
Premier Inn, Stanborough Road,
Welwyn Garden City

Extension to Existing Hotel

Planning Statement

Prepared on behalf of Whitbread Group PLC

May 2018

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 : LOCATION PLAN

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Background

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Barton Willmore LLP on behalf of Whitbread Group PLC ("the Applicant") to accompany the submission of an application for Planning Permission relating to the proposed extension to the existing Premier Inn Hotel at Stanborough Road, Welwyn Garden City ("the Site").
- 1.2 This Planning Statement has been completed in order to explain the nature of the proposed development, assess the proposal against relevant planning policy at both the national and local level and to demonstrate its acceptability.

The Proposed Development

- 1.3 The application seeks Full Planning Permission for the following works, as shown on the accompanying plans prepared by CHQ Partnership:
- Erection of a three-storey extension to the northern elevation of the existing hotel to provide an additional 24 bedrooms;
 - Single storey extension to existing reception / lobby area; and
 - Alterations to the existing car parking layout and new landscaping.
- 1.4 The proposed development represents an opportunity to deliver a number of economic, social and environmental benefits to Welwyn Garden City and the wider area:
- Further investment in a successful and popular facility that serves Welwyn Garden City and its surroundings.
 - Retain the existing level of employment at the hotel, with the creation of 4 new jobs arising from the proposed extension. Additional jobs will also be created during the construction and fit out period.
 - Improve the offer and attraction of the existing hotel to the benefit of guests working in / visiting the local area.
 - Improve the overall tourist offer within Welwyn Garden City and the wider area by expanding an established successful business.
 - Maximise the potential of the Site by developing an area of underused hardstanding and increasing investor confidence in the immediate area.

- Development of sustainable and high-quality design and associated improvements, representing an appropriate response to the character of the Site and immediate area.

1.5 This represents sustainable economic development in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The Planning Application

1.6 The planning application has been submitted in full and seeks the following development:

“Erection of a three-storey extension to the northern elevation of the existing hotel and single storey extension to existing entrance (Use Class C1), alterations to car parking layout, landscaping and associated works”

1.7 Based on the Council's Planning Application Validation Checklist, the Planning Application comprises of the following:

- Completed Application Forms and Ownership Certificates;
- Application Drawings prepared by CHQ Partnership;
- Detailed Planting Proposals Drawing (Ref: 780-SW-01 Rev C) prepared by Indigo Landscape Architects;
- Design & Access Statement incorporating Sustainable Design Statement (May 2018) prepared by CHQ Partnership;
- Planning Statement (May 2018) prepared by Barton Willmore LLP;
- Transport Statement (May 2018) prepared by RGP;
- Sustainable Energy Strategy Report (May 2018) prepared by Jenks Associates;
- Sustainability Statement (May 2018) prepared by Whitbread Group Plc;
- Extract Ventilation Statement (May 2018) prepared by Jenks Associates;
- Arboricultural Survey, Impact Assessment and Method Statement (May 2018) prepared by Enzygo; and
- Flood Risk Statement & Sustainable Drainage Strategy (May 2018) prepared by GDP.

Statement Contents

1.8 Against this background, this Statement provides an overview of all aspects of the proposed development and an assessment of its appropriateness against the Development Plan and other considerations. The scope of this Statement is as follows:

- Section 2 describes the Application Site and the main features of the surrounding area;
- Section 3 describes the main components and features of the proposed development;
- Section 4 outlines the relevant planning policy context of the Site and the proposed development;
- Section 5 sets out a planning assessment of the proposed development against national and local policy requirements; and
- Section 6 provides a summary and our conclusions on the proposed development.

