

EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 11 MAY 2022

Councillors Present: Graham Pask (Chairman), Alan Macro (Vice-Chairman), Jeremy Cottam, Alan Law, Tony Linden, Geoff Mayes, Richard Somner, Keith Woodhams and Graham Bridgman (Substitute) (In place of Ross Mackinnon)

Also Present: Jessica Bailiss (Policy Officer (Executive Support)), Bob Dray (Development Control Team Leader), Gareth Dowding (Principal Engineer (Traffic and Road Safety)), Jon Bowden (Senior Engineer (Drainage)), Michael Butler (Principal Planning Officer), Kim Maher (Solicitor) and Matthew Shepherd (Planning Officer)

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting: Councillor Ross Mackinnon

Councillor(s) Absent:

PART I

3. Minutes

The Minutes of the meetings held on 9th and 30th March 2022 were approved as true and correct records and signed by the Chairman, subject to the following amendment:

Minutes from 9th March 2022, page six, item two – Declarations of Interest: Councillor Geoff Mayes confirmed that he was a member of BBOWT (Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxon Wildlife Trust).

4. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Graham Pask declared an interest in Agenda Items 4(1) and 4(2) but reported that, as his interest was a personal or an other registrable interest, but not a disclosable pecuniary interest, he determined to remain to take part in the debate and vote on the matter. Councillor Pask stated that he would stand down as Chairman for both items, which would be chaired by the Vice-Chairman, Councillor Alan Macro.

All Members of the Committee declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 4(2) but reported that, as their interest was a personal, but not a disclosable pecuniary interest, they were determined to remain to take part in the debate and vote on the matter.

Councillor Graham Pask declared an interest in Agenda Item 4(3) but reported that, as his interest was a personal or an other registrable interest, but not a disclosable pecuniary interest, he determined to remain to take part in the debate and vote on the matter.

5. Schedule of Planning Applications

(1) Application No. & Parish: 20/03028/OUTMAJ - Land at Junction With Bath Road, New Road Hill, Midgham, Reading

(Councillor Graham Pask declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 4(1) by virtue of the fact that he was the Ward Member and therefore knew a considerable number of people who lived in Midgham and Woolhampton and had been canvassed on the item.

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Councillor Pask stated that he was predisposed on the item but had not predetermined it).

(Vice-Chairman, Councillor Alan Macro in the Chair)

The Committee considered a report (Agenda Item 4(1)) concerning Planning Application 20/03028/OUTMAJ in respect of an outline application for the erection of 16 dwellings, including 6 affordable units, with access from Bath Road. Matters to be considered: Access.

Mr Matthew Shepherd (Senior Planning Officer) introduced the report and highlighted the key points.

In accordance with the Council's Constitution, Mr Anthony Fenn, (Midgham) Parish Council representative, Mr Matthew Partridge, objector, Mr Douglas Bond, agent and Councillor Graham Pask, Ward Member, addressed the Committee on this application.

Parish Council Representation:

Mr Fenn in addressing the Committee raised the following points:

- An outline application for 16 dwellings on the site had been refused on 23rd January 2020. The proposed application was considered to be contrary to the current development plan and not deemed an appropriate development in the countryside.
- Midgham Parish Council (MPC) objected to the original application and saw no reason to alter its decision for the resurrected and identical application.
- MPC objected to the application on the following grounds; it was a development in the countryside; it was outside of the settlement boundary and it was an unfortunate example of unwanted urbanisation.
- MPC also objected to the potential inclusion of the site in the West Berkshire Local Plan Review to 2037.
- The two acre green field site was outside of any defined settlement boundary and was adjacent to ancient woodland. The area was currently used as a paddock. There was a Tree Preservation Order on a tree to the east side of the site.
- The south east corner of the site was of special interest in relation to ecological diversity. A significant part of the southern area would be destroyed by the new access to the proposal if approved.
- MPC was concerned that the erection of 16 dwellings would have a detrimental impact upon the ancient woodlands along the west and east boundaries and this formed part of the East Kennet Valley biodiversity opportunity area.
- The Core Strategy required biodiversity assets such as the site in question to be conserved.
- The site was approximately 500 metres from the Woolhampton reed beds and the River Kennet's site for special scientific interest with protected species present.
- The residents of Midgham and Woolhampton were not strangers to the risk and consequences of flooding. There was concern that the development of the site would reduce the natural infiltration and result in a higher risk of flooding to properties nearby.
- MPC was not reassured by the comments raised by Thames Water as they had been unable to determine the waste water infrastructure needs of the application. Thames Water had also failed to identify how the existing water network infrastructure would be able to cope with the needs of the proposal.
- The urbanisation of the greenfield site would have an adverse visual impact on the character of the area.

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- In conclusion there was great concern amongst the residents of Midgham and Woolhampton that increased development would lead to the loss of village identity.

Member Questions to the Parish Council:

Councillor Pask noted that historical flooding had been mentioned and asked Mr Fenn to use his local knowledge to expand on what impact there had been to the area during the 2007 flooding. Mr Fenn confirmed that he had only moved to the area in 2012 but was aware that there had been significant flooding during this time. Councillor Pask stated that he would pursue this point further with Officers.

Councillor Geoff Mayes understood that the sewage works that the development would be added to was located in Station Road and Mr Fenn confirmed this was correct. Councillor Mayes noted that there seemed to be some doubt as to whether it could cope with the additional load and Mr Fenn stated that two local residents had contacted him with this concern.

