

Item No	Application No. and Parish	8/13 week date	Proposal, Location and Applicant
(2)	17/02772/FULC Hampstead Norreys Parish Council	1st December 2017	Change of use of a grain storage building to B8 use class.  The Grain Store, Wyld Court Farm.  Empire State Land Company

To view the plans and drawings relating to this application click the following link:  
<http://planning.westberks.gov.uk/rpp/index.asp?caseref=17/02772/FULC>

**Recommendation Summary:** to **DELEGATE** to the Head of Development and Planning to **APPROVE PLANNING PERMISSION** subject to conditions

**Ward Members:** Councillor Virginia von Celsing

**Reason for Committee Determination:** More than 10 letters of objection

**Committee Site Visit:** Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2018.

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## 1. Relevant Site History

17/00497/FULC	Change of use of a grain storage building to B1/B8 use classes	Withdrawn – 3 July 2017
16/00142/PREAPP	Written Stage one: Change of use of a grain storage building to B1/B8 use classes	Closed - 2016
07/00316/FUL	Change of use of building from agricultural to B8 storage and distribution.	Approved - 10 April 2007
79/11633/ADD	Construction of grain storage building and improvement of access to main road	Approved – 30 October 1979

## 2. Publicity of Application

Site Notice Expired: 1 November 2017  
Latest Neighbour Notification Expired: 15 February 2018

## 3. Consultations and Representations

### 3.1 Consultations

#### **Hampstead Noreys Parish Council**

Object to the application – ‘There are concerns that the B8 category of use has been chosen rather than B1. This is likely to result in a higher volume of HGVs travelling through not just Hampstead Norreys, but several other local villages, passing several schools on the way.

This higher volume of HGVs is likely to negatively impact the nearest neighbours to the site, with constant year-round traffic volumes rather than a high volume only at harvest time as is the current scenario.

An increase in HGVs is likely to have a detrimental impact on the AONB.

Should this application be approved, if it is possible please ensure a condition is placed restricting the use of HGVs to smaller HGVS only.

Should this application be approved, please ensure a condition is placed restricting working hours to between 8am and 6pm in order to minimise the impact of HGVs on the nearest neighbours to the site and on the local residents as a whole.’

**Ashampstead  
Parish  
Council**

Object to the application – ‘The proposed change of use to B8 storage and distribution at the Grain Store, Wyld Court Farm, Hampstead Norreys will undoubtedly lead to a significant increase in the volume of heavy vehicles on the local roads. In particular traffic from the east, using junction 12 of the M4 will be directed by their satnavs through Ashampstead despite our roads being clearly marked as unsuitable for heavy goods vehicles. We know this to be the case as buses travelling to The Living Rainforest at Wyld Court often use the main road through the village despite being advised by its website to use Junction 13 of the M4 as our roads are unsuitable. The road in question is single track in parts of Palmers Hill and Holly Lane, Ashampstead.

It has been suggested that the capacity of the grain store is between 900 and 1000 tonnes which would result in about 35 two-way lorry movements to clear the store. These vehicles tend to travel along the B4009 and have little impact on some of the more unsuitable roads. It is difficult to assess the tractor and trailer movements as it would appear from the site plan that some fields supplying grain to the store can be accessed without travelling on any roads. In any event, the existing farming use would have minimal impact on the local villages and roads in the area.

In addition, it is difficult to see how the occupiers of the site will be able to restrict the size of vehicles visiting and their frequency until it is only they who can deliver both to and from the site. This surely means that the transport statement may be of little value?’

The Parish Council have provided some photographs which are enclosed at **Appendix 1**.

**Yattendon Parish  
Council**

Object to the application.

**Tree Officer**

No objection subject to a planning condition to ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the tree protection measures set out within the supporting arboricultural report.

**Highways**

Following the receipt of an additional transport information, the highways officer recommendation is one of conditional approval. The consultation response is provided in detail further below.

**Environmental  
Health**

No objection subject to details of details of external lighting and hours of operation limited to 07:00 – 19:00 Monday to Friday

07:00 – 13:00 Saturday. Closed on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

## Archaeology

No objection. We have checked the proposed development against the information we currently hold regarding the heritage assets and historic land uses in this area. This evidence suggests that there will be no major impact on any features of archaeological significance.

