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Farnham Park Sports Fields Charitable Trust
C/O Buckinghamshire Council
The Gateway
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This report is a summary version of the Designated Adviser Report provided to the Trust in April 2025. Please note: references to the Council as corporate trustee of the Trust may appear as 'the Council' for the purpose of brevity in some sections; additionally, some details within the report have changed due to the passage of time (such as the references to the status of repairs on the rugby club building); redactions have been applied to sections containing protected or sensitive information (such as rental value).

SOUTH BUCKINGHAMSHIRE GOLF COURSE & FARNHAM PARK PLAYING FIELDS

1 Instructions

This report ('Report') is for Section 119(1) Charities Act 2011 purposes and reflects the changes made by the Charities Act 2022 as contained in the Charities (Disposition of Land: Designated Advisers and Reports) Regulations 2023.

This Report is provided for the potential transactional purposes and for the sole use of the Farnham Park Sports Fields Charitable Trust (Trust). It is confidential to the Trust and its professional advisors. The Valuer accepts responsibility to the Trust alone that the Report has been prepared with the skill, care and diligence reasonably to be expected of a competent Chartered Surveyor but accepts no responsibility whatsoever to any parties other than the Trust. Any such parties rely upon the Report at their own risk.

I have relied upon information provided by the Trust, Buckinghamshire Council ('Council') and / or the Trust's/Council's legal or other professional advisors relating to tenure, leases and all other relevant matters. Where necessary to complete the valuation, further information has been sourced from the relevant local and national authority websites and / or professionals. I have assumed this information to be complete and correct.

This Report has been prepared by [name redacted] MRICS (Partner) who is qualified to provide this report and who has the ability in, and experience of, the valuation of the land of the particular kind in question.

I confirm that I have no interest which conflicts, or would appear to conflict, with that of the Trust although it should be noted that Carter Jonas are acting as marketing agents for the letting of South Buckinghamshire Golf Course and Farnham Park Playing Fields (the 'Property') which is the subject matter of this Report.

I also note that Carter Jonas Planning Consultants have been appointed by the preferred bidder which is detailed later in this Report.

2 Background

South Buckinghamshire Golf Course and Farnham Park Playing Fields form two adjoining sites separated by Parsonage Lane to the east of Farnham Royal Village.

The majority of the land is held by the Trust for which the Council is sole corporate trustee although there is some 26.5 acres of the golf course which are Council-owned land, and which does not form part of the assets held by the Trust.

There is significant cost in maintaining the two sites as they do not generate enough income to offset operating and maintenance costs despite fees and charges having been increased. The current arrangements are considered not financially sustainable and therefore new operating arrangements are required.

The Trust are seeking long term lease arrangement(s) for the sites with appropriate clauses to ensure continuing community access in line with the charitable obligations that exist over the land.

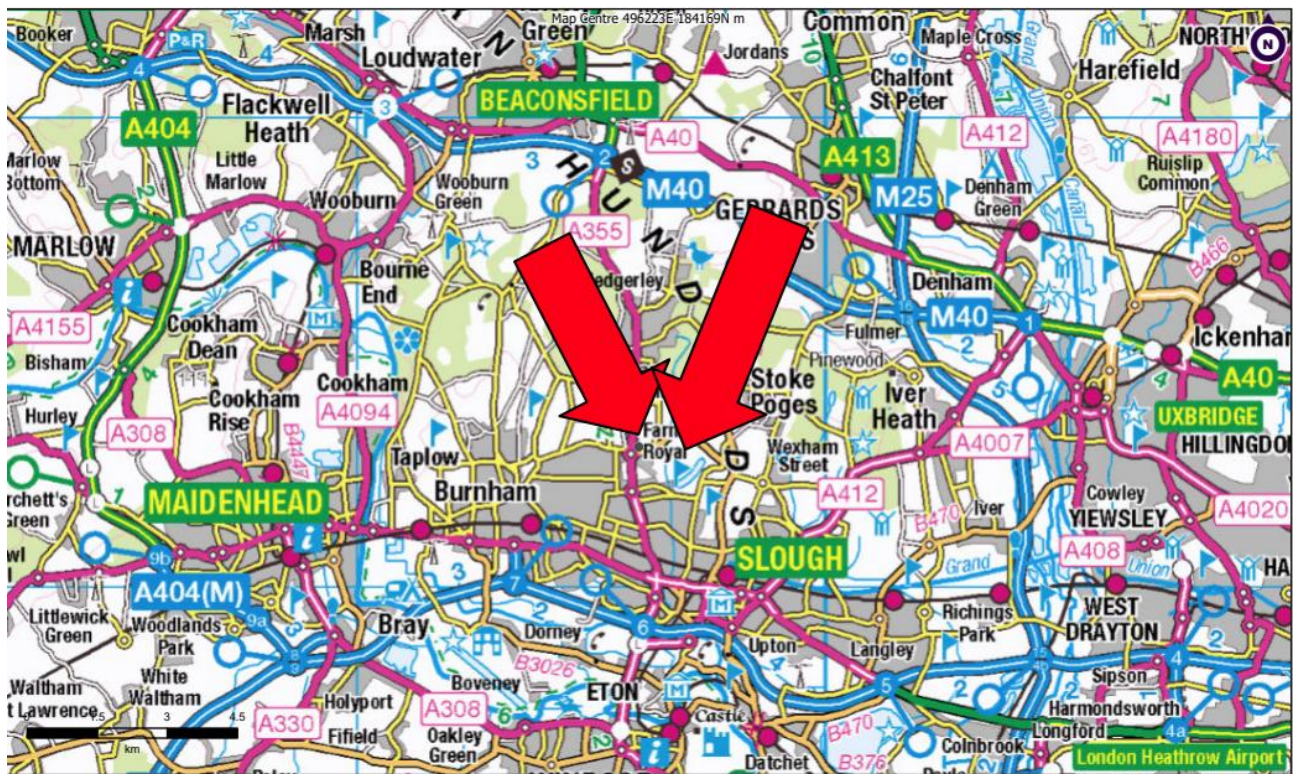
3 Location & Situation

The golf course lies off the northern side of B416 Park Road and east of Farnham Royal a village and civil parish within Buckinghamshire. It lies a short distance to the north of Slough and some 22 miles to the west of Central London.

The playing fields are located to the eastern side of the A355 Beaconsfield Road just north of Farnham Royal and to the west of the Golf Course.

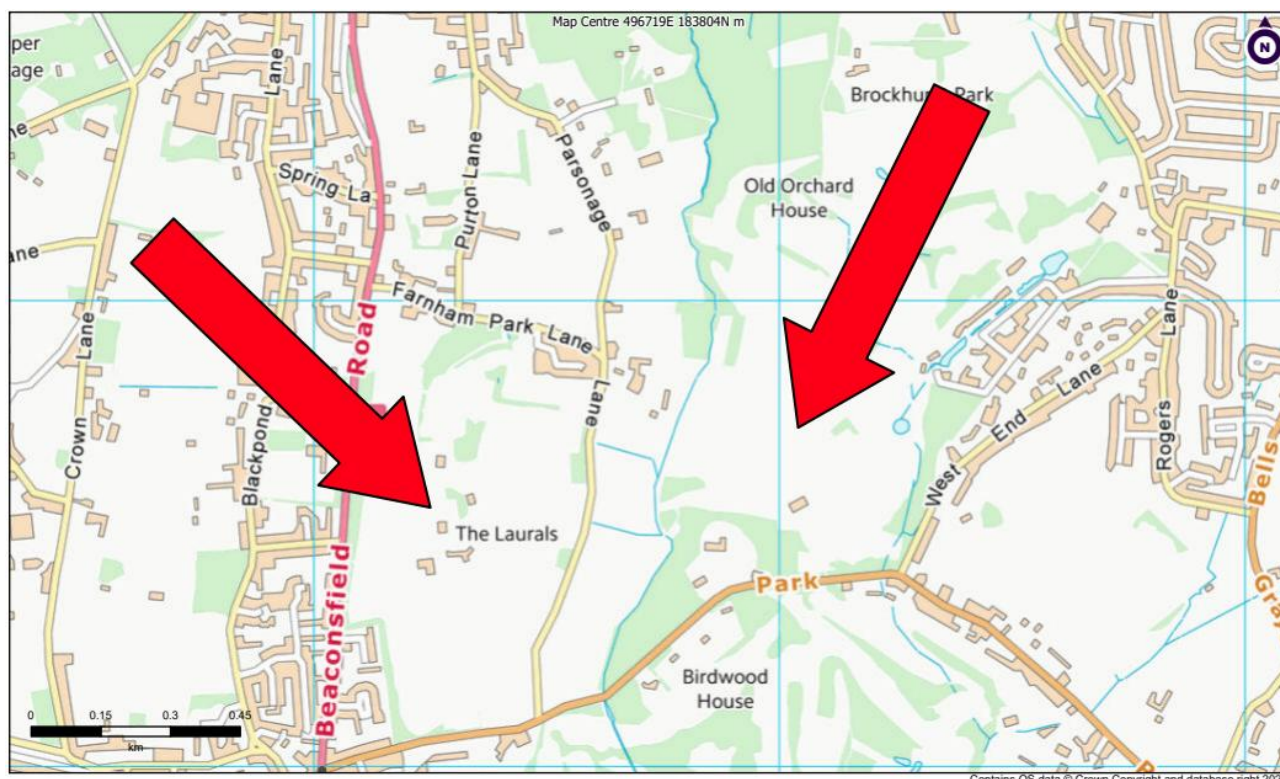
The two sites are dissected by Parsonage Lane, an adopted highway, which runs in a north-south direction.

Their locations are shown on the extract plan below:



Plan 1: Location

The Property lies in a semi-rural area within a Green Belt with residential properties nearby with the villages of Stoke Poges to the east and Farnham Royal to the south. The situation of the two sites are shown on the plan extract below:



Plan 2: Site Plan

4 The Golf Course and Clubs

The golf course is a well-established 18 hole par 70 public parkland course set within some 130 acres of mature woodland with a small practice area, two practice nets and a practice putting green.

It has the benefit of a modern single storey clubhouse and offers a bar and restaurant, meeting rooms, a small golf shop, offices, changing rooms and showers.

There are two car parks; lower and upper, together with two padel tennis courts adjoining the upper car park recently constructed and operated by UK Padel.

The golf course has the benefit of a bore hole for the irrigation of the greens and tees which requires an annual abstraction licence to operate. It is understood that the current irrigation system is nearing the end of its economic life.

Following heavy rain, the condition of the course can make access difficult with the 9th hole being particularly bad in winter months with the top of the course having a number of holes based upon clay. It is understood that the course would benefit from drainage which would result in reducing the number of lost days of golf due to weather.

The golf course is subject to several public footpaths crossing the course and along the boundaries of the course.

It is understood that the golf course was originally the 9 hole ladies golf course for Stoke Park Golf club which is located across the road from the golf course.

The golf course was previously called Farnham Park Golf Course, however, the name was changed in 2014.

Prior to 2014 there was one golf club operating at the golf course being Farnham Park Golf Club. This is a club managed by the members and their committee and has been in existence since 1977.

In 2014 the District Council decided to create a new golf club called South Buckinghamshire Golf Club which was initially operated by on-site District Council staff. In 2016 the members of South Buckinghamshire Golf Club voted in favour of operating the club themselves and this was agreed with the District Council.

Both clubs use the golf course as their home course and between them have circa 350 members. Both clubs are given block booked tee times for competitions for members.

Members of the clubs, also receive green fee discounts and the ability to book up to 14 days ahead for tee times outside of competition tee times compared to a visitor who can only book 10 days in advance.

Green keeping and ground maintenance is carried out by an inhouse team which was recently overseen by an Operations manager. The inhouse team comprises a senior green keeper and three green keepers. In addition, there is a senior groundsman who is dedicated to provide maintenance of the playing fields but who is a qualified green keeper and who provides cover for holidays, sickness and weekend work.

The management of the golf course and playing fields is undertaken in house with all staff on joint employment contracts with the Trust/the Council.

The golf shop is managed in-house and stocks a limited range of golf accessories such as tees, balls, gloves and some clothing. UK Padel also sell a small amount of stock from the shop.

The catering/cleaning operation is also managed in-house employing a mix of full time and part time staff.

5 Playing Fields

The playing fields comprise some 80 acres with a number of sports clubs and pitches located on site together with clubhouses, changing facilities and car parks as well as a children's playground operated by Farnham Royal Parish Council. In addition, there is a fenced off area that is used for the grazing of horses.

The changing facilities adjoin the former Phoenix Old Boys Clubhouse although much of this building has been unused for many years due to it being unsafe.

There is also a further dilapidated unused building comprising the former Slough Town Clubhouse which has also been unused for many years and is in the process of being demolished.

There are a total of six adult size football pitches, two youth pitches, two junior pitches and two small training pitches available to hire weekly or on a one-off basis.

The sports clubs tenants on site are Farnham Royal Rugby Football Club ('Rugby Club'), Unity Martial Arts and Baseball Softball UK ('BSUK').

The Rugby Club has been on site for over 50 years and occupies a 1950s single storey pavilion with two grass rugby pitches as well as former tennis courts now used for car parking. The main pitch has been subject to improvements in 2022.

The pavilion requires a new roof due to storm damage and vandalism, however, it has recently been subject to extensive fire damage and is currently not used and in need of restoration pending the outcome of an

insurance claim. It previously offered changing facilities, a club house with bar and kitchen. The pavilion had largely been upgraded at the expense of the rugby club.

Unity Martial Arts has been on site for over 30 years and also occupy a former 1950s sports pavilion which has been adapted by the occupant to provide a large training hall with adjoining gym, a physio room, changing facilities, kitchen and storage. There are also adjoining outbuildings which provide basic storage. Externally there is a car park adjoining.

BSUK occupy a large part of the site as their national home with two dedicated baseball/softball fields (Fields 1 and 2), two dedicated softball only fields (Fields 3 and 4) plus land used as a dirt area for Field 5 (the outfield for Field 5 extends onto football pitches outside the BSUK demise). It is believed that BSUK have installed the facilities associated with the use of these pitches.

A former Council staff dormer bungalow known previously as the Laurels has been converted by BSUK into a clubhouse now known as Home Plate with offices and stores on the upper floor. It has been extended with a canopy to the rear for covered outdoor seating.

There is also an events office created from a clad ship container on site with a viewing platform installed by BSUK.

BSUK use a gravel and bunded car park area besides their clubhouse.

A former multi-use games area ('MUGA') on the southern perimeter of the playing field is also used by BSUK for the storage of equipment and surplus astroturf. Adjoining the MUGA lies metal storage containers.

The grazing area lies to the north of the pavilion occupied by Unity Martial Arts and is fenced off with gates leading out on to the playing field. It currently houses horses with timber stables.

The children's playground lies to the south of the approach road within a corner of the playing fields and comprises a grass area with a timber fence around its edge. It contains a variety of play equipment including swings, a climbing frame and a zip line. The playground is maintained by Farnham Royal Parish Council.

There are three tarmac car parks on site of which two are used by the Rugby Club and Unity Martial Arts.

There are redundant tennis courts by the Slough Town Clubhouse which are currently used for the storage of football posts for the pitches on site.

The playing fields are accessed off A345 Beaconsfield Road through automatic closing gates with red/green lights for arrivals and departures. Internal access is by way of a T-shape estate road which serves the northern and southern halves of the site.

The layout of the playing fields are shown on the photograph extract below. It excludes the horse grazing area.



Plan 3: Aerial Site Plan

6 Grounds Maintenance/Green Keeping Compound

There is a single grounds maintenance and green keeping compound serving both the golf course and playing fields where all the equipment is stored. This is sited broadly in the middle of the playing fields and offers a palisade fenced concrete compound area together with modern storage sheds, staff accommodation and offices.

Staff and vehicles accessing the golf course have to drive across the playing fields and over Parsonage Lane (a public road, requiring all vehicles to be registered for use on roads and also taxed).

7 Photographs

Photographs from my inspections are set out below:

