



Paul Butler Associates

Planning, Development & Heritage Consultants

Hukd Golf (Hooked Entertainment Ltd)

Link House, 35 Walmersley Road, Bury,
BL9 5AE

Planning Statement

31 May 2022

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Job Number: 22.1712

Project: Link House, 35 Walmersley Road, Bury, BL9 5AE

Client: Hukd Golf (Hooked Entertainment Limited)

File Name: Planning Statement 31 May 2022

Document Preparation/Checking Record:

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Document Revision Record:

Issue No.	Date	Details of Revisions

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Paul Butler Associates on behalf of Hukd Golf (Hooked Entertainment Limited). The statement has been provided in support of a planning application for the change of use from Class F1 to an indoor golf simulator and café/bar facility (suis generis). The business would occupy both floors with the golf simulators and café/bar at the ground floor with further golf simulators, back of house and office accommodation at the first floor.

Structure of the Statement

- 1.2 In order to provide a clear understanding of the proposed scheme and its relationship with the surrounding area, this statement includes:

- A description of the application site and surrounding area;
- A review of the application site's planning history;
- An overview of the proposal;
- A review of the relevant national and local planning policy guidance; and,
- An appraisal of the proposal against its planning policy context.

Supporting Information

- 1.3 The application is supported by a series of drawings prepared by Isin and the following documents:
- This Planning Statement prepared by Paul Butler Associates.
 - Transport Statement prepared by Focus Transport Planning.
 - Signage proposal prepared by Innovate Signs.

2. The Application Site and Surrounding Area

The Application Site

- 2.1 The application site (Link House) is located at 35 Walmersley Road, Bury, BL9 5AE (see Figure 1).
- 2.2 From 2011 to October 2014 Google Earth shows the building to be occupied by Bury College Business Solutions. The planning history retrieved from the Bury website (Section 3) suggests that up to 2014 the building was occupied Bury College and used to provide educational training and development to students, local businesses and the wider community (Historic Use Class D1 'Non-residential institution').
- 2.3 Google Earth shows that between June 2015 and August 2018 the building was being used by Freedom Church (Historic Use Class D1 'Non-residential institution'). The church made various applications for improvements to the car park and also may have implemented a change of use permission to alter 2 no. first-floor offices from D1 to A2 ('Financial and professional services').
- 2.4 Google Earth suggests from August 2018 to April 2021 the building was used by Evolve Military College (Historic Use Class D1 'Non-residential institution'). The building is presently vacant and is likely to have been disused for over a year, since April 2022.
- 2.5 On 1st September 2020 Use Class D1 was removed and replaced with Use Class E, Use Class F1, Use Class F2 and Sui Generis. In our view the lawful use of the building is presently Use Class F1 – 'Learning and non-residential institution' which allows use for:
 - a) the provision of education, (schools, colleges etc. – former use class D1)
 - b) for the display of works of art (otherwise than for sale or hire), (galleries – former use class D1)
 - c) as a museum (former use class D1)
 - d) as a public library or public reading room, (former use class D1)
 - e) as a public hall or exhibition hall, (former use class D1)

f) for, or in connection with, public worship or religious instruction (churches etc. – former use class D1)

2.6 Use class F1 does not benefit from any permitted development rights to move to another use class.



Figure 1: Link House is located at 35 Walmersley Road, Bury, BL9 5AE.

2.7 The building is understood to have been built as a car showroom subsequently being repurposed when Porsche closed their operation here. Link House and its associated external area are approximately bounded by Walmersley Road to the east, Fox Street to the north and Moor Street to the west. This area is approximately 0.21 hectares in size. The landscaped strip which lies between Walmersley Road and the building lies outside the applicant's site edged red. There are two areas of dedicated car parking associated with the building, these adjoin the west and south sides of the building.