## 3.2 Representations

Total: 97 Object: 97 Support: 0

**The material planning considerations raised in objection to the application are summarised as follows:**

- The supporting transport statement is inadequate and does not accurately assess the full impact of the proposed development on the village road network.
- The proposal would result in an adverse impact on highway safety within the local village highways infrastructure which is unsuitable to cater for HGV traffic, exacerbating existing highway safety issues/problems for users of the existing schools, pubs, village shop as well as cyclists, horse riders and pedestrians (including school children) travelling along the narrow village roads.
- The proposal would result in an unacceptable increase in traffic generation taking into account cumulative impact with other HGV/farm/car traffic movements.
- Increased noise and disturbance for neighbouring residents/occupiers of the village from HGV movements associated with the proposed use in the early hours of the morning and the night, as well as cumulative noise impact from helicopters and aircraft nearby.
- Increased air pollution from HGV vehicle emissions.
- The entrance to Wyld Court is on a narrow and dangerous bend where the road floods each winter, which already causes problems to vehicles passing through a village.
- The proposal would damage the existing road surfaces which when being repaired cause significant local disruption.
- The proposal would have an adverse impact on the setting of the village Conservation Area status and the AONB.
- The proposal would have an adverse impact on local biodiversity.
- Proposal would conflict with the provisions of local plan policy ENV19 and Core Strategy policy CS9, as well as the overall objectives of the Core Strategy, in that it is not within a sustainable location (outside of any settlement boundary) which would not promote sustainable transport, and would harm the local environment/surroundings and the local highways infrastructure.
- Proposal would include external lighting harming the rural character of the area and local biodiversity.
- The proposal would detract from the amenity of the users of footpath running alongside the grain store by way of increased air pollution associated with HGV traffic.

### *Other comments:*

- If planning committee are minded to support the application, a planning condition should be imposed that requires all HGV traffic to the site to approach and leave from the East, and not through Hampstead Norreys.

- The application site, as it exceeds 500 sq.m, does not benefit from Permitted Development rights that allow conversion to other commercial uses.
- Lack of public consultation on the application.

#### **4 Planning Policy**

4.1 The statutory development plan comprises the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026 and those saved policies within the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 (Saved Policies 2007).

4.2 The policies within the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026) attract full weight. The following policies are relevant to this application:

- ADPP1: Spatial Strategy;
- ADPP5: North Wessex Downs of Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB);
- CS5: Infrastructure Requirements and Delivery;
- CS9: Location and Type of Business Development;
- CS10: Rural Economy;
- CS13: Transport;
- CS14: Design Principles;
- CS16: Flooding;
- CS17: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- CS18: Green Infrastructure;
- CS19: Historic Environment and Landscape Character.

4.3 The policies of the West Berkshire District Local Plan (1991-2006) Saved Policies 2007 attract due weight in accordance with their degree of consistency with the policies of the National Planning Policy Framework. The following saved policies are relevant to this application:

- ENV.19: The Reuse and Adaption of Rural Buildings
- OVS5: Environmental Nuisance and Pollution Control
- OVS6: Noise Pollution
- TRANS1: Meeting The Transport Needs of New Development
- Appendix 5: Parking Provision for New Development

4.5 In addition, the following documents are material considerations:

- West Berkshire Council (SPD) Quality Design (2006)
- West Berkshire Council (SPD) Planning Obligations (2015)
- West Berkshire Council (SPG)
- West Berkshire Council Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule (2015).
- National Planning Policy Framework
- Planning Practise Guidance

#### **5.0 Site Description**

5.1 The application site is located within the open countryside designated as AONB, outside of any defined settlement boundary, approximately 0.5km east of the hamlet of Hampstead Norreys. The site comprises a former grain store of steel portal frame

construction with a floor area of approx. 510 sq.m. The elevations of the store being clad in dark green box profile sheeting.

5.2 The grain store is located within a hard surfaced yard area with a short access way leading off the B4009. A public right of way HAMP/4/1 runs through the site from the B4009 along the access way and yard area into the open countryside to the south. Adjacent to the north-west is a former agricultural building converted to B8 storage use in 2007 under application reference 07/00316/FUL. To the east are a row of lime trees, 2 of which are classified as B1 (moderate quality). To the north, approx. 20m from the grain store are 5 residential dwellings. To the south are a large grouping of trees. The surrounding context is predominantly agricultural.