Objector Representations:

Mr Partridge in addressing the Committee raised the following points:

- He was representing the residents of Woolhampton who unanimously objected to the application.
- There were several points of concern:
 1. Local opinion: alongside the 39 formal objections to the application he stated that he had submitted a petition against the plans, which had accrued almost 150 signatures. The application had received no local support. The site fell under MPC however, would directly impact on Woolhampton. Both Parish Councils had strongly objected to the application.
 2. The proposed development would have a harmful impact on the landscape and character of the area: this was a quote from a previous rejection statement in July 2019 and this point still applied. The village had already accommodated significant development. The substantial development at Reed Gardens by itself contained almost 40 dwellings, many of which were substantial in size. The elevated position of the site at Reed Gardens like the one on question, significantly increased the negative visual impact on the landscape. The proposed development on the western approach would irreversibly change the character of the village forever. It was felt by residents that Woolhampton had already played its part in providing new housing in the immediate area.
 3. Amenity, services and critical infrastructure: Thames Water had not given permission for surface water to be discharged into the public network from the development. Regarding waste water and sewage, the Thames Water system in Woolhampton was over capacity and residents on Station Road had reported issues with the drainage system backing up. There was no detailed plan provided to remedy these issues despite comments from Thames Water on 5th February 2021, which had stated that a detailed drainage strategy should be submitted with the planning application. To date Thames Water's response to the system being over capacity was to send tanker lorries to manually siphon, which had caused disruption. It was queried how the application had reached the decision stage when the stipulation from Thames Water had not been met. It was also queried where the impact assessment was from the Reed Gardens development, which should feed into the proposal. Land slippage affecting properties outside the Reed Gardens development had been reported due to the issues with land retention on such a gradient, similar to the site in question. Excess water run-off from the A4 had been reported.

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Infrastructure in Woolhampton was already over capacity and this was not addressed as part of the proposal.

4. Biodiversity impact: As outlined in one of the rejection points to the previous application, the impact on biodiversity would be significant. Policy CS17 required biodiversity assets to be conserved and enhanced. A senior planning and biodiversity officer at the wildlife trust, who had been consulted by one of the local residents, had advised that the applicant had made an error in their calculations meaning that the proposal would result in a 44.5 percent loss to the biodiversity as opposed to the 25.5 percent gain stated.
 5. Road Safety: The proposed ghost lane for access would be the fourth within a 200 yard distance on what was a precarious section of road given the volume of traffic on the A4. All local residents concurred that there was already a speeding issue in the village and when travelling west past New Road a large number of vehicles accelerated dramatically. This section of road was also a dangerous place for pedestrians to cross and was the most obvious place to cross for the village hall and playground. The village did not need more housing but to be enhanced and improved for the current residents. The infrastructure should not be put under more strain and stress.
- Mr Partridge concluded that there was no resident support for the application. He had presented material and planning matters that required consideration by the Committee. The application would have an ecological, aesthetic and locally damaging impact. It was felt that the area should be supported with a positive, sustainable and supportive plan for growth and evolution.

Member Questions to the Objector:

Councillor Pask referred to comments made regarding traffic however, stated that one issue that had not been raised was the difficulty local residents experienced in departing New Road, particularly when turning right towards Thatcham and Councillor Pask asked Mr Partridge to provide his knowledge on this matter. Secondly Councillor Pask asked if Mr Partridge had lived in the area in 2007 and was able to describe the impact on water run-off from the hills in that year or any other year. In response to Councillor Pask's questions, Mr Partridge stated that he had been a resident in Woolhampton since 2005. Regarding the matter of turning right from the roads in question, at peak hours this could take up to five minutes. It was also incredibly dangerous to turn right because of the acceleration of traffic. It was a significant problem and having four ghost lanes within 200 yards of each other was dangerous considering the precarious nature of that area of road. Regarding Councillor Pask's question regarding flooding, Mr Partridge reported that in 2007 he had lived at number one Angel Mead by the canal. He had been told that the flooding had been caused because the culverts that were designed to carry water down to the canal had failed due to the large volume of water. The A4 at one point had been at least a foot under water. His house at one Angel Mead, which was at least 100 metres from the A4, had been close to being flooded. It had been a very traumatic event for local residents and the thought of drainage capability being taken away as a result of the proposal was not a good prospect.

Councillor Mayes noted that the Thames Water used a tanker to take excess water or sewage across the canal to the south side. He assumed therefore that the bulk of the effluent was therefore normally in a pipe, which went under the canal, which he noted was an issue considering the canal had a lift bridge. Mr Partridge commented that tankers went down Station Road and over the canal bridge, train tracks and level crossing. This often happened during the night and had caused significant damage to the road. Mr Partridge reported that the disturbance to residents living close by was significant. This had been contested with Thames Water directly on several occasions

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however, had been rebuffed. To have another development reliant on the same aggregation system seemed adverse to what was required by the village in terms of infrastructure. Councillor Mayes commented that this would be taken up with the drainage officer later in the meeting.

