

Agenda Item 73.

Application Number	Expiry Date	Parish	Ward
192420	PPA 15/01/2020	Wokingham Town	Evendons;

Applicant	Mr Philip Glover, Intersurgical Ltd.
Site Address	Unit 1 Molly Millars Lane, Wokingham, RG41 2QZ
Proposal	Full application for the change of use from B8 Warehouse to mixed use of B8, B1a (Offices other than in A2) and B1c (Light Industry within a residential area). Extension of first floor. Increase in ridge height by 1.75m. Installation of 2no. silos, new external doors and solar panels.
Type	Full Planning
PS Category	3
Officer	Senjuti Manna
Reason for determination by committee	Major application, consisting of employment floorspace of more than 1000 sq.m.

FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Planning Committee on Wednesday, 8 January 2020
REPORT PREPARED BY	Assistant Director – Place

SUMMARY
<p>Intersurgical are a global designer, manufacturer and supplier of a wide range of medical devices for respiratory support. The company began in 1982 and relocated to its current global head office at Crane House, Molly Millars Lane, Wokingham in 1997. It currently has approximately 400 employees at its Wokingham site operating from 4 different buildings across Molly Millars Lane.</p> <p>The proposal is for raising the roof of one of the buildings, known as Unit 1 – The Business Centre, to create additional employment floorscape at mezzanine level and change its existing warehouse use to a mixed use comprising of B8 (storage and distribution), B1a (office in association with the business) and B1c (light industry) to expand the company's existing operations. The site falls within the Molly Millars Industrial Estate, which is a defined Core Employment Area in the Core Strategy. The proposal satisfies Policy CP15 of the Core Strategy in terms of providing additional Class B use floorspace. It is also in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework in providing an opportunity for the growth and expansion of the existing business. It is being undertaken in a sustainable location, including with regard to its proximity to public transport. The principle of the development is therefore acceptable.</p> <p>The proposal would not result in an increase of building footprint. It is proposed to raise the roof by 1.8m to include double gables with a connecting valley. Due to its limited increase in height and industrial character of the area with other neighbouring buildings of similar height, the proposal would not have any detrimental impact on the character of the area. Similarly, due to the building's approximately 50m separation from residential properties on Finchampstead Road, the additional 1.8m height would not have any detrimental impact on neighbour amenity.</p> <p>The proposal includes 72 parking spaces which does not meet the Council's parking standards on its own. However, the company, Intersurgical, has 3 other sites across Molly Millars Lane that can provide additional parking which is secured using Car Park Management Plan and Travel Plan conditions. Moreover, Molly Millars Lane is a</p>

sustainable location with readily available public transport and as such it is considered that there is sufficient capacity within the greater Intersurgical Campus to support the current proposal in terms of parking.

There are no objections to the scheme on Trees and Landscape, Ecology, Environmental Health, Drainage and Archaeology grounds. The application is accordingly recommend for approval subject to conditions and legal agreement securing Employment Skills Plan for the reasons set out in this report.

PLANNING STATUS

- Major Development Location
- Core Employment Area
- Overhead cables
- Landfill gas consultation zone
- Contaminated land consultation zone
- Nitrate groundwater consultation zone
- Flood Zone 1
- Bat consultation zone
- Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area (7km zone)
- Farnborough Aerodrome consultation zone
- Wind turbine safeguarding zone
- South East Water consultation zone
- Non-classified road

RECOMMENDATION

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

A. Completion of a legal agreement to secure an Employment Skills Plan (see Condition 7 and Informative 1).

B. Conditions and Informatives:

Conditions:

Timescale

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).

Approved details

2. This permission is in respect of the submitted application plans and drawings numbered 3513/202 (Proposed Ground Floor Plan); 3513/203 (Proposed First Floor Plan wrongly titled as existing site elevations/ sections); 3513/204 (Proposed Elevations wrongly titled as existing site elevations/ sections); 3513/205 (Proposed Elevations and Materials); 3513/207 (Proposed Sections); 3513/208 (Proposed

Silo Elevations); 3513/209 (Proposed Use Class Plan); 3513/211A (Location Plan); Noise Assessment Report dated August 2019; Tree Survey Report (SN/5837-01/12.08) dated 21st August 2019; Transport Assessment Report (6316/TA) dated August 2019; Workplace Travel Plan Report (6316/TP) dated August 2019 and Planning Statement dated August 2019 received by the Local Planning Authority on 11/09/2019; Preliminary ecological Appraisal Report (SPH/ET/PEA-01/08.08) dated 22nd August 2019 received by the Local Planning Authority on 09/10/2019; Supplementary Travel Information received by the Local Planning Authority on 28/11/2019 and drawing numbered 3513/206a (Proposed Site/ Roof Plan) received by the Local Planning Authority on 17/12/2019. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details unless other minor variations are agreed in writing after the date of this permission and before implementation with 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.

External Materials

3. Except where stated otherwise on the approved drawings and application form, the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extension hereby permitted shall be of similar appearance to those used in the existing building, unless other minor variations are agreed in writing after the date of this permission and before implementation 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.

Noise Mitigation

4. Prior to the commencement of the of the development hereby permitted, details of the proposed noise mitigation measures shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. The details shall ensure that all plant, machinery and equipment installed or operated in connection with the carrying out of this permission is so enclosed and/or attenuated so that noise therefrom does not exceed at any time a level of 5dB[A] below the existing background noise level when measured at a point one metre external to the nearest residential or noise sensitive property. The measures are to be implemented prior to the occupation of the building extension, and permanently maintained thereafter.

Reason: To ensure that no nuisance or disturbance is caused to the occupiers of neighbouring properties.

Relevant policy: NPPF Section 15, Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC06.

Construction Management Plan

5. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted, including any works or demolition, a Construction Management Plan is to be submitted to, and

approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The approved Statement shall be adhered to throughout the construction period and shall provide for:

- a) The parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors
- b) Loading and unloading of plant and materials
- c) Storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development
- d) The erection and maintenance of security hoarding including decorative displays and facilities for public viewing, where appropriate
- e) Wheel washing facilities
- f) Measures to control the emission of dust and dirt during construction
- g) A scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from demolition and construction works

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

Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 and CP6.

Protection of Trees

6. a) 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.

Employment Skills Plan

7. Prior to the occupation of the development hereby permitted, an Employment and Skills Plan is to be submitted 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. Alternatively, in lieu of implementing the Employment Skills Plan, the appropriate contribution is to be paid to the local planning authority prior to occupation of the development hereby permitted.

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

Hours of Work

8. No work relating to the construction of 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.

Car Parking Management Plan

9. Prior to the occupation of the development hereby permitted, details of the following shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority:
 - a) Parking Management Plan covering all 4 Intersurgical sites to demonstrate adequate parking is available at all times for all employees.
 - b) A mechanism by which if parking demand rises within the application site (Unit 1, Business Centre), spaces will be made available in other car parks within Intersurgical sites or additional spaces will be provided within the application site.

Parking management plan shall be implemented in accordance to the approved details and shall be permanently maintained.

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 Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC07.

Parking Spaces

10. Prior to the occupation of the development hereby permitted, the parking spaces are to be provided in accordance with the approved plans. The parking spaces shall be permanently maintained 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 Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC07.

Travel Plan

11. Prior to the occupation of the development hereby permitted, a Travel Plan is to 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 9 and Core Strategy policy CP6.

Cycle Parking to be Approved

12. Prior to the occupation of the development hereby permitted, details of secure and covered bicycle storage/ parking facilities 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 9 (Sustainable Transport) and Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3 & CP6 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC07.

Electric Vehicle Charging

13. Prior to first occupation, details of electric vehicle charging within the car park shall be submitted to the Council for written approval. The details as approved shall be installed prior to first occupation, and shall be maintained thereafter, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Council.

Reason: In order to ensure that secure electric vehicle charging facilities are provided so as to encourage the use of sustainable modes of travel.

Relevant policy: NPPF Section 9 and Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3 and CP6 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC07 and Appendix 2 and the Council's Parking Standards Study Report (2011).

Retention of Trees and Shrubs

14. 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.

Bin Storage and Collection Area

15. Prior to the occupation of the development hereby permitted, details of bin storage facilities are to be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The bin storage facilities shall be permanently so-retained and used for no purpose other than the temporary storage of refuse and recyclable materials.

Reason: In the interests of visual and neighbouring amenities and functional development.

Relevant policy: Core Strategy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC04.

No amplification

16. No external sound amplifying equipment shall be installed in or on the premises.

Reason: To safeguard the residential amenities of nearby residents and the area generally from noise and disturbance.

Relevant policy: NPPF Section 15, Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC06.

No Additional Floorspace

17. No additional floorspace including mezzanine floors shall be constructed within Unit 1 Business Centre without prior written permission of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To prevent an over-development of the site and to ensure adequate parking.

Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3 and CP6 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC07

Informatives:

1. Section 106 agreement

This permission should be read in conjunction with the legal agreement under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act dated # January 2020, the obligations in which relate to this development.

2. 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.

3. Travel Plan

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

- a) NPPF Section 9 (Sustainable Transport)
- b) The Essential Guide to Travel Planning (DfT, March 2008)
- c) Delivering Travel Plans Through the Planning Process (DfT, April 2009)
- d) A Guide on Travel Plans for Developers (DfT)
- e) 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>

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. Discussion

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received. This planning application has been the subject of positive and proactive discussions with the applicant in terms of:

- amended plans being submitted by the applicant to overcome concerns relating to highway concerns;

The decision to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF is considered to be a positive outcome of these discussions.

PLANNING HISTORY		
The following applications are relevant to this assessment as it explains the expansion of Intersurgical operations across the Molly Millars Lane sites, including parking arrangements.		
UNIT 1 – BUSINESS CENTRE (Current Application Site)		
Application Number	Proposal	Decision & Date
181859	Full application for the proposed change of use from B8 to B2	Application withdrawn 19 October 2018
F/2008/1203	Rear extension to allow an increase in storage space (Class B8) use (not implemented)	Approved 18 July 2008
F/2004/2761	Change of Use from Class B1 (business) to Class B8 (storage and distribution)	Approved 01 December 2004
22143	Change of Use from storage and distribution to light industrial with ancillary general industrial use for a total maximum area of 1000 square feet	Approved 20 September 1984
20707	Extension of mezzanine for additional office space (not implemented)	Approved 09 February 1984
17152	Light industrial and warehouse buildings in Molly Millars Lane, with Condition 21 limiting the use of Unit 1 to 'Class X (wholesale warehouses or repositories together with ancillary offices'	Approved 07 May 1982
CRANE HOUSE AND REMEHA HOUSE		
Application Number	Proposal	Decision & Date
F/2014/1760	Link between Crane House and Remeha House with new front entrance, revised highway access and 15 new visitor parking spaces	Approved 5 June 2015
F/2008/1202	Rear extension for an increase in Class B8 storage space	Refused 18 July 2008
F/2007/3117	Extension to carpark comprising eight additional spaces at Remeha House (prior to occupation by Intersurgical)	Approved 6 February 2008
F/2005/4107	New mezzanine floor for administration space and Change of Use of part of the warehouse production area (Class B8) to production area (Class B1c)	Approved 27 April 2005
F/2003/0382	New mezzanine floor to form B1(a) office space and change of use of part of existing warehouse space (B8) to production area (B1c) with new external windows and 15 car parking spaces	Approved 24 February 2004

F/2000/1189	Erection of two silos	Approved 2 June 2000
F/1999/69404	New entrance lobby and relocated parking	Approved 17 May 1999
F/1997/65375	Change of Use from Class B8 use To 2015m2 of Class B8 use and 2315m2 of Class B1 use with parking to the rear (retrospective)	Approved 19 January 1999
F/1997/66827	Variation to F/1996/64009 (retrospective)	Approved 9 November 1998
F/1996/64009	Provision of 25 additional parking	Approved 31 January 1997
F/1996/63220	Alterations to exterior of building and parking for 45 car parking spaces	Approved 5 March 1996
F/1995/61194	Enlargement to entrance lobby and 10 car spaces	Details unknown
45102	Exterior cladding and glazing	Refused 20 November 1995
40018	Signage	Approved 5 November 1992
BROOK HOUSE		
Application Number	Proposal	Decision & Date
183208	Full application for the proposed change of use from existing mixed use to Sui Generis mixed use (B1c/B2/B8) to include erection of extension to Brook House, installation of solar panels and two silos, engineering excavation work, ancillary parking and demolition of existing Ready Power building	Approved 13 September 2019
T/1998/68021	Silo for lime storage (temporary)	Approved 26 August 1998
BR 20597	Storage platform	Approved 27 May 1983
BR 17220		Approved 28 August 1981
BR 16521		Refused 3 April 1981
05471	Change of Use of warehouse to factory	Approved 28 October 1976
04724	Warehouse extension	Approved 14 May 1976
03268	Bridge, warehouse and offices (outline)	Approved 2 October 1975
01060	Warehouse and offices (outline)	Approved 8 August 1974
OPTIMUM HOUSE		
Application Number	Proposal	Decision & Date
191094	Full application for change of use of ancillary offices (B8) to a mixed use comprising offices (B1a) with serviced accommodation (C1) with external roof alteration for glazed roof lantern	Approved 04 July 2019
F/2005/4907	Proposed mezzanine floor to B8 storage unit.	Approved 12 July 2005

F/2004/2104	Application for the proposed erection of building for B8 storage and distribution use with associated parking and service areas.	Approved September 2004	08
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SUMMARY INFORMATION	
Site Area	0.64 Hectare
Previous land use(s) and floorspace(s)	B8 Warehouse: 3158 m ²
Proposed floorspace of each use	Mixed use B8 Warehouse: 640 m ² ; B1a Office (other than A2): 1125 m ² ; B1c Light Industrial: 3254 m ² .
Change in floorspace (+/-)	+ 1861 m ²
Number of jobs created/lost	+ 3
Existing parking spaces	72
Proposed parking spaces	72

CONSULTATION RESPONSES	
WBC Drainage	No objections
WBC Environmental Health	No comments received
WBC Highways	Recommended refusal on lack of on-site parking grounds. Detailed analysis of parking provision, sustainable location and travel management plan has been discussed in paragraphs (23 – 25) in the planning issues section below.
WBC Tree & Landscape	Recommended approval subject to condition
WBC Ecology	No objection
Thames Water	No objection

REPRESENTATIONS
<p>Town/Parish Council: No comments received.</p> <p>Local Members: No comments received.</p> <p>Neighbours: 2 letters were received from neighbours objecting to the scheme on following grounds:</p> <p><u>Neighbour amenity:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional mezzanine accommodation would result in overlooking and loss of privacy impacts on residential gardens. • Increase in building height would cause overshadowing. • Noise disturbance from proposed industrial use. <p><u>Officer's note:</u> Neighbouring residential properties are located approximately 50m from the building and as such, an additional 1.8m building height is not considered to have detrimental overshadowing impact. Residential properties are located to the eastern side of the building. No windows are proposed in eastern elevation at first floor level and as such, the proposal will not have any overlooking impact. A condition (no. 13) is included to minimise noise disturbance.</p> <p><u>Highway issues:</u></p>

- The proposal would result in additional traffic and will have negative impact on already congested roads.

Officer's note: The proposal will result in 3 additional employees and as such is not considered to increase volume of traffic. Parking and highway safety issues are discussed in paragraphs (23 – 25) below.

Health and Safety:

- The proposed development would come very close to the overhead power lines which could pose a threat to the stability and security of the lines.

Officer's note: The overhead power cables run approximately 5m from the proposal building to the east. The scheme does not include extension of the building closer to the power line. Increasing the roof height will not result in the building any closer to the power lines than existing.

APPLICANTS POINTS

- The proposal retains an employment use at the application site, thus both retaining, supporting and promoting the second largest employment organisation in Wokingham Town.
- The proposal is development plan policy compliant in terms of development within settlement boundary, core employment area and sustainable location.
- The proposal includes additional area needed for the business. It is achieved by raising the roof of the building to create a mezzanine floor.
- The relatively modest increased ridge would not appear out of scale for the area within the existing context of Molly Millars Lane.
- Proposed installation of two silos to the rear/southern elevation would not appear prominent from the streetscene as they would not project higher than the proposed ridge height.
- The proposal needs to be read as part of the larger Intersurgical business and within the shared parking of 4 sites spread across Molly Millars Lane. It is possible to accommodate parking requirements for 3 additional staff within wider Intersurgical sites.
- There are no changes proposed to existing landscape and proper protection of trees will be incorporated at the time of construction.

PLANNING POLICY

National Policy	NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
	NPPG	National Planning Practice Guidance
Adopted Core Strategy DPD 2010	CP1	Sustainable Development
	CP2	Inclusive Communities
	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
	CP15	Employment Development

Adopted Managing Development Delivery Local Plan 2014	CC01	Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
	CC03	Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping
	CC04	Sustainable Design and Construction
	CC05	Renewable energy and Decentralised Energy Networks
	CC06	Noise
	CC07	Parking
	CC09	Development and Flood Risk
	CC10	Sustainable Drainage
	TB11	Core Employment Areas
	TB12	Employment Skills Plan
	TB20	Service Arrangements and Deliveries for Employment and Retail Use
	TB21	Landscape Character
	TB23	Biodiversity and Development
Borough Design Guide SPD	BDG	Sections 6 and 7

PLANNING ISSUES

Description of Development:

1. The proposal includes expansion of one of the existing buildings of the company "Intersurgical", known as Unit 1, Business Centre, Molly Millars Lane by raising the roof profile by 1.8m to allow for the creation of additional floorspace at mezzanine level. The proposal also includes change of use of the existing building from B8 Warehouse to a mixed use of B8 Warehouse; B1a Offices (other than A2) and B1c Light Industrial that would result in a net increase of 1861 m² of internal floorspace.
2. Moreover, the proposal includes erection of 2 silos to the rear of the existing building.
3. It is proposed to relocate all 86 staffs currently employed at the Crane House to the extended building. The proposal would result in 3 additional members of staff thus employing a total of 89 staffs.

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. Policy CC01 of the MDD Local Plan 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. The site is located within Major Development Location of Wokingham and as such the development should be acceptable subject to assessment of the impact of the development on the character of the area, existing street scene, the amenity of the neighbouring occupiers and highway safety.

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 Policy CP9 of the Core Strategy. This sets out that proposals within development limits will be acceptable in principle, having regard to the service provisions associated with the major, modest and limited categories.
6. As the site is within a major development location and the proposal involves an extension to the existing Class B use, the proposal is acceptable in principle. This includes a consideration of the proposal site's sustainability credentials as it is 40m from the nearest bus stop, 280m from Tesco Supermarket, 860m from Wokingham Town Centre and 1.3km from Wokingham Train Station, which are appropriate walking distances.
7. Policy CP15 of the Core Strategy allows for the redevelopment, refurbishment or minor extension of buildings in employment use where they are in the settlement limits and where there is no net loss of Class B floor space. The proposal would result in a net increase of 1861 m² of Class B floor spaces within the boundaries of the Molly Millars Core Employment Area. The proposal is therefore in accordance with Policy CP15 in terms of providing additional employment floor space within the borough.
8. Similarly, the National Planning Policy Framework has an overriding emphasis for building on a strong, competitive economy, with Paragraph 80 stating that decisions *'should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.'*
9. Intersurgical have been operating from the Molly Millars Lane Headquarters for last 22 years and there have been multiple planning permissions since 1997 relating to building extensions, changes of use and additional car parking areas. The extraction, manufacturing, storage and distribution operations also occur across four separate buildings and the staffing roster has increased consistently and substantially over the years. This demonstrates ongoing growth and the subject application addresses a need for additional floorspace to allow continued expansion of the business. The proposal is therefore in accordance with Policy CP15 and is acceptable.

Character of the Area:

10. Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy states that development must be appropriate in terms of its scale, mass, layout, built form, height and character of the area and must be of high quality design. Section R1 of the Borough Design Guide SPD requires that development contribute positively towards and be compatible with the historic or underlying character and quality of the local area.
11. The application site is located within a predominantly industrial area of Molly Millars Lane with residential properties on Finchampstead Road located along the eastern boundary of the site. It forms part of a larger group of 4 industrial buildings covering operations of Intersurgical, all located in the immediate neighbourhood and to the north and western sides of the application site. The existing building on

site is a large two storey building that is currently being used as a storage and distribution centre (warehouse, user class B8).

12. The proposal is for increasing the height of the existing building by 1.8m with a double gable roof and erection of a mezzanine floor resulting in an additional 1861 m² of Class B floorspace. There is no increase in the existing footprint of the building and external appearance of the building will not be altered other than the additional roof and minor changes to fenestration to the rear section of the building. As such, these operations will not have any significant impact on the existing industrial character of the building and are considered acceptable. Additional 1.8m roof, which would result in 20% increase on the existing building height, would not appear an intrusive feature within the existing street scene since other buildings in the immediate neighbourhood have similar heights. Similarly, minor changes to the rear fenestrations will not impact the character of the building and character of the area.
13. The proposal also includes erection of 2 silos to the rear of the property. Whilst these would be visible from public view points along Finchampstead Road, they will be seen within the wider industrial/ commercial context of Molly Millars Lane and will not appear out of character of the area.
14. The proposal retains existing access and parking arrangements within the site. This is acceptable and as such, the proposal is not considered to have any significant impact on the character of the host building as well as general character of the neighbourhood.

Residential Amenities:

15. Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy aims to protect neighbouring amenity and section R23 of the Borough Design Guide SPD requires that extensions relate to neighbouring properties.
16. Application site is located at the eastern edge of Molly Millars Lane and shares boundary with residential properties along Finchampstead Road to the east. These dwellings are sited approximately 50m from the proposal building with a row of trees and high hedges screening the boundary. Due to the considerable separation distance between the residential properties and the proposal site, a shallow addition of 1.8m in building height is not considered to have any detrimental impact on residential amenities of these properties in terms of overbearing and loss of light.
17. Objections were received from neighbouring properties on overlooking, loss of light and noise disturbance impacts. The proposal does not include any windows at first floor level or above except for one serving a stairwell in the eastern elevation. Because of this reason, no overlooking impact is expected from the proposed development. Moreover, existing boundary vegetation would act as an additional screening and proposed erection of a mezzanine floor will not have loss of privacy impact on neighbouring properties. Similarly, the proposal is not considered to have loss of light impact for the reason explained above.
18. A noise assessment report has been submitted with the current planning application which predicts a noise level of 49dBA to be experienced by the nearest

residential property which is 6dBA higher than permitted noise level. British Standards BS 4142:2014 provides guidance for industrial and commercial noise assessment and states that at nearest noise sensitive receptor (nearest residential property in this instance), noise received from the proposed industrial/ commercial activity should not be more than 5dBA below the average daytime background noise level.

19. Noise levels were measured from existing silos at Crane House and based on these reading, noise levels were predicted for the residential properties at Finchampstead Road. It is stated in the noise assessment report that the average daytime background noise is 48dBA which means that the noise received by residential properties on Finchampstead Road from the silos should not be more than 43dBA at any point of time. Currently, the predicted noise level from the silos is expected to be 49dBA which is 6dBA above the permitted level and hence unacceptable. Whilst noise mitigation measures were mentioned in the noise assessment report, no details have been provided and as such it was not possible to determine at this stage if acceptable noise levels could be maintained at the site. As such, it is considered reasonable to include a condition (no. 4) to secure appropriate noise mitigation measures prior to the commencement of development to minimise noise disturbance to neighbouring properties.

20. The proposal also includes change of use from Class B8 to mixed B1a and B1c with a reduced B8 use. This would result in increased activity and noise within the warehouse with more intensive operations being undertaken. Indeed, the storage and distribution warehouse currently operates with 31 staff members and this is proposed to increase to 89 staff members operating across multiple shifts beginning at 7:30am (43 staff) on weekdays; rolling shifts beginning at 7:00am (19 members) on alternate days and rolling evening shift beginning at 7:00pm (18 members). This will bring about additional noise during the night time and with associated movements of workers and vehicles and lorry movements. It is considered that the noise mitigation measures, as requested by condition 4, would help in minimising noise disturbance caused by additional traffic movement.

21. Similarly, objections were received on noise disturbance arising from loud music emanating from the site. Because of this, it is considered reasonable to include condition no. 15 to minimise noise disturbance from external amplified noise.

22. It is considered that subject to these conditions there are no objections to the proposal on neighbour amenity grounds.

Access and Movement:

Car Parking:

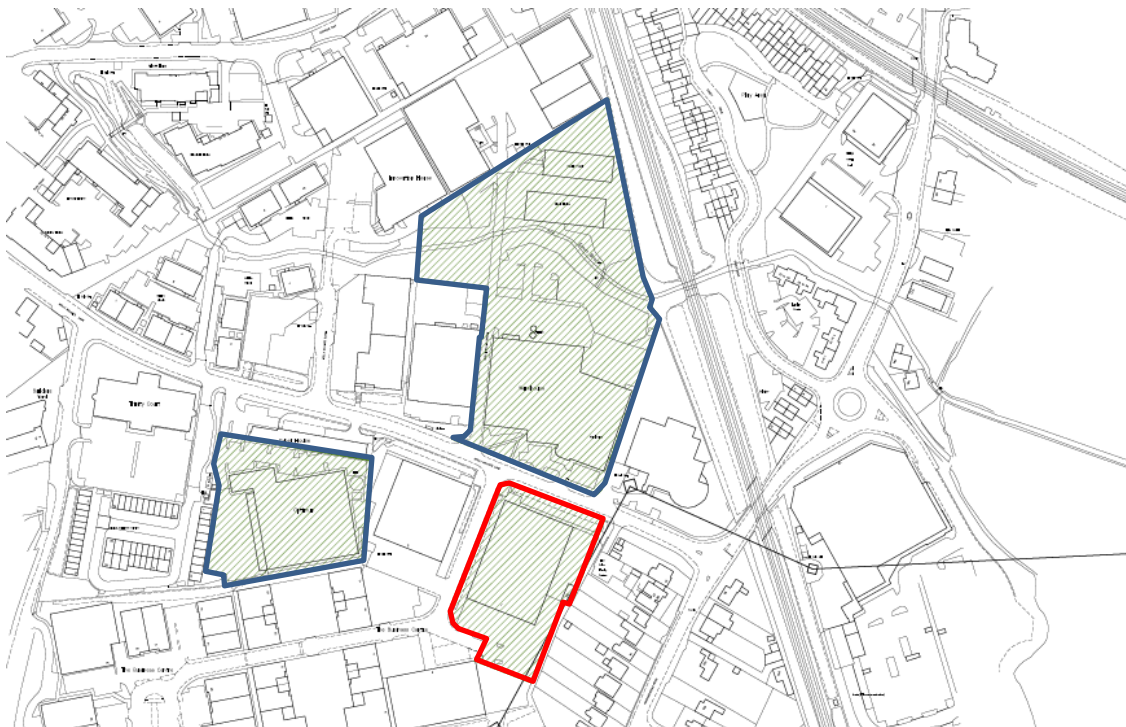
23. Policy CC07 and Appendix 2 of the MDD Local Plan stipulates minimum off street parking standards, including provision for charging facilities. A Use Class plan was supplied and it results in the following proposed parking requirements:

User Class	Area (m²)	Parking Rate	Parking Required
B1	4,379	1 per 25m ² (or 1 per 30m ² above 2500m ²)	146 spaces

B8	640	1 per 25m ² for first 250m ² and 1 per 200m ² thereafter	12 spaces
Total	5,019		158 spaces

24. The proposal is to retain all 72 existing parking spaces within the application site. This on its own does not meet the Wokingham Council’s parking standards and is not acceptable. However, additional information have been provided relating to operation on the site as well as travel plan surveys that state that “Based on the existing shift patterns at Crane House, the anticipated working hours for employees at application site would peak between 07:00 – 07:30 hours at 54 employees”. The on-site car parking has a capacity of 72 cars which is capable of handling the peak hour traffic.

25. Moreover, it is stated in the Transport Assessment report that a recent travel survey conducted amongst Intersurgical employees demonstrated only 64% of the employees drive to work. Intersurgical has 4 different sites across Molly Millars Lane (image below) which have a total of 280 car parking spaces. Total number of staff including additional 3 members resulting from proposed development will be 388. Based on staff travel survey, only 64% of cumulative 388 members, i.e., approximately 250 members of staff are expected to drive. Hence, it has been demonstrated that across 4 Intersurgical sites there is sufficient parking capacity to support the extension of proposed B1 floorspaces. However, it is considered necessary to secure a parking management plan and travel plan for the entire Intersurgical campus covering all 4 sites using pre-occupancy condition (no. 9, 10 and 11) to ensure that sufficient parking is available at all time.



Map showing all Intersurgical sites within Molly Millars Lane

Cycle Parking

26. Policy CC07 and Appendix 2 of the MDD Local Plan stipulates minimum cycle parking standards. One space is required per 150m² – 200m² of floorspace, depending upon the Class B use. The proposal includes an area for cycle parking/storage. However since no details have been provided regarding the cycle store, it is considered reasonable to secure the same using condition no. 12.

Accessibility

27. The ground floor of the warehouse remains accessible and the proposed change of use does not change any obligations.

Construction Management

28. Given the extent of the proposed works, a framework for construction method statement is secured using Condition 5.

Flooding and Drainage:

29. The proposal site is in Flood Zone 1 but close to Emm Brook. The proposal does not include any additional increase in building footprint as well as any additional hardstanding. The car parking area is already established and no additional impermeable area is proposed. As such there is no objection to the scheme on flooding and drainage grounds.

Landscape and Trees:

30. The proposal does not include any additional hard or soft landscapes. There are existing trees surrounding the site and a tree survey report has been submitted to support the application which requires mitigation measures to protect the Root Protection Areas during development. This is secured using a condition (no. 6) and there are no other objections to the proposal on trees and landscape grounds.

Employment Skills

31. Policy TB12 of the MDD Local Plan requires an employment skills plan (ESP) for this development. ESPs use the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) benchmark based on the value of construction. This is calculated by multiplying the total additional floor space (approximately 1,861m²) by £1,025, which is the cost of construction per square metre as set out by Building Cost Information Service of RICS and the methodology as set out in the Council's Employment and Skills Guidance. In this case, it totals £1,907,525.

32. The ESP would require a total of three community skills support jobs and the creation of one job. If for any reason the applicant is unable to deliver the plan or elects to pay the contribution, the employment outcomes of the plan will be borne by the Council at a cost of £3,750. Either way, this is secured by a Section 106 agreement although it remains in draft form.

Other:

33. There are no objections to the proposal with regard to Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area; environmental health; ecology; and archaeology. The subject scheme is acceptable in all other aspects.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010)

34. In determining this application the Council is required to have due regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application and there would be no significant adverse impacts upon protected groups as a result of the development.

CONCLUSION

35. The proposed increase in height of Unit -1 The Business Centre Molly Millars Lane to create additional user Class B1 floorspace is appropriate in the context of the surrounding built form and it includes acceptable provision for parking and access, subject to satisfactory compliance with Conditions 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13. Neighbour amenity is protected by Conditions 8, and 16, and noise mitigation is outlined in Condition 4, amongst other conditions. It also accords with the intent of the NPPF and the Development Plan by allowing for the ongoing expansion and growth of a global company with the head office in Wokingham, thus allowing for the ongoing employment of approximately 400 staff. Based on these reasons it is recommended that the application is approved subject completion of legal agreement securing employment skills plan and conditions included in this report.

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