### 5.3 **Description of Development**

5.4 Planning permission is sought for the change of the use of the grain store from agricultural into B8 use (storage and distribution) with associated works. The building would be subdivided internally into 2 storage units. Unit 1 would be served off the existing access into the building with a replacement roller shutter proposed to the access. Unit 2 would include a new access with new roller shutter to the north-western elevation of the building. The elevations to the building would include 3 new pedestrian emergency exit doors (2 the southwest and 1 to the northeast). The existing hard standing to the yard area would be extended/widened to provide a route to the new building entrance, and additional turning and parking areas. The scheme would also provide 18 off road car parking spaces and 4 'Sheffield' bike stands.

### 6.0 **Community Infrastructure Levy**

6.1 The Council's CIL charging schedule is now in place. As the proposal involves the conversion to B8 use, it is zero rated and therefore no CIL is payable.

### 7.0 **Consideration of the proposal**

7.1 The main issues raised by the proposal are:

- The principle of development;
- Highways matters;
- Character and appearance;
- Impact on neighbouring amenity;
- Other matters;
- Sustainability.

#### 7.2.1 **The principle of development**

7.2.2 Core Strategy Area Development Plan Policy 1 defines a settlement hierarchy for directing new development where it is indicated, for the open countryside, only appropriate limited development will be allowed with a focus on maintaining a strong rural economy amongst other considerations. Core Strategy Policy CS9 seeks to facilitate and promote growth within the District. The policy indicates storage and distribution uses will be directed to the districts defined protected employment areas. Any proposal for such uses outside of these areas/locations will be assessed against compatibility with surrounding uses and potential impacts on

those uses, the capacity and impact on the road network and access by sustainable modes of transport. The policy indicates a range of types and sizes of employment premises will be encouraged throughout the District to meet the needs of the local economy, and the Council will promote the intensification and upgrade of existing vacant premises for business development.

7.2.3 Core Strategy Policy CS10 supports economic growth in rural areas and supports existing small and medium sized enterprises within such areas in order to provide local job opportunities and maintain the vitality of smaller rural settlements.

7.2.4 Saved Local Plan Policy ENV.19 supports the commercial re-use existing buildings in the countryside subject to compliance with the following criteria:

- (a) the form, bulk and general design of the existing buildings are in keeping with their surroundings; and
- (b) the existing buildings are suitable for the proposed new use(s) without needing extensive alterations, rebuilding and/or enlargement; and
- (c) the conversion would not have a detrimental effect on the fabric, character and setting of historic buildings; and
- (d) the conversion respects local building styles and materials; and
- (e) the proposed curtilage of the new development is not visually intrusive or harmful to the amenities of the surrounding countryside; and
- (f) the proposed new use(s) would not generate traffic of a type or amount harmful to local rural roads, or require improvements which would detrimentally affect the character of such roads or the area generally; and
- (g) the proposed new use(s) would not result in material harm to the environmental qualities of the surrounding rural area; and
- (h) the use of the building by protected species is surveyed and mitigation measures are approved by the Council using expert advice.

7.2.5 The NPPF supports economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development. The re-use / conversion of existing buildings and alternative uses should be considered on their merits having regard to market signals and the relative need for different land uses to support sustainable local communities. All types of business and enterprises in rural areas should be supported, including through the conversion of existing buildings, and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses.

7.2.6 Having regard to the above, it is recognised the application site is located outside of any defined settlement or designated employment area and is not highly accessible by sustainable modes of transport which counts against the proposal. However, the proposal involves the re-use of existing vacant building for business development which would support the local economy and promote growth, with potential for local job opportunities in accordance with the overall aims and objectives of Core Strategy policies Area Development Plan Policy 1, CS9, CS10, saved Local Plan policy ENV19 and the NPPF.

7.2.7 Turning to the assessment criteria set out Saved Local Plan Policy ENV19 in relation to the commercial re-use existing buildings in the countryside. The proposal is supported by a structural survey that confirms the building is suitable for the proposed storage use without needing extensive alterations, rebuilding or

enlargement. As set out further below, the form of the proposal would not result in material harm to the surroundings including any heritage assets, it would not result in harm to any protected species and would have an acceptable impact on the local highways infrastructure.

7.2.8 For these reasons, the proposal is considered acceptable in principle subject to the detailed considerations set out below.