Agent Representations:

Mr Bond in addressing the Committee raised the following points:

- In his view the proposal had significant merit. The site was acceptable for residential development owing to its well contained characteristics with strong defined boundaries comprising of an existing development to the north, east and partly to the south. There was a mature woodland to the west of the site. Therefore the site related more to the built settlement of Woolhampton.
- This was supported by the evidence base to the last Local Plan. The site was not rejected for any specific reason other than only one site should be allocated at Woolhampton.
- These matters were reinforced by the proposed allocation of the site in the emerging Local Plan. The proposed allocation represented a material change in circumstance since the last application, which was refused. Having listened to the comments from both the Parish Council and local residents, Mr Bond commented that it was important to note that the last refusal of the application was not on grounds of access, highways, trees, drainage, flooding or foul drainage.
- Regarding the weight to the new Emerging Local Plan, this was in part determined by the existence of any substantive objections to a proposal. Only one objection had been received to the Local Plan allocation. As Officers had confirmed, they considered the matters raised were not significant enough to remove the site as an allocation. The residential allocation of the site was anticipated to remain and the Council's Local Plan Team had reconfirmed this.
- Mr Bond stated that in the factual circumstances National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 48B confirmed that weight could be given to an emerging local plan allocation where there were no unresolved objections, which was the case with the current proposal. NPPF paragraph 50 also confirmed that prematurity of an emerging local plan would seldom be justified as a reason for refusal and Mr Bond stated that Officers agreed with this.
- For all the reasons mentioned, the principle of the proposed development could be supported.
- Regarding landscape and visual impact, the site was well enclosed and related well to its built context. The localised impact of visual change would be limited. The principle of development including the support of a residential allocation outweighed the small degree of impact.
- All other issues including site access, highways, housing mix, density, infrastructure, affordable housing and residential amenities including drainage had been successfully addressed as detailed in the comprehensive responses by statutory consultees.
- To conclude, Mr Bond highlighted that in the case of the application other material considerations had arisen including the largely uncontested emerging local plan allocation and the suitability of the site supported by NPPF paragraphs 48B and 50. These paragraphs confirmed that permission could be granted in accordance with the development plan and consistent with the officer's recommendation for approval.

Member Questions to the Agent:

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Councillor Alan Law noted that Mr Bond had stated that there were no outstanding unresolved objections outstanding in the development of the emerging local plan. Councillor Law referred to pages 28 and 29 of the report, which included comments from Thames Water regarding foul water drainage and queried if Mr Bond would consider any of the points as unresolved objections. Mr Bond stated that he did not consider the points raised by Thames Water as unresolved objections because Thames Water had a statutory duty to provide both the water and drainage to proposed properties. Mr Bond highlighted that condition number 33 in the Officer's report confirmed that no development would take place until issues regarding foul water drainage capacity were resolved. Councillor Law highlighted therefore that the points were not currently resolved. Mr Bond added that this was how the planning process addressed these type of issues and it did not represent an embargo on the proposal.

Ward Member Representation:

Councillor Pask in addressing the Committee raised the following points:

- Councillor Pask thanked Members who had attended the site visit, which had been very valuable. The site visit had ended just after 7pm, which would be assumed to be a fairly quiet part of the day in terms of traffic. Although it had not taken five minutes to exit from New Road Hill there had been a significant wait.
- Traffic was the main issue in Councillor Pask's mind, although the Officer had raised a number of other issues.
- Regarding the highways issues Councillor Pask referred to page 39, paragraph 6.56 of the report, which stated that 'the provision of additional accesses onto main roads such as the A4 is not normally supported by highways officers'.
- There had been lots of comments regarding the principle of development and Members would recall being advised by planning officers at a recent meeting that it was not developable under policy C1 of the Housing Site Allocations Development Plan Document (HSADPD). Councillor Pask highlighted that a consultation on Regulation 18 had been completed however, there was still another consultation that needed to be conducted and Councillor Pask posed the question to Members of whether they felt that the Local Plan was sufficiently progressed enough in order for the application to be determined.
- Councillor Pask asked for the slide to be displayed that showed the site map that displayed the road network. It could be seen from the slide that New Hill Road was to the right and the site was entirely within Midgham. Councillor Pask highlighted a driveway that went to the village hall, which was located in Woolhampton and stated that he was a regular visitor to this location for Parish Council meetings. Late at night turning out right from the area was not a problem however, he had attended a community event on a Sunday during the day and had experienced difficulty trying to turn right due to the volume and speed of traffic. He therefore concurred with concerns raised by local residents that it was a very busy road and the shadow lanes for turning right were on a narrow section of road considering the number of heavy goods vehicles (HGVs).
- Councillor Pask was concerned about the cumulative impact of traffic. Woolhampton had recently had in excess of 40 houses built within the area. Councillor Pask was aware there was a BBOWT Officer living in the area and had felt concerned when this officer had said there would be a loss of biodiversity caused by proposal.

Member Questions to the Ward Member:

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Councillor Tony Linden referred to points regarding the emerging local plan and he queried if Councillor Pask felt that there was some similarity to the Pincents application. Secondly Councillor Linden queried Councillor Pask's comments regarding ghost lanes. Councillor Pask stated that each application had to be judged on its merits. Councillor Pask acknowledged there had been concerns regarding the Pincents application and Officers had stated that it did not fall under C1. The difference with the current application was that it was proposed within the Local Plan whereas the Pincents Hill application was not. Councillor Pask had expressed his view regarding the shadow lanes and stated that Mr Dowding would be well placed to provide a more technical answer on this. It was the proximity of the junctions that were of most concern to Councillor Pask along with the speed and volume of traffic for cars trying to turn right.

Member Questions to Officers

Councillor Alan Law noted that the application was for access only and therefore queried why there were conditions included on other matters such as lighting and biodiversity. Councillor Law stated that his second question was for the Highways Officer. The Committee had heard references to the junction and that the stretch of road was treacherous and therefore Councillor Law asked if there was any information on the number of accidents in the last five years and if the Highways Officers would describe the stretch of road as treacherous.