South Buckinghamshire Golf Course



Entrance Sign



Course



Course



Course



Course



Course



Front of the Clubhouse



Side of the Clubhouse



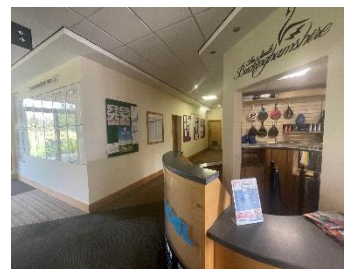
External Seating Area



Bar/Restaurant



Reception



Shop



Shop



Corridor



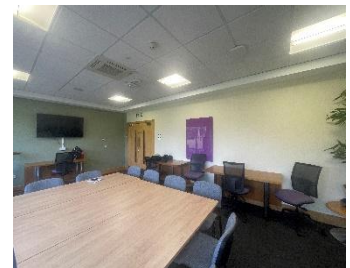
Event Space



Kitchen



Meeting Room



Meeting Room



Carpark



Padel Tennis Courts



Padel Tennis Courts

Farnham Park Playing Fields



Sign at Entrance



Entrance Gates



Playing Fields



Playing Fields



Playing Fields



Laurels the former Staff Bungalow now Home Plate



Side of Home Plate with Canopy



Side of Home Plate



Events Office



BSUK Pitches



BSUK Pitches



BSUK Pitches



BSUK Pitches



Former MUGA



Former MUGA



Ship Containers



Unity Martial Arts



Unity Martial Arts



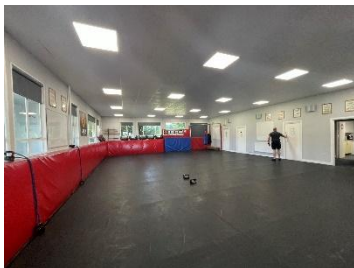
Unity Martial Arts



Unity Martial Arts



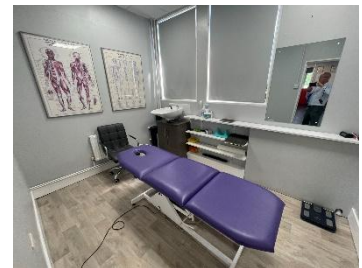
Unity Martial Arts



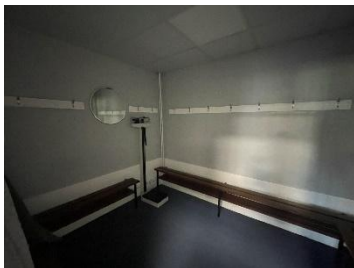
Unity's Main Hall



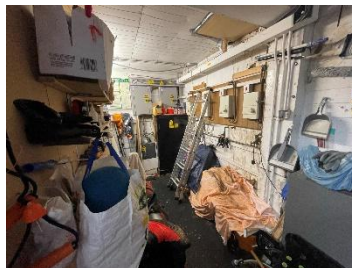
Unity's Gym



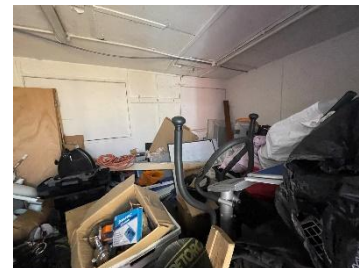
Unity's Physio Room



Unity's Changing Facilities



Unity's Storage



Unity's Storage



Rugby Club's Pavilion



Rugby Club's Pavilion



Rugby Club's Pavilion



Rugby Club's Pavilion



Rugby Club's Hall before Fire



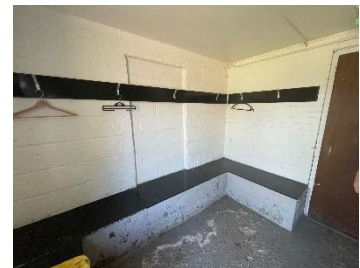
Rugby Club's Hall before Fire



Rugby Club's Bar Area before Fire



Rugby Club's Lounge before Fire



Rugby Club's Changing Facilities before Fire



Former tennis Courts used by Rugby Club for Parking



Rugby Pitches



Rugby Pitches



Phoenix Old Boys Clubhouse



Phoenix Old Boys Clubhouse



Changing Facilities



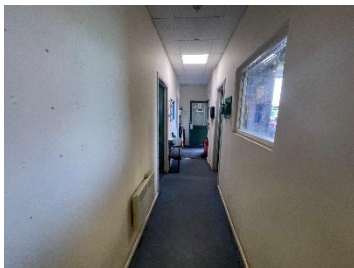
Shower Room



Shower Room



Shower Room



Corridor



Corridor



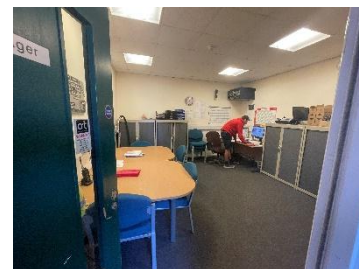
Changing Facilities



Maintenance Building



Storage



Offices



Slough Town Clubhouse before Demolition



Former Tennis Courts used for Goal Post Storage



Former Tennis Courts used for Car Parking



Grazing Land



Grazing Land



Grazing Land



Main Car Park



Estate Road



View along A335

8 Accommodation

The accommodation within the sites are believed to have the following Gross Internal Areas ('GIA'):

Site	Building	Sq. M.	Sq. Ft.
South Buckinghamshire Golf Course	Clubhouse	629.55	6,776
Farnham Park Playing Fields	Rugby Club Pavilion	293.67	3,161
	Unity Martial Arts Pavilion	312.35	3,362
	Maintenance Compound	272.30	2,931

	Changing Facilities	206.37	2,221
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No measurements were possible for the BSUK accommodation, the Phoenix Old Boys Clubhouse and the Slough Town Clubhouse.

All measurements are approximate and calculated in accordance with the RICS Property Measurement (incorporating International Property Measurement Standards) 2nd Edition January 2018.

9 Repair

With the exception of the maintenance compound and the BSUK’s buildings within the playing fields the accommodation was generally in a fair to poor condition.

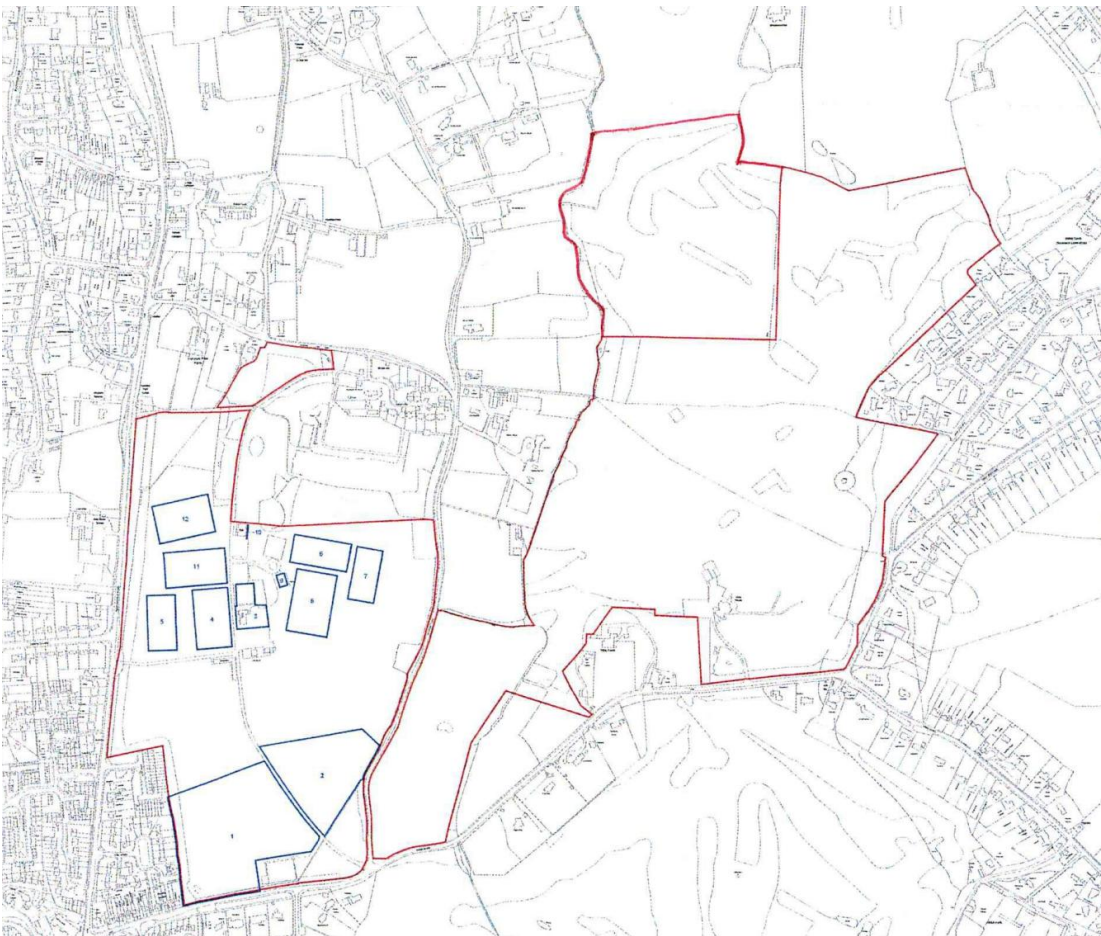
The Phoenix Old Boys Club and Slough Town Clubhouse are dilapidated and represents a liability for the site.

The Rugby Club pavilion was subject to an asbestos survey in April 2024; the results of which are unknown.

The club house at the golf course is in good condition. It would not be in the interests of the Trust to undertake any alterations, nor to sub-divide the accommodation.

10 Tenure

The majority of the land is held by the Trust for which the Council is the sole corporate trustee. The extent of the land held is shown edged in red on Plan 4 below:



Plan 4: Land Ownership

Part of the golf course extending to approximately 26.50 acres is held freehold by the Council. It is understood that the Council seeks to retain their ownership in this part of the golf course but with the intention to offer the golf course site to the market as a single package.

The land was transferred to the local authority as a permanent endowment under the Eton Rural District Council Act 1971 ('ERDC Act'). The ERDC Act requires the Council to maintain the land: *'for the maintenance and improvement of the physical well-being of persons resident in the rural district of Eton and adjoining areas by the provision of facilities for the physical training and recreation and for promoting and encouraging all forms of recreational activities calculated to contribute to the health and physical well-being of such persons'*.

The land cannot be sold and must be managed and maintained for the purposes as stated in the ERDC Act.

It is understood that the Council is legally required to exercise its powers in the best interests of the charitable Trust.

11 Tenancies

The land is subject to a number of occupations as follows:

South Buckinghamshire Golf Course

The golf course is subject to one occupation:

UK Padel

UK Padel have installed a set of padel courts at the golf course beside the car park.

