

# Agenda Item 48.

<b>Development Management Ref No</b>	<b>No weeks on day of committee</b>	<b>Parish</b>	<b>Ward</b>	<b>Listed by:</b>
171903	14/13	Earley	Bulmershe Whitegate	and Major application

<b>Applicant</b>	Standard Life Assurance Ltd.
<b>Location</b>	Units 62 – 67, Suttons Business Park, Reading
<b>Proposal</b>	Full planning application for the redevelopment of site to provide a new class B2/B8 industrial unit with ancillary office space and associated storage areas, car parking and landscaping
<b>Type</b>	Full
<b>PS Category</b>	3
<b>Officer</b>	Graham Vaughan

**FOR CONSIDERATION BY** Planning Committee on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2017  
**REPORT PREPARED BY** Head of Development Management and Regulatory Services

## SUMMARY

The application site is within a major development location in the settlement of Earley and on Suttons Business Park. The park is well established and is designated a Core Employment Area in the development plan. The site was previously occupied by three semi-detached offices (containing 6 units) with some landscaping however the site has since been cleared. It is bordered by the access road through the business park, the railway and the A3290.

The application is for full permission for the erection of a mixed B2/B8 use building including an ancillary office area. The building would be located centrally on the site with car parking to the south and a service area to the north. Additional landscaping is proposed to augment the landscaping contained within the adjacent highway land. The building would be a substantial size having a footprint of 2641m<sup>2</sup> and would be of a different appearance to neighbouring buildings. Nonetheless, this should be considered in the context of its location in a business park and the policy support for B use floor space in these areas. Additionally, the proposal would increase B use floor space provision in the borough above the current level.

With regards to other planning matters, the proposal would provide sufficient parking, would not have a harmful impact on residential amenity and there are suitable drainage and ecological mitigation aspects in place. It is considered that, subject to the use of conditions, the scheme is compliant with the development plan and is therefore recommended for conditional approval.

## PLANNING STATUS

- Major development location
- Contaminated land consultation zone
- Core Employment Area
- Sand and gravel extraction

## RECOMMENDATION

**That the committee authorise the GRANT OF PLANNING PERMISSION subject to the following:**

## **A. Conditions and informatives:**

### **1. Timescale**

The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

*Reason: In pursuance of s.91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by s.51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).*

### **2. Approved details**

This permission is in respect of the submitted application plans and drawings numbered '30905-PL-200B Plot C Location Plan', '30905-PL-201J Plot C Site Layout Plan', '30905-PL-202B Plot C Floor Plans', '30905-PL-203B Plot C Elevations', '30905-PL-204 Plot C Illustrative Colour Site Layout Plan' and '30905-PL-205 Plot C Illustrative Colour Elevations' received by the local planning authority on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2017 and the revised plans on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2017. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

*Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the application form and associated details hereby approved.*

### **3. External materials as agreed**

The buildings hereby permitted shall be erected in accordance with the 'Schedule of External Facing Materials' as set out on plan number '30915-PL-203B' unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

*Reason: To ensure that the external appearance of the building is satisfactory.*

*Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3*

### **4. Construction method statement to be submitted**

No development shall take place until a Construction Method Statement has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The approved Statement shall be adhered to throughout the construction period. The Statement shall provide for:

- i) the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors,
- ii) lorry routing and potential numbers
- iii) types of piling rig and earth moving machinery to be utilized
- iv) installation of temporary lighting
- v) loading and unloading of plant and materials,
- vi) storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development,
- vii) the erection and maintenance of security hoarding including decorative displays and facilities for public viewing, where appropriate,
- viii) wheel washing facilities,
- ix) measures to control the emission of dust and dirt during construction,
- x) a scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from construction works.

*Reason: In the interests of highway safety & convenience and neighbour amenities.*

*Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.*

### **5. Contamination details to be submitted**

Unless otherwise agreed by the local planning authority, development other than that required to be carried out as part of an approved scheme of remediation must not commence until conditions A to D have been complied with. If unexpected contamination is found after development has begun, development must be halted on that part of the site affected by the unexpected contamination to the extent

specified by the Local Planning Authority in writing until condition D has been complied with in relation to that contamination.

