

Agenda Item 59.

ITEM NO: 59

Development Management Ref No	No weeks on day of committee	Parish	Ward	Listed by:
161631	18/13	Shinfield	Shinfield South	Scheme of Delegation

Applicant Location Pulleyn Transport Ltd.
Pulleyn Transport Ltd, Church Lane, Three Mile Cross **Postcode** RG7 1HB

Proposal Full planning application for the demolition of existing office building and erection of a cold store warehouse (B8 use class), with ancillary drivers rest accommodation with associated parking and landscaping, the closing of the existing access with formation of a new means of access.

Type Full
PS Category 3
Officer Graham Vaughan

FOR CONSIDERATION BY Planning Committee on 12th October 2016
REPORT PREPARED BY Head of Development Management and Regulatory Services

SUMMARY

The application is for the erection of a building for use as B8 storage with ancillary office and drivers rest accommodation as well as changes to the site accesses.

Although the site is in designated countryside, the use has been established for some time and therefore further expansion is considered acceptable in principle. Whilst the building would be of a large scale it would be viewed in the context of the site and a landscaping bund would be provided. This would result in more restricted views into the site helping to maintain a rural character.

The changes to the access are considered acceptable in highway terms and to reinforce the existing weight restriction on Church Lane, further alterations to the access have been made during the application.

It is considered all other aspects would be satisfactorily mitigated through the use of conditions and therefore, the scheme is compliant with the development plan and is recommended for conditional approval.

PLANNING STATUS

- Countryside
- Strategic Development Location
- Bat roosts
- Special Protection Area – 7 km
- Groundwater protection zone
- Minerals consultation zone
- Nuclear consultation zone
- Contaminated land consultation zone

RECOMMENDATION

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

A. Conditions and informatives:

Conditions:

1. 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. This permission is in respect of the submitted application plans and drawings numbered '13615-100', '13615-101', '13615-102', '13615-105 Rev D', '13615-106', '13615-107', '13615-108', '13615-109' and '13615-110' received by the local planning authority on 14th June 2016. 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. Before the development hereby permitted is commenced, samples and details of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the building/s shall have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the so-approved details.

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

Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3

4. Prior to the commencement of the development, full details of both hard and soft landscape proposals shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. These details shall include, as appropriate, proposed finished floor levels or contours, means of enclosure, car parking layouts, other vehicle and pedestrian access and circulation areas, hard surfacing materials and minor artefacts and structure (e.g. furniture, play equipment, refuse or other storage units, signs, lighting, external services, etc). Soft landscaping details shall include planting plan, specification (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment), schedules of plants, noting species, planting sizes and proposed numbers/densities where appropriate, and implementation timetable.

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

(and TB06 for garden development)

5. No development or other operation shall commence on site until an Arboricultural Method Statement and Scheme of Works which provides for the retention and protection of trees, shrubs and hedges growing on or adjacent to the site in accordance with BS5837: 2012 has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. No development or other operations shall take place except in complete accordance with the details as so-approved (hereinafter referred to as the Approved Scheme).

b) No operations shall commence on site in connection with development hereby approved (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) until the tree protection works required by the Approved Scheme are in place 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 in writing 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

6. Prior to the commencement of the development a landscape management plan, including long term design objectives, management responsibilities, timescales and maintenance schedules for all landscape areas, other than privately owned, domestic gardens, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The landscape management plan shall be carried out as approved.

Reason: In order to ensure that provision is made to allow satisfactory maintenance of the landscaping hereby approved. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21

7. Prior to the commencement of the development, details of earthworks shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. These details shall include the proposed grading and mounding of land areas including the levels and contours to be formed, showing the relationship of proposed mounding to existing vegetation and surrounding landform. The Earthworks shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and permanently so-retained.

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

8. No development shall take place until the following drainage details have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:
- (i) An assessment of the existing highway drainage ditch to demonstrate that it has the capacity to receive the proposed 5l/s discharge.
 - (ii) BRE365 soakage test result to demonstrate if infiltration is achievable or not.
 - (iii) Groundwater monitoring to give an indication of high ground water levels for the area.
 - (iv) Sizing of SuDS features to cater for events up to and including the 1 in 100 flood event with a 40% allowance for climate change.
 - (v) Drainage strategy drawing indicating the location of SuDS features and corresponding discharge points.
 - (vi) Soffit level of SuDS being at least 1m above high water table levels.
 - (vii) Maintenance program for any SuDS features throughout the lifetime of the development and who will be responsible for the maintenance.