- 2.8 The building itself is 874 sqm and is constructed in red brick and grey cladding. The building is broadly rectangular in shape although stepping in at the southern end where the building is clad and painted grey. The roof is flat with a man-safe rail following the perimeter. The large former car showroom windows have been infilled with smaller windows finished in dark painted frames. The southern car park to Walmersley road is landscaped with vehicular access being from Fox Street.



Figure 2: View of Link House from the south, looking northwards.



Figure 3: View of Link House from Moor Street.

Surrounding Area

- 2.9 The site is located on the outskirts of Bury Town Centre, close to Peel Way, Tesco Superstore and The Rock Shopping Park. Buildings here are predominantly in commercial use including retail, food and drink, essential services and office use. Directly at the rear of the application site is a large commercial unit (Wickes) that also has associated car parking. At the front of the site, the A56 (Walmersley Road) gives ready access to the ring road which allows traffic to access the towns shopping town centre and associated car parks. Opposite the application site is a vacant piece of hardstanding with advertisement hoardings fronting Walmersley Road.
- 2.10 The site is well connected with the strategic highway network with ready access to roads leading to other parts of Bury and beyond to nearby towns such as Bolton, Rochdale and Manchester. There is a bus stop on the main road outside the application site, connecting

the site to surrounding areas such as Holcombe Brook, Burnley and Blackburn. Bury Metrolink station is within a 10 minute walk, providing services to Manchester City Centre and Altrincham.

3. Planning History

3.1 Over the last twenty years a series of planning applications which have been submitted and determined for Link House. These are of limited relevance to the application proposal, however for completeness are detailed in the table below:

Planning reference	Location (as per MCC database)	Description of development	Decision and date
62820	Freedom Church, Link House, 35 Walmersley Road, Bury, BL9 5AE	7 No. non-illuminated pole mounted car park management signs	Approved with Conditions 28.06.2018
62819	Freedom Church, Link House, 35 Walmersley Road, Bury, BL9 5AE	1 No. automatic number plate recognition camera mounted on 5 metre high column	Approved with Conditions 28.06.2018
62106	Freedom Church, Link House, 35 Walmersley Road, Bury, BL9 5AE	Change of use of 2 no. first-floor offices from D1 (non-residential institutions) to A2 (financial and professional services)	Approved with Conditions 20.12.2017
61875	Link House, 35 Walmersley Road, Bury, BL9 5AE	Certificate of lawfulness for proposed change of use for two first floor offices at 35 Walmersley Road	Refused 02.08.2017
58165	Link House, 35	Lawful Development Certificate for a proposed use of Link House as a place	Lawful Developme

Planning reference	Location (as per MCC database)	Description of development	Decision and date
	Walmersley Road, Bury, BL9 5AE	of worship, church hall, creche, day nursery, non residential education and training centre under Use Class D1	nt 12.12.2014
99/34984	Link House, 35 Walmersley Road, Bury, BL9 5AE	New windows to Walmersley Road Elevation	Approved 26.01.1999

4. The Proposal

4.1 The proposal is for the change of use of 35 Walmersley Road from Use Class F1 to new indoor golf simulator centre and café/bar facility (sui generis) including alterations to the external elevations of the building, the installation of building signage and associated works. The business would occupy both floors of this 874 sqm building with golf/café/bar at the ground floor with further golf simulators, back of house and office accommodation at first floor.

4.2 The café/bar will bring a casual dining element to the venue with a range of hot/cold drinks, bar snacks and food options. It will therefore be able to cater for anyone entering the venue that would like to enjoy refreshments whilst playing the golf simulator.

Use

4.3 The provisional hours of operation that are being applied for are 08:00 to 22:00 seven days a week.

4.4 The proposed drawings show that the café/bar will have space for 12 tables and additional stools will be placed around the bar area, equating to 57 covers.

4.5 The indoor golf simulator will encourage family participation during the daytime and a young adult demographic in the evening. The simulator system is the Foresight GC Quad, used by global tour level golf players as a training and development aid.

4.6 There will be a number of functions available on the simulators including play a round of golf, play on a driving range, play in competitions/tournaments, play crazy golf and play arcade games, making it accessible to all abilities and age groups.

