

# Agenda Item 37.

Application Number	Expiry Date	Parish	Ward
210705	02/08/2021	Wokingham	Evendons

<b>Applicant</b>	LGIM
<b>Site Address</b>	Fishponds Close Wokingham Town RG41 2TZ
<b>Proposal</b>	Full application for the proposed erection of 2 no. industrial buildings (Use Class B2 and B8) comprising a total of 4 no. units together with associated infrastructure, parking and landscaping, following demolition of 2 no. existing industrial buildings.
<b>Type</b>	Full
<b>Officer</b>	Baldeep Pulahi
<b>Reason for determination by committee</b>	Major application (Floorspace over 1000sqm)

<b>FOR CONSIDERATION BY</b>	Planning Committee on Wednesday, 8 September 2021
<b>REPORT PREPARED BY</b>	Assistant Director – Place

<b>SUMMARY</b>
<p>The application site is located off Molly Millars Lane and is within the Fishponds Estate which a defined Core Employment Area in the Core Strategy. The proposal comprises of the demolition of 2no. existing industrial buildings and erection of 2 no. industrial buildings (B2 and B8 use) comprising of total of 4 no. units with 41 car parking spaces and associated landscaping.</p> <p>The proposal satisfies Policy CP15 of the Core Strategy in terms of providing additional Class B Use floorspace. It also accords with paragraph 81 of the National Planning Policy Framework in providing an opportunity for the growth and expansion of the site. It is being undertaken in a sustainable location with close proximity to public transport. Therefore, the principle of development is acceptable.</p>

<b>PLANNING STATUS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Major Development Location</li> <li>• Core Employment Area – Molly Millars Industrial Area</li> <li>• Contaminated Land</li> <li>• Bat Roost Habitat Suitability</li> <li>• Tree Preservation Order – 868/1997</li> <li>• SSSI Impact Risk Zones</li> <li>• Thames Basin SPA Mitigation</li> <li>• Water Utility Consultation Zone</li> <li>• Flood Zone 2 and 3</li> <li>• Historic Flood Zones</li> <li>• Landfill Gas Consultation Zone</li> </ul>

## RECOMMENDATION

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

- a) **A legal agreement to secure an Employment Skills Plan for the site. If the Agreement is not completed within 3 months of the date of this resolution, planning permission will be refused unless the Operational Manager in consultation with the Chairman of the Planning Committee agree to a later date;**
- b) **The following conditions and informatives:**

### **Conditions**

#### 1. Timescale

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

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

#### 2. Approved details

This permission is in respect of the submitted application plans and drawings received by the local planning authority on 01/03/2021 and numbered:

- 19137C4PAVZZDRA0101P2 - Existing Site Plan
- 19137C4PAVZZDRA0200P2 - Schematic Site Sections
- 19137C4PAVZZDRA0201P2 – Highways
- 19137C4PAVZZDRA0202P1 - Existing Site Utilities
- 19137C4PAVZZDRA0700P1 - Site Street Elevation A
- 19137C4PAVZZDRA1000P1 - Existing Floorplan - Building 0718
- 19137C4PAVZZDRA1001P1 - Existing Floorplan - Building 0722
- 19137C4PAVZZDRA1100P1 - Existing Elevations - Building 0718
- 19137C4PAVZZDRA1101P1 - Existing Elevations - Building 0722
- 19137C4PBA00DRA2000P3 - Building A, Proposed Floor Plan Level 00
- 19137C4PBA01DRA2001P3 - Building A, Proposed Floor Plan Level 01
- 19137C4PBAR1DRA3300P2 - Building A, Proposed Roof Plan
- 19137C4PBAZZDRA2100P4 - Building A, Proposed Elevations A and B (Front and Side)
- 19137C4PBAZZDRA2101P2 - Building A, Proposed Elevations C and D (Rear and Side)
- 19137C4PBAZZDRA9000P3 - Building A, 3D Views
- 19137C4PBAZZDRA9200P3 - Building A, Floor Areas GIA and GEA
- 19137C4PBB00DRA2000P4 - Building B, Proposed Floor Plan Level 00
- 19137C4PBB01DRA2001P4 - Building B, Proposed Floor Plan Level 01
- 19137C4PBBR1DRA3300P2 - Building B, Proposed Roof Plan
- 19137C4PBBZZDRA2100P4 - Building B, Proposed Elevations A, B, C and D
- 19137C4PBBZZDRA9000P3 - Building B, 3D Views
- 19137C4PBBZZDRA9200P4 - Building B, Floor Areas GIA and GEA
- 205424700T2 - Proposed External Works
- 20826 - Tree Constraints Plan