In response to Councillor Law's first question, Mr Bob Dray explained that when an outline application was being considered, the principle of development was also being considered. Reserved matters included access, appearance, layout, landscaping and scale. There were many fundamental planning considerations that had to be considered under the principle of development at the outline stage. In the case of the current application this included principal fundamental issues and detailed access. It needed to be recognised that precise layout, landscaping, appearance and scale could be subject to change at the reserved matters stage.

Regarding Councillor Law's second question, Mr Dowding responded that there had been no reported incidents along the stretch of road in question in the three years leading up to December 2021. The nearest location of any reported incident was at the junction with Station Road, where there had been two incidents reported.

Councillor Graham Bridgman referred to paragraph 6.34 of the report and raised the following query regarding the affordable housing calculation. He was of the understanding that this was calculated at 40 percent rounded up however noted that the report stated 'six units (rounded up)'. Councillor Bridgman stated that 40 percent of 16 was 6.4 and when rounded up equalled 7. Mr Dray clarified that the Planning Obligations SPD stated rounded up or down to the nearest whole unit and therefore six units was policy compliant.

Councillor Bridgman referred to the question raised previously by Councillor Linden regarding the Pincents Hill application. This application had been debated at length with regards to policy C1 including development outside a settlement boundary and the emerging local plan. Councillor Bridgman stated however, that to his knowledge the current application was the first time the Committee had been referred to paragraph 50 of the NPPF. Mr Dray stated that paragraph 50 of the NPPF had been referenced during the Committee meetings regarding the Pincents Hill application however, it was not included in the report. Councillor Bridgman explained that paragraph 50 related to prematurity being justified where a draft plan had yet to be submitted and his question therefore related to the stages of local plan preparation. Councillor Bridgman referred to his own research of the stages from the Planning Institute and he queried how Councils were included in this process. He stated that there had not been a debate regarding sites

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in terms of the current application and he therefore queried if it was too early in the process and why paragraph 50 was being referred to.

In response to Councillor Bridgman's question, Mr Dray explained the meaning of Paragraph 50 of the NPPF. Paragraph 50 and prematurity needed to be differentiated to giving weight to an emerging local plan. Prematurity was a specific policy that needed to be applied if an application was approved prior to a plan being completed because there was a threat of undermining the plan as a whole. There was clear guidance that prematurity should not be brought into the decision making process at the current stage and it was only valid for examination. Mr Dray stated that the key question for Members was what weight should be given to the current plan and the emerging plan. The matters that needed to be considered were consistency with the NPPF and unresolved objections. Unresolved objections were addressed as part of the report and the Planning Policy Team had looked at this in detail and were satisfied that the issues raised were not anything that would change their opinion to recommend to Full Council. Mr Dray stated that it was about confidence when considering the weight that should be given to the emerging local plan so that the process was not undermined. Mr Dray stated that there was confidence that Woolhampton would remain a service village and would attract the same rate of growth as in the HSA DPD. There was also no other alternative sites in Woolhampton. Mr Dray concluded by explaining the planning balance that had been applied to the application. Councillor Bridgman thanked Mr Dray for his comprehensive response.

Regarding the stages of preparation, Mr Bryan Lyttle explained that regarding Regulation 18, the Council had delegated the production of the draft Local Plan to the Planning Advisory Group. At Regulation 19, Full Council would need to approve the plan for final consultation. The plan would then go to the examination stage and once the Inspectors report was received back by the Local Authority then it would need to go back to Full Council for approval or rejection of any changes. Councillor Bridgman further asked where this left a Planning Authority faced with an emerging local plan and proposed site within it. If it rejected the application it would fall foul of the appeal process because it would not be taking account of the emerging local plan. Mr Lyttle stated that this would likely need to go to court. Mr Lyttle stated that there was an issue in that a Local Plan took at least three years to produce. The Appeal process could also have a fundamental impact on planning policy depending on what an Inspector determined for that individual application. Mr Lyttle stated that Mr Dray had set out the planning balance that had to be considered on all applications and the considered opinion of Officers was that the planning balance for the current application was tilted in favour of the development for the reasons set out in the report and by Officers.

Councillor Pask referred to comments from objectors regarding the significant difficulties experienced when exiting roads. He referred to the comments from the Highways Officer under section 6.58 of the report where it stated 'the provision of additional accesses onto major roads such as the A4 was not normally supported by highways officers'. Councillor Pask understood this to be due to the close proximity of the access to another road that was well used. There was also another immediate junction just beyond this road to Woolhampton Hill, which at peak times generated a lot of school traffic. The access in question would therefore be the third junction in close proximity if approved and he asked Mr Dowding to comment on this. Mr Dowding explained that detailed later in paragraph 6.58 it went on to read that 'however, in this instance having the development accessing and fronting onto the A4 would assist in providing an 'active frontage' in line with the Government's Manual for Streets'. Mr Dowding stated that the decision had been based on this. Normally any form of access onto an A road was not encouraged but in the current case it would help to develop an active frontage in line with guidance. The

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proximately to two other right turn junctions was not a reason for concern. The proposal, which would create a third right hand turn into the site, followed the precedent set by the two other right turn lanes arrangements. The road was wide and a right turn lane offered a refuge for vehicles to wait in to make a right turn manoeuvre into a side lane.

Councillor Pask stated that he would allow Members to make a judgement regarding westbound traffic turning right. Councillor Pask further queried the difficulty of exiting the road onto the A4. Mr Dowding stated that as with any road there would be periods of time where the traffic was busy. The refuge islands provided refuge for vehicles turning out and into the site.