Internal Alterations

4.7 Internal alterations will be undertaken to facilitate the proposed change of use. The proposed unit layout drawing on the ground floor shows the provision of a kitchen, dining

and seating area, toilets, two rooms which could cater for storage and 12 bays where the indoor golf simulation will take place.

- 4.8 On the first floor, the drawings show two storage rooms, male and female toilets, a meeting / conference room, an office space, staff room and staff kitchen. The remaining space will be used for golf simulators although this area will be fitted out once the ground floor simulators have been established. The plans show this space to be cleared in advance of these 'phase two' simulator fit out works.

External Alterations

- 4.9 Elevational changes are proposed including likely external cladding, signage advertising the business within and building illumination. The existing rooftop condensers would be reused or if necessary replaced with similar.
- 4.10 In terms of servicing, the vacant building has dedicated car parking provision. C.9 car spaces in an adjacent car park, c.3 alongside the building and a further c.30 in a separate car park nearby.
- 4.11 Advertisement consent is being sort as part of this planning application. A commercial signage proposal is proposed to advertise the new use within the premises.

5. National and Local Planning Policy Context

5.1 Planning policy guidance of relevance to the proposed scheme, and which provides the context for its assessment, is set out within the following documents:

- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF);
- Saved Policies of the Bury Unitary Development Plan;
- Bury Local Plan and,
- Supplementary Planning Documents.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

5.2 Published on 27 March 2012 and revised on 20 July 2021, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England. The document states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Of relevance to the proposed scheme it states that:

5.3 Section 2 '**Achieving sustainable development**' of NPPF (July, 2021) advises that:

Para 7. *'The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. At a similarly high level, members of the United Nations – including the United Kingdom have agreed to pursue the 17 Global Goals for Sustainable Development in the period to 2030. These address social progress, economic well-being and environmental protection.'*

Para 8. *'Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):'*

a) **an economic objective** – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

b) **a social objective** – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and

c) **an environmental objective** – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy'.

Para 9. 'These objectives should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of the policies in this Framework; they are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged. Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area'.

Para 10. 'So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is **a presumption in favour of sustainable development**'.

Para 11 'Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable Development..... For decision-taking this means:

c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or

d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or*
- ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole’.*

5.4 Section 4 **‘Decision-making’** of NFFP (July, 2021) advises that:

Para 38. *‘Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available, including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible’.*

Para 47 *‘Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Decisions on applications should be made as quickly as possible, and within statutory timescales unless a longer period has been agreed by the applicant in writing’.*

5.5 Section 7 **‘Ensuring the Vitality of Town Centres’** of NFFP (July, 2021) advises that:

Para 86 *‘Planning policies and decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation’.* The reuse of vacant buildings is encouraged.

5.6 Section 8 **‘Promoting healthy and safe communities’** of NFFP (July, 2021) advises that:

Para 93. *‘To provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should:*

- a) plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments;*

Para 98. *'Access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities, and can deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change'.*

5.7 Section 9 **'Promoting Sustainable Transport'**

NPPF promotes sustainable development in sustainable locations which are well served by public transport infrastructure. The Transport Statement prepared by Focus and submitted in support of the application addresses these matters and demonstrates the proposal complies with NPPF transport policy objectives.

5.8 Section 11 **'Making Effective Use of Land'** of NFFP (July, 2021) advises that:

Para 123. *'Local planning authorities should also take a positive approach to applications for alternative uses of land which is currently developed but not allocated for a specific purpose in plans, where this would help to meet identified development needs'.* The reuse of vacant buildings is encouraged.