and the submitted application plans and drawings received by the local planning authority on 17/03/2021 and numbered:

- 19137C4PAVZZDRA0100P3 - Location Plan
- External Lighting and EV Charging Points Plan

and the submitted application plans and drawings received by the local planning authority on 24/05/2021 and numbered:

- 19137-C4P-AV-ZZ-DR-A-0101\_P5 Sit Existing Topography and Constraints
- 19137-C4P-AV-ZZ-DR-A-0200\_P5 Schematic Site Sections
- 19137-C4P-AV-ZZ-DR-A-0203\_P2 Schematic Site Sections Key Plan
- 19137-C4P-AV-ZZ-DR-A-0500\_P13 Proposed Site Plan
- 20-5424-A-151-T2 Ground Slab and Retaining Wall Details
- Landscape Proposals SF 3063 LL02 Rev B

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 the development is carried out in accordance with the application form and associated details hereby approved.*

### 3. Materials

The materials to be used in the new building are to be in accordance with those specified on the approval drawings and application form.

*Reason: To ensure the appearance of the building is satisfactory. Relevant policy – Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3.*

### 4. Drainage System

No development shall take place until details of the drainage system for the site have been submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA. The details shall include:

1. Calculations demonstrating that there will be no flooding of pipes for events up to and including the 1 in 100-year flood event with a 40% allowance for climate change.
2. Indication of the location and sizing of SuDS features, with the base of any SuDS features located at least 1m above the seasonal high water table level or precautions take to consideration like floodproof attenuation tank.
3. Confirmation from surface water drainage system owner that the connection is accepted, and capacity will be sufficient to which control discharge is proposed.
4. Details demonstrating how any SuDS for this development would be managed throughout the lifespan of the development and who will be responsible for maintenance.

The approved scheme shall be implemented prior to the first occupation of the development and shall be maintained in the approved form for as long as the development remains on the site.

*Reason: This is to prevent increased flood risk from surface water run-off.  
Relevant policy: NPPF Section 14 (Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change,*

*Flooding and Coastal Change), Core Strategy policy CP1 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC09 and CC10.*

5. Groundwater Details

No development shall take place until seasonal groundwater data for the area has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

*Reason: This is to ensure that the tank does not present any issues of uplifting and that groundwater displacements do not increase flood risk in the vicinity of the development, in accordance with NPPF Section 10 (Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change), Core Strategy policy CP1 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC09 and CC10*

6. Landscaping

Planting shall be carried out in accordance with drawing; Landscape Proposals – Phase 2 (SF 3063 LL02 Rev B) dated 24/05/2021, in the first planting and seeding seasons following the occupation of the building(s). Any trees or plants which, within a period of 5 years from the date of the planting (or within a period of 5 years of the occupation of the buildings in the case of retained trees and shrubs) die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species or otherwise as approved in writing by the local planning authority.

*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)*

7. Protection of Existing Trees Etc (Small Sites)

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*

8. Parking and Turning as approved

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

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

9. Cycle parking - details required

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

*Reason: In order to ensure that secure weather-proof bicycle parking facilities are provided so as to encourage the use of sustainable modes of travel. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 9 (Sustainable Transport) and Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3 & CP6 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC07.*

10. Surfacing of Access

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.*

11. Construction Method Statement

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.*

12. Accommodation of construction vehicles and deliveries

No development shall commence until provision has been made to accommodate all site operatives, visitors and construction vehicles loading, off-loading, parking and turning within the site during the construction period, in accordance with details to be submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority. The

provision shall be maintained as so-approved and used for no other purposes until completion of the development or otherwise as provided for in the approved details.