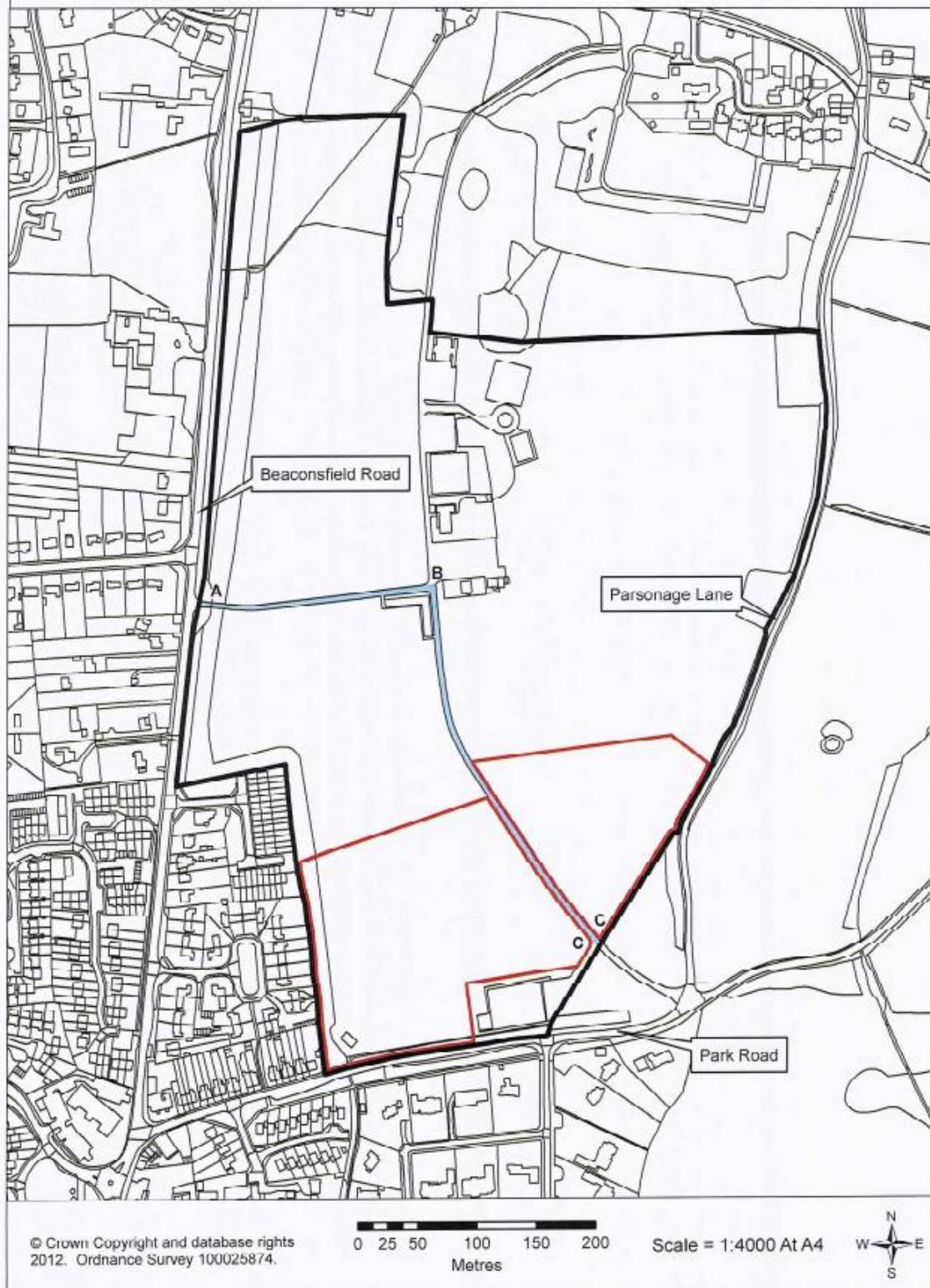
Farnham Park Playing Fields

The playing fields are subject to a number of tenancies as follows:

Baseball Softball UK (BSUK)

BSUK occupy part of the playing fields as their national site.

Appendix A. Farnham Park Sports Fields



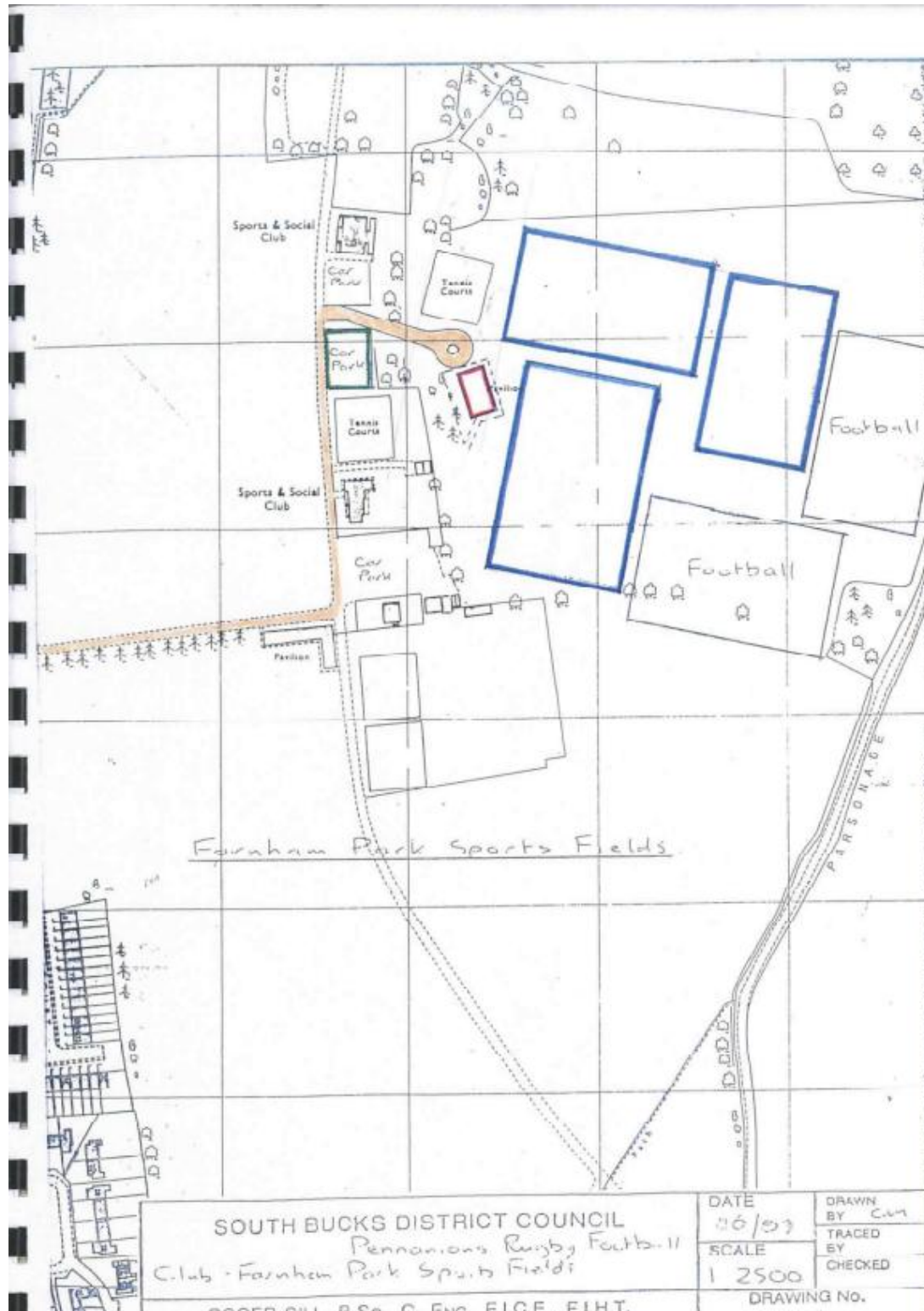
Plan 5: BSUK Lease Extract

The area currently occupied by BSUK extends beyond the area edged red on the extract plan above. *[note: the plan shows BSUK's original occupancy; an updated version showing their current occupancy is available]*

BSUK have a licence which extends over the former Multi-Use Games Area.

Farnham Royal Rugby Club

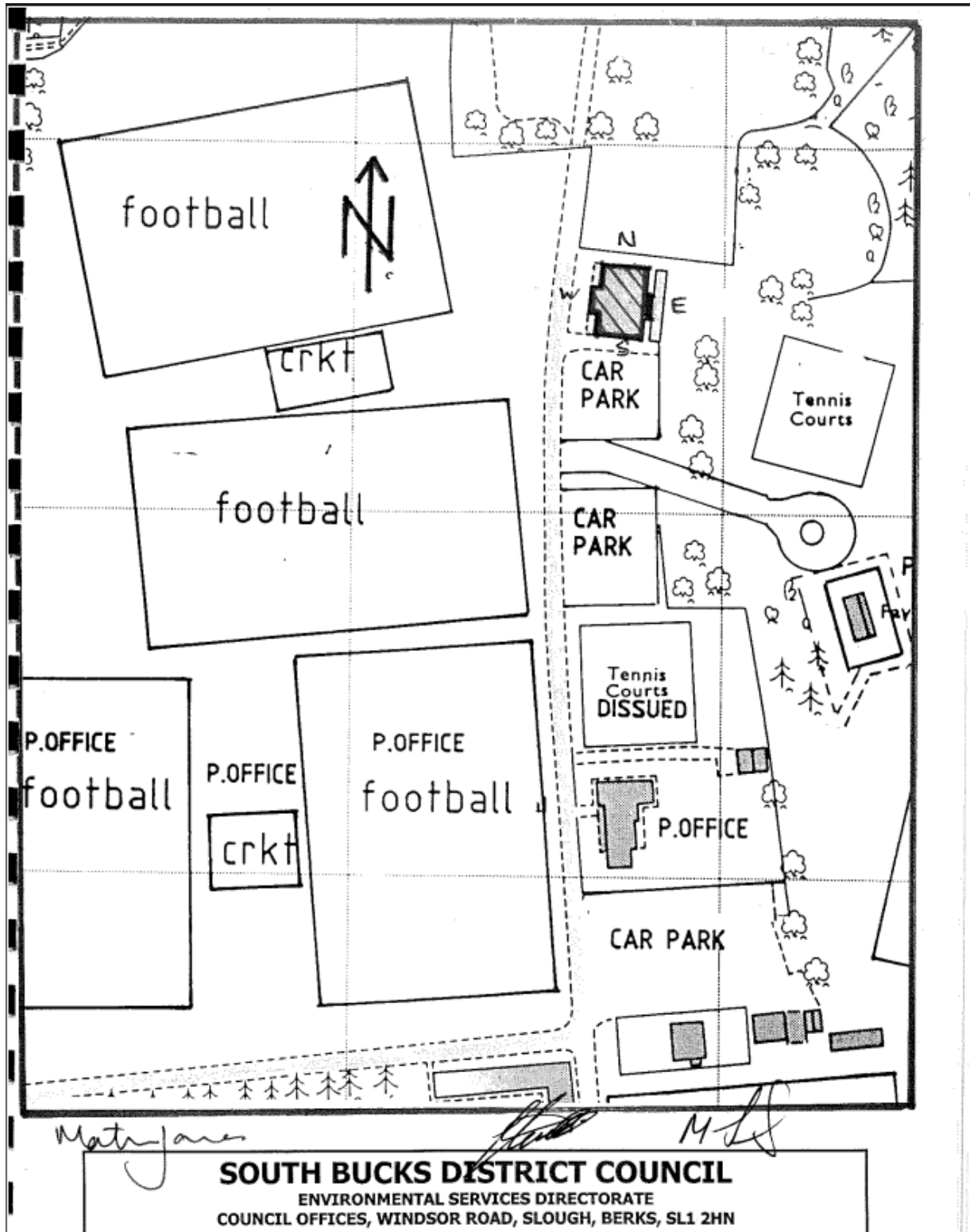
Farnham Royal Rugby Club occupy the area edged blue and red on Plan 6 below (*note: their current occupation is pavilion and two pitches having down sized from three pitches, together with the disused tennis courts used for car parking and a small patch of grass beside the pavilion*).



Plan 6: Rugby Club Lease Extract Plan

Unity Martial Arts

Unity Martial Arts occupy their building shown edged black on Plan 7 below:



Plan 7: Unity Martial Arts Lease Extract Plan

Horse Grazing

The horse grazing area is subject to a licence to [the occupier].

Farnham Royal Parish Ground

The playground is subject to a licence to Farnham Royal Parish Council.

12 Disposal Rationale

There is significant cost in maintaining the playing fields and golf course as they do not generate sufficient income to offset operating and maintenance costs, despite rising fees and charges. Operating costs have risen significantly over time due to inflation, increased employees costs and growing expenditure to maintain ageing infrastructure within the playing fields.

Whilst the clubhouse within the golf course is in good condition there is a requirement for future investment to maintain and improve the course to meet customer expectations and needs.

Therefore the Council as Trustee undertook an options appraisal to recommend an approach which will reduce the overall operating costs and create financial sustainability for the Trust, and which is commensurate with the requirements of the ERDC Act which governs the assets.

Options considered included:

Option 1: Adjustments to the current (in-house) operating arrangements

An independent review undertaken for the Council as Trustee for the golf course operations identified some opportunities to improve net operating costs by making changes to staffing structures, course management and provision for clubs, bar/catering operations, marketing and sales. However, the financial impact of such changes was anticipated to be more limited; and implementing significant operational changes would also require additional investment, since there was insufficient capacity within the existing team.

Option 2: Outsource operations to leisure operator

As part of the procurement process for the leisure contract that was recently awarded by the Council, a variant option was included to assess whether candidates were interested in managing the golf course. Following the contract award, the successful bidder provided updated management and financial proposals, which were analysed in relation to other options for the future operating model. This confirmed that compared to the current trading position, there is little financial benefit in bringing the facilities into this contract, which runs to 2029. While the risk of day-to-day trading would transfer to the operator, there was insufficient demonstration of value for money for the trust/Council in pursuing this management arrangement at this time.

Option 3: Wind up the charitable trust and bring the assets in-house

Legal advice obtained by the Council was that winding up the charity or declaring it insolvent was not legally possible, since the Trust is governed by the ERDC Act. To wind up the charity or make it insolvent would require supplemental legislation from the UK Government as it would breach the ERDC Act to declare the Trust insolvent. The Trust must therefore remain registered as a charity with the Charity Commission due to charity legislation for accounting and tax purposes and is required to produce audited accounts as a result and pay the appropriate taxation where this is due. However, although the charity is registered with the Charity Commission, legally the Trust is a function of the Council and does not have separate legal personality. As the Trust is a function of the Council, it is not possible for the Council to make itself insolvent.

