

The information, recommendations and advice contained in this report are correct as at the date of preparation, which is more than two weeks in advance of the Committee meeting. Because of these time constraints some reports may have been prepared in advance of the final date given for consultee responses or neighbour comment. Any changes or necessary updates to the report will be made orally at the Committee meeting.

Case Officer	Katie Herrington
Application No.	21/00926/FULPP
Date Valid	25th November 2021
Expiry date of consultations	16th December 2021
Proposal	Change of use of the Station House and land from residential (Use Class C3) to a community use (Use Class F2) at 37 Farnborough Street, Farnborough.
Address	37 Farnborough Street Farnborough Hampshire GU14 8AQ
Ward	Empress
Applicant	Network Rail Limited
Agent	Laura Mellon
Recommendation	Grant

Description

37 Farnborough Street is an unoccupied building located north of the railway lines at Farnborough North Station. The dwelling is a 'Station House' that would have been occupied by a railway worker. It is located on operational railway land. Access is via the level crossing.

This proposal seeks to change the use of the building from residential to community use (Use Class F2). It is understood that the facility would be operated by Network Rail for the local community. The availability will be phased, starting with the ground floor. Work on a community garden within its grounds has commenced.

The site is under consideration for inclusion within the Farnborough Street Conservation Area. No external alterations are proposed.

Consultee Responses

ESSO	Comments received regarding works near pipe lines.
Environment Agency	No comments received.
Environmental Health	No objection

Planning Policy	No comments received.
Network Rail	No comments received.
Surrey Heath Borough Council	No comments received.

Neighbours notified

In addition to posting a site notice and press advertisement, 65 individual letters of notification were sent to neighbouring addresses.

Neighbour comments

One response has been received;

3 Chapel Street, Farnborough	There has already been deforestation of this area in the last few months which is concerning considering this is a recognised flood area. Would there be a guarantee that there would be no further deforestation of this area with the change this change of use?
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Officer Comment: This proposal does not result in the removal of any trees and it is not considered that the proposal would encourage the removal of trees.

Policy and determining issues

The site is located outside of the Farnborough Street Conservation Area but close to it, and is currently under consideration for inclusion. It is located within designated Countryside and within Flood zone 2.

The relevant development plan policies are; IN2 – Transport; HE3 Development within or adjoining a Conservation Area; DE1 Design in the built environment; DE5 Proposals Affecting Existing Residential (C3) uses; DE10 Pollution; LN6 Local Neighbourhood Facilities; NE5 Countryside and NE6 Managing Fluvial Flood Risk of the Rushmoor Local Plan. The Rushmoor Car and Cycle SPD is also relevant.

Conclusions

- Principle of the loss of residential dwelling (C3)

The proposal is currently lawfully a C3 dwellinghouse and this use would be lost as a result of the development.

Policy DE5 - Proposals Affecting Existing Residential (C3) Uses states that the council will seek to minimise the loss of homes in the Borough by resisting development that would involve the net loss of residential units, unless it can be demonstrated that the proposal will:

- Enable sub-standard units to be enlarged to meet residential space standards;

- b. Enable existing affordable homes to be adapted to address an identified shortfall in larger affordable dwelling sizes;
- c. Be a more appropriate use because of existing environmental conditions;
- d. Ensure that a building of architectural or historic importance can be retained or renovated;
- e. Be incorporated in a comprehensive scheme of redevelopment where there is no net loss of residential units; or
- f. Provide an essential community facility which cannot be provided elsewhere.

It is considered that the proposal would result in a more appropriate use due to existing environmental conditions.

A community use is considered a more appropriate use for the building than as a dwelling. The dwelling is adjacent to the railway line and railway station and as a result is subject to a high level of railway related noise disturbance from both the movement of trains and platform announcements. Vehicular access is restricted and requires contact with the railway operator to allow access across the crossing. A more appropriate use would be less noise sensitive and be less reliant on vehicular movements. As the building is on operational railway land, it is subject to permitted development rights which would allow Network rail to demolish it. The replacement of the level crossing with a bridge which would remove the level crossing access to vehicles is also part of Network Rail's plans.

The proposed use is a community use F2 (community uses) that can include;

- F2(a) Shops (mostly) selling essential goods, including food, where the shop's premises do not exceed 280 square metres and there is no other such facility within 1000 metres
- F2(b) Halls or meeting places for the principal use of the local community

These uses are not themselves sensitive to noise from the railway and as they relate to use by the local community are less reliant on vehicle movements directly to the facility. Consideration of highway impacts of such uses shall be addressed later in this report.