The submitted details shall be implemented as approved and thereafter maintained unless agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the development would not have an adverse impact on flood risk for the surrounding area.

9. Prior to the commencement of development a scheme for generating 10% of the predicted energy requirement of the development from decentralised renewable and/or low carbon sources (as defined in the glossary of Planning Policy Statement: Planning and Climate Change (December 2007) or any subsequent version) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The approved scheme shall be implemented before the development is first occupied and shall remain operational for the lifetime of the development.

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 Plan policy CC05 & the Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document.

10. No development shall commence until a programme of archaeological work (which may comprise more than one phase of work) has been implemented in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: The site is identified as being of archaeological potential. Investigation is required to allow preservation and recording of any archaeological features or artefacts before disturbance by the development. Relevant policy: National Planning Policy Framework Section 12 (Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment) and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy TB25

11. Prior to commencement of the development a detailed scheme to provide wildlife enhancements for grassland, invertebrates, birds, and bats shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The measures contained within the plan shall be implemented 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.

12. Prior to the commencement of the development, a scheme of external lighting shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include location, height, type and direction of light sources and intensity of illumination. The lighting shall be installed in accordance with the approved scheme and shall thereafter be maintained as such.

Reason: In the interests of amenity and highway safety. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 11 (Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment), Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3, CP7

13. Prior to the commencement of the development, a driver management plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The plan shall include details of how drivers using the site shall be made aware of the highway arrangements and site access. The plan shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and shall thereafter be maintained as such.

Reason: In the interests of amenity and highway safety. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 11 (Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment), Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3, CP6

14. No development shall take place, including any works of demolition, 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) loading and unloading of plant and materials,
- (iii) storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development,
- (iv) the erection and maintenance of security hoarding including decorative displays and facilities for public viewing, where appropriate,
- (v) wheel washing facilities,
- (vi) measures to control the emission of dust and dirt during construction,
- (vii) a scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from demolition and construction works.

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

15. Prior to the commencement of the development 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.

16. No part of the building hereby permitted shall be occupied or used until the vehicle parking spaces have been provided in accordance with the approved plans. The vehicle parking spaces shall be permanently retained and remain available for the parking of vehicles at all times

Reason: To ensure adequate on-site parking provision in the interests of highway safety, convenience and amenity. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 and CP6 and MDD Local Plan policy CC07

17. No building shall be occupied until secure and covered parking for cycles has been provided in accordance with the approved drawing(s)/details. The cycle parking/ storage shall be permanently so-retained 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.
18. 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.
19. 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.
20. 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.
21. In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development it must be reported in writing immediately to the Local Planning Authority. Any subsequent investigation/remedial/protective works deemed necessary by the LPA shall be carried out to agreed timescales and approved by the LPA in writing. If no contamination is encountered during the development, a letter confirming this fact shall be submitted to the LPA upon completion of the development.
Reason: To ensure any contamination on the site is remedied to protect the existing/proposed occupants of the application site and adjacent land. Relevant policy: NPPF, Core Strategy policy CP3
22. The new buildings 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
23. No works related to the development hereby approved, including works of demolition or preparation prior to building operations, shall take place other than between the hours of 8.00am and 6.00pm Monday to Friday and 8.00am to 13.00pm on Saturdays and at no time on Sundays or Bank or National Holidays unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority

Reason: To safeguard amenity of neighbouring properties. Relevant policies: NPPF, Core Strategy Policies CP1 and CP3

Informatives:

1. The developer's attention is drawn to the fact that this permission does not authorise the physical construction of the proposed off-site highway works and site access connections to the public highway. A separate legal agreement made with the Council under s.278 of the Highways Act 1980 is required. No work within or affecting the public highway shall commence until the agreement has been completed and the Council, as local highway authority, has approved all construction and installation details together with a programme of works.
2. Any works/ events carried out by or on behalf of the developer affecting either a public highway or a prospectively maintainable highway (as defined under s.87 New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (NRSWA)), shall be co-ordinated and licensed as required under NRSWA and the Traffic Management Act 2004 in order to minimise disruption to both pedestrian and vehicular users of the highway.