#### **A SITE CHARACTERISATION**

An investigation and risk assessment, in addition to any assessment provided with the planning application, must be completed in accordance with a scheme to assess the nature and extent of any contamination on the site, whether or not it originates on the site. The contents of the scheme are subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority. The investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken by competent persons and a written report of the findings must be produced. The written report is subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority. The report of the findings must include:

- (i) a survey of the extent, scale and nature of contamination;
- (ii) an assessment of the potential risks to:
  - a) human health
  - b) property (existing or proposed) including buildings, crops, livestock, pets, woodland and service lines and pipes,
  - c) adjoining land
  - d) groundwaters and surface waters
  - e) ecological systems
  - f) archaeological sites and ancient monuments.
- (iii) an appraisal of remedial options, and proposal of the preferred option(s)

This must be conducted in accordance with DEFRA and the Environment Agency's Model Procedures for the Management of land Contamination CLR 11

#### **B SUBMISSION OF REMEDIATION SCHEME**

A detailed remediation scheme to bring the site to a condition suitable for the intended use by removing unacceptable risks to human health, buildings and other property and the natural and historical environment must be prepared, and is subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority. The scheme must include all works to be undertaken, proposed remediation objectives and remediation criteria, timetable of works and site management procedures. The scheme must ensure that the site will not qualify as contaminated under Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 in relation to the intended use of the land after remediation.

#### **C IMPLEMENTATION OF APPROVED REMEDIATION SCHEME**

The approved remediation scheme must be carried out in accordance with its terms prior to the commencement of development other than that required to carry out remediation, unless otherwise agreed by the Local Planning Authority. The Local Planning Authority must be given two weeks written notification of commencement of the remediation scheme works. Following completion of measures in the approved remediation scheme, a verification report (referred to in PPS23 as a validation report) that demonstrates the effectiveness of the remediation carried out must be produced, and is subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority.

#### **D REPORTING OF UNEXPECTED CONTAMINATION**

In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development that was not previously identified it must be reported in writing

immediately to the Local Planning Authority. An investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of condition A, and where remediation is necessary a remediation scheme must be prepared in accordance with the requirements of condition B, which is subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority. Following completion of measures identified in the approved remediation scheme a verification report must be prepared, which is subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority in accordance with condition C.

*Reason: To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other off-site receptors in accordance with policy.*

6. Drainage details to be submitted

No development shall take place until details of the drainage system have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The approved details shall be adhered to throughout the construction period and it shall provide for:

- i) Results of infiltration rates in accordance with BRE365;
- ii) Full calculations demonstrating the performance of soakaways;
- iii) Confirmation from the utilities supplier that their system has got capacity and that connection is acceptable;
- iv) A drainage strategy plan for the proposed development, including pipe details with invert levels; and,
- v) A maintenance management plan for the SuDS features throughout the lifetime of the development, as well as who will be responsible for the maintenance.

*Reason: To Prevent increased flood risk from surface water run-off. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 10 (Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change), Core Strategy policy CP1 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC09 and CC10.*

7. Cycle Storage details to be submitted

No building shall be occupied until details of secure and covered bicycle storage/ parking facilities for the occupants of [and visitors to] the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The cycle storage/ parking shall be implemented in accordance with such details as may be approved before occupation of the development hereby permitted, and shall be permanently retained in the approved form for the parking of bicycles and used for no other purpose.

*Reason: In order to ensure that secure weather-proof bicycle parking facilities are provided so as to encourage the use of sustainable modes of travel. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 4 (Sustainable Transport) and Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3 & CP6 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC07.*

8. Access to be provided

No building shall be occupied until the access has been constructed in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

*Reason: In the interests of highway safety and convenience. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.*

9. Access surfacing to be provided

No building shall be occupied until the vehicular access has been surfaced with a permeable and bonded material across the entire width of the access for a distance of 10 metres measured from the carriageway edge.

*Reason: To avoid spillage of loose material onto the highway, in the interests of road safety. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP6.*

10. Access to be stopped up

The existing vehicular access(es) to the site shall be stopped up and abandoned, and the footway and/or verge crossings shall be re-instated within one month of the completion of the new access(es) in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

*Reason: In the interests of highway safety and convenience. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.*

11. Parking and turning space to be provided

No part of any building(s) hereby permitted shall be occupied or used until the vehicle parking and turning space has been provided in accordance with the approved plans. The vehicle parking and turning space shall be retained and maintained in accordance with the approved details and the parking space shall remain available for the parking of vehicles at all times and the turning space shall not be used for any other purpose other than vehicle turning.