Therefore in this instance it is considered that the proposal would accord with policy DE5 of the Local Plan.

- Development within the Countryside

Policy NE5 of the Local Plan permits development within the countryside where a) the location is considered sustainable for the proposed use; b) it preserves the character and appearance of the Countryside; and c) it does not lead to harmful physical or visual coalescence between Aldershot and Farnborough and neighbouring settlements.

The proposal does not alter any built form and as such does not alter the bulk or visual appearance of the building. The use of the building as a local community facility is considered sustainable for its proposed use. This is given that it brings back an otherwise vacant building back into use and for use by local people.

The proposal would accord with policy NE5 as a result.

- Visual appearance and impact upon Heritage Assets

The proposal site is located close to the boundary of the Farnborough Street Conservation Area. The building is not a Building of Traditional Local Character or a Listed Building but it is

a building that complements the street scene and Conservation Area. The proposal does not make any external alterations to the building, but would bring it back into use and in doing so would improve its appearance and encourage its maintenance to the benefit of the Conservation Area.

The proposal would therefore not conflict with Policy DE1 or HE3 of the Local Plan.

- Impact upon residential amenity

Uses falling within Use Class F2 (Local Community) include;

- F2(a) Shops (mostly) selling essential goods, including food, where the shop's premises do not exceed 280 square metres and there is no other such facility within 1000 metres
- F2(b) Halls or meeting places for the principal use of the local community
- F2(c) Areas or places for outdoor sport or recreation (not involving motorised vehicles or firearms)
- F2(d) Indoor or outdoor swimming pools or skating rinks

The closest residential occupiers are within Chapel street that are at least 50m away from the application site. It is considered that the uses that would fall within Class F2 would not give rise to noise disturbance that would result in adverse harm to residential amenity. For clarity, if noise disturbance were to occur this should be reported to the Council's Environmental Health team.

- Highways impacts

The Rushmoor Car and Cycle SPD does not provide a standard for F2 Local Community Uses and as a result a case by case assessment of the likely highway impact must be considered. This includes considering the highways impact of the existing use.

The proposal site comprises parking for 2/3 vehicles currently accessible from the railway crossing. .

The proposal seeks to change the use to Use Class F2 ('Local Community') that by definition comprises uses by the Local Community. Whilst it would be preferable for a parking area to be provided, this is not possible. However, given that the audience is likely to be local and is located within an area of good public transport and cycle routes, that there is some scope for parking near the site, and that the proposal is unlikely to result in issues of parking stress and issues of highway safety as a result.

- Flooding

Policy NE6 'Flood risk' requires the vulnerability of the proposed use is appropriate for the level of flood risk on the site. The proposal site is located within Flood Zone 2 and is currently a dwellinghouse. The proposal, by changing the use to F2 would reduce the flood risk.

The NPPF assigns dwellings to the 'more vulnerable category' The proposal, in changing its use to F2 (Local Community use) would result in the building falling the 'less vulnerable' category.

The proposal would therefore not conflict with Policy NE6.

- Summary

The proposal would result in the loss of a dwelling but such harm is outweighed by the provision of a more suitable use in this location, would not result in harm to the character of the area or to Heritage Assets, would not result in harm to residential amenity, and would not result in highway safety issues. The proposal would therefore comply with Policies IN2 – Transport; HE3 Development within or adjoining a Conservation Area; DE1 Design in the built environment; DE5 Proposals Affecting Existing Residential (C3) uses; DE10 Pollution; LN6 Local Neighbourhood Facilities; NE5 Countryside and NE6 Managing Fluvial Flood Risk of the Rushmoor Local Plan. The Rushmoor Car and Cycle SPD is also relevant.

Full recommendation

It is recommended that Planning Permission be **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions and informatives:

Conditions

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

Reason - As required by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2 The permission hereby granted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved drawings Drawing numbers:

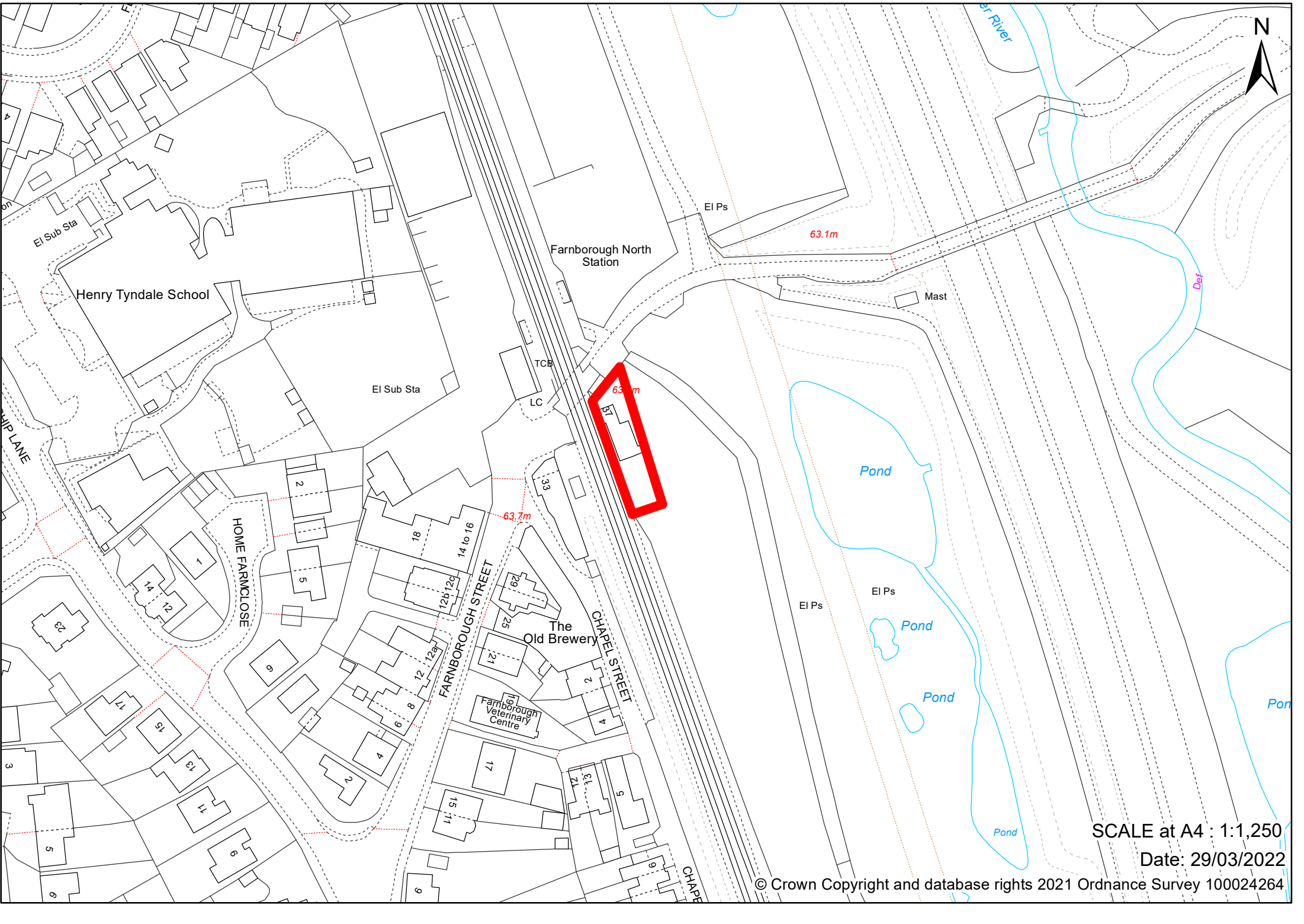
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Reason - To ensure the development is implemented in accordance with the permission granted

Informatives

- 1 INFORMATIVE – The Local Planning Authority's commitment to working with the applicants in a positive and proactive way is demonstrated by its offer of pre-application discussion to all, and assistance in the validation and determination of applications through the provision of clear guidance regarding necessary supporting information or amendments both before and after submission, in line with the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 2 INFORMATIVE - REASONS FOR APPROVAL- The Council has granted permission because The proposal would result in the loss of a dwelling but such harm is outweighed by the provision of a more suitable use in this location, would not result in harm to the character of the area or to Heritage Assets, would not result in harm to residential amenity, and would not result in highway safety issues. The proposal would therefore comply with Policies IN2 – Transport; HE3 Development within or adjoining a Conservation Area; DE1 Design in the built environment; DE5 Proposals Affecting Existing Residential (C3) uses; DE10 Pollution; LN6 Local Neighbourhood Facilities; NE5 Countryside and NE6 Managing Fluvial Flood Risk of the Rushmoor Local Plan.

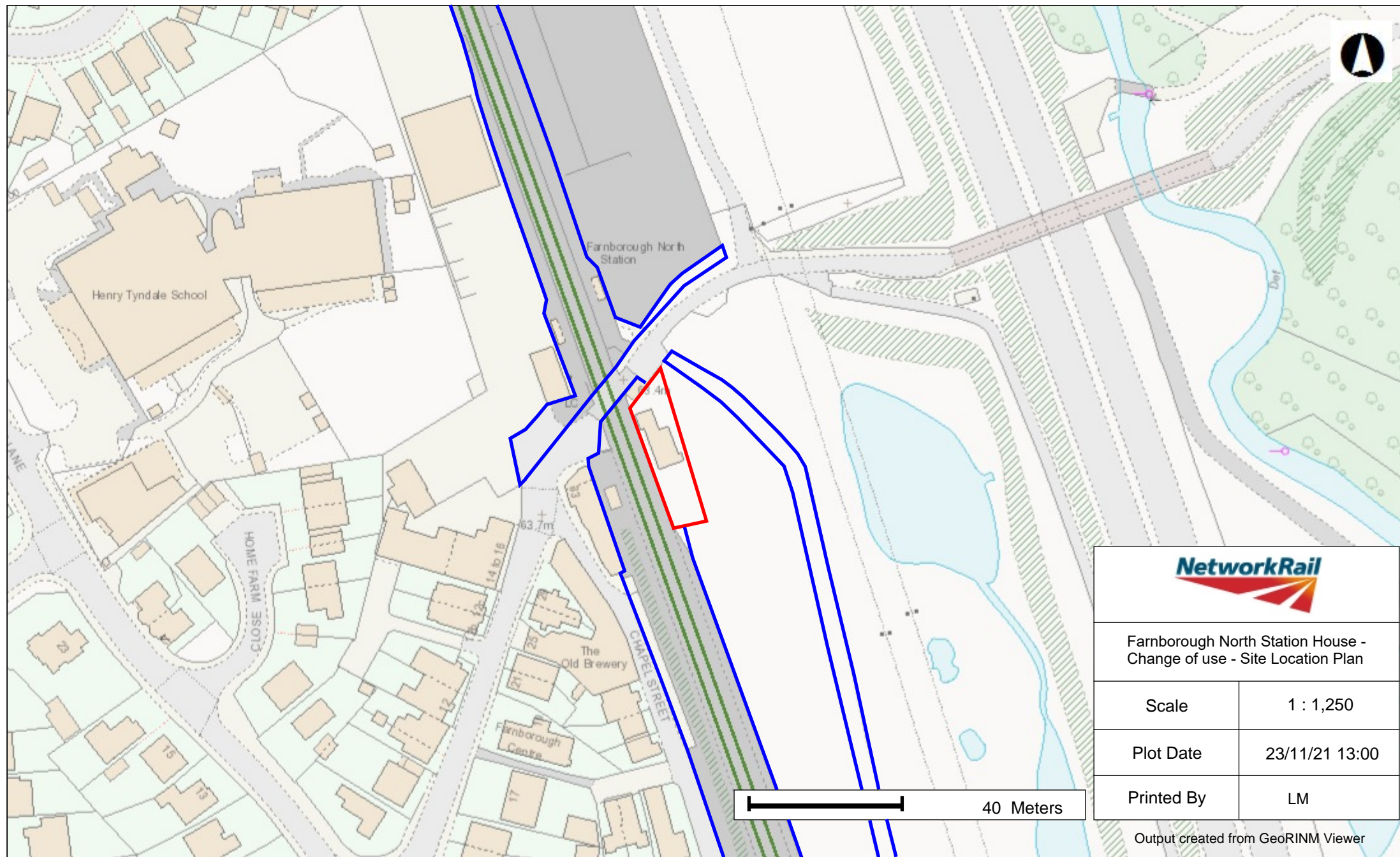
The Rushmoor Car and Cycle SPD is also relevant. It is considered that subject to compliance with the attached conditions, and taking into account all other material planning considerations, including the provisions of the development plan, the proposal would be acceptable. This also includes a consideration of whether the decision to grant permission is compatible with the Human Rights Act 1998.



SCALE at A4 : 1:1,250

Date: 29/03/2022

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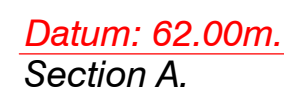
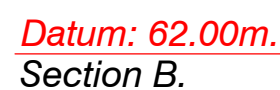
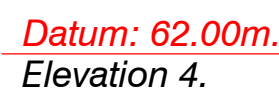
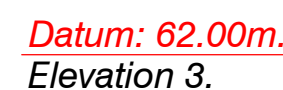
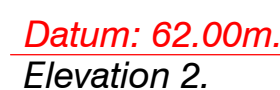
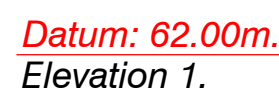


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