*Reason: To prevent queuing and parking off site, in the interests of highway safety and convenience. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP6*

13. Travel Plan

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 9 (Sustainable Transport) and Core Strategy policy CP6.*

14. Electric Vehicle Charging

Prior to commencement of development, details for Electric Vehicle Charging points serving the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Electric Vehicle Charging points 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 charging of electric vehicles and used for no other purpose.

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

15. Delivery Servicing Plan

Prior to occupation a Delivery and Servicing Plan 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.*

16. Stopping up of Access

Prior to commencement of the development details of the stopping up of access would need 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.*

17. Mix of Uses

The B2 and B8 uses hereby permitted shall be limited to no more than 50% of the floorspace contained within Units 1-4 (as identified on the approved plans)

*Reason: To encourage a mix of uses and to ensure adequate parking to serve the site. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 9 (Sustainable Transport) and Core Strategy Policy CP6.*

18. Bats and Lighting

Prior to occupation, a lighting design strategy for biodiversity for the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The strategy shall integrate the lighting mitigation recommendations given in the bat emergence survey report (Patrick Parsons, ref: CRS/19377a/BES, July 2021) with the external lighting strategy. All external lighting shall be installed in accordance with the specification and locations set out in the strategy and these shall be maintained thereafter in accordance with the strategy. Under no circumstances should any other external lighting be installed without prior consent from the local planning authority.

*Reason: To ensure that bats, a European Protected Species, are not adversely impacted upon as a result of the development.*

19. Ecological Enhancements

Prior to occupation, a strategy for providing bat and bird boxes in line with the recommendations given in section 5.5 of the submitted Preliminary Ecological Assessment and Bat Roost Potential Survey report (Patrick Parsons, ref: B19377 revision 0, November 2020) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Once approved the strategy shall be implemented in full unless otherwise agreed by the local authority in writing.

*Reason: To ensure that the proposal is in accordance with Section 41 NERC Act re. UK Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Species (Species of Principal Importance), and complies with Planning Policies for Wildlife including CP7 of the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy (2010), and the National Planning Policy Framework which requires consideration of the potential biodiversity gains that can be secured within developments*

20. Submission of Scheme (Sound Insulation)

A scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, which specifies the provisions to be made for the control of noise emanating from the site. The scheme shall take into account the proposed uses of each industrial unit and the recommendations made in the submitted Noise Assessment (AEC Report Reference P4243/R01a/RDC version dated 9/4/21). Thereafter, the uses shall not commence until the approved scheme has been fully implemented.

*Reason: To protect the occupants of nearby residential properties from noise.  
Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC06.*

21. Permitted Hours of Use

The industrial buildings hereby permitted shall not operate other than between the hours of 0700 and 1900. No deliveries shall be dispatched or accepted outside these times.

*Reason: To protect the amenity of residents living in the vicinity of the site and to reduce impact on air quality. Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC06.*

22. Decentralised Energy Supply

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 98 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 14 (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.*

23. Hours of Work

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

*Reason: To protect the occupiers of neighbouring 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.*

24. Additional Floorspace

No additional floorspace, including mezzanine floors, shall be constructed within the building/s hereby approved 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 & CP6 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC07*

***Informatives***

1. Changes to the Approved Drawings

The applicant is reminded that should there be any change from the approved drawings during the build of the development this may require a fresh planning application if the changes differ materially from the approved details. Non-material changes may be formalised by way of an application under s.96A Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. Legal Agreement

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

3. 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.

4. Thames Water Sewers

Thames Water would advise that if the developer follows the sequential approach to the disposal of surface water no objections are raised. Where the developer proposes to discharge to a public sewer, prior approval from Thames Water Developer Services will be required.

There are public sewers crossing or close to your development. If you are planning significant work near our sewers, it is important that you minimize the risk of damage. Thames Water will need to check that the development does not limit repair or maintenance activities, or inhibit the services we provide in any other way. The applicant is advised to read the guide working near or diverting our pipes.