### 7.2.9 Highway Matters

7.2.10 Core Strategy Policy CS9 indicates storage and distribution uses will need be assessed against the capacity and impact on the road network and access by sustainable modes of transport. Core Strategy Policy CS13 seeks to ensure proposals include sustainable modes of transport and mitigate any impact on the highways infrastructure. Saved Local Plan Policy ENV.19 indicates proposed new use(s) should not generate traffic of a type or amount harmful to local rural roads, or require improvements which would detrimentally affect the character of such roads. Saved Local Plan Policy Trans1 seeks to ensure development proposals incorporate a range of facilities associated with different transport modes including public transport, walking, cycling and parking provision. In addition, The Councils Parking standards require 1 car parking space per 200m<sup>2</sup> over 235m<sup>2</sup> for B8 use.

7.2.11 The NPPF supports the re-use of existing buildings in rural areas for economic growth. At paragraph 32 it states development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.

7.2.12 The application is supported by a Transport Statement and supporting layout plans that have been carefully considered the Council's Highways Team as follows:

#### 7.2.13 *Precedents:*

7.2.14 Notwithstanding every planning application must be considered on its individual merits, it is recognised that the principle of a B8 storage use within this location has previously been accepted by the Council by the granting of planning permission for the conversion of the adjacent building from agricultural to storage use under application reference 07/00316/FUL on 10 April 2007.

#### 7.2.15 *Proposed Access Arrangements:*

7.2.16 The application site would utilise an existing access way from the B4009. Additional information has been provided to demonstrate visibility splays of 46.4m (west) and 53.6m (east) can be achieved. The splays are considered commensurate with recorded vehicle speeds on the B4009 (following speed survey) and therefore are considered satisfactory by the councils Highways Team. Supporting plans have also been provided that demonstrate satisfactory turning and manoeuvring areas can be accommodated within the site to meet the needs of the development.

7.2.17 The proposed site access arrangements are therefore considered satisfactory to serve the proposed development.



### 7.2.18 *Traffic Generation:*

7.2.19 It is recognised that concerns have been raised over the potential number of trips generated by the proposed development. The Council's Highways Team have carefully considered this matter and advise the building has been operating as a grain store for many years, generating an average trip rate of approximately two trips per day (it is recognised there would be period of more intensive movements during the year). Despite this very low figure, the building has consent to be used in other ways that could generate far larger trip rates, as the machinery/chemical storage, with trips increasing to approximately 16 per day.

7.2.20 The proposed B8 use is anticipated to generate to 13 - 22 trips per day and as such represents a significant increase when compared with its use as a grain store. However, when comparing this potential trip generation of 13 - 22 trips with the building's other consented uses, e.g. machinery/chemical storage – 16 trips, the trip rates are considered to appear comparable.

### 7.2.21 *Impact on the B4009:*

7.2.22 The Highways team indicate whilst the B4009 does not have a weight restriction on it, there are two weight restrictions that exclude access from the east. There is also a weight restriction on the railway bridge at Goring (Oxfordshire). In addition, the steep gradient of Streatley Hill does not deem it as a favourable route for articulated vehicles in addition to the restricted access at the crossroads at the bottom of Hill adjacent to The Bull (PH).

7.2.23 The B4009 between Newbury and Streatley is predominantly rural and maintained to a high standard and is favourable route for local traffic. Generally there is sufficient width for two vehicles to pass safely and forward visibility is deemed sufficient. Where the carriageway width is reduced, such as Aldworth appropriate traffic management measures have been installed such as a priority working system as well as a reduced speed limit. Other settlements including Westridge Green, Hampstead Norreys, Hermitage and Long Lane are all subject to a 30mph speed restriction in accordance with current DFT guidance and the route on a whole has a good safety record. Current records do not indicate a history or trend of personal injury accidents relating to HGV's.

7.2.24 Bowers Farm and Haw Farm to the north of Hampstead Norreys are both large established farms with regular deliveries by HGV's with access only achievable from the B4009 to the south. Given the rural setting, the B4009 is regularly used by large agricultural vehicles, with increased movements expected due to seasonal farming requirements.

7.2.25 The existing highway layout within Hampstead Norreys is considered to be somewhat historic with the route of the B4009 being dictated by existing properties and a dis-used railway bridge crossing. A combination of this and a small area of regular on street parking to the east of the White Hart PH results in traffic speeds being very low.

