

**Worthing High School, South Farm Road, West Sussex,
BN14 7AR**

**Erection of temporary two-storey modular classroom
block.**

Planning Statement

**Prepared on behalf of Worthing High School
August 2026**



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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This planning statement has been produced by Parker Dann on behalf of Worthing High School in support of an application for planning permission for development at Worthing High School, South Farm Road.
- 1.2 The proposed development within this application is for the erection of a temporary two-storey modular classroom block for a 12 month period.
- 1.3 This statement should be read alongside the following documents:
- Supporting Statement for Worthing High School from West Sussex County Council's Strategic Development Manager;
 - Drawing no. PL01 Location Plan, Proposed Elevations;
 - Drawing no. PL02 Existing & Proposed Site Plans, Proposed Roof Plan;
 - Drawing no. PL03 Proposed Floor Plans; and
 - Sustainable Drainage Strategy

2.0 Application Site Context, History and Proposal

- 2.1 The application site is within the existing Worthing High School site that is accessed from South Farm Road. The site itself forms part of an area of existing hard standing in the north-eastern corner of the site together with a cycle parking shelter.

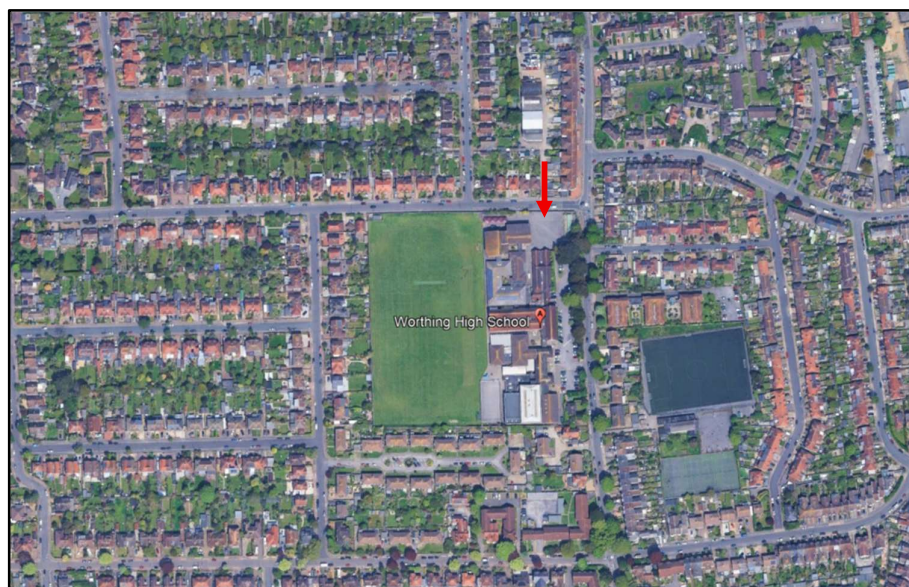


Figure 1 Aerial view of the site, showing the location of the proposed structure with a red arrow (from Google Maps)

- 2.2 The School dates back to 1905, where it started as a small private establishment for girls. It was taken over by the Local Education Authority in 1909. At the time, the School was attended by 30 to 40 pupils. By 1914, the numbers had grown to 113, and the School was moved to a new purpose-built site with accommodation for 150 pupils at the South Farm Road site, where it stands to this day.
- 2.3 From 1944 to 1973, the school served as a grammar school for girls, and then, following a restructuring of education in the county, it became a comprehensive school in 1973. With further reorganisation of education in 1982, Gaisford High School for Girls merged with Tarring Secondary School for boys to become fully co-educational as Worthing High School.
- 2.4 The site is located within the Built-up Area Boundary of Worthing, North of the Town Centre and on the western side of South Farm Road. St. Lawrence Avenue

forms the northern boundary of the School site with existing housing on the western and southern boundaries.

- 2.5 According to the online database, there are no Tree Preservation Orders on the application site, but there are mature trees present along the Eastern boundary of the site (shown in **Figures 3 & 8 below**)



Figure 2 Proposed location for the sitting of the modular classroom block (looking North from within the School site)



Figure 3 Proposed location for the sitting of the modular classroom block showing nearest trees and an existing school building to the south (view facing East)

- 2.6 With respect to heritage assets, the application site is not within a Conservation Area or Character Area, and the nearest listed building is approximately 150m North along South Farm Road - the Grade II Listed South Farm Cottages.
- 2.7 The application site is within Flood Zone 1, and although there is some risk of surface water flooding on the wider School site, between the existing buildings as shown in **Figure 4**, as well as along South Farm Road, there is no risk of surface water flooding on the proposed location of the structure.



