

OFFICER REPORT FOR COMMITTEE

DATE: 13/09/2023

**P/21/2042/LB
METIS HOMES LIMITED**

**WARSASH
AGENT: NOVA PLANNING LIMITED**

DEMOLITION AND RESIDENTIAL REDEVELOPMENT COMPRISING 117 DWELLINGS (INCLUDING CHANGE OF USE AND ALTERATIONS TO RETAINED LISTED BUILDINGS) TOGETHER WITH ASSOCIATED ACCESS, PARKING AND LANDSCAPING

WARSASH MARITIME ACADEMY, NEWTOWN ROAD, WARSASH SO31 9ZL

Report By

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1.0 *Introduction*

- 1.1 This application is being brought before the Planning Committee for determination due to the number of third party representations received.
- 1.2 A separate application seeking planning permission for the same development is reported to the committee elsewhere on this same agenda (application reference P/21/2041/FP).

2.0 *Site Description*

- 2.1 The application site comprises the upper (southern) part of the Warsash Maritime Academy campus on the western side of Newtown Road. The educational campus is owned and operated by Southampton Solent University (SSU) and was originally established in 1932 as the School of Navigation. Whilst the upper (southern) part of the campus subject of this application is surplus to the university's requirements, SSU retains the lower (northern) area of the campus where planning permission was granted in 2019 for a new fire and pool training centre (application reference P/19/0344/FP). An existing fire training ground is located on the retained campus site also.
- 2.2 The site measures approximately 2.5 hectares. It includes the parts of the campus south of the existing main entrance to the campus including the buildings Hamble Meads located at its north-eastern corner, Mountbatten Library, Coastguard, and the cluster of buildings known as Admiral Jellicoe, Whalley Wakeford and Blyth at the site's southern edge. It also includes the Grade II Listed Buildings known as Shackleton and Moyana which are the most westerly of the buildings located towards the centre of the campus. This application relates to those Grade II Listed Buildings.

3.0 Description of Proposal

3.1 Listed building consent is sought for the demolition of all of the buildings on the land, with the exception of the Grade II Listed Buildings Shackleton and Moyana, and the subsequent redevelopment of the site. In total it is proposed to create 117 dwellings together with associated access, parking and landscaping proposals.

3.2 The works requiring listed building consent are the conversion of the Grade II Listed buildings Shackleton and Moyana to residential apartments. Within the two buildings twelve 1-bed, twenty-one 2-bed and two 3-bed apartments would be provided. Those works involve external and internal changes to the buildings including partial demolition of internal walls and new subdivisions of both buildings.

4.0 Policies

4.1 The following policies apply to this application:

Adopted Fareham Local Plan 2037

HE1 – Historic Environment and Heritage Assets

HE3 – Listed Buildings and Structures and/or their Settings

5.0 Relevant Planning History

5.1 None

6.0 Representations

6.1 In response to the initial publicity carried out when this application was first received in March 2022, eight objections from seven different households were received. The points raised relate to the accompanying application for planning permission which is reported elsewhere on this agenda.

6.2 Following amendments made to the application, further publicity was carried in June 2023. A further two objections were received. In addition a further comment from The Fareham Society was received with the following point in relation to works to the listed buildings:

- In light of the observations of the Council's Conservation Planner the Council will need to consider whether the changes to the proposed internal layout of Moyana building are sufficient to overcome concerns raised.

7.0 Consultations

INTERNAL

Conservation Planner

- 7.1 Policies HE1 (Historic Environment and Heritage Assets) & HE3 (Listed Buildings and Structures and/or their Settings) of the adopted Fareham Local Plan 2037 are applicable as is Section 66 of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Area Act (as amended) and Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework – Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment.