5. Additional advertising consent

This permission does not convey or imply any approval or consent that may be required for the display of advertisements on the site for which a separate Advertisement Consent application may be required. You should be aware that the display of advertisements without the necessary consent is a criminal offence liable to criminal prosecution proceedings through the courts

6. Access Construction

The Head of Highways at the Council Offices, Shute End, Wokingham [0118 9746000] should be contacted for the approval of the access construction details before any work is carried out within the highway (including verges and footways). This planning permission does NOT authorise the construction of such an access or works.

7. Travel Plan

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) 103
- 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>
- 6) WBC Transport Plan 3 and Active Travel Plan 2011 – 2026
- 7) WBC Workplace Travel Plan Guidance and Residential Travel Plan Guidance

8. 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 and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF.

<b>PLANNING HISTORY</b>		
<b>Application Number</b>	<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Decision</b>
F/1996/64289	Proposed change of use of building from B8 storage to B1 light industrial use	Approved 24/10/1996

<b>SUMMARY INFORMATION</b>	
Site Area	0.60 hectares
Existing Floor Area	2391 m2
Proposed Floor Area	2803.18 m2
Existing Parking Spaces	17
Proposed Parking Spaces	41
No. of jobs created/lost	No change (maintain 20 existing full-time positions)

<b>CONSULTATION RESPONSES</b>	
WBC Environmental Health	No objections subject to Conditions 20 and 21
WBC Drainage	No objections subject to Conditions 4 and 5
WBC Highways	No objections subject to Conditions 8-17
WBC Economic Prosperity and Place	Legal Agreement
WBC Landscape and Trees	No objections subject to Conditions 6 and 7
WNC Cleaner and Greener	No comments received
WBC Ecology	No objections subject to Conditions 18 and 19
National Grid	No objections
South East Water	No comments received
Southern Gas Networks	No objections
SSE Power Distribution	No objections
Thames Water Utilities Ltd	No objections
Environment Agency	No objections
Crime Design Prevention	No comments received
Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue	No comments received

<b>REPRESENTATIONS</b>	
Wokingham Town Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support for the proposal</li> <li>• Concerns local residents haven't been consulted</li> </ul> <p><i>Officer's comments: Email dated 16/04/2021 was sent to the Town Clerk confirming local residents were consulted on the application on the 17/03/2021 in line with the Council's neighbour consultation guidelines and the Site Notice was displayed at the site on 18/03/2021.</i></p>
Ward Members	No comments received

Neighbours	No comments received
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<b>APPLICANTS POINTS</b>
The proposed development would make efficient and effective use of the site providing industrial units to the surrounding area, providing jobs and business opportunities for smaller businesses such as start-ups etc and also providing redevelopment to the local area.

<b>PLANNING POLICY</b>		
National Policy	<b>NPPF</b>	National Planning Policy Framework
Adopted Core Strategy DPD 2010	<b>CP1</b>	Sustainable Development
	<b>CP2</b>	Inclusive Communities
	<b>CP3</b>	General Principles for Development
	<b>CP4</b>	Infrastructure Requirements
	<b>CP6</b>	Managing Travel Demand
	<b>CP7</b>	Biodiversity
	<b>CP8</b>	Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area
	<b>CP9</b>	Scale and Location of Development Proposals
	<b>CP15</b>	Employment Development
Adopted Managing Development Delivery Local Plan 2014	<b>CC01</b>	Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
	<b>CC02</b>	Development Limits
	<b>CC03</b>	Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping
	<b>CC04</b>	Sustainable Design and Construction
	<b>CC05</b>	Renewable energy and decentralised energy networks
	<b>CC06</b>	Noise
	<b>CC07</b>	Parking
	<b>CC09</b>	Development and Flood Risk (from all sources)
	<b>CC10</b>	Sustainable Drainage
	<b>TB11</b>	Core Employment Areas
	<b>TB12</b>	Employment Skills Plan
	<b>TB15</b>	Major Town, and Small Town/District Centre Development
	<b>TB20</b>	Service Arrangements and Deliveries for Employment and Retail Use
	<b>TB21</b>	Landscape Character
	<b>TB23</b>	Biodiversity and Development
Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)	<b>BDG</b>	Borough Design Guide