Figure 4 School Site showing risk of surface water flooding (at 1% chance) within existing buildings

Site History

- 2.8 From available online records, the School's planning history is summarised in the following table.

Planning Reference	Application Type	Proposal	Decision and Date
92/05644/CR4	Not Available	<i>Notification under Regulation 4 for the provision of a single laboratory mobile classroom unit and replacement car parking</i>	No objection to County Consultation – 17 Jun 1992
93/05679/CCR3 (WB/93/0266/CC)	County Council Reg 3 Application	<i>Application for planning permission under regulation 3 for an extension to mobile laboratory to provide a preparation room and additional single laboratory unit</i>	No objection to County Consultation – 16 Jun 1993

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95/05667/FULL (WB/95/0024)	Full Application	<i>Use of the School car park and playing field fronting St. Lawrence Avenue for car boot sales on Saturdays (Maximum two per term)</i>	Application Permitted 22 Feb 1995
99/00463/CCR3	County Council Reg 3 Application	<i>Application under Regulation 3 for the erection of an extension to provide a new school hall and foyer, construction of a two storey maths and technology block, widening of two No. vehicular entrances on South Farm Road and redesignation of St. Lawrence Avenue entrance to be for cyclists and pedestrians only.</i>	Application Permitted 06 Jul 1999
00/00225/CCR3	County Council Reg 3 Application	<i>Application under Regulation 3 for the installation of one double and one single mobile classroom and the relocation of a double mobile classroom unit from elsewhere within the site</i>	No objection to County Consultation 25 Apr 2000
00/00226/CCR3	County Council Reg 3 Application	<i>Application under Regulation 3 for a new two storey maths and technology block; re-organisation of parking including widening of two vehicular entrances onto South Farm Road; redesignation of St. Lawrence Avenue entrance for use by cyclists and pedestrians only - resubmission of WB/99/00463/CCR3 approved on the 15.09.1999 to include expanded maths and technology block with revised elevational treatment.</i>	No objection to County Consultation 25 Apr 2000
01/00624/CCR3	County Council Reg 3 Application	<i>Application under Regulation 3 for proposed 3 metre high fencing around the formation and construction of a multi-use games area (without floodlighting)</i>	No objection to County Consultation 13 Aug 2001
02/00653/CCR3	County Council Reg 3 Application	<i>Notification under regulation 3 of Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992 for the construction of single storey extension to provide new music classrooms.</i>	No objection to County Consultation 07 Aug 2002
02/00654/CCR3	County Council Reg 3 Application	<i>Notification under Regulation 3 of Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992 for the construction of a single storey extension to provide an enlarged classroom for language, study and associated group and resource rooms.</i>	No objection to County Consultation 08 Aug 2002

AWDM/1573/15	County Council Reg 3 Application	<i>Application made under Regulation 3 for replacement science block (WSCC/068/15/WB)</i>	Application Permitted 10 Dec 2015
AWDM/0945/16	Full Application	<i>Barrel vaulted timber canopy to outdoor seating area</i>	Application Permitted 15 Sep 2016
AWDM/0061/17	Application to Display Adverts	<i>Four non-illuminated fascia signs to north and east elevations</i>	Application Permitted 15 Mar 2017
AWDM/0934/17 (WSCC/026/17/WB)	County Council Reg 3 Application	<i>Consultation by WSCC on Regulation 3 application WSCC/026/17/WB for two-storey extension of the existing sports hall and building to be re-clad with natural timber effect.</i>	Application Permitted 03 Aug 2017
AWDM/0269/19	Full Application	<i>Demolition of existing caretaker's dwelling (No.103 South Farm Road) and replacement with two-storey performing arts centre and single-storey entrance. Two-storey classroom block to replace existing single-storey classroom block to rear of school.</i>	Application Permitted 12 Jun 2019

- 2.9 This history confirms there has been continuous support for development and change at the School site since 1992 including the erection of modular buildings.