5.9 Section 12 **'Achieving Well Designed Places'** of NFFP (July, 2021) advises that:

Para 130. *'Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:*

a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;

b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;

c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);

d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit; and

f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

Saved Policies of the Bury Unitary Development Plan (Adopted August 1997)

- 5.10 The Unitary Development Plan (UDP) for Bury was adopted on 29 August 1997 and is the key Development Plan Document against which proposals should be judged. Site specific UDP policies are shown on Bury Council's online mapping system.
- 5.11 The plan below is an extract of the Council's online mapping and shows that the property is subject to a site specific policy designation. The mapping shows the site to be located within an area (blue dashed line) noted to be within a Local Shopping Centre (S/1) where locally orientated retailing will be maintained and encouraged to locate. Policy S1/4 is discussed more fully below.

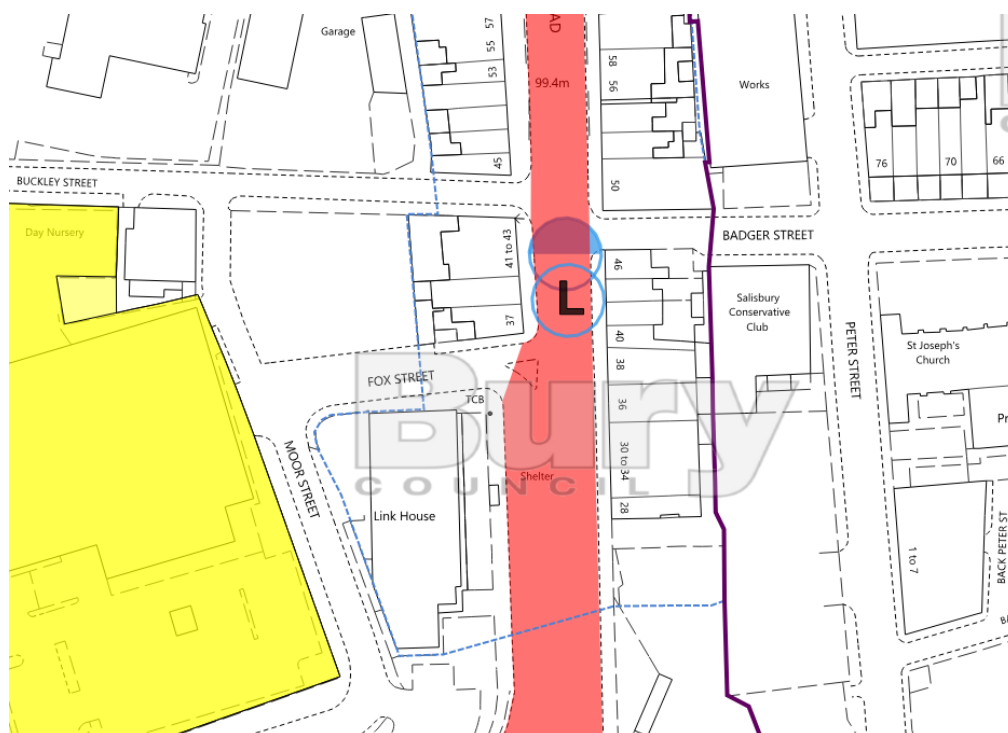


Figure 4: Extract Bury Unitary Development Plan

5.12 UDP objectives and policies of potential relevance to the proposed scheme are summarised below:

- Environment Objective 1: 'To protect and enhance the built environment' includes the encouragement of good design in new developments and the encouragement of high standards of civic and landscape design.
- Policy EN1 – 'Built Environment' states that the Council will seek to protect, preserve and enhance the character, appearance and amenity of the Borough's built environment.
- Policy EN1/2 'Townscape and Built Design' states that the Council will give favourable consideration to proposals which do not have an unacceptable adverse effect on the townscape of settlements. Factors to be considered when assessing proposals will include:
 - the external appearance and design of the proposal in relation to its height, scale, density and layout;
 - the relationship of the proposal to the surrounding area;
 - the choice and use of materials;
 - access and other design features for the mobility impaired;
 - the design of access, parking and service provision;
 - landscaping; and
 - the use of lighting.
- Policy EN1/5 'Crime Prevention' states that the Council will encourage development proposals which include design features aimed at discouraging crime. In assessing development proposals particular attention will be paid to the: use and creation of defensible space; creation of opportunities for natural surveillance; location of access points; location and design of parking facilities; and design of landscaping.