*Reason: To provide adequate off-street vehicle parking and turning space and to allow vehicles to enter and leave the site in a forward gear in the interests of road safety and convenience and providing a functional, accessible and safe development and in the interests of amenity. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC07.*

12. Employment Skills Plan to be submitted

No building shall be occupied until an Employment and Skills Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The Employment and Skills Plan shall show how the development hereby permitted provides opportunities for training, apprenticeship or other vocational initiatives to develop local employability skills and shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

*Reason: To ensure training opportunities are available for local workers. Relevant policy: Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy TB12*

13. Travel Plan to be submitted

Within 6 months of occupation a Travel Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The travel plan shall include a programme of implementation and proposals to promote alternative forms of transport to and from the site, other than by the private car and provide for periodic review. The travel plan shall be fully implemented, maintained and reviewed as so-approved.

*Reason: To encourage the use of all travel modes. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 4 (Sustainable Transport) and Core Strategy policy CP6.*

14. Landscaping as agreed

The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the landscaping details as agreed by plan 'DLA-1776-L 03 Rev E' and 'DLA-1776-L-01 Rev C' received by the Local Planning Authority on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2017 and the revised plans on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2017. All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried

out in accordance with the approved details prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with a timetable approved in writing by the local planning authority. Any trees or plants, which, within a period of five years after planting, are removed, die or become seriously damaged or defective, shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of species, size and number as originally approved and permanently retained.

*Reason: In the interests of visual amenity. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21*

#### 15. Tree Protection details agreed

a) The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the tree protection details as agreed on plan numbers 'DLA-1776-L 02 Rev D' (referred to as the Approved Scheme). The tree protection measures approved shall be implemented in complete accordance with the Approved Scheme for the duration of the development (including, unless otherwise provided by the Approved Scheme) demolition, all site preparation work, tree felling, tree pruning, demolition works, soil moving, temporary access construction and or widening or any other operation involving use of motorised vehicles or construction machinery.

b) No development (including any tree felling, tree pruning, demolition works, soil moving, temporary access construction and or widening or any other operation involving use of motorised vehicles or construction machinery) shall commence until the local planning authority has been provided (by way of a written notice) with a period of no less than 7 working days to inspect the implementation of the measures identified in the Approved Scheme on-site.

c) No excavations for services, storage of materials or machinery, parking of vehicles, deposit or excavation of soil or rubble, lighting of fires or disposal of liquids shall take place within an area designated as being fenced off or otherwise protected in the Approved Scheme.

d) The fencing or other works which are part of the Approved Scheme shall not be moved or removed, temporarily or otherwise, until all works including external works have been completed and all equipment, machinery and surplus materials removed from the site, unless the prior approval of the local planning authority has first been sought and obtained.

*Reason: To secure the protection throughout the time that the development is being carried out of trees shrubs or hedges growing within or adjacent to the site which are of amenity value to the area, and to allow for verification by the local planning authority that the necessary measures are in place before development and other works commence* Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21

#### 16. Energy Statement as agreed

The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the details as agreed in 'Energy Statement – Dunwoody March 2017' received by the Local Planning Authority on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2017 and shall be implemented in full in accordance with the approved plan unless otherwise approved in writing by the local planning authority.

*Reason: To ensure developments contribute to sustainable development. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 10 (Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change), Core Strategy policy CP1, Managing Development Delivery Local*

**17. External Lighting details as agreed**

The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the details as agreed in 'External Lighting Design Report – Dunwoody June 2017' and 'External Lighting Layout 20825/E/101 P3' received by the Local Planning Authority on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2017 and shall be implemented in full in accordance with the approved plan unless otherwise approved in writing by the local planning authority.

*Reason: In the interests of highway safety & convenience and neighbour amenities.*

*Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.*

**18. Ecology details as agreed**

The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the details as agreed in 'Applied Ecology Ltd, Ref AEL1070, 19<sup>th</sup> June 2017' received by the Local Planning Authority on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2017 and shall be implemented in full in accordance with the approved plan unless otherwise approved in writing by the local planning authority.