Councillor Linden referred to comments by Mr Partridge regarding ghost lanes and asked Mr Dowding if he had any comments. Mr Dowding stated that the road had been measured and the right turn ghost islands varied in width from 2.9 metres down to 2.1 metres. It was hoped by modification of condition 20 that the ghost lane measurements could be more regulated to a uniform width. This would help drivers when entering the new site if approved and existing sites.

Councillor Bridgman referred to the biodiversity comments raised by the objector and stated he would like to understand if there was a biodiversity gain or net loss and how it could be ensured there was a gain. Councillor Bridgman stated that he had also read the proposed conditions 26 and 31 and asked for the difference to be clarified. Regarding biodiversity and net gain Mr Shepherd reported that paragraph 6.77 of the report outlined the matter as a quantifiable gain in biodiversity (25.44 percent for habitats and 3.9 percent for linear habitats). This was significantly in excess of the 10 percent contained in the Environment Act 2021. The Ecology Officer was content with the level of net gain expected. BBOWT had been consulted and it had raised an initial concern with the calculation and this was resolved through securing net gains with conditions.

Regarding the two conditions queried by Councillor Bridgman, Mr Lyttle referred to condition 26 (Biodiversity measures) and reported that they were currently on biodiversity matrix 3.01 by DEFRA and the inclusion of the condition in the application ensured that when the reserved matters application came forward, the latest biodiversity matrix issue by DEFRA could be used. Regarding condition 31 (biodiversity enhancement), this ensured the developer could not avoid fulfilling the biodiversity enhancement requirements and dwellings could not be occupied until these were met. Councillor Bridgman stated that the second sentence for condition 26 referred to dwellings being occupied. Mr Dray understood the point and suggested if permission was granted that authority could be delegated to Officers to review the two conditions.

Councillor Law asked for Mr Dray to comment on the questions he had posed to Mr Bond regarding Thames Water. Mr Bond had stated that Thames Water were obliged to supply water and drainage to the site if approved and Councillor Law queried if this was the case. Mr Dray reported that there were two systems that ran in parallel. Thames Water were obliged to make the connections under a separate legislation. Thames Water would not normally object to an application but would identify whether the existing network's capacity was sufficient. In terms of the current application Thames Water had identified that they were unsure if there was capacity for the proposal. Mr Dray explained that this was why conditions 33 and 34 had been included as these ensured that development could not commence until this was confirmed.

Councillor Pask referred to comments by Mr Partridge concerning flooding and asked Mr Bowden, the Senior Drainage Engineer, for reassurance that the measures put forward were adequate. Mr Bowden referred to figure 12 in the Flood Risk Assessment, which had been provided by the developer. There was a responsibility by the developer that water should be discharged at one metre per second. All other water would have to be

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retained on site. Mr Bowden was therefore satisfied that the site would not increase flooding risk elsewhere outside of the site boundary.

Debate

Councillor Pask stated that there had been representations from a significant number of people and it had been heard that there was also a petition, which he believed had received over 100 signatures. There had been letters of objection and concerns were very consistent, many of which he shared. Mr Dowding had tried to reassure the Committee regarding traffic and Councillor Pask appreciated that at peak times, traffic on major roads slowed things down. Councillor Pask also appreciated that there had not been any reported incidents related to the area of road. Councillor Pask however, still had grave reservations regarding three roads being in such close proximity. The other issue Councillor Pask asked Members to debate was that the site was not developable under C1 of the HSA DPD. Councillor Pask was aware that there was another consultation required under Regulation 19. He noted that it had been stated that there were no other developable sites in Woolhampton and that Woolhampton was a service village however, he had reservations about the site and there was a lot of local concern. This was essentially why it had been brought before the Committee. Councillor Pask stated that he wished to hear the views of other Members on the Committee before making a judgment.

Councillor Law commenced by clarifying points that had been commented on by the Committee. He had noted that it had been stated that there had been no debate regarding the site in the developing plan. He highlighted that 18 months ago the whole list of proposed sites had been taken to the various Parish Councils for comment and feedback had been received.

Councillor Law noted that Pincents Hill had been mentioned and felt that the two applications should not be compared. Regulation 48 had been discussed as part of the Pincents Hill application and he knew this because he had raised it during the initial debate at the Eastern Area Planning Committee. Regarding the current application, Councillor Law stated that he had a lot of empathy with the Ward Member particularly on the highways issues. He had also listened to the comments by the Highways Officer and noted that the road had not been defined as treacherous and there had not been any serious accidents in the last three years. Given what had been stated by the Highways Officer at the meeting and within the report, Councillor Law feared that if the application was rejected on highways grounds, the case would be lost on appeal.

Councillor Law moved on to a further aspect regarding balance. This was particularly difficult because it was a question of weight and whether more weight should be put on the emerging Local Plan or previous one. Councillor Law stated that Woolhampton was a service village and when reading C1 carefully it said this allowed some development inside and adjacent to the existing settlement boundary. He understood that 16 houses was felt to be excessive but there had to be identified need. Councillor Law suspected that when the previous application was submitted and subsequently rejected due to being contrary to the current Local Plan, it was most likely a balanced decision because the Local Plan did allow for some development within or adjacent to a service village. Councillor Law was interested to hear the views of other Members but stated that he did not feel able to reject the application on highways grounds but he would need to consider how much weight to give the emerging plan versus the existing plan.