- Policy EN5/1 – ‘New Development and Flood Risk’ states the Council will not permit new development, including the raising of land and the intensification of development, where such development would be at risk from flooding, would be likely to increase the risk of flooding elsewhere, or would adversely affect river flood defences. When assessing proposals against this policy, the following criteria will apply: the impact on the floodplain; the increase in surface water run-off as a result of the proposal; the impact on fluvial flood defences; and the incorporation of mitigating works.
- Policy EN7/2 ‘Noise Pollution’ in seeking to limit noise pollution the Council will not permit: development which could lead to an unacceptable noise nuisance to nearby occupiers and/or amenity users.
- Policy S1/1 – ‘Shopping in Bury Town Centre’ The Council will protect, maintain and enhance the role of Bury Town Centre as a sub-regional shopping centre and promote the centre as a focal point for further town centre developments.
- Policy S1/4 – ‘Local Shopping Centres’ As noted above, the application site lies within an allocated local centre. The Council’s objective is to seek to maintain and enhance local shopping centres and will encourage the provision of a range of shopping facilities required to serve purely local needs. The main emphasis will be on consolidation and enhancement of existing retail provision. In circumstances where a proposal is not considered to be serving purely local needs, for example in terms of its size, location and/or character, a location within or adjoining a town or district centre may be considered more appropriate.
- EC4/1 – ‘Small Businesses’ This advises that proposals for small businesses will be acceptable when the scale of development is appropriate to, and the use is environmentally compatible with, the surrounding area in which it is to be located, and where they do not conflict with other policies and proposals of the Plan.

- Policy HT2/4 – ‘Car Parking and New Development’ advises that the Council will require all applications for development to make adequate provision for their car parking and servicing requirements in accordance with the Council's car parking standards. There are no standards applicable to the *suis generis* use proposed.
- Policy HT3 – ‘Public Transport’ states that the Council will encourage development which maintains and increases the use of public transport.
- Policy HT5 – ‘Accessibility for those with Special Needs’ states that Council will seek to improve accessibility, and the means of movement for the mobility impaired and those with special needs.
- Policy HT6 – ‘Pedestrians and Cyclists’ advises that the Council will seek to provide new and improved facilities for pedestrians and cyclists. SPD 11: Parking Standards in Bury (May 2007) provides guidance in relation to cycle parking.
- Policy RT2 – ‘New Provision for Recreation in the Urban Area’. This advises that the Council will encourage the provision of additional land and facilities for recreation in the urban area. The justification notes that new provision for recreation will be welcomed, particularly as analysis of the Borough's Recreation Survey (1989) has shown that there is a shortfall in both formal sports provision and children's play space, compared with the NPFA standard of 2.4 hectares per 1000 population.

Bury Local Plan

- 5.13 Bury Council is currently in the process of preparing a new Local Plan, and once adopted it will replace the existing UDP document. Consultation on the Key Issues and Policy Framework for the new Bury Local Plan and a 'Call for Sites' ended on 2 October 2017. The Council is now assessing all comments and suggested sites and taking these into account when moving on to the preparation of a draft Local Plan for Bury. The Plan is not yet adopted, therefore limited weight can be given to policies within it.

Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance

5.14 Supplementary Planning Documents provide additional information to assist with the interpretation and implementation of policies set out within the Core Strategy and the saved policies of the Revised UDP. SPDs which may be referred to by the Council include:

- SPD 3: Planning Out Crime in New Development (June 2001) and
- SPD 11: Parking Standards in Bury (May 2007).

6. Planning Appraisal

6.1 Having regard to the planning policy guidance detailed in section 5, the key material considerations against which the proposed scheme should be considered include:

- Principle of Development;
- Design Considerations;
- Highways, Parking and Bin Storage;
- Local Amenity Considerations;
- Flood Risk; and
- Sustainable Development: Economic, Social and Environmental Benefits.