*Reason: To secure wildlife enhancements within the course of the development, as appropriate under the NPPF.*

**19. BREEAM Level as agreed**

The new building shall achieve BREEAM level 'Very Good' in accordance with the requirements of BREEAM [or such national measure of sustainability for non-residential design that replaces that scheme].

*Reason: To ensure developments contribute to sustainable development. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 10 (Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change), Core Strategy policy CP1 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC04*

**20. Hours of Construction**

No construction work relating to the development hereby approved, including works of demolition or preparation prior to building operations, shall take place other than between the hours of 08:00 and 18:00 Monday to Friday and 08:00 to 13:00 Saturdays and at no time on Sundays or Bank or National Holidays.

*Reason: To protect the occupiers of neighbouring properties from noise and disturbance outside the permitted hours during the construction period. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC06.*

**21. Visibility Splay details as agreed**

Before the development is brought into use, the visibility splays at the junction of Suttons Park Avenue and the entrance road to the site shall be cleared of any obstruction exceeding 0.6 metres in height. Thereafter, they shall be maintained clear of any obstruction exceeding 0.6 metres in height at all times.

*Reason: In the interests of highway safety and convenience. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.*

**22. No removal of vegetation as agreed**

No trees, shrubs or hedges within the site which are shown as being retained on the approved plans shall be felled, uprooted wilfully damaged or destroyed, cut back in any way or removed without previous written consent of the local planning authority;

any trees, shrubs or hedges removed without consent or dying or being severely damaged or becoming seriously diseased within 5 years from the completion of the development hereby permitted shall be replaced with trees, shrubs or hedge plants of similar size and species unless the local planning authority gives written consent to any variation.

*Reason: To secure the protection throughout the time that development is being carried out, of trees, shrubs and hedges growing within the site which are of amenity value to the area. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21.*

**23. Restriction of permitted development rights**

Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning, (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no more than 65% of the floor space of the building hereby approved shall be used for B2 purposes.

*Reason: To ensure adequate parking is available on site. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.*

*Informatives*

**1. Pre-commencement Conditions**

The applicant is reminded that this approval is granted subject to conditions which must be complied with prior to the development starting on site. Commencement of the development without complying with the pre-commencement requirements may be outside the terms of this permission and liable to enforcement action. The information required should be formally submitted to the Council for consideration with the relevant fee. Once the details have been approved in writing the development should be carried out only in accordance with those details. If this is not clear please contact the case officer to discuss.

**2. Thames Water Pressure**

Thames Water will aim to provide customers with a minimum pressure of 10m head (approx 1 bar) and a flow rate of 9 litres/minute at the point where it leaves Thames Waters pipes. The developer should take account of this minimum pressure in the design of the proposed development.

**3. Thames Water Main**

There is a Thames Water main crossing the development site which may/will need to be diverted at the Developer's cost, or necessitate amendments to the proposed development design so that the aforementioned main can be retained. Unrestricted access must be available at all times for maintenance and repair. Please contact Thames Water Developer Services, Contact Centre on Telephone No: 0800 009 3921 for further information.

**4. Travel Plan**

The requisite Travel plan would need to comply with the latest national and local guidance:

- 1) NPPF Section 4 (Sustainable Transport)
- 2) The Essential Guide to Travel Planning (DfT, March 2008)
- 3) Delivering Travel Plans Through the Planning Process (DfT, April 2009)
- 4) A Guide on Travel Plans for Developers (DfT)
- 5) Making Residential Travel Plans Work (DfT, June 2007) All accessible at:



<http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/sustainable/travelplans/>  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/improving-local-transport>

Also: WBC Transport Plan 3 and Active Travel Plan 2011 – 2026, WBC Workplace Travel Plan Guidance and Residential Travel Plan Guidance. Documents, covering workplace travel plans and residential travel plans provide local guidance and are available on the Borough's website.