7.2.26 OGV (all vehicles over 3.5t) vehicle trip rates on the B4009 through Hampstead Norreys are approximately 90 per day (based upon a WBC five day traffic survey taken in March 2016). If the 'worst case scenario' of 22 additional trips are

generated by the proposed development, this would equate to a net increase of 20 trips per day (based upon an existing 2 trips per day for the grain store). Typical OGV proportions of total traffic flows for B8 uses are 20%, thereby of the proposed daily 22 trips, four would be expected to be OGVs. Allowing for the consented average of one or two daily grain lorry trips, this would result in a net increase of 2-3 OGV trips per day.

7.2.27 This increase in OGV trips is equivalent to a net increase of 2.2 – 3.3% (2/90; 3/90). Furthermore, this is taking a robust approach to the trip rates, as it could be argued that the site currently has consent to be used in such a way (such as machinery/chemical storage) that the number of trips could be far more than two per day, which would correspondingly, significantly reduce the net gain in trips.

7.2.28 The proposed development would therefore not result in the creation of significant levels of additional traffic generation within the local highways infrastructure.

*7.2.29 Accident record:*

7.2.30 The local accident history has been interrogated by the Highways Team and the results identify there have been in total two Personal Injury Accidents (PIAs) within 200m of the site access within the most recent five year period, which suggests the access and immediate roads have performed with a good accident record. Furthermore neither of these accidents involved HGVs.

7.2.31 It is recognised that significant concerns have been raised by the local community over the potential unsuitability of the local roads. Consequently, the Highways Team have expanded the search criteria for the accident history and can report the following results. Since the previous application was approved, in 2007, there has been a total of six recorded accidents involving HGVs, all of which were classified with a severity level of 'slight'. Thereby this low level of accidents, i.e. 6 in 10 years involving HGVs, would not justify refusal of the application on the grounds of increased risk of accidents as a result of the proposed development.

*7.2.32 Parking:*

7.2.33 The Council's Parking standards require 1 car space per 200m<sup>2</sup> over 235m<sup>2</sup> for B8 use. The amended plans include 18 car parking spaces and 4 Sheffield cycle stands which would accord with the council standards and ensure there is sufficient parking to meet the needs of the proposed development. The Sheffield stands would also promote the use of sustainable modes of transport.

*7.2.34 Public Rights of Way:*

7.2.35 A public right of way HAMP/4/1 runs through the site from the B4009 along the access way and yard into the open countryside to the south. In terms of pedestrian safety, the right of way would remain open and unimpeded as a result of the proposed development. The proposal would not result in any significant intensification in use of the access way compared to the lawful use of the site therefore whilst there is potential for adverse impact on users from conflict between vehicles and pedestrians, any additional risk from the proposed change of use would be slight. To further improve pedestrian safety, the applicant proposed to

erect a small section of post and rail fence along the southern part of the PROW where it crosses the yard which would be an improvement to the current situation.

#### *7.2.36 Other Highways Matters:*

7.2.37 It is noted representations have been made, if the application is approved, that a routing agreement is secured via planning condition to control the route of commercial traffic accessing the site within the local highways infrastructure. However, is it considered such a condition would not be reasonably enforceable e.g. it would be difficult for the applicant to control where third party deliveries to the site would arrive from.

7.2.38 Concerns have also been raised over potential damage to the local highways infrastructure. In this regard, taking into account the proposal would not result in a substantial increase in traffic generation compared against the lawful use of the site, the risk of excessive damage to the roads associated with the proposed development would not be significant.

#### *7.2.39 Conclusions on Highways matters:*

7.2.40 There are two policy issues that need addressing in terms of highways matters. Firstly whether the site is sustainable and secondly how much weight this factor should be attributed when the site is in a rural location.

7.2.41 The site is recognised to not be highly accessible in terms of access by sustainable modes of transport being remote from any higher order settlements identified within the districts settlement hierarchy with the nearest residential area being the relatively small village of Hampstead Norreys. However, the core strategy, the local plan and the NPPF seek to support rural areas promotes economic development in rural areas through the conversion of existing buildings. Therefore, although the site's location is not considered highly accessible by sustainable modes of transport, the proposal would comply with the overall aims of the planning policy to support economic growth within rural areas.

7.2.42 Para 32 states development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe. As indicated above, the net increase in OGV trips would be, in a worst case scenario, an additional 2 - 3 daily trips. The Highways Team cannot therefore reasonably conclude that an additional 2 - 3 OGV trips, plus the associated remaining trips by cars and light vehicles (that would be approximately 20), would result in a "severe" impact on the local highways infrastructure having regard to the provisions of NPPF paragraph 32. Furthermore, refusal of the application on the grounds of a 'severe' impact on the highways or the location being unsustainable would not be justified.