2.0 APPLICATION SITE & SURROUNDINGS

Application Site and Surroundings

- 2.1 The boundary of the Application Site ("the Site") is identified in red on the Site Location Plan provided at Appendix 1 of this Statement. The Site extends to 0.95 hectares and is located approximately 850m south of the nearest part of Welwyn Garden City Town Centre.
- 2.2 The Site comprises an existing three storey hotel, occupied by Premier Inn and an adjoining pub/restaurant "The Stanborough". The hotel provides 120 guest bedrooms and 151 surface level car parking bays are provided which serve both uses, including 8 disabled bays.
- 2.3 The site is accessed from Stanborough Road to the north west of the site. Access from Stanborough Road is shared with residential properties at Stanborough Mews and Longcroft Green which are located to the north east of the site.
- 2.4 To the east of the site is the railway line, separated by a range of mature trees whilst to the south is Gosling Sports Park which includes an athletics track / football ground and indoor facilities.
- 2.5 The site is not within a Conservation Area, albeit one is located to the immediate north. There are no Statutorily Listed Buildings on or close to the site and it is not subject to any Tree Preservation Orders.

Site History and Lawful Use

- 2.6 Planning Permission for the hotel (60 bed) was originally granted in 1998 (Ref: N6/1997/1047/FP). Two extensions to the hotel each comprising of 30 beds, were subsequently granted in 2005 (N6/2004/1884/FP) and 2008 (N6/2008/2104/FP). These establish the principle of hotel development, including extensions, on the site.

3.0 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Background

- 3.1 The proposed development will deliver a number of distinct benefits, representing a significant investment in Welwyn Garden City by Whitbread Group PLC. This responds to an identified commercial and customer need for additional hotel bed spaces in this location.
- 3.2 The existing hotel is extremely popular with leisure travellers given its accessibility close to the A1(M) and good connections to the Town Centre. The high average occupancy levels of the hotel have established a clear requirement to expand at this location to fulfil an identified customer need.

The 'Premier Inn' Brand

- 3.3 Whitbread both own and operate the 'Premier Inn' brand. Premier Inn is the biggest hotel brand in the UK, with almost 700 hotels nationwide, providing over 59,200 bedrooms.
- 3.4 Premier Inns have an excellent reputation for providing quality rooms within a budget pricing structure. A typical Premier Inn bedroom will provide the following features:
- King sized bed;
 - En suite bathroom with shower and bath in most;
 - Remote control TV;
 - Spacious desk area with tea and coffee making facilities; and
 - Internet access.
- 3.5 Premier Inn has an aspiration to grow space to provide 85,000 rooms by 2020 in order to respond to customer demand. This will be achieved through the provision of new hotels but also via the expansion to existing well performing facilities. The expansion of the existing hotel forms an integral part of that strategy and will enhance the area's offer to businesses, tourists and visitors.

The Scheme

- 3.6 The component parts of the proposed development are set out in Section 1 of this Planning Statement, with additional information in the application drawings and

documents submitted as part of this planning application. The scheme relates to the three storey extension of the existing hotel to provide 24 additional bedrooms, plus a small single storey extension to the existing reception lobby. The additional proposed floorspace will be 907 sq m GEA / 828 sq m GIA.

- 3.7 The application proposes to extend the building to the north, continuing the established style and features of the existing hotel.
- 3.8 Whitbread have extensive experience in accurately predicting trade patterns in order to assess the required capacity of their car parks. A number of detailed surveys were undertaken to determine the capacity of the existing hotel car park against the number of bedrooms proposed, which are set out in the accompanying Transport Statement. As a result of the extension, it is proposed to reconfigure the existing car park to optimise space while retaining the landscape character of the site. A total of 162 parking spaces, including 9 disabled spaces will be provided, an overall increase of 11 spaces. The provision of a number of additional spaces will result in the removal of some existing trees. Replacement and additional tree planting is to be provided in appropriate locations.
- 3.9 The overall scheme has been designed to provide a safe, clear, secure and legible environment for all users and visitors to the Site.

4.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Introduction

- 4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) forms a primary consideration for the planning application alongside the Development Plan.
- 4.2 The Development Plan for the Site comprises the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 (Adopted April 2005). A new Local Plan to 2031 is currently undergoing Examination in Public, following Submission in May 2017. Stage 4 Hearing Sessions are scheduled to take place in June 2018.
- 4.3 This section sets out the planning policy framework relevant to the Site and proposed development.