**PLANNING ISSUES**

**Description of Development**

1. The proposal is for the erection of 2 no. buildings (Use Class B2 and B8) comprising a total of 4 no. units together with associated infrastructure, parking and landscaping, following demolition of 2 no. existing industrial buildings (Buildings 718 and 722) at Fishponds Close.
2. The proposed buildings will be of a portal frame type construction, with a maximum eaves height of 7.5m for Building A and 6m for Building B. The units will provide two storeys, with a core amenity area located at the ground floor, and office provision at the first floor. A breakdown of the floorspace for each unit is provided in the table below.

<b>Building A</b>	<b>Floorspace</b>
Unit 1	749.55 m2
Unit 2	1207.27 m2
<b>Total</b>	<b>1956.82 m2</b>
<b>Building B</b>	<b>Floorspace</b>
Unit 3	455.05 m2
Unit 4	391.31 m2
<b>Total</b>	<b>846.36 m2</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2803.18 m2</b>

3. The proposal will deliver a total of 41 parking spaces (including accessible and electric vehicle charging spaces) to the front of the building, including two external bin stores, external cycle storage and landscaping.
4. The hours of operation are 07:00-19:00 7 days a week.

**Principle of Development**

5. 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.
6. The site is located within a Major Development Location of Wokingham and as such the development would be acceptable subject to the assessment of the impact of the development on the character of the area, existing street scene, and the amenity of the neighbouring occupiers and upon highway safety.
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 delivers 2803.18m2 of Class B floor space 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. It is also complemented by sufficient car parking in an accessible location and without any detriment to the character of the area.

8. Further to this Paragraph 81 of the National Planning Policy Framework states 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'. The proposal would be in accordance with this requirement.

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

9. 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. Policy TB06 of the MDD Local Plan also states that there should be no significant adverse visual or environmental impact and NR1 of the Borough Design Guide states development should respond to key characteristics and features of the site. NR2-NR12 are also applicable in terms of ensuring a positive entrance, presentation, car park layout, boundary treatments and servicing and appropriate height, roof form and materials that are compatible with the area.
10. The site is located within the Fishponds Road Industrial Estate and is surrounded by various office building and industrial units of varying height and scale. Several of the office buildings within the industrial estate have been granted Prior Approval for the conversion into residential units. Buildings 720 and 721 have been granted planning permission under ref: 201345 for 1no. Self-storage facility and 2no. industrial units.
11. The proposed buildings will be of a portal frame type construction, with a maximum eaves height of 7.5m for Building A and 6m for Building B. The units will provide two storeys, with a core amenity area located at the ground floor, and office provision at the first floor. The proposed buildings are set back from the end of Fishponds Close, opposite the rear service yard of the building facing Fishponds Road and will provide a sufficient area for parking and access including soft landscaping.
12. The proposed buildings will feature a mix palette of materials which are satisfactory and are secured by Condition 3.
13. Due to the proposed building's location within the Core Employment Area, the sufficient separation distances and soft landscaping, the height of the buildings would not be unduly excessive, nor would it adversely detract from the character of the existing industrial estate. On this basis the height of the buildings are considered to be acceptable.
14. The proposed buildings will proposal achieves a contemporary design, built form and appearance that does not adversely detract from the character of the existing industrial estate. It achieves an increase in employment floorspace in a measured manner that is not inconsistent with the desired or likely future character of the area. In this respect, it is acceptable in terms of CP3 and the BDG and no objection is raised.

## **Neighbour Amenity**

15. Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy aims to protect neighbouring amenity and Policy TB20 of the MDD Plan requires that there be no harmful impact on the amenity of adjoining land uses in terms of noise, fumes and disturbance

### Adjoining Industrial/Commercial Buildings

16. The proposal will maintain separation distances in excess of 40m between the proposed buildings (Building A and Building B) and Unit 1-3 Millars Business Centre (located opposite the application site) therefore there is unlikely to be an impact upon the occupiers of these industrial buildings in terms of overlooking, loss of light or overbearingness.

17. There will be a separation distance of 6.5m between Building A and the adjoining industrial building (Meridian Business Centre). This separation distance is akin to the existing relationship on site between the buildings and as the adjoining industrial building is too two storeys high, there is unlikely be a detrimental impact upon the occupiers of this industrial building in terms of overlooking, loss of light or sense of enclosure.

18. There will be a separation distance of 13m between the proposed buildings and Buildings 720 and 721 which are located within the vicinity of the application site. Due to the orientation of Buildings 720 and Building 721 in relation to the application site there is unlikely to be a detrimental impact upon the future occupiers in terms of overlooking, loss of light or overbearingness.

### Alexandra Grange House (nursing home)

19. The neighbouring site to the application site is a nursing home (Alexandra Grange House). The separation distance from the side elevation of Building B to the side elevation (west elevation) of Alexandra Grange House will be a minimum of 10.5m. Due to the orientation of Building B, the separation distance, and scale i.e. Two storeys high in comparison to Alexandra Grange House a three storey building there is unlikely to be a detrimental impact upon the residents of the nursing home in terms of overlooking or overbearingness.

20. In respect of overshadowing impacts, a degree of overshadowing is expected towards the nursing home however it is considered this would not be significantly different to the existing situation between the sites given the orientation of the buildings.

### Residential Dwellings

21. There are residential dwellings located at the rear of the application site at No.1 and No. 2 Oaklands Drive, No.8b Holmes Crescent and No.10 Holmes Crescent.

22. The separation distances (back to back relationship) between the proposed buildings and the residential dwellings are as follows:

- No. 1 Oaklands Drive – 23m
- No.2 Oaklands Drive – 21m
- No. 8b Holmes Crescent – in excess of 30m
- No. 10 Holmes Crescent - in excess of 30m

23. The back to back separation distances between the proposed buildings and the residential dwellings are considered to be acceptable to ensure there is no detrimental overbearing or overlooking impact upon the occupiers of these residential dwellings.
24. In respect of overshadowing impacts, a degree of overshadowing is expected upon the rear most part of the gardens of the residential dwellings; given the proposed buildings will be set in from the rear boundary of the application site and taking into account the back to back separation distances there is unlikely to be a detrimental overshadowing impact upon the habitable rooms of these residential dwellings.

#### Noise break out from units

25. The submitted Noise Assessment identifies that the breakout of noise from the units is likely to be the most significant source that could affect noise sensitive properties in Oaklands Drive and the Alexandra Grange Care Home.
26. The assessment was carried out using typical noise from a motor mechanic workshop but acknowledges that noisier activities are possible in the proposed use classes B1, B2 and B8. The report provides the recommended construction details to provide sufficient acoustic insulation to achieve 8db below the AEC suggested noise limits. The report states that this will need to be reviewed and developed once the occupants and tenants are known. The Council's Environmental Health Officer recommends further assessment before the units are constructed are undertaken to ensure that an appropriate level of sound insulation is provided and to ensure there is no adverse impact on residential amenity. This is to be secured by Condition 19.

#### HGV Noise

27. The assessment carried out is based on lorries delivering to each unit simultaneously. The predicted levels take into account screening provided by the buildings and the existing close boarded fence and concludes that the noise created would be below the limits that AEC propose. As the assessment is based on operating hours of 0700 – 1900, the Council's Environmental Health Officer has advised that deliveries to and from the site are restricted to these times to minimise the risk of disturbance to local residents. This is secured by Condition 20.

#### Plant Noise

28. There are currently no proposals for externally ventilated mechanical services plant.

#### Access and Movement

##### Car Parking

29. Policy CC07 and Appendix 2 of the MDD Local Plan stipulates minimum off street parking standards.
30. The proposal will provide 41 car parking spaces, this is 2 spaces lower than the average between the two land uses. The average parking number is the average between if all the site was B2 (62 spaces) and if all the site was B8 (23 spaces). The average would be 43 (42.5). However, the Council does not have parking standards for mixed B2/B8 sites.

31. The applicant has carried out a parking utilisation exercise based on TRICS data from acceptable sites which does show that there will be spare parking capacity. This is acceptable to the Council's Highways Officers on the basis the mix of units is controlled by a planning condition.

32. In addition, the site is also in close proximity to buses and trains, and a Travel plan will be secured via condition which would encourage use of more sustainable modes. Overall, the development as whole is acceptable to the Council's Highways Officer on the highway and parking aspects.

33. The proposed level of disabled parking based on the Council's Parking standards would be 4 spaces. 5 spaces are proposed which exceeds this standard and is acceptable to the Council's Highways Officer.

34. It is proposed that there will be 8 electric charging bays, no information has been provided if these would be all active or active and passive. The standard for a parking area of this size would be 2 active and 2 passive spaces and details are to be secured via Condition 17.

#### Cycle Parking

35. Policy CC07 and Appendix 2 of the MDD Local Plan stipulates minimum cycle parking standards.

36. The level of cycle parking for employees would be 16 cycle spaces and this is acceptable to the Council's Highways Officer. There will be three areas of cycle parking in close vicinity to the accesses to the buildings which is acceptable, details of the secure storage are to be secured via Condition 9.

#### Access

37. The proposed access would be off Fishpond Close which is an adopted highway and through the existing service yard. This arrangement is acceptable to the Council's Highways Officer.

#### Swept Paths

38. Swept paths for a 10m rigid and a 16.5m articulated lorries have been submitted and the Council's Highways Officer is satisfied the vehicles can manoeuvre safely.

39. The Travel Statement submitted states Units 1 and 2 can be served by an articulated lorry, whilst Units 3 and 4 could only be served by a 10 m rigid lorry. To ensure this is going to be acceptable the Council's Highways Officer has recommended a Delivery and Servicing Plan is implemented. This will be secured via Condition 14.

#### **Flooding and Drainage**

40. Section 10 of the NPPF, Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy and Policies CC09 and CC10 of the MDD requires flooding protection, sustainable drainage methods and the minimisation of surface water flow.

41. Part of the development site close to Molly Millars Lane, is within Flood Zone 2. The proposed buildings are located in flood zone 1 and no objections have been raised by the Council's Drainage Officer on this aspect.



42. Details of the drainage system and SUDs are to be secured via Condition 4 at the request of the Council's Drainage Officer.

#### Groundwater Protection

43. The Environment Agency have commented that if infiltration drainage is proposed, then it must be demonstrated that it will not pose a risk to groundwater quality. Any infiltration SuDS greater than 3m below ground level to be a deep system is generally not acceptable. All infiltration SuDS require a minimum of 1m clearance between the base of the infiltration point and the peak seasonal groundwater levels. All need to meet the criteria set out in the EA Groundwater Protection publication. In addition, they must not be constructed in ground affected by contamination. The groundwater details are secured via Condition 5.

#### **Landscape and Trees**

44. Policy CC03 of the MDD Local aims to protect green infrastructure networks, retain existing trees and establish appropriate landscaping and Policy TB21 requires consideration of the landscape character.

45. A revised Trees and Construction document by Indigo Surveys and dated May 2021 (20826/A3 rev C) has been submitted along with additional section information. Following this submission, a site visit was arranged to assess the trees on the northern boundary and their current growing conditions by the Council's Landscape Officer. It was clear from the site visit that the TPO trees are growing at the top of a steep embankment several metres above the existing concrete surfacing to the rear of the site and therefore it is unlikely that the proposed groundworks required for the new building would have a detrimental impact on the trees.

46. Several trial holes were dug in the location where the corner of Unit 2 comes closest to the tree T14. The findings within the Root Investigation report dated 30<sup>th</sup> July 2021 states there is very limited rooting activity in the area due to the make-up of the ground profile.

47. Following the submission of the revised plans and information as above the Council's Landscape Officer raises no objection to the proposals as it has been shown the TPO trees will not be materially affected by the proposed development (including ground level changes) and can be properly retained.

48. A landscape scheme has been provided to show replacement and additional planting, where several conifers and poor-quality trees are to be removed as part of the proposals. The landscape scheme will provide 17no. native species trees (to be planted) , 254 no. hedge plants (laurel) to be planted to form 50 linear metres of new hedge; 8 existing trees to be retained (identified within the arboricultural report as numbers t11 to 19 inclusive) . The Landscaping Scheme is secured via Condition 6.

#### **Ecology**

49. Policy TB23 of the MDD required the incorporation of new biodiversity features, buffers between habitats and species of importance and integration with the wider greener infrastructure network.

50. This application is supported by a Preliminary Ecological Assessment and Bat Roost Potential Survey report (Patrick Parsons, ref: B19377 revision 0, November 2020). This survey identified some bat roost potential and recommended follow up emergence survey work. This work was undertaken and a further letter Bat Emergence Survey report (Patrick Parsons, ref: CRS/19377a/BES, July 2021) has been submitted.

51. The survey results indicate that it is unlikely that a bat roost is present on site and at risk from the development proposal. The proposed development does look to retain existing mature trees and provide additional trees within the landscaping. In anticipation of the site continuing to be a bat commuting and foraging route, the applicant's ecologist has made recommendations as to the type of external lighting to use. These recommendations were made post the drawing up and submission of the External Lighting Site Plan (KGA (UK) Ltd, drawing number: 5427-KGA-XX-XX-DR-E-300 revision R1). Looking at the luminaire data to accompany this lighting plan, the Council's Ecology Officer states there are conflicts between the proposed floodlights and the applicant's ecologist's recommendations.

52. Therefore, it is recommended that prior to occupation the synthesis of the lighting plans with the mitigation recommendations in the Bat Emergence Survey report are submitted, this is to be secured via Condition 18.

53. The Preliminary Ecological Assessment and Bat Roost Potential Survey report makes recommendations for bird and bat bricks to be included within the structure of the building, although these are not shown on the submitted plans. The Council's Ecology Officer states there is little conflict between providing boxes and any windows or doors. Therefore, as per paragraph 170 of the NPPF, the ecological enhancement measures are to be secured via Condition 19.

### **Employment Skills**

54. Policy TB21 of the MDD Local Plan states proposals for major development should be accompanied by an Employment Skills Plan to show how the development would provide opportunities for training, apprenticeship or other vocational initiatives to develop local employability skills required by developers, contractors or end users of the proposal. This would be secured via a Section 106 Agreement.

### **Sustainable Construction**

55. Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy and the Council's Sustainable Design and Construction SPD requires proposals to maintain or enhance the high quality of the environment through contribution towards sustainable development.

56. In line with these requirements the proposed development incorporates the following sustainability measures which are considered acceptable subject to Building Regulations:

- a) PV Panels installed on roof, directly above office spaces.
- b) Enhanced building fabric
- c) Air permeability
- d) No gas connection
- e) Electric vehicle charge points

57. Furthermore, Policy CC05 of the MDD Local Plan encourages renewable energy and decentralised energy networks, with encouragement of decentralised energy systems and a minimum 10% reduction in carbon emissions for developments in excess of 1000m<sup>2</sup>. This is applicable in this case and in addition to the above sustainability measures, is applied by Condition 21.

#### **Waste Storage**

58. Policy CC04 of the MDD Local Plan requires adequate storage for the segregation and waste. Two bin stores are located towards the front of the buildings within the site which are sufficiently sized.

#### **Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area**

59. Policy CP8 of the Core Strategy states that where development is likely to have an effect on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (TBH SPA), it is required to demonstrate that adequate measures to avoid and mitigate any potential adverse effects are delivered. The subject property is located within 7km of the TBH SPA but the works would not constitute any additional harm and no mitigation is required.

#### **Community Infrastructure Levy:**

60. Being a commercial development, the application is not liable for CIL payments.

#### **Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010)**

61. 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**

62. The proposal will create additional Class B2/B8 floorspace which is appropriate in the context of the surrounding built form and includes acceptable provision for parking and access. The proposal would not have a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the wider area and the nearby residential properties.

63. No harmful impact would occur in regard to drainage, landscape and trees and environmental health therefore it is recommended that the application is approved subject to securing an Employment Skills Plan via legal agreement and the conditions included in this report.

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