7.2.43 Local Policy ENV.19 sets out the criteria for the re-use of existing buildings in the countryside. At part (f) this policy states the new use "would not generate traffic of a type or amount harmful to local rural roads, or require improvements which would detrimentally affect the character of such roads or the area generally." The proposal is considered to result, in a worse-case scenario, 2 - 3 OGV additional trips per day and on this basis it is considered the proposal would not have significant adverse impact on the local highways infrastructure.

7.2.44 For the above reasons, whilst the application site is not highly accessible in terms of access by sustainable modes of transport, it is recognised the Council have accepted the principle of B8 use within this location previously and the proposal would accord with plan led policy to support growth within rural areas. In terms of access, traffic generation, risk of accidents and impact on the public right of way, it is considered that the proposal would not have an adverse impact on highway safety and the local highways infrastructure having regard to the provisions of Core Strategy Policies CS9, CS13, Saved Local Plan Policies ENV19 and Trans1 and the NPPF.

#### **7.2.45 Character and Appearance**

7.2.46 The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Core Strategy Policy CS14 indicates new development must demonstrate high quality and sustainable design that respects and enhances the character and appearance of the area. Core Strategy Policy CS19 seeks to protect the historic environment and landscape character of the district. The NPPF supports these aims. Core Strategy Policies CS17 and CS18 require the District's green infrastructure to be protected and enhanced, and the protection of important landscape features. The site lies within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), where this landscape is given the highest level of protection.

7.2.47 Saved Local Plan Policy ENV.19 supports the commercial re-use existing buildings in the countryside having regard to, amongst other considerations, (a) the form, bulk and general design of the existing buildings are in keeping with their surroundings; (c) and (d) the conversion respects local building styles and materials.

7.2.48 The proposal involves the conversion and refurbishment of the existing grain store building. The external alterations to the building are not substantial and relate to the provision of new vehicle and pedestrian doors. Other works include the existing hard standing to the yard area being extended / widened to provide the route to the new vehicle building entrance and the additional turning and parking areas. The new route to the building entrance would involve the loss of one existing lime tree located adjacent to the north-eastern elevation of the building. Additional works include erection of post and rail fence to part of the PROW, demarcation of parking areas and installation of new 4 cycle stands.

7.2.49 The proposed external alterations to the building, given their limited scope, and subject to appropriate colour and finishing materials, would have a minimal impact on the surroundings. The general form of the works to the building would be appropriate in style and materials to the nature of the proposed storage use and existing building construction. The additional hardstanding, demarked parking and turning areas and cycle stands, although would be visible from the B4009 and the PROW, would comprise a modest extension of the existing hard surfacing within the site and the cycle stands would not appear particularly prominent. These elements would be seen within the context of the existing yard area and therefore would not have a significant impact on the appearance of the area.

7.2.50 Parked cars with the yard area associated with the proposed development would be visible from the road and PROW. However, they would be seen within the context of an existing yard area and existing B8 storage building located adjacent. In this

context they would not have a significant impact on the character and appearance of the area. To further mitigate any impact, planning conditions could be imposed that restrict the external storage of goods, materials and equipment within the yard area and the installation of any external lighting.

7.2.51 The proposal would involve the loss of a lime tree that is considered to be of moderate quality. However, given its location close to a row of 7 retained lime trees and 8 horse chestnuts, and woodland to the south of the building, its loss would not have a material impact on the visual amenity of the area. The remaining trees around the site would be retained and protected during construction as set out in the supporting arboricultural report. In addition, the proposal has been considered by the Council's Tree Officer who raises no objection to the proposal.

7.2.52 It is recognised that a Public Right of Way passes through the site where users would experience the proposed use and physical works. However, given users would already experience this from the use of the existing B8 unit, coupled with the potential lawful use of the application site, and the relatively short length of the PROW that would be affected, there would be no significant impact on their amenity.

7.2.53 Overall, the conversion of the building and associated works would conserve the overall landscape and scenic beauty of the AONB, would not result in any wider impact on the wider rural landscape character or the general character and appearance of this rural area. In addition, the impact on existing users of the Public Right of Way would not be significantly adverse. The proposal would therefore accord with the provisions of Core Strategy Policies CS14, CS17, CS18, CS19 Saved Local Plan Policy ENV19 and the NPPF.

#### **7.2.54 Impact on Neighbouring Amenity**

7.2.55 Securing a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings is one of the core planning principles of the NPPF and Core Strategy Policy CS14. Part 2 of the Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Document 'Quality Design' and the Supplementary Planning Guidance on 'House Extensions' seek to protect neighbouring residential amenity. Saved Local Plan Policy OVS5 seeks to protect against pollution and loss of amenity. Saved Local Plan Policy OVS6 seeks to protect against noise pollution including where it would harm the quiet enjoyment of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

7.2.56 There are 5 residential properties located approximately 20m away from the building and are adjacent to the buildings yard area. The proposal has been assessed by the Council's Environmental Health Officer who raises no objection subject to a restriction on the hours of operation and any external lighting. Taking into account the lawful use of the site for grain storage with potentially intensive use during seasonal periods, coupled with the proposal not resulting in a significant increase in vehicular traffic over the lawful use of the site, and subject to the imposition of conditions to control external storage/working in the yard area, lighting and hours of operation, the proposal would have an acceptable impact on neighbouring residential amenity, including any increased air pollution associated with the additional traffic movements, and cumulative impact taking into account existing traffic movements through the village in terms of noise and disturbance.

7.2.57 In addition, having regard to the nature of B8 storage use in terms of noise generation coupled with the existing lawful use, and subject to restrictions on operating hours, the proposal would not unduly harm the amenity of users of the AONB. For these reasons, the proposal would accord with the provisions of Core Strategy Policies CS14, Saved Local Plan Policies ENV19, OVS5, OVS6, SPD 'Quality Design', SPG 'House Extensions' and the NPPF.

#### **7.2.58 Other Matters**

7.2.59 The proposed development is located at distance from any listed buildings or conservation areas such that their settings would be preserved. The Council's Archaeological Officer has assessed the proposal and confirms the proposal is unlikely to have an adverse impact on features of archaeological importance within the site.

7.2.60 For the above reasons, the proposal would therefore not have an adverse impact on any heritage assets in accordance with the provisions of Core Strategy Policy CS19, Saved Local Plan Policy ENV19 and the NPPF.

7.2.61 Given the limited scope of external works, the proposal is unlikely to result in harm to any protected species or biodiversity having regard to the provisions of Core Strategy Policy CS17, Saved Local Plan Policy ENV19 and the NPPF. Precautionary informative notes can be suggested to provide guidance to the applicant in the event of any protected species being identified within the site.

7.2.62 In light of the previous use of the building as a grain store and modest external works including minor resurfacing proposed, the proposal is unlikely to have any significant impact on potential contamination within the site having regard to the provisions of Saved Local Plan Policies ENV19 and OVS5 and the NPPF. Precautionary informative notes can be suggested to provide guidance to the applicant in the event of any contamination being identified within the site.

7.2.63 The proposal would ensure the re-use of an existing building which is considered to be an inherently sustainable approach in accordance with the overall aims and objectives of Core Strategy Policy CS15 and the NPPF.

7.2.64 The proposal would include additional hardstanding but given its modest scale, and taking into account the site is located within Flood Zone 1 (lowest risk of flooding) according to the Environment Agencies Flood Maps, the proposal would not have an adverse impact on the risk of flooding within the site or the locality having regard to the provisions of Core Strategy Policy CS16 and the NPPF.

#### **7.2.65 Sustainability**

7.2.66 The NPPF identifies three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. The policies of the NPPF, taken as a whole, constitute the Government's view of what sustainable development in England means in practice for the planning system. Whilst the proposal is within a location that is not highly accessible by sustainable modes of transport, it would make a contribution to wider social and economic roles of planning, through the conversion of existing premises for business development that would contribute to the local economy within a rural area. With regard to the environmental role contributing to protecting

and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment is fundamental. The impact on the site and surroundings, including the AONB and heritage assets, has been assessed as part of this application, and it is considered that the proposal would not result in material harm to such matters of acknowledged importance. For these reasons, the proposal is considered to be sustainable development.

## 8.0 Conclusion

- 8.1.1 Having regard to the relevant development plan policy considerations and the other material considerations referred to above it is considered that the proposed development would accord with the development plan when considered as a whole and therefore it is recommended that planning permission should be granted subject to the planning conditions set out below.