National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in March 2012 and sets out the Government's objectives for achieving sustainable development. The NPPF establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 7 confirms there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental.
- 4.5 When making planning decisions, paragraph 14 of the NPPF confirms that there should be a presumption in favour of sustainable development and that planning permission should be granted where development proposals accord with the development plan. This approach is applied in the assessment of the proposed development.
- 4.6 The NPPF then outlines a series of considerations against which development should be assessed. In terms of the proposed development the key areas are:
- Chapter 1 – Building a strong, competitive economy;
 - Chapter 2 – Ensuring the Vitality of Town Centres;
 - Chapter 4 – Promoting Sustainable Transport; and
 - Chapter 7 – Requiring Good Design.

- 4.7 The NPPF defines hotels as a Main Town Centre Use and as a result it encourages a town centre first approach. Paragraph 24 requires local authorities to apply a sequential test to planning applications for such uses that are not in an existing centre and not in accordance with an up-to-date development plan. The NPPF does not however require an impact assessment as this only relates to retail, office and leisure development (paragraph 26).
- 4.8 The NPPF encourages Local Planning Authorities to determine applications positively to foster the delivery of sustainable development (Paragraph 186). LPAs are advised to look for solutions rather than problems and decision-takers are asked to approve applications for sustainable development where possible (Paragraph 187).

Planning Policy Guidance

- 4.9 In March 2014, the Government launched the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) as an online web-based resource. PPG is a live document that has been periodically updated. In its most up-to-date form, PPG is a material consideration in the decision-making process.
- 4.10 The PPG reinforces the NPPF in terms of the need for Local Planning Authorities to support Town Centres to generate local employment, promote beneficial competition within and between Town Centres, and create attractive, diverse places where people want to live, visit and work (ID: 2b-001-20140306).
- 4.11 It helpfully provides advice on how the sequential test should be used in decision-taking and acknowledges that certain main town centre uses have particular market and locational requirements which mean that they can only be accommodated in specific locations (ID: 2b-012-20140306).

The Development Plan

- 4.12 The site is not subject to any designations or allocations in the Adopted 2005 Plan. To the north of the site, along Stanborough Road lies the boundary of the Welwyn Garden City Conservation Area. Within this context, the following saved policies are considered of relevance to the Site and proposed development:
- Policy SD1 (Sustainable Development): Development will be permitted where it satisfies the principles of sustainable development. Reference is made to

the 2005 Design Guide SPD and Sustainability Checklist. These matters are addressed in Section 5 of this Statement and the supporting documentation.

- Policy GBSP2 (Towns and Specified Settlements): Identifies Welwyn Garden City as a town where development will be mainly concentrated.
- Policy R1 (Maximising the Use of Previously Developed Land): Requires development to take place on previously developed land.
- Policy M1 (Integrating Transport and Land Use): Sets out that, amongst other things, development will only be permitted in locations with accessibility pedestrian and cycles routes and passenger transport services and the environment can accommodate the amount and type of movement likely to be generated. Internal layouts much demonstrate priority for non-car users.
- Policy M2 (Transport Assessments): Sets out the requirements for transport assessment and their contents as part of a planning application.
- Policy D1 (Quality of Design): Requires a high quality of design in all new development.
- Policy D2 (Character and Context): requires development to respect and relates to the character and context of the area in which it is proposed.
- Policy CLT6 (Hotels): Permission will be granted for proposals which increase and improve hotel provision in the district. Preferred locations are town centres and the Hatfield aerodrome, followed by edge of centre locations, district / neighbourhood centres or areas with high public transport accessibility. All proposals will only be permitted where there is no harmful impact on residential amenity; it is in keeping with the scale and character of the surrounding area; and is easily accessible by passenger transport, walking and cycling.

4.13 Other relevant policies include:

- Policy R3 (Energy Efficiency).
- Policy R5 (Waste Management).
- Policy R7 (Protection of Ground and Surface Water).
- Policy R9 (Water Supply & Disposal).
- Policy R10 (Water Conservation Measures).
- Policy R11 (Biodiversity and Development).
- Policy R19 (Noise and Vibration).
- Policy M14 (Parking Standards for New Development).
- Policy D7 (Safety by Design).
- Policy D8 (Landscaping)

- Policy D9 (Access and Design for People with Disabilities).
- Policy D11 (Design Statements).