Residential conversion of Shackleton Block

- 7.2 Due to the modular and compartmentalised nature of the original architectural scheme of the Shackleton Block, the conversion of the building into a residential block is considered acceptable in Historic Environment policy terms. The proposed scheme is considered to be relatively sympathetic to the special architectural and historic interest of the building. Although the conversion will require the removal of some historic fabric this has been kept to a minimum and the building will largely retain its original internal cellular form. It is also still proposed to install lifts between the second and third floors adjacent to the existing stairwells which will require cutting through the existing floor slab and will also result in the loss of historic fabric. In this instance, due to the nature of the building, it is not considered that this would be harmful to the building. In principle, the conversion of Shackleton is acceptable, subject to the approval of details such as the replacement / refurbishment of windows and retention of original features and internal finishes.

Residential Conversion of Moyana Block

- 7.3 Even in its revised form, the internal subdivision of the Moyana Block would still cause significant harm to the architectural and historic interest of the building and still cannot be supported in Historic Environment policy terms. Unlike the Shackleton Block where the original internal architectural scheme was always for relatively small cellular units, the interior of the Moyana Block was originally designed as one large open-plan communal space. This is not just evidenced in the internal spatial characteristics but also in the continuity of high-quality materials used throughout. Although this internal space has previously been subdivided to a certain extent (*which is acknowledged in the list description*), the current opening partitions are lightweight and, even when closed, still allow the internal space to be read as a per the original architectural scheme and this is an intrinsic part of the special architectural interest of the building and its character. Permanently subdividing the space in the way proposed to convert it into individual residential units would lose the internal spatial characteristics. This would significantly harm the special architectural and historic interest of the of the building and could not be supported in Historic Environment policy terms.

7.6 The conversion of the listed Moyana Block still remains unacceptable in Historic Environment policy terms. Should planning permission be granted I would recommend conditions are attached to ensure that all external materials and all materials and joinery details and conditions for the conservation of are submitted and approved in advance.

8.0 *Planning Considerations*

8.1 Planning application P/21/2041/FP for the redevelopment of the site is reported elsewhere on this same Planning Committee agenda. The Officer recommendation is that planning permission be granted subject to a number of appropriate planning conditions and the applicant first entering into a Section 106 legal agreement which would, amongst other things, secure the conversion of the Shackleton and Moyana buildings alongside the new build houses and apartments to be constructed.

8.2 The following paragraphs are taken from the report for the planning application. They set out the heritage considerations in the round and explain why Officers have formed the view that, notwithstanding the substantial harm to the Moyana building as a result of the proposed development, it is recommended planning permission be granted.

8.3 The heritage assets affected by the proposal are the two Grade II Listed Buildings on the site itself, Shackleton and Moyana. Shackleton (referred to as such but also including the Hudson and Wilson parts of the building) was built as a cadet's residential block and is connected by an open sided walkway link to Moyana, a dining block. Shackleton, Moyana and the link are the work of the architects Richard Shepherd, Robson and Partners built between 1959 - 1961. Maritime activity on the site began in the nineteenth century as a coastguard station and expanded post-WWII when the School of Navigation relocated to Warsash in 1946 and became part of Southampton University in 1956, and the two listed buildings were part of a first phase of major expansion of the training college under the university's ownership.

8.4 Hamblemeads, built in the 1930's on a field to the north of the existing buildings at the time, was purchased for use as a domestic staff hostel in 1963. A second phase of redevelopment followed the construction of Shackleton and Moyana during the 1960's with the construction of new buildings including Blyth, Whalley Wakeford and Admiral Jellicoe and the Mountbatten Library was added in 1980's. During the course of this application being considered Historic England received a request to assess these other buildings on the site for listing. As a result Coastguards and Hamblemeads were also assessed. In March this year the Council received

notification from Historic England that, having taken into account all the representations made and completed their assessment, following their recommendation the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport had decided not to add the buildings to the statutory list.