Councillor Jeremy Cottam felt it was a very difficult decision to make. The Committee had been told they could not really refer to the emerging Local Plan because it was not ready or relevant however, the application had been refused previously in reference to the current Local Plan. Nothing had been mentioned about the street scene or character of

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the village. Councillor Cottam felt that if the application had been more sympathetic to area and continued housing development to the left hand side of the road, then it was likely it would have been received more positively. He was concerned that Members were being asked to overturn something that they had already refused. Councillor Cottam felt uncomfortable regarding the application.

Councillor Richard Somner agreed that a decision on the application was not straight forward. He often travelled through the district from the eastern area and sympathised regarding concerns about the speed of traffic however, it was a 30 mph speed limit with speed cameras located at either end. Sensible drivers slowed down accordingly however, he sympathised that this was not always the case. Councillor Somner suggested that traffic speeds in the area was something that could be picked up separately by the Highways Team to see if the reinforcement of signage or road markings was required.

Councillor Somner referred to points raised by Councillor Pask regarding pulling out onto the main road. He queried if pulling out on the main road was any more complex than pulling out onto the main road from the petrol station further up the road and felt that this was unlikely particularly when busy. It was unusual to find so many junctions within close proximity and his initial thoughts had been why a new access was being created rather than using an existing road. On balance, Councillor Somner stated that he was leaning towards supporting the Officer recommendation to approve the application however, it was not straight forward.

Councillor Bridgman referred to the question regarding the site being adjacent to the settlement boundary in respect of the current Local Plan. Councillor Bridgman referred to the refusal reasons when the application was last submitted and it was not refused because it was adjacent but because it was against Policy C1 and was outside the settlement boundary. He agreed with sentiments that highways reasons were not adequate reasons for refusal of the application. Councillor Bridgman stated that biodiversity net gains and Thames Water matters including sewage and drainage were covered by suggested conditions. Councillor Bridgman explained that his difficulty was with the emerging Local Plan and how much weight should be given to it and he stated that he was in favour of C1. This was because the emerging Local Plan was not sufficiently emerged or advanced and it was not about to go to examination. Councillor Bridgman did not therefore feel that paragraph 50 of the NPPF meant that there was no option but to accept the application because it was part of an emerging plan. Councillor Bridgman felt that current policy should be adhered to as well as the current DPD. In his view the application should be rejected as being contrary to existing policy. Councillor Bridgman commented that he had stressed to local objectors that just because it was rejected against the current local plan did not mean that it would not emerge in the new local plan. It was not incapable of accommodating housing but should not accommodate housing under the current local plan and should be refused on this basis.

Councillor Bridgman proposed refusal of the application, against Officer recommendation, based on the grounds that it was against policy C1. Mr Dray advised that the lack of a Section 106 Agreement be included in the reasons for refusal and Councillor Bridgman agreed to the inclusion of this. Councillor Cottam seconded the proposal by Councillor Bridgman. The Chairman invited Members of the Committee to vote and at the vote the motion was carried (Councillor Alan Macro abstained from voting)

RESOLVED that the Service Director of Development and Regulation be authorised to refuse planning permission for the following reasons:

- The application was contrary to Planning Policy C1.

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- Lack of a Section 106 Agreement.

(2) **Application No. & Parish: 21/02130/OUTMAJ - Land Adjacent To 1 Gables Way, Bath Road, Colthrop, Thatcham**

(Councillor Graham Pask declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 4(2) by virtue of the fact that he was the Ward Member and therefore knew a considerable number of people who lived in Midgham and Woolhampton and had been canvassed on the item. Councillor Pask stated that he was predisposed on the item but had not predetermined it).

(All Members of the Committee declared an interest in Agenda 4(2) by virtue of the fact that the two Adjacent Parish Council representatives were also Members of West Berkshire Council and were therefore well known to them. As their interest was personal and not prejudicial or a disclosable pecuniary interest, they determined to remain to take part in the debate and vote on the matter.)

(Vice-Chairman, Councillor Alan Macro in the Chair)

The Committee considered a report (Agenda Item 4(2)) in respect of an Outline Application for a commercial B2 (general industrial) and/or B8 (storage and distribution) development together with ancillary office space and associated landscaping, car parking, service yards and access. Matters to be considered: Access.

Michael Butler (Principal Planning Officer) introduced the report and highlighted the key points.

In accordance with the Council's Constitution, Mr Anthony Fenn, Midgham Parish Council representative, Councillors Steve Ardagh-Walter and Owen Jeffery, Adjacent Parish Council representatives (Thatcham Town Council), Tracey Underwood, objector, Mr James Walker, Agent and Councillor Graham Pask, Ward Member, addressed the Committee on this application.

Parish Council Representation:

Mr Fenn in addressing the Committee raised the following points:

- Midgham Parish Council (MPC) objected to the application on the following grounds; it was a development in the countryside; it was outside of the settlement boundary and it was a disturbing piece of ribbon development.
- The core plan stated that due to Thatcham's recent expansion there should be a considerable period of consolidation resulting in no immediate and no significant growth in the area. However the application proposed an industrial expansion into rural Midgham beyond the settlement boundary.
- A recent planning permission for housing in Midgham was refused on the grounds that the area was a rural parish outside of any recognised settlement area. Consequently MPC was alarmed at the rate of the destruction of prime agricultural land; the loss of Midgham's identifiable boundary and the disturbing prospect of setting a precedent for further continued ribbon development.
- MPC understood the applicant was requested to consider reducing the height of the buildings in areas one and two from 15 metres to 12.5 metres. The applicant refused this request claiming that the extra height was required for the installation and use of warehouse automation.
- MPC felt that the extra eight feet above the tree line would have an adverse visual impact on the 15 households located to the east of Midgham Marsh.
- The report predicted up to 980 traffic movements per day to be generated by the proposal. These would be exiting and entering the already busy A4.