Any such works or events, and particularly those involving the connection of any utility to the site must be co-ordinated by the developer in liaison with the Borough's Street Works team (0118 974 6302). This must take place AT LEAST three months in advance of the intended works to ensure effective co-ordination with other works so as to minimise disruption.

3. 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.

4. Adequate precautions shall be taken during the construction period to prevent the deposit of mud and similar debris on adjacent highways. For further information contact the Highway Authority on tel.: 0118 9746000.

PLANNING HISTORY

- F/1998/67515 - Extension to existing warehouse and loading area refused on 6th July 1998. Dismissed at appeal on 6th July 1998
- O/2000/2750 - Outline application for proposed redevelopment of B8 warehousing including modifications to site access refused on 28th February

2001

- O/2000/3042 - Outline application for redevelopment of site for B1 office use refused on 28th February 2001

SUMMARY INFORMATION

Site Area	1.93 hectares
Existing floor space	Offices: 360m ² , driver accommodation: 70m ² , warehouse: 980m ²
Proposed floor space	Offices: 404m ² , driver accommodation: 372m ² , warehouse: 1394m ² (plus 980m ² of existing retained)
Existing parking spaces	26
Proposed parking spaces	33

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Berkshire Archaeology:	No objection subject to condition (10)
Crime Prevention Design Advisor:	No comments received
Environment Agency:	No comments received
Natural England:	No objection
Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue:	No objection
Southern Gas Networks:	No comments received
SSE Power Distribution:	No comments received
Thames Water:	No comments received
WBC Highways	No objection subject to conditions (13 – 20)
WBC Biodiversity	Further information required
WBC Tree and Landscape	No objection subject to conditions (4 – 7)
WBC Environmental Health	No objection subject to condition (21)
WBC Drainage	No objection subject to conditions (8)
WBC Waste Services	No comments received
WBC Community Infrastructure	No comments received

REPRESENTATIONS

Shinfield Parish Council: No objection

Local Members: No comments received

Neighbours: 19 letters of objection received with regards to the following:

- Removal of weight restriction and allowance of lorries to use the whole of Church Lane (Officer Note: the weight restriction is not proposed to be removed nor can it be removed by a planning application. Paragraph 13 - 18 refer)
- Large lorries will be able to use the road with no restriction
- Accidents have occurred on the road and it is near a school with many school children walking along Church Lane
- Lorries ignore the weight restriction and turning ban anyway
- Many vehicles speed along Church Lane
- The road is not in a good state and the pathways are narrow
- Vibration from lorries on the road can be felt in properties including listed buildings
- Increase in pollution from lorries
- Increase in light pollution from warehouse
- Increase in noise pollution from warehouse
- Residents were not consulted (Officer Note: Consultation for the application was

carried out in accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement which is standard for every planning application)

APPLICANTS POINTS

- Expansion and growth of local business
- Improved access safer for lorries and cars
- Landscaping buffer provided

PLANNING POLICY

National Policy	NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
Adopted Core Strategy DPD 2010	CP1	Sustainable Development
	CP3	General Principles for Development
	CP6	Managing Travel Demand
	CP7	Biodiversity
	CP8	Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area
	CP9	Scale and Location of Development Proposals
	CP11	Proposals outside development limits (including countryside)
	CP15	Employment Development
Adopted Managing Development Delivery Local Plan 2014	CC01	Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
	CC02	Development Limits
	CC03	Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping
	CC04	Sustainable Design and Construction
	CC10	Sustainable Drainage
	TB12	Employment Skills Plan
	TB20	Service Arrangements and Deliveries for Employment and Retail Use
	TB21	Landscape Character
Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)	BDG	Borough Design Guide – Section 7 and 8

PLANNING ISSUES

Description of Development:

1. The proposal is for the demolition of the existing office building and the erection of a further warehouse on the site (for B8 storage and distribution purposes) with office and ancillary driver rest accommodation. Due to these multiple uses the building has an irregular shape and would be at most 71.6 metres in length and 36.2 metres in width. The building would have a curved roof with a maximum height of 8.6 metres and a maximum eaves height of 7.2 metres. However, the roof would be stepped down towards the road dropping to 5.6 metres in total. Also proposed is the use of the existing grass area to the front of the site for

parking related to the use of the site and the creation of a new access. This would involve stopping up the existing access.