- 8.5 The application proposes the reconfiguration and reuse of Shackleton and Moyana for use as private apartments. Shackleton would provide twelve 1-bed and fifteen 2-bed apartments whilst Moyana would provide six 2-bed and two 3-bed units. These works would affect both the exterior and interior of the buildings and hence their character. The redevelopment of the rest of the site would also have an impact on the setting of both of these heritage assets.
- 8.6 Following extensive discussions and work with the applicant and their architects and heritage consultant, previously raised issues concerning the setting of the buildings have been resolved through revisions and clarification of details submitted. For example, the regrading of the land and provision of car parking to the west of Shackleton building is considered acceptable given that the degree of engineering works and changes to the topography of the land has been minimised so as not to detract from the setting of the listed buildings. The applicant has also sought to improve the 'parade ground' setting of the building to its east, and the effect of the new flat block to the north which has subsequently been reduced in scale and its elevational design amended to take account of Officer's feedback. Similarly, the proposals to convert Shackleton is acceptable subject to the approval of details such as the replacement/refurbishment of windows and retention of original features and internal finishes.
- 8.7 The conversion of Moyana block is less straight forward than the Shackleton building. Unlike the Shackleton Block where the original internal architectural scheme was always for relatively small cellular units, the interior of the Moyana Block was originally designed as one large open-plan communal space. Officers have worked with the applicant in response to their proposals for the building and revisions to the originally submitted scheme have been made to reduce the number of apartments and the degree of internal subdivision required. However, the latest revisions to the application still show the main open plan space in Moyana building sub-divided into three large apartments. Following these revisions to the application the Council's Conservation Planner has provided his final comments noting as follows:

“Although this internal space has previously been subdivided to a certain extent (which is acknowledged in the list description), the current opening partitions are lightweight and, even when closed, still allow the internal space to be read as a per the original architectural scheme and this is an intrinsic part of the special architectural interest

of the building and its character. Permanently subdividing the space in the way proposed to convert it into individual residential units would lose the internal spatial characteristics.”

8.8 As a result, Officers consider that the proposals would significantly harm the special architectural and historic interest of the building contrary to Policy HE3 of the local plan. The degree of harm caused is considered to be substantial. The following paragraphs set out the statutory tests in relation to listed buildings and local and national policy with regards substantial harm to listed buildings in more detail.

8.9 Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a statutory duty on local planning authorities that, in considering whether to grant consent for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

8.10 Policy HE3 of the local plan states in part:

“Where a development would affect a listed building/structure and/or its setting, proposals should preserve or enhance any features of special architectural or historic interest they possess, proposals must demonstrate sufficient understanding of and respond to the historic environment by ensuring that:

- a) Proposals to alter or extend listed buildings/structures, are accompanied by a Heritage Statement, which provides sufficient detail and is proportionate to the proposal and describes:
 - 1. the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting; and*
 - 2. the principles of the proposal and its impact on the special interest and significance of the building; and*
 - 3. why the works proposed are desirable or necessary and demonstrate how the public benefit of the works outweighs any harm;**
- b) Proposals are of a well-considered design which ensure that any development is appropriate in terms of style, scale, density, height, materials, architectural features and detailing; and*
- c) Changes of use are compatible with and respect the special architectural or historic interest of the heritage asset or its setting and;*
- d) Demolition of structures within the curtilage of a listed building are supported by robust evidence demonstrating that the structure is*

beyond meaningful use or repair or is not of special architectural or historic interest as a structure ancillary to the principal listed building.

Great weight will be given to the conservation of listed buildings/structures (the more important the asset, the greater the weight will be). Proposals which would cause substantial harm to or the total loss of the listed building/structure will be refused unless it can be demonstrated that such a proposal would provide substantial public benefits which would outweigh the harm caused to the listed building/heritage asset..."

8.11 Paragraph 200 of the NPPF reads as follows:

"Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;..."

8.12 Paragraph 201 of the NPPF continues:

"Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and*
- b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and*
- c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and*
- d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use."*

8.13 The wording of local plan Policy HE3 and NPPF paragraph 201 is similar in that both require it to be demonstrated that the substantial harm to the heritage asset is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that

outweigh the harm otherwise planning permission should be refused. If this is not possible then paragraph 201 provides a further exception based on four tests (a – d) being satisfied.

- 8.14 In terms of public benefits, the proposals would secure the future use of these heritage assets. Officers acknowledge the contribution the scheme would make towards boosting the Council's housing supply in terms of delivering 117 dwellings albeit the quantum of development relating to the conversion of Moyana itself is just 8 units. Forty-four of the units would be age restricted apartments in the McCarthy Stone building. As set out in more detail later in this report, a large area of public open space to the west of the site would be provided and this would exceed the policy requirements for such space in terms of its size. The scheme would also generate employment opportunities during the construction and operational phases of the development contributing positively to the local economy.
- 8.15 In terms of Policy HE3, Officers consider that the proposal would provide substantial benefits that outweigh the harm caused to the listed building.
- 8.16 In terms of NPPF paragraph 201, the harm caused is not necessary to achieve these substantial benefits as the benefits could still be largely achieved without the conversion of the Moyana building. However, to redevelop the remainder of the site without Moyana would significantly affect any prospects of the building being brought back into use. This is considered further below.
- 8.17 Turning to the four tests at a – d of NPPF paragraph 201 of which all four must be met, Officers have the following comments after each point:

“a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site;...” [The open plan nature of the building makes conversion to any number of leisure, recreation and commercial uses feasible rather than preventing such uses. Housing Allocation Policy HA7 does not endorse the conversion of Moyana to a residential use although it does not require a mixed use of the site to come forward either. However, Officers consider that whether or not a non-residential use of the building is 'reasonable' is highly dependent on whether a viable use can be found - see criterion b below].

b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; [The applicant has provided detailed information on the marketing exercises undertaken by the landowner Southampton Solent University and subsequently Metis Homes with regards Moyana itself. The

information provided shows that with the exception of one developer Foreman Homes who contemplated occupying the building as their own offices, all twelve initial expressions of interest in the site were based on entirely residential schemes. The interest from Foreman Homes did not progress and, having secured the site under contract, Metis Homes have explained how they then undertook further targeted marketing of Moyana and Shackleton. The marketing for Moyana focused primarily on the leisure and hospitality industry as well as mixed use developers. All of the parties who considered the use of Moyana for hospitality purposes ultimately rejected the building on the basis that it was either too large or too complex or too compromised to be viably converted for such use. The information provided by the applicant explains the challenging market conditions for leisure and hospitality uses and why the listed buildings are unattractive in this context. Furthermore, the applicant points out that the viability assessment considers that a fully open market residential development is marginally viable based on Moyana contributing a residential use value (which would be higher than a leisure or hospitality use value). Putting Moyana to a non-residential use would make the overall development even more marginal in viability terms].

c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; [Given the viability position, the information provided suggests that the building is incapable of being financially self-sufficient and there is no realistic prospect of grant-funding or ownership by a not-for-profit organisation].

d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use; [The evidence provided indicates that a non-residential reuse of Moyana building is very unlikely to be achieved. Furthermore the strong indication is that a residential conversion would only be viable as part of the wider redevelopment of the site. In light of this Officers consider the substantial harm to the special architectural interest of the building and its character to be outweighed by the benefit of bringing it back into use and securing its long term use].

8.18 Given that the four tests a – d set out above are satisfied, the proposal complies with NPPF paragraphs 200 & 201 in that clear and convincing justification has been provided and the substantial harm to the listed building is exceptional.

8.19 In light of the conclusions reached by Officers in relation to the above matters, it is recommended that listed building consent be granted.

9.0 Recommendation

9.1 **GRANT LISTED BUILDING CONSENT** Subject to the following conditions:

1. Time period for implementation
2. Approved documents
3. Details of external materials and fenestration
4. Details of internal works to remove building fabric
5. Details of new internal partition walls, doors and other works

THEN

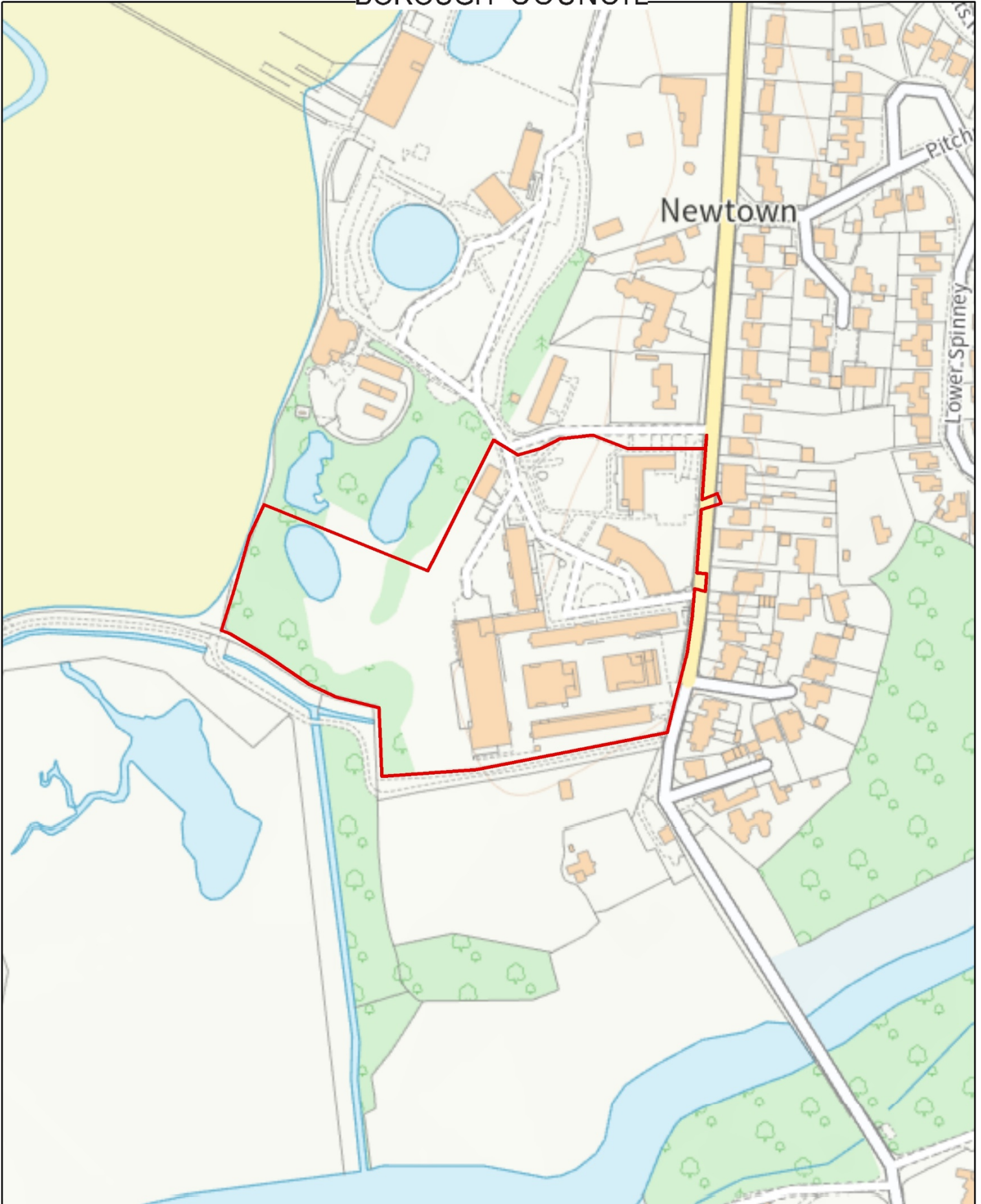
9.2 **DELEGATE** authority to the Head of Development Management to make any necessary modification, deletion or addition to the proposed conditions.

10.0 Background Papers

10.1 Application documents and all consultation responses and representations received as listed on the Council's website under the application reference number, together with all relevant national and local policies, guidance and standards and relevant legislation.

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL



Warsash Maritime Academy,
Newtown Road, Warsash
Scale 1:2,500



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