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- MPC were concerned that the extra traffic movements and the utilisation of robots in the warehouses strongly suggested that the site would be operational 24 hours a day, seven days per week.
- MPC did not feel residents of Midgham Marsh or those living north of the A4 should be subjected to a virtual perpetual motion of traffic noise, traffic pollution and light pollution.
- The residents of Midgham Marsh were already blinded by the floodlights operated by Ryder Contract Services on the south side of Colthrop beyond the railway line and adjacent to the proposed development.
- MPC was concerned about the increased risk of localised flooding due to additional surface water as a direct result of farm land being replaced with concrete and tarmac.
- Midgham Marsh already suffered from surface water and despite the best efforts of the local farmer who regularly cleaned and maintained the ditches, standing water remained on the site for much of the winter months
- The site formed part of the East Kennet Valley biodiversity Opportunity Area and MPC was mindful that the Core Strategy required biodiversity assets to be conserved.
- The urbanisation of the greenfield site would have an adverse visual impact on the character of the area.
- In conclusion there was a great concern amongst residents in Midgham that increased development would lead to the loss of the rural identity as ribbon development yet again furthered its concrete reach.

Member Questions to the Parish Council:

Councillor Graham Pask noted that Mr Fenn had lived adjacent to the site on Midgham Marsh since 2012. Councillor Pask asked Mr Fenn if he was subject to much noise from the existing Colthrop area. Mr Fenn confirmed that those living in the area were aware of noise coming from Colthrop. Mr Pask noted that Mr Fenn had mentioned lighting, which he highlighted could be conditioned. Councillor Pask asked for Mr Fenn's view in terms of the type of use that the potential warehouses could be put to. In response Mr Fenn stated that he had been concerned regarding the height the applicant was proposing at 15 metres because this would enable the site to accommodate robots. Robots did not need to sleep and could work 24 hours per day. Councillor Pask commented that he would take this point up with the agent.

Councillor Geoff Mayes referred to the projected amount of heavy vehicles using the site each day. He commented that the road junction design at the north end of the site was critical and asked Mr Fenn if he had noted that the road from Cox's Lane did not have a right turn obligation towards Thatcham and Newbury. Mr Dray clarified questions could only be asked to clarify points that had been raised during a representation. Councillor Mayes moved onto his second question regarding drainage. Water from the site was going to be collected and put into a drain alongside the railway line, which drained to the east and into the Kennet at a later stage. Councillor Mayes asked Mr Fenn if he was concerned that the biodiversity area at Midgham Marsh would be impacted and Mr Fenn confirmed that he was.

Adjacent Parish Council Representation:

Councillor Jeffery and Councillor Ardagh-Walter in addressing the Committee, on behalf of Thatcham Town Council (TTC), raised the following points:

Councillor Jeffery:

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- Referred to section 6.51 of the report and quoted 'will have a degree of impact on the local transport network' and then 6.46 and quoted 'A4 remains within overall capacity'. Councillor Jeffery stated that the development was cited by the applicant to produce over 900 vehicles movements per day and he had little doubt that these would happen 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- The A4 east to junction 12 was already slowed by HGVs sometimes running at 40mph.
- The A4 west passed directly through the residential heart of Thatcham and impacted greatly upon Chapel Street.
- Traffic using the A4 travelling west continued into east Newbury as far as the Robinhood roundabout and sometimes to the bypass roundabout at Speen. In Councillor Jeffery's view, this alone should stop the proposal being approved. West Berkshire Council had rightly pursued an active travel agenda, which sought to get car users onto their bikes. New cycle lanes had been created and road width had been reduced. The proposal would cause cyclists to be sharing the roads with more HGVs on roads such as Chapel Street. A further 900 movements a day was not tolerable and quite possibly unsafe.
- HGVs coming out of the site would use the Thatcham crematorium roundabout, which would be distressing for anyone turning up the road to a funeral or cremation. Councillor Jeffery believed there was no right turn from Cox's Lane, if the proposal went through in its current form.
- The urban sprawl was not needed in or near to Thatcham. The proposal was not felt to be acceptable or a proper way to conduct planned development.
- TTC supported the comments raised by MPC in not wishing to see viable farm land turned into an industrial delivery site.

Councillor Ardagh-Walter:

- Began by raising concerns regarding the stated employment benefits as detailed on pages 68 to 70 under sections 6.31 to 6.41. His main concern was with paragraph 6.40 of the report and the assertion from Savills logistics that West Berkshire Council was keen on attracting unskilled jobs into the area. This was a bold assertion in Councillor Ardagh-Walter's view and he contended to the Committee that contrary to helping the district, the proposed development would hinder and avert existing employers.
- Veolia had grave difficulties in 2021 attracting enough HGV drivers and the last thing Veolia or existing major employers already located at Thatcham and Colthrop needed was more demand for and the poaching of drivers. The most critical asset was people and if the application was approved the application would suck supply of skilled drivers away from existing employers. It would also cause there to be direct competition for lower cost housing.
- In summary the development would not have a significant benefit to the district in terms of traffic or employment benefit. Councillor Ardagh-Walter urged the Committee to reject the application.

Member Questions to the adjacent Parish Council:

Councillor Tony Linden asked Councillor Ardagh-Walter if he was suggesting that the site would be better off as a housing site. Councillor Ardagh-Walter confirmed that he was not suggesting this.