## PLANNING HISTORY

20839	6 industrial/office units conditionally approved on 8th May 1984
37685	Change conditions 8 and 9 of 37685 to allow unrestricted business use (B1) conditionally approved on 26th June 1991
A/1997/6676 8 (Units 64 and 65)	Erection Of Non-illuminated Sign conditionally approved on 16th January 1998
A/2012/0429 (Suttons Business Park)	Advertisement consent for the erection of various illuminated and non-illuminated signs to include 1no freestanding site directory sign and 11free standing directional signs conditionally approved on 15th May 2012
152354	Full application for the proposed redevelopment of site and the erection of new building for B2 use including office space and storage areas, plus associated car parking and landscape works conditionally approved on 11 <sup>th</sup> November 2015

## SUMMARY INFORMATION

Site Area	0.68 hectares
Previous use	Office buildings – 6 units. Now demolished
Proposed units	Mixed use building of B2 and B8 use
Existing parking spaces	0
Proposed parking spaces	44

## CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Berkshire Archaeology	No objection
Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue	No objection
Thames Water	No objection subject to informatives (2, 3)
WBC Community Infrastructure	No objection subject to condition (12)
WBC Drainage	No objection subject to condition (6)
WBC Ecology	No comments received
WBC Environmental Health	No objection subject to conditions (5, 20)
WBC Highways	No objection subject to conditions (4, 7 – 11, 21, 23)
WBC Policy	No comments received
WBC Trees and Landscape	No objection subject to conditions (14, 15, 22)
WBC Waste Services	No comments received

## REPRESENTATIONS

**Earley Parish Council:** No objection

**Local Members:** No comments received

**Neighbours:** One letter of comment received noting potential opportunity to maximise carbon emission savings is being missed. Officer Note: Applications can only be

required to meet planning policies and in respect of carbon emissions; the development does this.

#### **APPLICANTS POINTS**

- The site has already had permission granted for similar development
- The development of the site would secure employment in the Borough
- The site is in a core employment area where this type of development should be encouraged

#### **PLANNING POLICY**

National Policy	<b>NPPF</b>	National Planning Policy Framework
Adopted Core Strategy DPD 2010	<b>CP1</b>	Sustainable Development
	<b>CP3</b>	General Principles for Development
	<b>CP6</b>	Managing Travel Demand
	<b>CP7</b>	Biodiversity
	<b>CP9</b>	Scale and Location of Development Proposals
	<b>CP15</b>	Employment Development
Adopted Managing Development Delivery Local Plan 2014	<b>CC01</b>	Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
	<b>CC02</b>	Development Limits
	<b>CC03</b>	Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping
	<b>CC04</b>	Sustainable Design and Construction
	<b>CC05</b>	Renewable energy and decentralised energy networks
	<b>CC06</b>	Noise
	<b>CC07</b>	Parking
	<b>CC09</b>	Development and Flood Risk
	<b>CC10</b>	Sustainable Drainage
	<b>TB11</b>	Core Employment Areas
	<b>TB12</b>	Employment Skills Plan
	<b>TB21</b>	Landscape Character
	<b>TB23</b>	Biodiversity and Development
Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)	<b>BDG</b>	Borough Design Guide – Section 7
	<b>WPSS</b>	Wokingham Parking Standards Study Report October 2011
	<b>SDC</b>	Sustainable Design and Construction

#### **PLANNING ISSUES**

##### **Description of Development:**

1. The proposal is for the erection of a B2/B8 use building at the former site of units 62 – 67 Suttons Business Park. The site has been cleared following the approval of

planning application 152354 however the applicant did not implement the permission and the owners of the park have sought different occupiers.

2. The application proposes a new building located centrally within the site. Car parking would be located to the south of the building and the service area to the north. Whilst the existing access at the northern corner of the site would be utilised, the access to the east would be stopped up and a new access created further to the south. Additionally, the site is located adjacent to Wokingham Borough Council owned highway land to the east and south.
3. The building itself would be 54 metres in length and 50 metres in width. It would have a dual pitched roof with a ridge height of 16.3 metres and an eaves height of 13.2 metres. The footprint of the building would be 2640m<sup>2</sup> however the actual floor space in the building would be split for B2 use (50%) and B8 use (50%).