Proposal

- 2.10 The proposed development within this application is for the erection of a temporary two-storey modular classroom block (as specified in drawing no. PL03 Proposed Floor Plans) to accommodate eight classrooms for a period of 12 months. The units comprise of internal staircases for safety and comfort, and an external ramp connecting the building to the outside – as illustrated in **Figure 5**.
- 2.11 Each teaching room will have an area of 60m². The windows will be UPVC double-glazing for heat and sound insulation, and air conditioning will be installed in each

classroom (heat and cool). The building will have LED lighting with sensors, and it will be carpeted throughout.

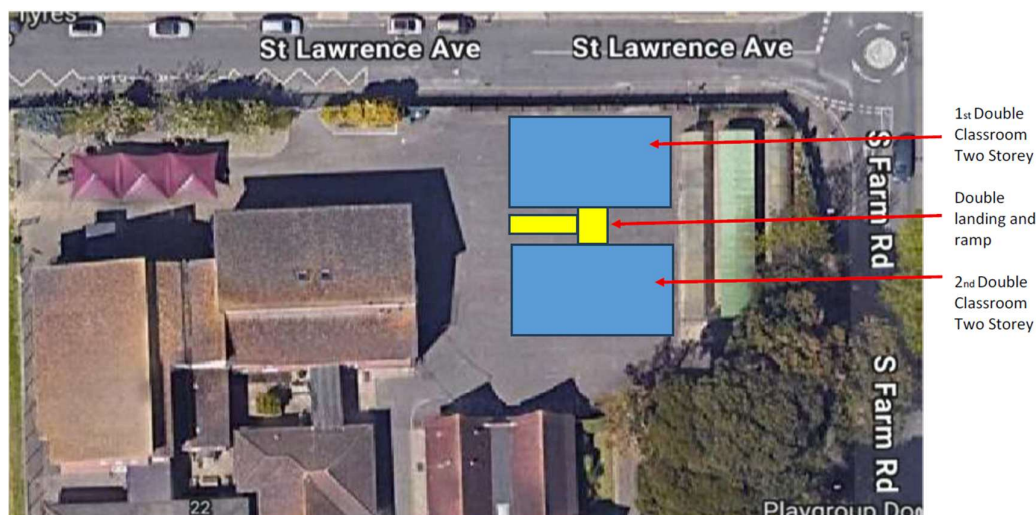


Figure 5 Proposed Aerial View Layout of the two double modular units

- 2.12 A Supporting Statement, prepared by the Strategic Development Manager of West Sussex County Council, is submitted alongside this application. This statement confirms that the existing classrooms used for the Special Support Centre for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) requires improvements and enhancements to ensure young people with SEND needs can be fully supported. The limitations of the current facilities restrict the School's ability to deliver appropriate interventions, therapeutic support, and inclusive learning environments for pupils with additional needs.
- 2.13 The proposed temporary modular accommodation will provide sufficient space to decant current classrooms, enabling the significant remodelling to take place, ensuring the required segregation of construction and educational activities.
- 2.14 The structures will be placed on site via crane over eco foundations. The modular units would be lifted into position from St. Lawrence Avenue – immediately to the north of the application site, avoiding harm to any trees on the South Farm Road frontage of the site.
- 2.15 The temporary modular units will be supplied by Portable Offices. At the end of the lease and temporary planning permission, they would be lifted out of the

application site, in the same manner, via St. Lawrence Avenue, to be reused by Portable Offices in a future scheme elsewhere.

- 2.16 Photos of comparable modular units to those to be installed on the application site are provided in **Figures 6 & 7**.



Figure 6 Example of a single two-storey Modular unit



Figure 7 Example of the inside of a modular unit classroom

3.0 Compliance with Planning Policy

- 3.1 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 require planning applications to be determined in accordance with the policies in the Development Plan, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.

Development Plan

- 3.2 The relevant Development Plan document for this application is the Worthing Local Plan (adopted in 2023), which sets the strategic development and land-use priorities for Worthing (outside the South Downs National Park) up to 2036, and contains the policies against which development management decisions within that area will be made. The Local Plan supersedes the Worthing Core Strategy (2011) and the saved policies from the Worthing Local Plan (2003). The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024, as amended in 2025) is also a material consideration in planning decisions.

Principle of the development

- 3.3 Policy **SS1 – Spatial Strategy** of the 2023 Worthing Local Plan, criterion **a** states that the Local Plan will: *seek to deliver high quality development and provide for the needs of local communities and balance the impact of growth through the protection and enhancement of local services and (where appropriate) the safeguarding of employment sites, leisure uses, community facilities, valued green/open spaces and natural resources.*
- 3.4 Criterion **d (i)** of **SS1** states that *the strategy for different parts of the Borough is as follows: i) Land within the Built Up Area Boundary - development will be permitted subject to compliance with other policies in the Local Plan. Development should make efficient use of previously developed land, but the density of development should be appropriate for its proposed use and also relate well to the surrounding uses and the character of the area. Within the existing urban fabric, nine key regeneration sites are allocated for development.*
- 3.5 Part a) of Policy **DM8 - Planning for Sustainable Communities/ Community Facilities** of the Local Plan confirms that the Council will support improvements

to education facilities to ensure they meet the needs of local communities where it is demonstrated that there would be no unacceptable impact on the occupiers of adjacent properties.

- 3.6 Paragraph **100** of the NPPF (2024) states the importance of providing *sufficient choice of early years, school and post-16 places... to meet the needs of existing and new communities*. It also states that *local planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education. They should:*

a) give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter early years, schools and post-16 facilities through the preparation of plans and decisions on applications; and

b) work with early years, school and post-16 promoters, delivery partners and statutory bodies to identify and resolve key planning issues before applications are submitted.

- 3.7 This policy approach sends a strong message of support for the principle of growth and change within the School site and for the extension and alteration of its buildings and introduction of new buildings. As confirmed earlier in this statement, the proposed temporary classrooms that would be delivered under the proposal would help meet the school's and the community's local needs, providing temporary SEND accommodation while much-needed improvements are undertaken at the existing facilities, in line with the support identified in policies **SS1** and **DM8** of the Local Plan and paragraph **100** of the NPPF

Sustainable Development and Design

- 3.8 As confirmed above Policy **DM8** criterion a) states that *the Council will support improvements to health, education, social, community and cultural facilities to ensure they meet the needs of local communities where it is demonstrated that there would be no unacceptable impact on the occupiers of adjacent properties.*
- 3.9 Policy **DM16 – Sustainable Design** states that *all development (excluding householder applications) will be required to achieve the relevant minimum standards below unless superseded by national planning policy, Building Regulations, or it can be demonstrated that it is not practicable, feasible or viable*

(in which case the minimum standard should be met as far as is possible). Applications for major development must be supported by a Sustainability Statement demonstrating that the minimum standards are met and, where possible, exceeded. All development is encouraged to exceed these minimum standards where possible.

- 3.10 Criterion **c)** of **DM16** states that *New non-domestic buildings will achieve a 27% reduction in CO2 on average per building compared to the Building Regulations Part L 2013 standard, unless superseded by national policy or Building Regulations.* Criterion **j)** confirms that new development should minimise construction waste and maximise the recycling and re-use of demolition materials.
- 3.11 The proposed development is temporary in nature; One of the units to be installed has previously been in use, and both units installed on site will be dismantled for reuse by the supplying company, Portable Offices.
- 3.12 Portable Offices is a member of the Modular & Portable Building Association (MPBA); as such, they are committed to circularity in modular buildings. Circular economy principles are applied to design, construction, use and end-of-life stages of modular buildings in order to minimise waste, extend the lifespan of materials, and enable reuse and/or recycling.
- 3.13 The modular classrooms are manufactured in a controlled factory environment, which provides significant environmental advantages over traditional construction. These include:
- Substantially reduced waste, with approximately 98% of construction waste segregated for recycling, far exceeding typical site-based performance
 - Modular components are standardised to fit multiple building types or future configurations, enabling easier repurposing or upgrading.
 - Higher build quality and consistency, reducing defects and improving long-term performance
 - Better resource efficiency and quality control compared to traditional onsite building methods.
 - Precision installation of insulation and airtightness detailing, which is difficult to achieve reliably on site.

- 3.14 In addition to the above, modular construction delivers clear whole-life carbon advantages. The units are designed for durability, adaptability, and potential relocation, enabling reuse across multiple sites and extending service life beyond 60 years, depending on the manufacturing system in use. This contrasts with traditional construction, where buildings are typically demolished at the end of use, resulting in significantly higher lifecycle carbon impacts.
- 3.15 Having regard to Policy **DM8**, no unacceptable impact on the occupiers of adjacent properties has been identified. There are no residential properties immediately opposite the site of the proposed building across St. Lawrence Avenue – only garages and St. Lawrence Lane. The nearest residential property is located further to the west on the north side of St. Lawrence Avenue and it is estimated that there would be a distance of over 20 metres between the nearest window in the front elevation of that property and the north elevation of the proposed building. At that distance the proposed building would not introduce issues of overlooking, loss of daylight or overshadowing and it could not be viewed as being overbearing. Noise generation from the building would have to be viewed in the context of the building's location within an established School site and background noise generation from vehicles using St. Lawrence Avenue and South Farm Road – notwithstanding the acoustic insulation properties of the proposed building itself.
- 3.16 The proposal therefore complies with policies **DM8** and **DM16**.

Sustainable Drainage Systems

- 3.17 **Policy DM20 – Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage** states (inter alia) *development should be directed away from areas of highest risk of flooding from any source and opportunities should be taken to reduce flooding through sustainable drainage systems and natural flood management to deliver multi-functional benefits for people and wildlife.* It also sets design guidelines for sustainable drainage systems (SuDS).
- 3.18 **Policy DM21 – Water Quality and Sustainable Water Use** also states in criterion **b** that *the Council will support proposals to replace existing traditional drainage systems with suitable Sustainable Drainage Systems to further reduce water pollution and improve water quality.*

- 3.19 The application site is impermeable hardstanding. The Sustainable Drainage Strategy confirms that the surface water run-off from the existing hardstanding discharges directly into gullies and is directed to the wider network discharging into a combined sewer south of the site.
- 3.20 As infiltration opportunities are restricted by the clayey ground conditions, the Sustainable Drainage Strategy confirms that the primary strategy is to install SuDS planters below rainwater downpipes to intercept and slow runoff as a secondary measure before discharging to the existing piped drainage network. Additionally, channel drains will be installed to capture surface water runoff at ground level. It confirms that there will be no increase in flows to the sewer due to the impermeable area remaining the same.
- 3.21 The Sustainable Drainage Strategy advises that this provides significant betterment over the existing drainage arrangement where runoff from the impermeable surfacing at the site is discharged directly into the below ground system with no SuDS features present. It concludes that this is considered to be compliant with the principles of the NSfS, the NPPF and CIRIA SuDS guidance.
- 3.22 A Flood Risk Assessment is not required for the development as the scale of the project is less than one hectare and is located wholly within Flood Zone 1, as indicated by the EA online flood maps for planning. Additional sources of flood risk have been reviewed and the Sustainable Drainage Strategy confirms that the risk of flooding from all sources, including surface water flood risk, is considered to be low.
- 3.23 This approach is aligned with Policy **DM20** and **DM21** as well as **paragraph 172 c)** of the NPPF that encourages applicants to use opportunities provided by new development to reduce the causes and impacts of flooding, (making as much use as possible of natural flood management techniques as part of an integrated approach to flood risk management). Likewise, **paragraph 164 a)** advises that vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change should be addressed in new development through suitable adaptation measures, including through incorporating green infrastructure and sustainable drainage systems.

Design and Impact on the Street Scene

3.24 Policy **M5** of the Local Plan concerns the quality of the built environment. Part a) advises that all new development should:

- i) be of a high architectural and design quality and respect and enhance the character of the site and the prevailing character of the area;
- ii) enhance the local environment by way of its appearance and character, with particular attention being paid to the architectural form, height, materials, density, scale, orientation, landscaping, tree canopy, impact on street scene and layout of the development;
- iii) make a positive contribution to the sense of place, local character and distinctiveness of an area;
- iv) respect, preserve and where appropriate enhance, heritage assets and settings;
- v) be well built, accessible, fit for purpose, and adaptable to changing lifestyle, demography and climate;
- vi) include a layout and design which: take account of potential users of the site; create safe conditions for access, egress and active travel (walking and cycling) between all locations; provide good links to integrated public transport; and have acceptable parking arrangements (in terms of amount and layout);
- vii) make a positive contribution to creating a safe and secure environment by integrating measures for security and designing out opportunities for crime;
- viii) not have an unacceptable impact on the occupiers of adjacent properties, particularly of residential dwellings, including unacceptable loss of privacy, daylight/sunlight, outlook, an unacceptable increase in noise giving rise in significant adverse impacts, or vehicular movements resulting in severe cumulative impacts on the road network, or loss of important open space of public value (unless it satisfies any of the exceptions set out under Policy DM7 – Open Space, Recreation and Leisure);
- ix) respect the existing natural features of the site, including landform, trees and biodiversity and contribute positively to biodiversity net gain. Where