Principle of Development

6.2 The existing building is considered to have lawful use as Class F1 – learning and non-residential institution which allows use for education, gallery, museum, library, public hall or place of worship.

6.3 The proposed scheme involves the change of use Class F1 to an indoor golf simulator and café/bar facility (suis generis). The business would occupy both floors with the golf/café/bar at the ground floor with further golf simulators, back of house and office accommodation at the first floor. The principle of the use proposed is considered to be appropriate given the sustainable location next to Bury Town Centre, and is appropriate with other commercial businesses located nearby.

6.4 The application site will be occupied by Hukd Golf (Hooked Entertainment Limited), a leisure company that have developed experience in a number of related fields including technology, video game apparatus, education and science. They are therefore well placed to install and manage an indoor entertainment venue with golf simulator and café/bar area. The growing popularity of golf, alongside the technology and leisure experience to be offered and the sustainable location of the site, means the facility should

appeal to a diverse range of customers including residents of and visitors to the Borough. The new venue will complement the existing leisure facilities Bury has to offer.

- 6.5 The sustainable location of the proposed new venue falls within the S1/4 'Local Shopping Centres' policy which encourages the provision of shopping facilities to serve purely local needs. However at least for the last 30 years, the site has not appeared to accommodate any local shopping facilities. Implementation of the scheme will not result in the closure of an existing retail use and therefore the proposal would not be detrimental to the existing viability of the centre. Furthermore Policy RT2 'New Provision for Recreation in the Urban Area' advises that the Council will encourage the provision of additional recreational facilities within the urban area of the Borough which this site is.
- 6.6 The application will provide an active use for the vacant unit thereby providing regeneration benefits including increasing vitality and vibrancy along Walmersley Road. The publicly accessible use of the building at ground level would improve footfall generated by the new use and will contribute to footfall in the Local Centre and the Town Centre through linked trips by golf clientele using the new facility.
- 6.7 Policy EC4/1 'Small Businesses' advises that proposals for small businesses will be acceptable when the scale of development is appropriate to, and the use is environmentally compatible with, the surrounding area in which it is to be located, and where they do not conflict with other policies and proposals of the Plan. This statement shows this to be the case with no policies of the development plan conflicted or compromised.
- 6.8 In summary the principle of development in this location is consistent with the relevant provisions of the NPPF and policies S1/1, S1/4, EC4/1, RT2 of the Bury Unitary Development Plan.

Design Considerations

- 6.9 The proposal involves the reuse of an existing vacant building in a prominent location adjacent to the Bury Town Centre and within a Local Shopping Centre. The building

footprint and scale will remain the same as at present with minor alterations proposed to some parts of the external elevations, including replacement cladding, new windows and new signage designed to advertise and facilitate reuse of the building for the commercial use proposed. The proposed works to the elevations and new signage proposals are in keeping with the architecture and appearance of the existing building as a whole and fit well within the surrounding townscape context of the area which is predominantly commercial in nature and appearance.

- 6.10 The existing front elevation of the building (Elevation AA to Walmsley Road) will stay broadly similar although the submitted proposal drawings show the existing deteriorated timber cladding system to be removed along with the poor condition windows. The existing cladding will be replaced by a new curtain walling system which is of a higher quality and will improve the appearance of the building, particularly about the entrance. The existing ground floor and first floor windows within the brick part of the elevation which are no longer required for the provision of natural lighting for the use proposed within are to carry the branding and advertising for the building. Window treatments proposed will ensure natural daylight does not prejudice the 'dark' environment which is required to facilitate operation of the golf simulators within. Uplighting placed between the windows will further enhance the elevation during the evening hours.
- 6.11 The car park elevation to the building (Elevation BB to the Car Park) comprises largely of poor quality cladding and damaged windows. These existing finishes will be replaced by a new high quality curtain walling system which will improve the appearance of the building. In this elevation the new windows to the café bar will provide passive surveillance of the customer parking area to the south and will assist with crime prevention. CCTV will also be installed as part of the proposed scheme to ensure the security of the external environment about the building. The black cladding and signage finishes proposed match those of Elevation AA ensuring a consistent approach to the design.
- 6.12 The Fox Street elevation (Elevation CC to Fox Street) remains broadly similar. The existing ground floor windows which are no longer required for the provision of natural lighting for the use within are to carry corporate branding and advertising for the building.