2. As set out in the submitted Planning Statement, Pulleyn Transport offers temperature controlled storage of pharmaceutical and medical products, foodstuffs and engineering equipment and then transports these to the relevant markets. This is throughout the UK and Europe and therefore road connections and the proximity to the M4 is of substantial benefit to the company. Since moving to the site in 1989, the company has grown in stature to the extent that currently, the storage areas are at full capacity and new contracts are unable to be secured. At the moment, many of the 60 FTE staff are from the local area and although searches for alternative sites in the Borough have been made, no suitable sites have been found due to the specialised requirements of the business. As such, an alternative site would likely mean moving outside of the Borough.

Principle of Development:

3. 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 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.
4. The site is located within designated countryside and therefore is subject to policy CP11 of the Core Strategy. However, the site has been used by Pulleyn for storage and distribution for a substantial time (since 1989) and therefore the use of the site is well established. In this respect, despite not being a typical countryside use, it would be unreasonable in planning terms to resist an expansion of this use in terms of the principle of development. With regards to CP11, the proposal would primarily be located on the existing footprint of a building and contained within the site as whole. Although some expansion into the grassed area to the north of the site would occur, this is not considered excessive and therefore the proposal would accord with criterion 2 of the policy.
5. The proposal would result in increased B use floor space in the Borough which is an aim of policy CP15 of the Core Strategy. However, this policy relates to Core Employment Areas or existing B uses within development limits and is silent on B use floor space outside of development limits. As such, it is considered the NPPF is the most up to date in this respect. The NPPF places an emphasis on supporting a prosperous economy as part of sustainable development and therefore the scheme is considered to be compliant in this respect. Furthermore, the provision of jobs in the local area and contribution towards the economy should be given weight in determining the application. However, it should be noted this is not the only facet of sustainable development.

Character of the Area:

6. Church Lane connects Three Mile Cross to Shinfield and has a predominantly rural character with views to fields shielded by hedgerows along the road edge. Nonetheless, there are established uses along the road and whilst the majority of

buildings are residential dwellings there is also a pub/restaurant, former farm, caravan sales and the application site occupied by Pulleyn Transport. Whilst not a typical countryside or rural land use, the site has been occupied by Pulleyn for some time and therefore has an established impact on the character of the area.

7. The site is in designated countryside but is also within the boundary of the south of the M4 SDL. However it is not in an area allocated for any residential development in the SDL Masterplan. Nonetheless, extensions to Three Mile Cross and Shinfield will have an urbanising impact on the area although it is acknowledged this is at the ends of Church Lane not adjacent to the site and therefore has limited weight. Also attributed limited weight is the introduction of further development near the site; specifically there is an extant permission for a Gospel Hall and Montessori Nursery School south west of the site along Church Lane.
8. The site currently comprises of a large warehouse (split into multiple sections) and an ancillary office building with a large area of hard standing for lorry parking/manoeuvring. Although not currently used by Pulleyn, the 'island' of grass area to the north of the site is owned by Pulleyn. It is acknowledged this area results in the buildings being some distance away from the road at this point and helps contribute towards the rural character of the area. Nonetheless, the site has an established impact and already urbanises the area to a certain extent.
9. The proposal would result in the demolition of the existing ancillary office building and its replacement with a warehouse, office and ancillary driver rest accommodation facility. The building would be large in size and scale and this is due to the requirement for additional storage/warehouse space. The proposal would also result in changes to the access, dedicated parking and substantial change to the grassed island. In itself, it is acknowledged this would have a further urbanising impact on the area, not least because of the sheer scale of the building proposed. Nonetheless, there are material considerations that could outweigh this impact.
10. As has been noted, the site has an established impact. The increase in built form would be viewed in context of the existing buildings and activity that occurs at the moment. The proposal would be similar in size and scale to the existing warehouse and this would in fact prevent views from the west of the site. The building has also been designed to minimise its scale with a step change in the roof levels towards the road. However significant weight is attributed to the landscaping bund that would be provided. This would help prevent views into the site much more than currently occurs and would in part mitigate the increase in built form. Whilst the lack of a view does not justify built form in itself, particularly in designated countryside, the landscaping would nevertheless contribute substantially to the verdant character of the area.

Landscape and Trees:

11. A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment has been submitted which details the impacts on views into the site. It concludes that the changes to the landscape will be relatively minimal and have a short term impact particularly as the building would be viewed in the context of the site as a whole and the existing warehouse. The main impact is the introduction of development in the northern

section of open land adjacent to Church Lane and the LVIA acknowledges this has a more detrimental impact. Nonetheless, a landscaping bund is proposed in this area to mitigate this impact. The Tree and Landscape Officer has considered this and does not raise any objection to the LVIA. Although the site is in countryside and the proposal would create additional built form, the Tree and Landscape Officer also considers that the landscaping bund would be an improvement on the existing situation as currently there are multiple views into the site. Subject to further details of the design of the bund and landscaping, which can be required through a condition (4 and 6) as well as earth works (7), no objection is raised in respect of this.

12. In terms of works to trees it is noted that five category C trees and one category B tree would need to be removed. However, replacements could be agreed through the landscaping scheme and therefore no harm would occur. Furthermore, tree protection methods could be secured through a condition (5).

Access and Movement:

13. Currently there are two accesses onto the site separated by a grassed area. The western access is subject to a 6' 6" width restriction and as a result the eastern access is used by Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) accessing the site. There is also a weight restriction on vehicles above 7.5 tonnes using Church Lane except for access purposes. The restriction is in place for environmental reasons however lorries of a greater weight than the restriction use the road in order to access the Pulleyn site. As a result, HGVs access the site from the Brookers Hill direction and enter using the eastern access. It is noted that some lorries may have ignored the restriction and turned left out of the site under the current arrangement however specific details on this are not clear i.e. if these were Pulleyn operated lorries and if there was a highway reason it occurred such as a blocked road. Currently, both accesses have poor visibility when leaving the site.
14. It is proposed to alter the access arrangement by stopping up both current accesses and forming a new one through the existing grassed area. The new access would essentially be between the two existing accesses which would enable visibility splays appropriate for the road to be achieved. The new access would also be wider to enable lorries to turn into the site safely and off the highway. Additionally, a dedicated car parking area can be provided which enables cars to park separately to moving/turning lorries and also secures motorcycle and cycle provision which is not currently on the site. The alterations to the access and parking provision are considered to have a positive impact given the existing situation.
15. Concern has been raised by residents on a number of highway issues. In particular, that the application would result in the removal of the weight restriction and allow lorries of any weight to use the entirety of Church Lane. The weight restriction is not proposed to be removed and in any case a planning application/permission cannot give authority to do so. Also, that the proposal would result in an increase in the number of movements of lorries and the new access would allow for lorries to enter the site from the west. The submitted Transport Statement sets out that the increase in floor space would result in increased traffic movements and this has been assessed using TRICS data (i.e. a recognised source in traffic generation). This concludes that there would be an

additional 10 trips in the peak AM period and 6 trips in the peak PM period however this would be negligible when compared to the existing transport movements. The Highways Officer has considered this and does not raise any objection.

16. Concern regarding the turning of lorries into and out of the site is also noted and a number of elements are considered relevant. Firstly, the applicant intends to place a 'no turn left' sign at the new access to reinforce the restriction on the road. Secondly, a condition could be used to require training of new drivers about the access restrictions (13). Thirdly, discussions have occurred through the application process to revise the access and limit the ability of a lorry to turn left from the site. Specifically, this would occur by restricting the gradient of the pathway making it much for difficult for a lorry to make the turn. Revised plans will be available for the meeting however it should also be noted that precise details would be agreed as part of the Highways Act and outside the planning application (informative1). As such, it is considered that these elements would all help in preventing lorries from ignoring the restriction in the future although it should be noted that the applicant is not intending to change or remove the restriction.