appropriate, this will include the protection and integration of existing trees and green infrastructure into new developments; and

- x) ensure that lighting incorporated into developments provides the minimum for public safety, is energy efficient and avoids light pollution.

3.25 The proposed building is temporary and has significant advantages in terms of cost, ease and speed of installation and removal from the site and environmental performance. In the circumstances where the building is only required for one year, it has been concluded that it represents the most appropriate way of proceeding.

3.26 It is accepted that this approach means that it is unable to meet criteria i) – iii) of Policy M5 but this should be balanced against the clear need for the development, the benefits that it will help to deliver and the temporary nature of the building.

3.27 Having regard to impact on the street scene, local character, sense of place and distinctiveness of the area, as seen in **Figure 8**, the application site is screened by mature trees in views from South Farm Road to the east.



Figure 8 View from South Farm Road looking north towards the junction with St. Lawrence Avenue

- 3.28 Whilst there are some trees that provide screening in views from St. Lawrence Avenue, the junction of St. Lawrence Avenue and South Farm Road and South Farm Road looking south west, **Figures 9, 10 and 11** confirm these are younger trees and the classroom block would be visible in these locations.



Figure 9 View from St Lawrence Avenue looking south east towards the application site



Figure 10 View towards the application site from the Roundabout at the South Farm Road - St Lawrence Avenue junction



Figure 11 View from South Farm Road looking south west towards the application site

- 3.29 In these views, the temporary building would be prominent – particularly in the view looking directly south from St. Lawrence Avenue – but it would be seen in the context of an existing two storey building on the School site that lies adjacent to the application site to the west. It would therefore not appear out of keeping – also mindful that two storey buildings are located on South Farm Road to the east.
- 3.30 Criterion vi) of Policy **M5** is addressed through the ramped access to the building, its proximity to established cycle parking and location within the School site that is served by established public transport routes. Parking arrangements at the School will be unchanged under the proposal as the application site does not accommodate any car parking and no increase in student and staff numbers would result from this temporary development. Criterion vii) is addressed by the location of the building within the existing secure perimeter fencing of the School site. Criterion viii) is also addressed and this is confirmed at paragraph 3.15 above. Criterion ix) is addressed as the development will be on an existing area of hardstanding and all existing planting – including the trees on the South Farm Road and St. Lawrence Avenue frontages of the School site will be retained under the proposal. No lighting is proposed as part of the development as it will rely on existing lighting within the School site and will, in any case, be predominantly used

during daylight hours during the School day. Criterion x) is therefore also complied with.

4.0 Conclusion

- 4.1 The supporting letter from the Strategic Development Manager of West Sussex County Council, submitted as part of this application, confirms that the installation of the temporary classroom block would provide a decant solution to support the remodelling of existing accommodation to improve and enhance the existing Special Support Centre for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). This is a material consideration that weighs in favour of the application.
- 4.2 The principle of such development is strongly supported by both District Plan policy and the NPPF, and this statement has demonstrated that the proposal would accord with relevant national and Development Plan policy concerning design, flood risk and green infrastructure.
- 4.3 This statement has also demonstrated that the proposed development would comply with policy concerning sustainability and drainage. The nature of the modular units provides reduced carbon emissions and demonstrably improved environmental performance compared to traditional construction methods, strongly supporting the planning case.
- 4.4 Any detrimental effects to the character of the area would be temporary.
- 4.5 Paragraph **11** of the NPPF concerns the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Part c) provides guidance for decision-making on planning applications and confirms that they should approve development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay. This statement has demonstrated that the proposed development complies with national and local policies and that the need for the development is a material consideration that also weighs strongly in favour of the application. Planning permission should therefore be granted for the proposed development.