- 6.13 The rear of the building to Moor Street (DD) remains broadly similar. Poor quality cladding is replaced and an illuminated billboard sign is proposed to advertise the building from Moor Street. The billboard will be vinyl with the intention being to change out advertisements seasonally.
- 6.14 Elevation (EE) is not proposed to be changed and will remain as it appears presently.
- 6.15 The new advertising gives a fresh modern look to the building and enhances both the building and the surrounding commercial area in which it is located. A new 'welcome sign' is proposed to be installed to the southern car park, replacing the present car park sign.
- 6.16 The application site is located in a predominantly commercial area and a variety of commercial billboards are located opposite the site. It is considered that level of advertising and illumination proposed is appropriate given the necessity to raise awareness of the new facility, the commercial nature of the location and the high level of competing advertising signage being displayed on neighbouring buildings and sites.
- 6.17 Rather than removing windows which are not required to service the use within, cleverly the application proposal retains these and treats them with a film which can be easily be removed should changed usage circumstances demand. This approach future proofs the building and allows easy repurposing for uses which requires windows and natural light.
- 6.18 In summary, the design is considered to be in accordance with relevant provisions of the NPPF and Bury Unitary Development Plan policies including EN1, EN1/2, EN1/5, EC4/1 and SPD3.

Highways, Parking and Bin Storage

- 6.19 The application scheme proposes to retain the existing dedicated car parking associated with the building (i.e parking areas to the south and west of Link House that consist of c.18 car parking spaces). It is also proposed that the pay & display surface car park located to the north of Fox Street would be retained to enable operational flexibility (22 further spaces under control of the applicant). A minimum of 3 disabled parking spaces would be

available. Site servicing and vehicular access (for refuse collection and deliveries) would continue to be accommodated within the external areas to the south and west of Link House.

- 6.20 A Transport Statement has been prepared by Focus TP to consider highway and transport matters related to proposals for the change of use of the building to deliver a golf simulator and café/bar and is submitted in support of the application. The Focus report clearly demonstrates that the application scheme would represent appropriate and sustainable development when considered in highways and transport terms.
- 6.21 The report shows the application site has excellent accessibility to bus and Metrolink networks by virtue of its location, including a range of nearby bus stops and Bury Metrolink within walking distance. The application site is therefore shown to have excellent potential to encourage access by alternative sustainable travel modes to the private car for day-to-day journeys.
- 6.22 Furthermore, the report concludes there is no evidence to suggest that the application scheme would give rise to a severe detrimental impact on local highway network operation, especially when considering the extant use of the site as a college. Indeed, the application scheme is anticipated to result in an overall reduction in vehicle movements when compared to the extant college use of the site. Traffic impacts associated with the scheme are negligible and there are no highway capacity grounds for the refusal of the proposals. The existing level access and ramp to the entrance will be maintained.
- 6.23 It is concluded that the scheme represents appropriate and sustainable development in transport terms and therefore would commend the proposals to the council. It is in accordance with relevant provisions of the NPPF, Bury Unitary Development Plan policies HT2/4, HT3, HT5, HT6 and SPD 11.

Local Amenity

- 6.24 The proposal will have a positive impact in terms of amenity by ensuring an active use that will add to the diversity of the leisure offer in this part of Bury, on the edge of the Town

Centre and within a Local Shopping Area. It will provide activity and natural surveillance along Walmersley Road which will impact positively on the local environment.