17. Concerns have also been raised with regards to vibration from lorries and particularly the impact on listed buildings along Church Lane. The Conservation Officer has confirmed that research into this has occurred however it was unable to find that historic buildings were particularly susceptible to this type of traffic-related vibration damage. One of the important factors in this was being able to separate the causes of damage from other aspects such as settlement, thermal expansion or moisture fluctuations. On this basis, it is considered that a reason for refusal could not be substantiated with regards to this. Weight should also be given to the fact that lorries could pass along the road to the site regardless of this application.

18. Ultimately, it is considered the revised access would be an improvement on the existing as it would provide suitable visibility splays for lorries leaving the site. It is also noted that the driver rest accommodation, which already occurs on the site, would be formalised and help reduce car movements associated with the site (as they would not return home between shifts). Furthermore, it is considered there are suitable alternative methods of travel already available near the site including cycle and bus provision. Nonetheless, the Highways Officer has requested a travel plan be provided to encourage greater use of these methods (15).

Residential Amenities:

19. The nearest residential property would be located over 90 metres away and, as such, no harmful impact would occur in terms of overlooking, overbearing or a loss of light.

20. It should also be noted that the proposal would be constructed beyond the existing warehouse and the closest residential properties. As a result there would be an existing barrier in terms of noise and light and the Environmental Health Officer has not objected to the proposal on these points. Nonetheless, an external lighting strategy could be controlled through a condition (12).

Other Issues:

21. *Flooding and Drainage:* The site is within flood zone 1 but over a hectare in size and as such a Flood Risk Assessment has been submitted. This concludes that there would not be a significant impact in terms of flooding due to the potential storage of water and the limiting of discharge to an existing highway ditch. The Drainage Officer does not object to this but requires further information through a condition (8).
22. *Land contamination:* The proposal site and the buildings contained within it are not known to have any contamination issues and therefore the Environmental Health Officer has requested a condition (21) to secure further work only if contamination is found during the works.
23. *Archaeology:* Due to the requirement of some excavation and potential archaeological implications, the Archaeologist has requested a programme of archaeological work. This can be secured through a condition (10).
24. *Ecology:* An ecological walk-over survey has been submitted and concludes that due to the built up nature of the site, there would be minimal impact on protected species. In particular, it the survey considers that bat activity is low and probably occurred some time ago. The Ecology Officer has considered this and has raised concern due to inconclusive data on bats. Further clarification has been sought and will be reported in the meeting. In addition, wildlife enhancements could be secured through a condition (11).
25. *Sustainable design and Construction:* Policy CC04 of the MDD Local Plan requires that all new non-residential development (of more than 100m² gross floor space) should seek to achieve BREEAM requirements. The applicant has stated a 'Very Good' level could be achieved and this could be secured through a condition (22). Additionally, policy CC05 requires proposals of more than 1000m² to demonstrate how they will reduce carbon emissions by 10%. It is considered this could also be secured through a condition (9).
26. *Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):* As the proposal is not for new retail or residential space, it would not be liable for CIL.
27. *Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA):* The site is within 7km of the SPA however as the proposal is not for residential development, it is not considered to result in any additional impact SPA.

CONCLUSION

The site is within designated countryside however it has an established use. Whilst protection of the countryside is important, it would be unreasonable in planning terms to restrict expansion on the basis of the principle of development. Added to this, the expansion would contribute towards the economy and provide employment opportunities.

In terms of the character of the area, which is acknowledged as primarily being rural but in parts eroded by other developments, the proposal would be of a large size and scale. The building has been designed to step the roof height down towards the road however

the size is driven primarily by the warehouse space requirements. Notwithstanding this, material considerations are considered to justify the size of the building in part because there is a building of similar size on the site but also because a landscaping bund would be provided. Although landscaping in itself should not justify development, emphasis is placed on the fact it would be an improvement on the existing situation as views into the site would be limited as a result.

Concerns have been raised on highway grounds due to the impact of the movement of lorries. The proposal would alter the access into the site but this is considered to be an improvement given that it would provide suitable visibility splays. Changes have been made to the layout to reinforce the existing situation where lorries use the Brookers Hill junction with Church Lane. Given this it is considered a reason for refusal on highway grounds could not be substantiated.

Subject to conditions, other issues relating to the site are considered to be acceptable and ensure the proposal accords with the development plan. As a result, the application is recommended for conditional approval.

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