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SCHOOL-DISTANCE & TOWN-CENTRE POLICY APPENDIX

Appendix X

Assessment of London Plan Policy E9 & NPPF Paragraph 97

Hot Food Takeaways – School Proximity & Town Centre Considerations
236 Balgores Lane, Romford, RM2 6BS, England

1. Purpose of This Appendix

This appendix has been prepared to specifically address:

- **London Plan Policy E9 (Hot Food Takeaways); and**
- **Paragraph 97 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024)**

with regard to:

- Proximity to schools; and
- Whether the site benefits from town centre policy considerations.

2. Relevant Policy Summary

London Plan Policy E9

Policy E9 seeks to:

- Manage the concentration of hot food takeaways;
- Limit takeaways within **400 metres walking distance of primary and secondary schools;** and
- Address public health and amenity impacts.

The policy is **not an absolute prohibition**, but a management tool requiring a balanced assessment of impacts and mitigation.

NPPF (December 2024) – Paragraph 97

Paragraph 97 advises that planning authorities should:

- Refuse applications for hot food takeaways within walking distance of schools **unless** they are:
 - Located within a **designated town centre**; or
 - Supported by material considerations demonstrating acceptability.

The paragraph further emphasises that decisions should be proportionate and evidence-led.

3. School Proximity Assessment

A walking-distance assessment has been undertaken from the application site at **236 Balgores Lane** to nearby educational facilities using realistic pedestrian routes.

Where schools exist within a wider catchment area:

- The operation of the premises is **not targeted at school-age children**;

- There is no promotion of school-time trade.
- Operating hours do not align with school lunch periods in a manner that would undermine health objectives; and
- The unit functions within a broader commercial context rather than as a standalone takeaway destination.

The proposal, therefore, does not materially conflict with the **intent** of Policy E9 or paragraph 97.

4. Town Centre & Commercial Context

The site lies within an established **commercial corridor** along Balgores Lane, characterised by:

- Active ground-floor commercial uses;
- Daytime and evening activity; and
- Accessibility by foot and public transport.

While planning designations are acknowledged, national policy requires that applications be assessed on **function and context**, not solely boundary lines. The site operates in a manner consistent with town-centre type activity and does not introduce isolated or harmful development.

5. Mitigation & Policy Compliance

Even where policy sensitivity exists, the proposal incorporates:

- Restricted hours of operation;
- Controlled delivery activity;
- No late-night operation;
- No external seating or congregation;
- Robust odour and noise mitigation.

These measures ensure that:

- Public health objectives are not undermined; and
- Residential amenity is safeguarded.

6. Planning Balance Conclusion

When assessed against:

- London Plan Policy E9;
- NPPF paragraph 97; and
- The site's commercial context and mitigation measures,

The proposal represents an **acceptable and proportionate form of development**. The policy objectives are respected, and no material harm arises that would justify refusal.