Option 4: Closure

Closure of the sites and conversion to general open green space. This was discounted for various reasons, including legal advice, that closure would not be permissible under the ERDC Act; the implications for existing leases; and the significant costs involved in creating and maintaining the sites as open green space.

Overall, the sites require improved efficiency and further investment to allow better quality provision and increased usage of the sites.

Option 5: The Recommended Option for a Lease

The recommendation was to go to market to offer a lease for the golf course for a minimum of 25 years, with a variant option to include the playing fields. It was considered that the ideal scenario would be for a single party to lease and operate both sites, investing the income achieved into developing them for the benefit of users. The freehold would remain with the Trust/the Council as corporate trustee and requirements would be built into the lease(s) to ensure the land is maintained in line with the ERDC Act.

Engagement/soft market testing with leisure operators and specialists in the leasing of golf-related property to assess likely appetite for leasing the golf course and clubhouse has confirmed that the market is relatively buoyant and that there would be interest from the commercial sector in leasing and operating the golf course facility. The view was that the course is in a good location in terms of catchment and transport links and represents a positive opportunity due to the quality of the facilities.

Achieving a long-term leasing arrangement for the playing fields was expected to be more challenging given the complex mix of existing tenants and users, as well as the condition of the buildings on site. Therefore, the recommendation was to test a lease on the market, offering as much freedom as possible to potential tenants to change the facilities mix, within the confines of the associated legislation and with appropriate consideration of existing long-term leases. Under the ERDC Act, there is a requirement for physical training and recreation on site but there is flexibility on the nature of this sports and physical recreation.

If there was no appropriate interest for a lease on playing fields, the Council as Trustee considered it would need to give consideration and implementation of alternative options to improve the financial position. These could include reducing the operating costs by conducting a procurement exercise for grounds maintenance, including the site as part of wider leisure operating contracts when these are next retendered, changes to some of the existing facilities to reduce costs and/or introducing new facilities or activities which deliver increased income.

Benefits of leasing arrangement(s) include

- Facilities would be run by specialists in the sector, benefiting from improved economies of scale on overheads, marketing and commercial expertise, and greater resilience on staffing.
- Long-term lease arrangements will provide improved opportunities for investment into the sites by the tenants, to develop facilities in line with customers' expectations. Such investment cannot be made available by the Council due to the pressures on capital budgets.
- Obligations would be built into lease(s) to ensure continuing community access to the facilities in line with the requirements of the ERDC Act; and that there is no breach of existing long-term leases at the sites. There is a need to achieve the right balance between the charitable objectives/legal constraints and ensuring the leases are commercially attractive to support financial sustainability.
- Existing employees would transfer to the new operator under TUPE.

13 Proposed Disposition

Carter Jonas were appointed in Autumn 2024 to undertake the marketing of the Property on the basis of a mixed sporting and leisure long term lease as a whole or in parts for the golf course and playing fields.

Formal marketing of the Property went live in early January 2025 and included the preparation of a coloured brochure, which was issued to all interested applicants.

The letting was advertised in relevant online channels and in Golf Monthly 23 January 2025 edition.

Viewing days of the golf course and playing fields were booked running from 16 January 2025 to the 27 February 2025.

A data room was compiled offering wider information and access was made available to all interested parties subject to Non-disclosure Agreements (NDAs) being entered in to.

Some twenty-eight parties registered an interest in the Property of which fifteen sought access to the data room and nine undertook viewings of the golf course and playing fields. A number of parties either withdrew or failed to pursue their initial interest in the Property.

Ten parties submitted initial proposals. These proposals were reviewed by the Council on behalf of the Trustee in conjunction with Carter Jonas. The review identified an initial shortlist of six applicants who were invited for interviews. The applicants were questioned on their individual proposals and how the objects of the ERDC Act were to be met. The financial covenant strength of the parties also formed an important consideration.

The interview process resulted in a final shortlist of three parties of which one party withdrew. Of the two remaining parties, WWFC are now considered to be the preferred party.

In summary, WWFC's proposition is to secure a £x lease at £x per annum over a 75-year period for the entire Property with an investment of between £x and £x for the comprehensive development, management and enhancement of the Property.

Their proposals for the Property include: ensuring that the Property continues to be managed and maintained in line with the ERDC Act; reconfiguring the existing 18-hole golf course into a more flexible 9-hole or 12-hole golf course retaining the existing clubhouse and delivering improved facilities; delivering a state of the art training centre for the club's first team and providing a Category 1 Academy as well as programmes for the Women's Team and girl's football outreach with a mix of full- size and half-size pitches; retention and management and improving the Farnham Park Playing Fields including a new 3G pitch and exploring the provision of additional facilities; indoor changing facilities, showers and toilets upgraded; TUPE of staff; protecting the greenspace, woodland and high value habitats with public access being maintained.

Initial investment over the 5 years for the outdoor community sporting facility is estimated to be £x, investment to upgrade current facilities of between £x and £x and investment in the golf course of £x.

My recommendations, subject to the Trust taking appropriate legal advice, are as follows:

The rental offer at £x per annum subject to review is in excess of estimated market rent range of £x to £x per annum and therefore represents the best price payable.

The Property has been extensively marketed, and I believe has been fully exposed to potential tenants and no further marketing is required.

No further steps should be taken to enhance the values based upon the terms offered.

Finalise Heads of Terms with the terms offered by WWFC forming the baseline.

Subject to the above I therefore recommend the disposition on the terms so far offered to WWFC.

14 Confidentiality and Publication

Finally, and in accordance with our normal practice, I can confirm this report is confidential to the party to whom it is addressed for the specific purpose to which it refers and the charity commissioners. No responsibility what

so ever is accepted from any third party and neither the whole of this report, nor any part nor references there to may be published in any document, statement or circular, nor in any communication with third parties without my prior written approval of the form and context in which it may appear.

The contents of this Report must not be disclosed to any third parties without first obtaining Carter Jonas' written approval to the form and context of the proposed disclosure. Carter Jonas' consent must be obtained even if Carter Jonas are not referred to by name or the Report is to be combined with others. We will not approve any disclosure that does not refer sufficiently to any Special Assumptions or departures that we have made.