Emerging Development Plan

4.14 The emerging Local Plan Proposals map (Submission 2016) does not allocate the site for specific development, nor is it subject to any designations. The emerging Plan includes the following policies:

- Policy SP1 (Delivering Sustainable Development).
- Policy SP3 (Settlement Strategy and Green Belt boundaries).
- Policy SADM2 (Highway Network and Safety).
- Policy SADM3 (Sustainable Travel for All).
- Policy SP9 (Place Making and High Quality Design).
- Policy SADM11 (Amenity and Layout).
- Policy SADM12 (Parking, Servicing and Refuse).
- Policy SP10 (Sustainable Design and Construction).
- Policy SADM14 (Flood Risk and Surface Water Management).

Policy Conclusions

4.15 The site is not subject to any specific policy designations. The application proposals therefore need to be assessed against the policies of the NPPF and the more general policies of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies.

4.16 Within this context, the NPPF encourages sustainable development and technically requires compliance with the sequential approach. Arising from our review of national and local policy, the key issues for assessment in the consideration of this application are:

- Appropriateness of the Proposed Use;
- Sequential Approach;
- Design Considerations;
- Trees and Landscaping;
- Neighbour Amenity;
- Sustainability;
- Transport;
- Flood Risk & Drainage; and
- Economic Benefits.

4.17 We turn to consider these matters in Section 5.

5.0 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

5.1 This section outlines our assessment of the proposed development against the planning policy context and issues identified in Section 4. As referred to in Section 4, the relevant planning policy considerations relate only to the proposed extension, alterations to the car park and associated works.

Decision-Making Approach

5.2 The NPPF forms a primary consideration for the planning application alongside the Development Plan.

5.3 Within this context, we believe the proposed development should be defined as sustainable development for the following reasons:

- **Economic Role:** the proposed development will contribute towards reinforcing a strong, responsive and competitive 'local' economy within the area through the delivery of expanded hotel accommodation and direct and indirect job creation. The proposal will maintain the existing level of employment at the hotel (23 jobs), with 4 new jobs created. Additional jobs will be created through the construction of the extension. The development will support the demand for bed spaces in the area and also be of an appropriate scale serving the needs of the local area.
- **Social Role:** the proposed development will make a series of contributions to help maintain a strong community. In particular, the scheme will build on existing community links and provide additional guest accommodation further enhancing facilities in the local area. Additional guests will increase awareness and expenditure within the local area.
- **Environmental Role:** the proposed development has been specifically designed to contribute towards the quality of the built and historic environment of the area due to the level of design applied to the extension being consistent with the existing hotel, and through investment in an existing facility. The extension will utilise an underused area of car parking and sustainability measures have been introduced where possible. As such the proposed development is consistent with sustainability and design policies set out in the Development Plan.

- 5.4 Arising from this assessment, we then examine whether there are any adverse impacts which would arise from the proposed development and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the NPPF's policies as a whole; or whether there are any specific policies in the NPPF which indicate development should be restricted. The outcome of this Assessment and consideration of other material considerations will then inform whether the proposed development ought to benefit from planning permission.
- 5.5 To inform this assessment, the key issues are:
- Appropriateness of the Proposed Use;
 - Sequential Approach;
 - Design Considerations;
 - Trees and Landscaping;
 - Neighbour Amenity;
 - Sustainability;
 - Transport;
 - Flood Risk & Drainage; and
 - Economic Benefits.
- 5.6 These are assessed in the remainder of this Section.

Appropriateness of Proposed Use

- 5.7 The site is not allocated for development nor subject to any designations in the adopted Development Plan.
- 5.8 The Development Plan (Saved Policy CLT 6 – Hotels) sets out that planning permission will be granted for proposals which improve hotel accommodation in the district. Preferred locations are within town centres in the first instance, which is commented on further below.
- 5.9 Hotels will then need to be acceptable in relation to impact on residential amenity; scale and character of the surrounding area; and easily accessible by passenger transport, walking and cycling which are addressed further in this Statement.
- 5.10 In granting the original Planning Permission and subsequent extension permissions, the local planning authority confirmed that the principle of hotel development on this Site is acceptable. Against this background, the principle of the proposed

development is considered to be acceptable and complies with the requirements of the NPPF and the adopted and emerging Development Plan.

Sequential Approach

- 5.11 The NPPF at paragraph 24 encourages local authorities to apply a sequential test to planning applications for main town centre uses that are not in an existing centre and are not in accordance with an up to date Local Plan.
- 5.12 The PPG provides additional guidance on how the sequential test should be used in decision taking (ID 2b-010-20140306) and recognises that main town centre uses will have particular market and locational requirements which mean that they may only be accommodated in specific locations. In such cases, robust justification must be provided (ID 2b-011-20140306).
- 5.13 The NPPF sets out that a hotel constitutes a main town centre use (Annex 2: Glossary) and as such, a sequential assessment would normally be required for a new facility. However, given the market and locationally specific requirements prevalent in this case, we believe that the application proposal can only be accommodated in this location. We set out the justification below:
- The existing hotel, the subject of the extension application, was accepted through the previous planning permissions as being an appropriate and sustainable location. It complied with town centre use policies relevant at that time, including the sequential approach and the still current Development Plan. It is an established hotel location.
 - The requirement for the proposed extension arises from the success and popularity of the existing hotel and the high occupancy levels achieved.
 - The proposed extension (828 sq m GIA) will provide an additional 24 rooms to supplement the existing 120 on-site. No additional facilities will be provided.
 - To locate the extension in an alternative location would not meet the locationally specific requirements of this Site and would not address Premier Inn's requirement to provide additional bedrooms to support the existing hotel to serve the identified market.

- 5.14 We do not therefore believe it is necessary to undertake a sequential assessment in this case given the locational and market requirements of Premier Inn to enhance the existing hotel. In any event, it would not be viable for Premier Inn to operate a standalone 24-bedroom facility in Welwyn Garden City or the wider area given the location and demand found within these areas.
- 5.15 As a result, and for the wider scheme benefits to be delivered, the extension proposal must logically be positioned adjacent to the existing hotel. We therefore consider that the application proposals comply with the sequential approach.

Design Considerations

- 5.16 The design and layout approach of the proposed development is outlined in the submitted drawings (prepared by CHQ Partnership) which present the layout, scale and appearance of the proposed development. Further details are provided in the Design and Access Statement, which incorporates the Sustainable Design Statement considerations required by emerging Policy SP10.
- 5.17 The extension will be constructed from the same material palette to integrate with the existing hotel ensuring a continuity of architectural style across the building, as detailed in the Design & Access Statement.
- 5.18 The proposed extension, at three storeys and using the same materials, is entirely in keeping with the scale and character of the existing hotel (which has previously been accepted through previous permission) and in turn its surroundings, as required by Saved Policy CLT6.
- 5.19 Due to the location of the proposed extension within the site, as well as being in keeping with the existing hotel, it is not considered that there would be an impact on the setting of the nearby Conservation Area.
- 5.20 A number of trees are proposed to be removed to facilitate the proposed development, with new tree planting proposed within the site in order to mitigate against this loss and provide additional enhancement to the site and screening to the proposed development when viewed from Stanborough Road.
- 5.21 The requirements of the client and the consumer have also been considered. It is representative of the approach successfully taken at similar Premier Inn hotels nationwide. This ensures that it achieves an appropriate design quality with

consideration to the existing built form and ensures an appropriate development in the context of the site and its surroundings.

- 5.22 The proposed development has accordingly been designed to achieve the objectives of Sections 7 and 12 of the NPPF and the adopted and emerging Development Plan.

Trees and Landscaping

- 5.23 Given the proposed removal of a number trees within the Site, an Arboricultural Survey, Impact Assessment and Method Statement has been submitted with the application to assess the quality of the trees impacted by the development and suggests suitable protection measures for retained trees.