#### **Principle of Development:**

4. The National Planning Policy Framework has an underlying presumption in favour of sustainable development which is carried through to the local Development Plan. The Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (MDD) Policy CC01 states that planning applications that accord with the policies in the Development Plan for Wokingham Borough will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
5. Policy CC02 of the MDD sets out the development limits for each settlement as defined on the policies map and therefore replaces the proposals map adopted through the Core Strategy, as per the requirement of policy CP9. Policy CP9 sets out that development proposals located within development limits will be acceptable in principle, having regard to the service provisions associated with the major, modest and limited categories. As the site is within a major development location, the proposal is acceptable in principle.
6. It is also noted that the site is located in a Core Employment Area and therefore the application needs to be assessed against policies CP15 and TB11. Specifically, these policies encourage the provision of B use floor space in Core Employment Areas as well as supporting a range of types of buildings e.g. start-up, expansion and investment. The principle of development was accepted through the previous application the site, 152354 as this resulted in an increase in the amount of B use floor space. In terms of the current application, the site is currently vacant and therefore any development for B use would clearly result in an uplift of B use floor space in the Borough. When compared with the previous application, it is acknowledged there would be a decrease in floor space overall: approx. 3200m<sup>2</sup> for the previous buildings against 2896m<sup>2</sup>. Nonetheless, the proposal would result in occupied buildings on the site and the shortfall is not considered substantial. On balance therefore, the proposal is not considered to result in harm in planning terms.

#### **Character of the Area:**

7. The site is currently vacant but is surrounded by Suttons Business Park to the east, south and west. The railway line is located to the north of the site and also delineates the edge of the business park. The buildings immediately adjacent to the

site are of an older design but nonetheless are of an appearance typical of business parks. Further to the east of the site, but still within the park, are more modern interpretations of industrial style buildings. The site is visible from a number of viewpoints including from within the park and also from the A329 approach to the east.

8. The proposed building would have a typical industrial design being rectangular in shape and with a low pitched roof. In terms of materials, it is proposed to use a mix of dark grey and silver metallic cladding and grey aluminium window frames on the elevations. Some additional detailing through buff coloured bricks at the office section is also proposed. The roof would be similar in terms of a silver metal finish. It is acknowledged the design would be different to the immediate surroundings but nonetheless would be in keeping with the business park as a whole particularly as there is a mix of materials across the park. As such, no objection is raised with regards to this.
9. It is acknowledged that the size of the building would be substantial, especially in comparison to nearby buildings. This is demonstrated by the proximity to the boundaries, particularly the eastern side adjacent to the A329, as well as the height of the building. Nonetheless, regard should be had to the location of the site in terms of the business park and also the proximity to highway land. Suttons Business Park contains numerous B use buildings and indeed the site is surrounded by business uses. This needs to be balanced against the environmental impact of the proposal. Additionally, the site is bounded by highway land to the east and south due to the A329 being elevated at this point. In reality, the highway land would help contribute to a more appropriate setting due to the extent of vegetation already present. As such, although there would be an immediate change in short term views of the site, and this includes visibility from the A329, the overall harm in planning terms is not considered sufficient to warrant a reason for refusal.

#### **Amenities of adjoining occupiers:**

10. The site is located over 150 metres away from the nearest residential dwelling and there are other uses in-between these and the site. As such, no harmful impact would occur. With regards to the surrounding buildings in the park, the proposal would be located a sufficient distance away to ensure no harmful impact would occur.

#### **Access and Movement:**

11. **Traffic Generation:** A Transport Statement has been submitted with the application and it demonstrates that there will be no significant traffic impact associated with the proposal. Specifically, the number of trips against the previous land use (i.e. the B1 use buildings that were on the site) would fall from 53 two way trips in the AM peak to 21 two way trips; and, 40 two way trips in the PM peak to 18 two trips. Whilst this is based on a full B2 use, the proposal is for a mixed B2/B8 use and, as such, the trips generated would be lower than set out above. The Highways Officer has considered this statement and agrees with its conclusions. However, a Travel Plan is recommended in order to promote sustainable modes of travel to and from the site by condition (13). Additionally, secure, covered cycle storage has been indicated and details can be secured through a condition (7).

12. **Highway Safety and Access:** There is an existing access into the site from Suttons Park Avenue at the north of the site and would be used by lorries to access the service area. The southern access would be moved further south to provide access for cars. The Highways Officer is satisfied that both accesses would be suitable and that it would not have a detrimental impact upon the Suttons Park Avenue junction. Therefore, subject to conditions, no objection is raised (8, 9 10).
13. During construction it is recognised there would be a number of deliveries required. As such, the Highways Officer has requested a Construction Management Statement be controlled by condition (4).
14. **Parking:** The proposal would provide 44 parking spaces for the new building which would be between the standards for a B2 or B8 use. If the site was proposed to be all B2, then the level of parking would be 66 and if all B8 then the parking would be 24 spaces. The provision of parking has been tested against TRICS data which demonstrates this level would be sufficient in relation to the mixed use. Nonetheless this is based on a 50/50 split of floor space between B2 and B8. If the use of the building were to change (in terms of the split between uses) then the parking provision could accommodate a 65/35 split in terms of B2/B8. As such, condition (23) limits the amount of B2 floor space of the building to 65%. The Highways Officer does not raise any objection to this.
15. **Sustainability:** Secure, covered cycle storage is indicated and a Travel Plan would also help ensure other transport modes than the private car would be used. The site is already well served by public transport and is within suitable distance to rail and road links and as such, no objection is raised.