- 6.25 In terms of neighbouring uses it is recognised that a venue of this nature that includes a café/bar can sometimes raise concerns that noise associated with customers coming and going may have the potential to impact on nearby uses. However a late night operation is not proposed and furthermore the majority of the neighbouring premises are in commercial use as retail shops or food takeaways which would have a similar closing time to the application site. The site is also situated on a busy main road main road and the entrance of the building opens into a main road environment and it is considered that any noise associated with customer movements would be accommodated within the existing area without being noticeable over the existing level of activity and movement. No adverse noise impacts on sensitive uses have been identified.
- 6.26 The new proposals do not extend the height, scale or massing of the building and therefore the proposed use has no impact in terms of overbearing, overshadowing or visual intrusion.
- 6.27 The scheme is therefore considered to be in accordance with relevant provisions of the NPPF and Bury Unitary Development Plan policies EN1, EN1/2, EN7/2 and RT2. The scheme will also provide a mix of uses that will add to the diversity of daytime/evening activity in close proximity to the Local Shopping Centre S1/4 and Bury Town Centre S1/1.

Flood Risk

- 6.28 The application site is located in flood risk zone 1 which is the lowest level of risk and it is under 1 hectare in size. A Flood Risk Statement is therefore not necessary as part of this scheme.
- 6.29 The scheme is therefore in accordance with relevant provisions of the NPPF and Bury Unitary Development Plan policy EN5/1.

Sustainable Development: Economic, Social and Environmental Benefits

- 6.30 The proposed scheme will achieve high sustainability credentials as a result of the economic, social and environmental benefits it will bring.

Economic

- 6.31 The proposed development will bring a number of economic benefits during and post construction, particularly in terms of job creation and increased expenditure close to Bury Town Centre. As well as the construction and service jobs created in the conversion of the application site, the new proposal will create new full time and part time roles. Furthermore the new use will create new job opportunities in a location which is readily accessible by public transport.

Social

- 6.32 The scheme will add to and enhance the leisure facilities, food and drink that Bury Town Centre has to offer. It will provide a new venue for people to socialise, whilst active use of the application site will add vitality to the area and reinstatement of an active use will reduce the opportunities for anti-social behaviour that are associated with a vacant building.

Environmental

- 6.33 The proposed scheme will have environmental benefits since it involves the reuse of a vacant unit within an existing building. Bringing the unit back into active use will improve the appearance of the building and add value to the streetscape. Also, the site is easily accessible by various modes of public transport and on foot minimising the use of private cars. The sustainability benefits of the scheme are in accordance with relevant provisions of the NPPF.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of Hukd Golf (Hooked Entertainment Limited) in support of a full planning application for the change of use of 35 Walmersley Road from use Class F1 to indoor golf simulator and café/bar facility (sui generis).
- 7.2 The application scheme is considered to be in full compliance with the NPPF, Saved policies of the Bury Unitary Development Plan and the Supplementary Planning Documents. The proposals have been carefully considered to ensure the scheme is delivered in a sustainable manner and is of a high design standard that does not impact upon local amenity.
- 7.3 The development site is located in a sustainable location close to local bus and Metrolink services. The proposed development maximises opportunities that the site's sustainable location presents and plans for a development which makes the best use of an underutilised site. It will add value to Bury and its town centre, increasing the choice of leisure facilities on offer and creating increased footfall that will benefit the local shopping centre and economy.
- 7.4 As evidenced in this statement, the site has illustrated its sustainable and suitable location for the new development with no known adverse impacts arising from the development that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh its benefit. It is our view that no material planning considerations exist that would justify refusal of planning permission. The proposals are considered to constitute sustainable development as defined by the NPPF and the presumption in favour of sustainable development should apply in the determination of this application.
- 7.5 Paul Butler Associates are pleased to submit this planning application on behalf of Hukd Golf (Hooked Entertainment Limited) and look forward to working with Bury Council in progressing the application through to a positive determination.