- 5.24 As detailed in the Statement, three Category C2 (low quality) trees are to be removed to facilitate the proposed extension and alterations to the car park, the loss of which is considered to have a negligible impact in the local landscape. All other trees surrounding the proposed extension will be retained and measures will be introduced to protect the trees during construction.

- 5.25 Notwithstanding the loss of the above trees is acceptable, a landscape scheme has been prepared by Indigo. This includes additional tree planting (8 trees) around the entrance to the car park, the north eastern corner of the site and the hotel entrance, which will improve the overall appearance of the site and have resultant bio-diversity benefits.

- 5.26 It is considered that both replacement tree planting and tree protection measures can be controlled by way of a suitably worded planning condition.

- 5.27 Taking account of the replacement planting and landscape enhancement works, it is considered that suitable steps have been taken to ensure that the loss of trees have been suitably mitigated. As such the scheme complies with the NPPF (Sections 7 and 11) and the adopted and emerging Development Plan.

Neighbour Amenity

- 5.28 The proposed extension has been designed to ensure that there is no overlooking into residential properties to the north, with bedroom windows facing broadly east and west. The extension will be accessed via the existing hotel and as such there will not be any new external entrances to the extension. The doors shown on the

northern elevation are fire exits only, from the ground floor corridor and stairwell. No additional plant is proposed in the vicinity of the extension.

- 5.29 The Transport Statement submitted with the application identifies that over the course of a typical day, the proposed extension would generate a total of 54 additional two-way vehicle movements (i.e. an 9% increase when compared to the existing trip generation). This is not considered to represent a significant increase in traffic and would only have a negligible impact on the local highway network.
- 5.30 As a result, the proposed development is compliant with paragraph 123 of the NPPF and the adopted and emerging Development Plan.

Sustainability

- 5.31 The extension has been designed to reflect the existing building and will provide one additional universal access bedroom which will fully comply with Part M of the Building Regulations.
- 5.32 The proposed extension will be constructed using timber frame technology clad externally with materials to match the existing hotel. The materials will be sourced from local distributors.
- 5.33 The use of timber frame construction is environmentally friendly and it has a number of advantages, which include speed of construction, limited building waste materials and thermal efficiency. The timber frame specialists employed, source their timber from managed and accredited forests, which have stringent replanting and environmental policies.
- 5.34 The Government has a desire to reduce CO2 emissions and utilise environmentally friendly raw materials. Timber is recognised as a renewable resource, which can significantly assist in the reduction of CO2 emissions from the extension as insulation forms an integral part of the system.
- 5.35 The Sustainable Energy Strategy Report demonstrates that the proposed development will result in an energy consumption saving of 15.1% above Part L Building Regulations, arising from a number of measures, including:
- Building 'U' Values improves beyond the minimum standards.

- Installation of LED lights or low energy high frequency fluorescent lights where necessary.
 - All bedroom lighting is occupancy controlled, with corridors and ancillary areas controlled via occupancy sensors.
 - Mechanical ventilation and heat recovery.
 - Natural ventilation to circulation areas.
 - Use of highest efficiency and best energy rating white goods.
 - Inverter control to all pumps and fan motors where appropriate.
- 5.36 Section 5 of the Design and Access Statement details the sustainable approach to design and operation of the extension in relation to materials and waste; water; energy and climate change; and landscape and bio-diversity. Further details of the type of sustainability measures that could be incorporated into the scheme are set out in the Whitbread Sustainability Statement. Together these documents cover the key areas required by emerging Policy SP10.
- 5.37 The proposed development has accordingly been designed to achieve the objectives of the NPPF in terms of sustainability and also Section 7 (Requiring Good Design). The proposal is also compliant with the adopted and emerging Development Plan.

Transport

- 5.38 The highways and transportation implications of the proposed development are assessed within the accompanying Transport Statement prepared by RGP.
- 5.39 The Transport Statement assesses the number of additional trips to be generated by the proposed development and the parking demand at the Site. It finds that the extension would generate minimal levels of additional traffic and that parking provision as proposed would be sufficient to accommodate demand. It concludes that:
- The site is considered to be well placed for guest travel, being located in close proximity to a major highway and benefitting from access to a range of pedestrian facilities and public transport infrastructure.
 - The proposed 24 bedroom extension would likely generate in the region of 6 two-way vehicle movements over the AM (worst case) peak hour and a total of 54 two-way vehicle movements over the course of a typical weekday.

- The proposed overall parking provision of 162 spaces (11 additional spaces) would be adequate to accommodate the demand from the extension proposals and is considered to be in line with local policy.
- The access arrangements and size / frequency of delivery vehicles would remain unchanged post-development.

5.40 As a result, the scheme complies with the terms of NPPF and the adopted and emerging Development Plan.

Flood Risk and Drainage

5.41 A Flood Risk Statement and Sustainable Drainage Strategy has been prepared by GDP. This finds the following:

- The site is located within Flood Zone 1 and at low risk of flooding from rivers and tidal sources.
- The site is almost entirely at 'very low' risk of surface water flooding, with only a small extent of the car park being 'low' risk and localised areas around the edge of the hotel identified as 'medium' risk. The risk to people is considered to be 'low'
- Risk of flooding from sewers is low and emergent groundwater flooding does not present a significant risk.
- The proposed surface water drainage strategy includes provision of a cellular storage attenuation tank in the eastern part of the car park. This will reduce peak run-off rates and therefore will not result in an increase in flood risk elsewhere.

5.42 As a result, the scheme complies with the terms of NPPF and the adopted and emerging Development Plan.

Economic Benefits

5.43 The proposed extension will create 4 new jobs in the form of additional hotel staff, recruited locally, as well as further jobs during the construction phase. A positive effect may also be expected within the adjacent pub / restaurant as a result of increased use / visitors to the extended hotel.

5.44 It represents important investment in the local tourism economy. Additional visitors to the area will also generate income for local businesses.

6.0 SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS

6.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Barton Willmore LLP on behalf of Whitbread Group PLC to assess the planning issues arising from an application for an extension at the Premier Inn, Stanborough Road, Welwyn Garden City.

Scheme Benefits

6.2 The proposed development represents a significant opportunity to deliver the following economic, social and environmental benefits to the Application Site and wider area, in particular:

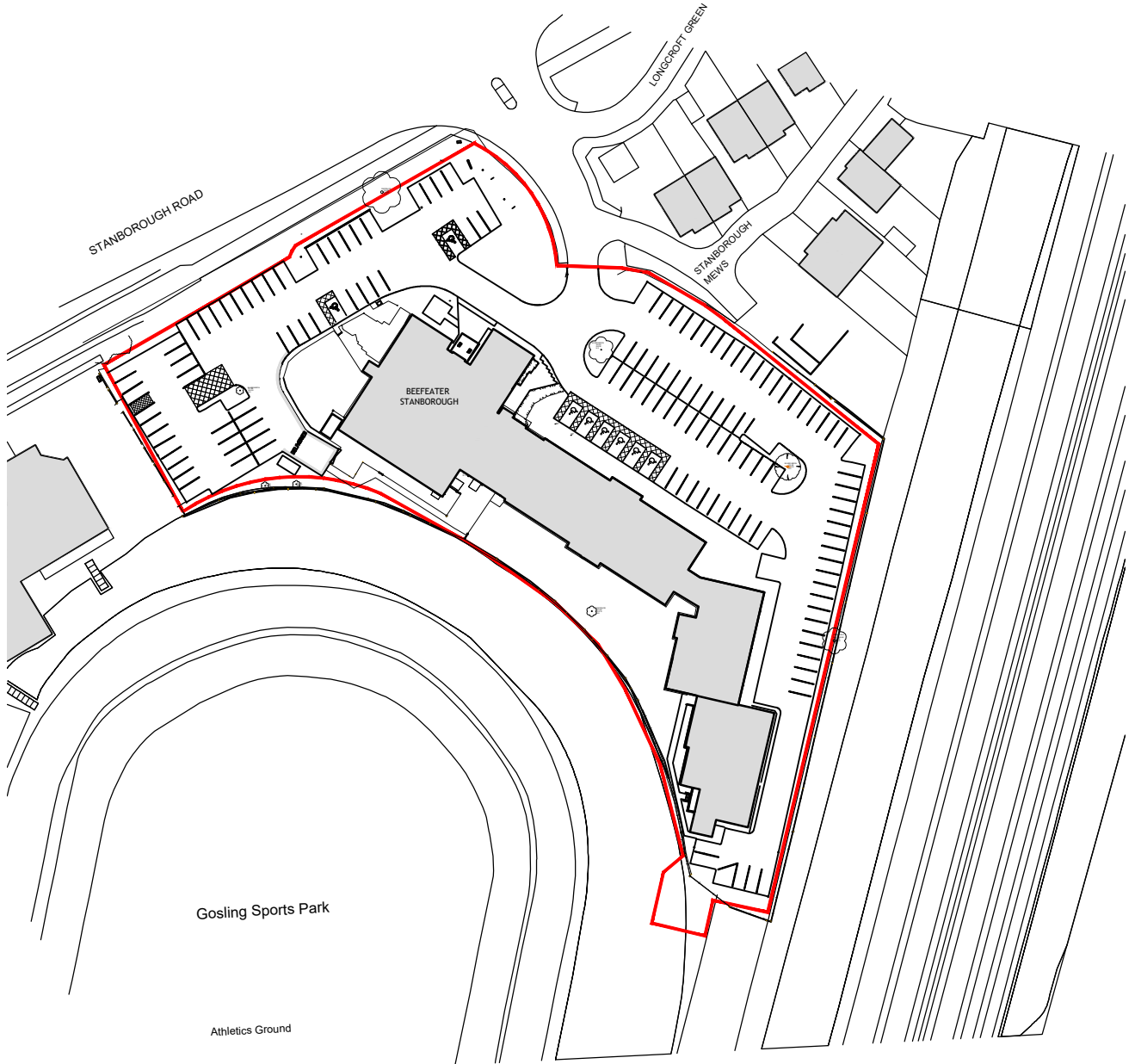
- Help to deliver sustainable development in line with the NPPF and utilise an underused area of the car park for active economic use.
- Promote competition in the area that improves customer choice and a diverse offer.
- Development of sustainable and high quality design, representing an appropriate architectural response to the existing building, the site and its surroundings.
- The proposed design features and materials will mirror the existing building and ensure a continuity of scale and design across the hotel.
- Replacement and additional tree planting / landscaping with bio-diversity benefits.
- Maintain the existing employment of 23 staff at the hotel with an additional 4 jobs to be created (totalling 27). Additional jobs will be created during the construction period.
- Improve the overall commercial offer in the area to serve an identified demand by passing customers en route to a destination or visitors staying in the local area.
- Building upon the existing good level of transport and pedestrian accessibility.

Decision Making Approach

6.3 The NPPF forms a key consideration for the planning application alongside the Development Plan. This Statement has demonstrated that the proposed development complies fully with the policy requirements of the adopted and emerging Development Plan.

- 6.4 The proposed development also constitutes sustainable development and can thus benefit from the NPPF paragraph 14 presumption in favour unless any adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.
- 6.5 In the absence of overriding harm and taking into account the significant benefits arising, it is therefore entirely appropriate to grant Planning Permission for the proposed development.

**APPENDIX 1
SITE LOCATION PLAN**



<p>NORTH</p>  <p>SCALE</p> 	REV.	DESCRIPTION	DATE	INITIALS	 <p>CHQ Architects Ltd. The Mallings, 44 Whitehorse Street, Baldock, Hertfordshire SG7 6DQ</p> <p>Telephone: (01462) 895110 Email: design@chq-architects.co.uk www.chq-architects.co.uk</p> 	<p>PROJECT</p> <p>Premier Inn</p> <p>Stanborough Road Welwyn Garden City Hertfordshire AL8 6DQ</p>	DRAWING	
	<p>PLANNING</p>		<p>Site Location Plan</p>				DATE	DRAWN
	<p>ISSUE</p>		<p>Jan 2018</p>	<p>FA</p>			SCALE	CHECKED
		<p>1:1250@A4</p>		<p>CHQ.15.11456-PL01</p>				