## 9.0 Recommendation

- 9.1 To **DELEGATE** to the Head of Development & Planning to **APPROVE PLANNING PERMISSION** subject to the following conditions;

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

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved drawings and supporting documentation:

Drawings:

- RAC/7000/01 (location plan)
- RAC/7000/02 (proposed site plan)
- RAC/7000/05 (proposed layout)
- RAC/7000/06 (proposed internal layout plan)
- RAC/7000/07 (proposed elevations)
- RAC/7000/09 (parking plan)
- 8170470/6101 rev.B (visibility splay plan attached to Transport Statement).

Documentation:

- Transport Statement prepared by Glanville
- Structural Survey prepared by Graham Smith Associates
- Arboricultural Report prepared by GHA Trees Arboricultural Consultancy

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3. The use hereby permitted shall not commence until the visibility splays at the approved access have been provided in accordance with drawing number 8170470/6101 rev.B. The land within these visibility splays shall thereafter be kept free of all obstructions to visibility over a height of 1.05 metres above the carriageway level.

Reason: In the interests of road safety. This condition is imposed in accordance with the NPPF and Policy CS13 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026).

4. The use hereby permitted shall not commence until the vehicle parking and/or turning space have been surfaced, marked out and provided in accordance with the approved plans listed under 2. The parking and/or turning space shall thereafter be kept available for parking (of private motor cars and/or light goods vehicles) at all times

Reason: To ensure the development is provided with adequate parking facilities in order to reduce the likelihood of roadside parking that would adversely affect road safety and the free flow of traffic. This condition is imposed in accordance with the NPPF, Policy CS13 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026) and Policy TRANS1 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 (Saved Policies 2007).

5. Prior to their installation, details of the colour and finish of the roller shutters doors and new pedestrian/fire exit doors on the building, and the specification of the hard surfacing areas and details of the post and rail fence adjacent to the Public Right of Way hereby permitted shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed development harmonises with the surroundings and responds to local character. This condition is imposed in accordance with the NPPF and Policies CS14 and CS19 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026) and SPD 'Quality Design' (June 2006).

6. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the recommendations of the approved Arboricultural Method Statement ref: GHA/DS/15560:17 prepared by GHA Trees Arboricultural Consultancy received by the Local Planning Authority on 6 October 2017. The method statement shall be carried out in full, including the implementation, supervision and monitoring of all temporary tree protection and any special construction works within any defined tree protection area.

Reason: To ensure the protection of trees identified for retention at the site in accordance with the objectives of the NPPF and Policies CS14, CS18 and CS19 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026.

7. Prior to their installation, details of any external lighting on the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The external lighting shall thereafter be installed, maintained and operated strictly in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To protect the character and appearance of this rural area designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and to protect neighbouring residential amenity from excessive light pollution in accordance with the objectives of the NPPF, Policies CS14 and CS19 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026, Policies ENV19, OVS5, OVS6 of The West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 (saved policies), SPD 'Quality Design', SPG 'House Extensions' and the NPPF.

8. No works, in association with the use hereby permitted, shall take place outside the following hours:



- 7:00am to 19:00 Mondays to Fridays;
- 7.00am to 13:00pm Saturdays;
- There shall be no working on Sundays or Bank or Public Holidays.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of adjoining land uses and occupiers. This condition is imposed in accordance with the objectives of the NPPF and Policies CS14 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026) and Policies ENV19, OVS5, OVS6 of The West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 (Saved Policies), SPD 'Quality Design', SPG 'House Extensions' and the NPPF.

9. With the exception of the storage of motor vehicles under condition 4 above, there shall be no external storage of material, equipment, vehicles or any other items associated with the use of the building hereby permitted.

Reason: To protect the character and appearance of this rural area designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and to protect neighbouring residential amenity from excessive noise and disturbance in accordance with the objectives of the NPPF and Policies CS14 and CS19 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026, Policies ENV19, OVS5, OVS6 of The West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 (Saved Policies), SPD 'Quality Design', SPG 'House Extensions' and the NPPF.

10. The development hereby permitted shall be used for B8 use only and for no other purposes including any other purposes in Class B of the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking and reacting that order with or without modification.

Reason: In the interests of road safety. This condition is imposed in accordance with the NPPF and Policy CS13 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026).

#### Informative Notes

1. Protected Species
2. Contamination
3. Drainage
4. NPPF

#### Appendix 1 – Photographs provided by Ashampstead Parish Council

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