#### **Flooding and Drainage:**

16. Although a Flood Risk Assessment is not specifically required for this development, the applicant has submitted one. The FRA shows that the site is at low risk from flooding being in Flood Zone 1 but to ensure flood risk would not increase as a result of the proposal, a surface water drainage strategy is required. The Council's drainage consultant has considered the FRA and agrees with its recommendations. As such, no objection is raised subject to detailed designs of the surface water drainage strategy being agreed at conditions stage (6).

#### **Landscape and Trees:**

17. The area is clearly dominated by buildings and hard standing however there are areas of landscaping across the business park which do contribute to the character of the area. Additionally, the site is adjacent to highway land that contains a number of trees and it is noted that this helps improve the acceptability of the scheme.
18. Immediately to the west of the site are four trees which also contribute to the area. Whilst these were originally proposed to be removed, it has been agreed that only one will be taken out to allow for a suitable access into the site. Above and beyond this, the submitted plans indicate an additional 22 trees would be planted and, as such, there would be betterment across the site. On balance therefore, the Tree and Landscape Officer has confirmed that the impact in landscape terms would be acceptable subject to conditions (14, 15, 22).

**Environmental Health:**

19. Due to the former uses of the site, the land is potentially contaminated and a report into this has been submitted with the application. The Environmental Health Officer has considered this report and recommended a condition to ensure remediation of the site takes place (5).
20. The proposal requires external lighting and this has been set out in a report and plan demonstrating the lighting would not have a significant impact outside of the site. Given this, and the location of the site within a business park, no objection is raised subject to a condition (17).

**Ecology:**

21. An Ecology Report submitted with the previous application indicated low ecological value of the site and this was considered acceptable. Since then, the site has been cleared of the previous buildings and the ecology report has been updated to reflect this. The report concludes that no substantial changes have occurred but recommends that any works occur outside of the bird nesting season. Subject to a condition, no harmful impact is considered to occur (18).

**Sustainable Design and Construction:**

22. The In line with Policy CC04 of the MDD, proposals for non-residential development over 100 square metres should as a minimum achieve the mandatory BREEAM requirements but seek to achieve higher. The applicant has stated a 'Very Good' rating could be achieved and, as such, a condition requiring this is considered necessary (19).
23. Policy CC05 requires non-residential proposals of more than 1,000 square metres gross floor space to deliver a minimum 10% reduction in carbon emissions through renewable energy or low carbon technology. An Energy Statement has been submitted which states how this would be achieved through the use appropriate fixtures and fittings within the building and through PV solar panels and air source heat pumps outside the building. As such, it is considered necessary to condition that the development is carried out in accordance with this statement (16).

**Archaeology:**

24. The Archaeology Officer notes that previous applications have resulted in substantial archaeological investigations in the area and these have returned limited results. As such, no objection is raised with regards to this application.

**Employment Skills:**

25. Policy TB12 of the MDD requires major applications to demonstrate how they can encourage the use of local skills and employment. The Community Infrastructure Team have advised that due to the size and scale of the proposal, the provision of an employment space could be achieved through the use of a condition requiring an Employment Skills Plan to be agreed at a later stage (12).

**CONCLUSION**

Although the size and scale of the building is substantial, this needs to be balanced against the location of the site in an area where such development is acceptable in principle and encouraged. The proposal would also ensure employment opportunities are provided in the Borough. It is considered that subject to conditions, no harmful impact would occur with regards to residential amenity, highway impacts, landscaping and drainage. As such, the application is considered to accord with planning policy and is recommended for conditional approval.

**CONTACT DETAILS**

<b>Service</b>	<b>Telephone</b>	<b>Email</b>
Development Management and Regulatory Services	0118 974 6428 / 6429	development.control@wokingham.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank