

Application Number	Expiry Date	Parish	Ward
193047	31/05/2020	Wargrave	Remenham, Wargrave and Ruscombe;

Applicant	Mr Lyon
Site Address	GTO House, Floral Mile, Bath Road, Hare Hatch, RG10 9ES
Proposal	Full application for the proposed erection of a workshop including associated office accommodation and storage following demolition of existing outbuildings.
Type	Full
PS Category	3
Officer	Mark Croucher
Reason for determination by committee	Major application

FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Planning Committee on Wednesday, 13 May 2020
REPORT PREPARED BY	Assistant Director – Place

SUMMARY
<p>The proposed development comprises the demolition of existing buildings on site and the erection of a new workshop building for the service and restoration of motor vehicles (Class B2 use) with ancillary office accommodation and storage use.</p> <p>There will be no significant net gain in built development on the site as existing buildings will be demolished to compensate for the new structure. The proposed building will be single storey and will be situated behind the main building on site. It comprises of a low key design and will not be overly prominent within the landscape. Overall, the proposal will have an acceptable impact on the openness of the Green Belt and is not inappropriate development.</p> <p>The development is considered acceptable in all other respects subject to conditions. 1 – 15 and a legal agreement securing an Employment Skills Plan. The development overcomes the previous reasons for refusal set out in the application ref: 190063 and associated dismissed appeal decision.</p>

PLANNING STATUS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Belt • Countryside • Green Route Enhancement Area (Bath Road)

RECOMMENDATION
<p>That the committee authorise the GRANT OF PLANNING PERMISSION subject to the following:</p> <p>A. Completion of a legal agreement to secure an Employment Skills Plan.</p> <p>B. Conditions and informatives:</p> <p><i>Conditions:</i></p>

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. The use of the site hereby approved shall only be occupied and used by the applicant known as 'GTO Engineering' for the carrying out of vehicle restoration & repairs and other ancillary functions connected to the business and shall at no time be used for any other uses.

Reason: to maintain the openness of the Green Belt, the character and appearance of the area and the amenity of neighbouring residents and uses.

3. Approved Plans

The plans hereby approved are 14013-10-000, 1910 01B, 1910 02, 1910 03, and 1910 04 received by the Local Planning Authority on 15.11.2019 and 20.11.2019.

Reason: for the avoidance of doubt.

Material samples/details

4. 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.

Scheme for landscaping

5. 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: To ensure adequate planting in the interests of visual amenity. Relevant

Tree protection details

6. a) No development or other operation shall commence on site until a scheme which provides for the retention and protection of trees, shrubs and hedges growing on or

adjacent the site in accordance with BS5837: 2012 has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority (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.

Drainage

7. No building hereby permitted shall be occupied until surface water drainage works have been implemented in accordance with details that have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Before these details are submitted an assessment shall be carried out of the potential for disposing of surface water by means of a sustainable drainage system in accordance with the principles set out in Annex F of PPS25 (or any subsequent government guidance), and the results of the assessment provided to the local planning authority. Where a sustainable drainage scheme is to be provided, the submitted details shall:

i) provide information about the design storm period and intensity, the method employed to delay and control the surface water discharged from the site and the measures taken to prevent pollution of the receiving groundwater and/or surface waters;

ii) include a timetable for its implementation; and

iii) provide a management and maintenance plan for the lifetime of the development which shall include the arrangements for adoption by any public authority or statutory

undertaker and any other arrangements to secure the operation of the scheme throughout its lifetime.

Reason: To prevent increased flood risk from surface water run-off.

Ecology

8. Demolition of Building 3 (as identified in the Ecological Appraisal, Rev 5, Clarke Webb Ecology Limited, 26 November 2019) shall not commence until a licence for development works affecting bats has been obtained from the Statutory Nature Conservation Organisation (Natural England) and a copy has been submitted to the council. Thereafter mitigations measures approved in the licence shall be maintained in accordance with the approved details. Should the applicant conclude that a licence for development works affecting bats is not required for all or part of the works the applicant is to submit a report to the council detailing the reasons for this assessment and this report is to be approved in writing by the council prior to commencement of works.

Reason: The building hosts a bat roost which may be affected by the proposals. This condition will ensure that bats, a material consideration, are not adversely impacted upon by the proposed development.

9. No development shall commence until a report detailing the lighting scheme and how this will not adversely affect wildlife has been submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA. The report shall include the following figures and appendices: A layout plan with beam orientation
- a. A schedule of equipment
 - b. Measures to avoid glare
 - c. An isolux contour map showing light spillage to 1 lux both vertically and horizontally and areas identified as being of importance for commuting and foraging bats.
 - d. The approved lighting plan shall thereafter be implemented as agreed.

Reason: To limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on nature conservation in accordance with para 180 of the NPPF.

10. The biodiversity enhancements (bird and bat boxes, native hedgerow and wildflower planting) detailed in section A9 of Appendix 1 of the Ecological Appraisal (Rev 5, Clarke Webb Ecology Limited, 26 November 2019) are to be installed / planted under the supervision of a suitably qualified ecologist. A brief letter report confirming that the biodiversity enhancements have been installed, including a simple plan showing locations and photographs is to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Council.

Reason: To incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments in accordance with paragraph 175 of the NPPF.

Parking and turning space to be provided

11. 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.

Cycle parking to be provided

12. 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: To promote sustainable transport.

Travel Plan

13. 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 promote sustainable transport and minimise the impact of additional vehicle movements.

Environmental Health

14. No development shall take place until details of a scheme (Construction Method Statement) to control the environmental effects of the demolition and/or construction work has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include:-

- (i) the control of noise
- (ii) the control of dust, smell and other effluvia
- (iii) the control of rats and other vermin
- (iii) the control of surface water run-off
- (iv) the proposed method of piling for foundations (if any)
- (v) proposed construction and demolition working hours
- (vi) hours during the construction and demolition phase when delivery vehicles, or vehicles taking materials, are permitted to enter or leave the site.

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of the area.

15. The building hereby approved shall not be occupied for any use until the existing buildings on the site are demolished in accordance with drawing ref: 1910 01B titled 'proposed site plan'.

Reason: To ensure the proposal is appropriate development within the Green Belt.

16. No development shall take place within the application area until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological works, in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Planning Authority.

Reason: The site lies within an area of archaeological potential; the Condition will ensure the satisfactory mitigation of any impacts upon buried archaeological remains accordance with national and local planning policy.

17. Prior to the commencement of development a scheme demonstrating a 10% reduction in carbon emissions through the use of low carbon and/or renewable technology 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 mitigate climate change and contribute to sustainable development.

Informatives:

1. The development hereby permitted is liable to pay the Community Infrastructure Levy. As an affordable housing development a claim for relief can be made. This is a matter for the developer. The Liability Notice issued by Wokingham Borough Council will state the current chargeable amount. Anyone can formally assume liability to pay, but if no one does so then liability will rest with the landowner. There are certain legal requirements that must be complied with. For instance, whoever will pay the levy must submit an Assumption of Liability form and a Commencement Notice to Wokingham Borough Council prior to commencement of development. For more information see - <http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning/developers/cil/cil-processes/>.
2. A Groundwater Risk Management Permit from Thames Water will be required for discharging groundwater into a public sewer. Any discharge made without a permit is deemed illegal and may result in prosecution under the provisions of the Water Industry Act 1991.
3. The requisite Travel plan would need to comply with the latest national and local guidance:
 - 1) NPPF Section 9 (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>
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. Should any bats or evidence of bats be found prior to or during the development, all works must stop immediately and an ecological consultant or the Council's ecologist contacted for further advice before works can proceed. All contractors working on site should be made aware of the advice and provided with the contact details of a relevant ecological consultant.

Application Number	Proposal	Decision
07486	Proposed office extension	Refused: 1978. Appeal allowed.
F/2007/0595	Two storey side extension to an office - for the headquarters building	Refused: 20/04/2007. Appeal allowed.
F/2013/1025	Demolition of Mabey HQ and associated buildings, and proposed erection of 70- bedroom Care Home with 39 parking spaces and vehicular access	Refused 29.08.2013
F/2014/2157	Application for temporary planning permission for 3 years to allow the erection of a modular structure for the use by GTO Engineering for the service repair and restoration of motor vehicles (B2) use	Withdrawn.
F/2014/2768	Proposed demolition of existing buildings and the erection of a two storey extension to existing office building for the service repair and restoration of motor vehicles (Use Class B2) with ancillary accommodation car parking and landscaping	Withdrawn
170107	Full application for the proposed erection of new service, repair and restoration motor vehicle centre (Use Class B2) with ancillary parking and landscaping following demolition of existing buildings.	Refused: 10.01.2018
190063	Full application for the proposed erection of restoration motor vehicle building including associated office and storage space, plus change of use of existing buildings with ancillary parking and landscaping following demolition of existing buildings.	Refused: 08.03.2019. Appeal Dismissed: 13.12.2019.

SUMMARY INFORMATION

For Commercial

Site Area:	2.18 ha.
Previous land use(s) and floorspace(s):	B1 (offices) 2,095 sqm
Proposed floorspace of each use:	B2 (general industrial) 2,095 sqm
Change in floorspace (+/-):	0 sqm
Number of jobs created/lost:	>22
Existing parking spaces:	59
Proposed parking spaces:	59 (not including 4 additional motorcycle & 14 cycle spaces)

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

WBC Biodiversity	No objection subject to condition.
WBC Drainage	No objection subject to condition.
WBC Environmental Health	No objection subject to condition.
WBC Highways	No objection subject to conditions.
WBC Tree & Landscape	No objection subject to conditions.
Thames Water	No objection.
SGN	No objection.

REPRESENTATIONS
Town/Parish Council: Wargrave Parish Council had no objection to this application. Note: a condition is requested requiring a landscaping scheme to maintain a screen when viewed from the A4 to minimise impact.
Local Members: No comments received
Neighbours: No comments received

APPLICANTS POINTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There would be no material volume increase in built development on the site. • It is appropriate development within the Green Belt. • GTO is local business and the development would allow it to continue and thrive. • Landscaping can be incorporated to soften the impact of the development. • The development would improve the appearance of the site. • The development will assimilate into the character and appearance of the area. • There would be no impact on local residents. • The proposal is acceptable in all other aspects.

PLANNING POLICY		
National Policy	NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
Adopted Core Strategy DPD 2010	CP1	Sustainable Development
	CP2	Inclusive Communities
	CP3	General Principles for Development
	CP6	Managing Travel Demand
	CP7	Biodiversity
	CP9	Scale and Location of Development Proposals
	CP11	Proposals outside development limits (including countryside)
	CP12	Green Belt
	CP15	Employment Development
	Adopted Managing Development Delivery Local Plan 2014	CC01
CC02		Development Limits
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 (from all sources)
	CC10	Sustainable Drainage
	TB01	Development within the Green Belt
	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
Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)	BDG	Borough Design Guide – Section 4

<p>PLANNING ISSUES</p> <p>Description of Development:</p> <p>1. The proposed development comprises the demolition of the existing buildings on site and the erection of a new workshop building for the service and restoration of motor vehicles (Class B2 use) with ancillary office accommodation and storage use.</p> <p>Principle of Development:</p> <p>2. 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.</p> <p>3. The application site is within the Green Belt. Paragraph 145 of the NPPF states the construction of new buildings is inappropriate development in the Green Belt apart from the exceptions listed. The relevant exception under consideration for this application is set out in para 145(g). This states the following is not inappropriate development:</p> <p><i>‘limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development.’</i></p> <p>4. The re-development would result in other buildings on site being demolished and it is stated in the submission that the total net volume of development on the site would be unchanged and numerically the same. This is because the demolition of the other existing buildings would compensate/offset for the erection of the proposed building.</p>
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5. Whilst the volume may be the same, the development could still have a greater impact on the Green Belt by reason of a more prominent siting or design. The proposed structure would be situated behind the main building on the site. Whilst the building will spread away from the main building, it will have a lower profile. The proposal will have a relatively simple pitch roof form and elevation detailing. This would assist the building in appearing discrete in the landscape and maintaining the existing main building as the focal point for the site.
6. The proposed development differs from the previously dismissed appeal decision (ref: 190063) in-so-far as being lower in height; reduced in width; comprising of a more sympathetic design and including the demolition of other buildings on the site to compensate for the proposal.
7. Overall, the proposal is considered not to be inappropriate development within the Green Belt because it would not have a greater impact on the Green Belt than the existing development on the site. It therefore complies with para 145 of the NPPF and the exceptions listed.
8. As the development is also within the countryside, it is assessed against policy CP11 of the Core Strategy. The policy states:

'in order to protect the separate identity of settlements and maintain the quality of the environment, proposals outside of development limits will not normally be permitted except where: 1) It contributes to diverse and sustainable rural enterprises within the borough, or in the case of other countryside based enterprises and activities, it contributes and/or promotes recreation in, and enjoyment of, the countryside; and 2) It does not lead to excessive encroachment or expansion of development away from the original buildings;
9. The proposal meets criterion 1 as the development would contribute to a business enterprise in a rural location. The site has been well established to be in commercial use. With regard to criterion 2 of CP11, it is considered that the proposed redevelopment would not lead to excessive expansion away from existing buildings. The reasons for this have been partially set out at the beginning of this section and are also explained in the next section of this report.
10. The NPPF states that planning decisions should enable *'the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings'* – Therefore the sustainable redevelopment of an existing business premise in the countryside is acceptable in principle.
11. The proposed redevelopment would change the use of the site from a B1 (office) use to a B2 (general industrial). The application has been assessed on the basis of GTO occupying the site. The business is a local employer and their general operation is known to principally occur within the buildings. As a B2 use includes a broad spectrum of operations and the entire site would benefit from a change of use, it is considered necessary for a personal condition to be recommended so that the openness of the Green Belt is maintained, along with the character and area of the countryside. Condition 2 is therefore recommended accordingly.

12. It is considered that the principle of re-developing the site is acceptable subject to the material considerations set out elsewhere in this report.

Character of the Area:

13. Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy states that planning permission will be granted for development proposals that *'maintain or enhance the high quality of the environment'*. Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy states planning permission will be granted if development is *'of an appropriate scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area together with a high quality of design'* and contributes *'to a sense of place in the buildings and spaces themselves and in the way they integrate with their surroundings (especially existing dwellings) including the use of appropriate landscaping'*. The supporting text to policy CP3 also sets out that development should be of a high standard of design that can integrate with the character of the area as this is important to achieving sustainable development.

14. The proposed structure would be positioned behind the existing main building on the site. It would replace an existing building with an arced shaped roof and other buildings elsewhere on site. Whilst the structure would have a wider frontage than the main building, it would have a lower profile and would be set back by approximately 26m.

15. The design of the building is relatively simple with brick elevations and limited articulation. It is considered that this is appropriate for the site as it maintains the main building as the focal point for the site. The restrained design also helps the building tie into countryside character of the area, which comprises of other simple rural and horticultural buildings.

16. It is considered that the siting and design of the proposed building would have an acceptable impact on the character and appearance of the area.

Residential Amenities:

17. The proposed use of the site is for B2 usage. There is 1 residential property located to the south west called Mulbery House. The proposed building will be located 120 metres away from this property and will not result in any detrimental impact with regard to overlooking; loss of privacy or over shadowing.

18. With regard to noise and disturbance, the commercial operations are intended to take place within the building. The Environmental Health Team has raised no objection to the proposal with regard to noise and disturbance. As set out above, a personal condition is recommended so that any other B2 use would require planning permission and the impact of that use assessed accordingly.

19. The other neighbouring land uses are commercial and agricultural and it is not considered that the proposed building would impact the amenity of any other neighbouring land uses.

Access and Movement:

20. The development will utilise the same the vehicle access arrangement onto Bath Road as existing, which is not known to have any detrimental safety issues.

21. The existing site has 59 parking spaces and this would not be altered because the level of parking required to serve the new building can be accommodated. An additional 14 cycle parking spaces are proposed to encourage sustainable modes of transport.
22. The proposed quantum of commercial floor space on the site is materially similar to the existing arrangement. The supporting Transport Statement does however state that there would be an increase of staff on the site from 40 to 60. This is marginally different to the application form which states there would be an increase in staff from 36 to 58. Overall, there would be an increase in staff of between 20 – 22 employees.
23. In the morning, the majority of staff arrive on site before the typical highway peak between 0700 and 0800. In the evening, many of the staff will be departing the site during the highway peak hour (1700 to 1800) with a select few working later into the evening. With the increase of staff, this will see circa 50 two-way vehicle movements (50 arriving in the morning peak with 50 departing in the evening peak). The increase of 22 staff would likely generate 17 - 19 of these morning and evening vehicle movements. The council's Highway Engineer has considered this increase and has raised no objections due to the negligible impact.
24. The site is located outside of settlement limits and in an area with limited sustainable public transport links. The Inspector for the previous appeal (ref: 190063) made the same observation while dismissing the appeal.
25. Whilst the previous Inspector considered the site to be poorly located with regard to promoting sustainable travel choices, the development is now volumetrically the same as the existing buildings on site. The increase in staff numbers could occur now given that the overall size of commercial floor space would remain materially similar. In the previous application the increase in size was considered to be 150% and it was this uplift in commercial activity, outside of settlement limits and employment areas that resulted in the objection from the council. This level of commercial intensification is not proposed now.
26. As the amount of commercial volume would be the same as existing, it is considered that the proposed development will not conflict with the sustainable location and transport objectives set out in the development plan.

Flooding and Drainage:

27. The application is for major development therefore a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has been submitted. The site is in Flood Zone 1 where the risk of fluvial flooding is low. The application form states that foul sewage from this development will be into a foul sewer network while surface water runoff will be managed via soakaway. The Drainage Engineer has raised no objection with regard to flooding and drainage subject to condition 7.

Landscape and Trees:

28. The site is located to the north of Bath Road (A4) which is a Green Route Enhancement Area. The site is in the countryside outside of any settlement boundary, and in the Green Belt. It is located within Wokingham District Landscape Character

Assessment Area (WDLCA) H1 'Wargrave-Twyford Arable Chalk Lowlands' with the following typical characteristics;

- Dominated by intensive working arable farmland, including market gardening, defined by extensive field units of no apparent pattern and with no obvious boundary divisions.
- Farmland with strong sense of openness and homogeneity due to the lack of field divisions or vertical elements across the landscape and maintains separation between and setting of settlements
- Views to the wooded knolls at Bowsey Hill create some sense of distant enclosure in an otherwise exposed landscape.
- Transport corridors both road and rail including the A4T and A3032 running through the landscape create a sense of disturbance in an otherwise peaceful landscape.
- Enclave of plant nurseries with their associated car parks along the A4 Bath Road

29. The landscape is considered to have a moderate quality and character due to distinct flat shelving landform. The strategy is to enhance landscape character, and there are management opportunities to improve the condition, intactness and presentation of the farmed landscape without affecting the sense of openness. The overall moderate sensitivity is a result of varied scope for the recreation of landscape elements but within this context there are some highly sensitive elements such as the perceptual open quality of the landscape and its physical contrast to the surrounding hills. Issues include; hedgerow loss, soil erosion and lack of traditional landscape management associated with the loss of small farms. Loss and fragmentation of native deciduous woodland and chalk grassland. Ongoing threat from built development and amalgamation of settlements and suburbanisation of the countryside.

30. The Inspector for the previous dismissed appeal decision stated in the decision letter that, '*the removal of areas of hardstanding and provision of more landscaping would be a benefit of the scheme, but this would not override or compensate for the identified harmful effects.*' A landscaping scheme on the site is secured by recommended conditions 5 and 6.

31. One tree is being removed which is part of group of sycamores. This tree is not visible from the public realm as it is located behind the main building on the site. It is considered that the tree removal can be mitigated given the space on the site for additional planting and landscaping. This is secured by recommended condition 5.

32. The Tree and Landscape Officer has advised that the objection to the previous application was based on the size of the proposed building. Now this is considered acceptable, there are no landscape objections to the application.

33. It is considered that the proposed development will have an acceptable impact and additional landscaping opportunities can be incorporated.

Environmental Health:

34. The application site is mainly located on previously developed land. The Environmental Health Team has considered the proposal and raised no objection

subject to a condition 14. Impacts regarding noise and disturbance have been previously set out in paragraphs 17 – 19.

Ecology:

35. An Ecology Report (Clarke Webb Ecology Limited, November 2019) has been undertaken and details a series of bat surveys carried out in 2012, 2016, with the most recent site walkover update in 2019. The report concludes that the building identified in the report as “Building 3 (B3)” hosts an occasional day roost for an individual soprano pipistrelle bat. The other outbuildings on the site are unlikely to host roosting bats, however, GTO House (which is to be retained) hosts a small maternity roost for common pipistrelle bats and a day roost for brown long-eared bats.
36. The council’s Ecologist has reviewed the proposal and raises no objection subject to conditions 8 - 10 which includes mitigation measures and a licence from Natural England. The application is considered acceptable in ecology terms.

Archaeology:

37. Berkshire Archaeology have advised that there are potential archaeological implications associated with this application as this is a reasonably substantial development within an area of archaeological potential. The Historic Environment Records show find spots of Prehistoric, Roman and Medieval date, recorded during the East Berkshire Archaeological Survey. Although little excavation has been undertaken in the vicinity of the proposal site, the find spots indicate there to be potential for unknown archaeological remains within this area. As such they have advised that condition 16 is recommended to mitigate potential archaeological impacts.

Sustainable Design/Construction:

38. Policy CC04 of the MDD Local Plan states that all new non-residential proposals of more than 100 sqm gross floor space shall at least achieve the necessary mandatory Building Research Establishment Assessment Method (BREEAM) requirements or any future national equivalent. Policy CC05 of the MDD Local Plan states that development for non-residential proposals of more than 1,000 sq m gross floorspace or above must deliver a minimum 10% reduction in carbon emissions through renewable energy or low carbon technology.
39. A Sustainability & Energy Statement has been submitted with the application which states the building can achieve a BREEAM rating of ‘Very Good’ and deliver a 10% reduction in carbon emissions through the use of low carbon and/or renewable technology. Whilst no detailed assessment of how the development would achieve this have been provided, it is considered that this can be secured by recommended condition 17.

Employment Skills:

40. An Employment Skills Plan is required by policy TB12 because it is Major Application. Given the quantum of development, the ESP should secure 1 Job created to be either a job post or an apprenticeship and this may be carried out either during the construction period or after construction is complete as part of normal business

activity. They must also carry out the 3 community skills support activities in addition to this. This will be secured by a legal agreement.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010)

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

There will be no net gain in built development on the site as existing buildings will be demolished to compensate for the new structure. The proposed building will be single storey and will be situated behind the main building on the site. It comprises of a low key design and will not be overly prominent within the landscape. Overall, the proposal will have an acceptable impact on the openness of the Green Belt and is not inappropriate development. The principle objection for the previous application and dismissed appeal decision are therefore considered to be overcome.

The development is also considered to have an acceptable impact with regard to neighbour amenity; highway safety; accessibility; drainage; ecology; environmental health; archaeology and sustainable design and construction.

The development is considered acceptable in all respects subject to the recommended conditions and legal agreement.

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