 LONDON