Councillor Alan Law noted from what he had heard that what would be offered by the proposal was the wrong type of jobs and further B8 units were not required. Councillor Law queried if it was felt that the Economic Development Officer and the Economic Development Strategy which had been approved by the Council was incorrect. Councillor

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Jeffery felt that it would appear so and Councillor Ardagh-Walter stated that he was concerned regarding the age of the evidence provided including the Berkshire Functional Economic Market Area Study, which was conducted in 2016 and suggested that there was a need to build a logistics cluster around Thatcham. Councillor Ardagh-Walter stated that this might have been the case in 2016 but was not the case now. Councillor Law noted the point regarding the age of some evidence but highlighted that the West Berkshire Employment Land Review 2020 was also referred to. Councillor Ardagh-Walter stated that in his view this was also incorrect and was out of date.

Objector Representations:

Ms Underwood in addressing the Committee raised the following points:

- Ms Underwood was present on behalf of the objectors and lived behind Midgham Marsh behind the eastern boundary of the site. She was the fourth generation of her family who had farmed Kennet Home Farm.
- Residents were concerned regarding the increasing risk of localised flooding due to additional surface water caused by the proposed development. This could not be allowed to drain into the ditches.
- National Rail rarely cleared out its ditches to the north of the railway line.
- Ms Underwood had grown up in Midgham Marsh and had moved away 20 years ago but her family had continued to farm there. Ms Underwood had then moved back to the area in October 2021. She had been shocked at how much wetter the fields were. There had been ankle deep standing water in many areas for weeks at a time and this never used to be the case. Ms Underwood stated that they were already doing all they could to clean out their ditches regularly. If fields behind the eastern boundary of the proposed site become any wetter then arable farming in the fields would no longer be possible.
- Midgham Marsh was almost completely flooded in July 2007.
- The Council had requested that the applicant reduce the height of the buildings in areas one and two from 15 metres to 12.5 metres. The applicant had refused to do this. The extra 2.5 metres in height would have a huge visual impact on residents living close by.
- The computer generated image supplied by the applicant used a photo taken in late spring when trees to the eastern boundary were in full leaf. All the trees were deciduous meaning the impact for six months of the year would be very different and the proposal would create a local eyesore. The colour of the façade had not been stipulated but a different colour would have a far greater impact than seen in the image.
- The proposed development would create increased noise, light and traffic pollution for local residents. The construction noise would be horrendous.
- The A4 was already a very busy and dangerous road. Ms Underwood left to do the school run at 8am every morning and she had to turn right out of the lane onto the A4, which was impossible due to the speed and volume of traffic causing her to have to turn left and drive a quarter of a mile to the nearest roundabout. The proposed change to the layout of the A4 caused by the development would cause a huge amount of disruption to drivers and if constructed at night would cause disruption to local residents.
- The fact that there would be access from the site directly onto the A4 very close to the existing roundabout seemed reckless, given the speed and volume of traffic.
- Residents were also very concerned that the applicant was refusing to reduce the height of the buildings due to the need for automation. This implied that the

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occupiers would not operate from 9am until 5pm and could operate 24 hours per day.

- The report stated that there could be up to 980 additional traffic movements per day caused by the site. This was an enormous increase in vehicles on an already busy road and would cause noise pollution and carbon dioxide pollution.
- There was already a huge amount of light pollution from the existing buildings on Colthrop business park. When Ms Underwood had built an extension on her cottage they were not permitted by the Council to put an outside light on it.
- The development would be detrimental to the wildlife and the countryside. Ms Underwood owned the field adjacent to the site and had already been approached by developers. Although this would be financially beneficial for her, Ms Underwood refused to sell her land because it would not be in the best interest of Midgham Parish or the countryside.
- Ribbon development was creeping along the A4. If it continued Thatcham would soon join up with Theale. The site was not located in Colthrop as stipulated but in Midgham.
- Regarding the ecological reports, Ms Underwood did not understand why only one static bat box was used. When Ms Underwood had been building her extension in 2020 she had needed to delay the build by five months as she had been required by the Council to carry out three bat dawn and dusk emergent surveys in May and June as bats were not fully active until this time.
- Ms Underwood urged the Committee to refuse planning permission for all the reasons she had stated. To approve the application would not be progress but would be sacrilege to Midgham parish and the countryside.

Member Questions to the Objector:

Councillor Pask noted that Ms Underwood had mentioned standing water and queried how this impacted on her as an arable farmer and if it precluded her from planting certain things. Ms Underwood was concerned that the situation could make the land untenable. Wheat was currently growing in the fields in question however, there were areas where crops were not growing because the land was so wet. The fields could not be used for arable farming if they got any wetter.

Councillor Mayes asked Ms Underwood to confirm the statement that she had given earlier that Network Rail did not regularly maintain the drainage along her boundary and the railway line. Ms Underwood confirmed that this was correct. To her knowledge Network Rail sometimes cleaned out the culverts but she could not recall when they last cleaned out the ditches. Councillor Mayes asked if Ms Underwood was responsible for the drain or if Network Rail was. Ms Underwood confirmed that Network Rail were responsible for cleaning out their ditches to the north of the railway line and Ms Underwood was responsible for her ditches within the marsh, which were regularly cleaned out.

Councillor Mayes asked Ms Underwood to confirm if drainage water drained from the west towards the east. Ms Underwood stated she would have to look into this point and was unsure.

Councillor Bridgman noted that Ms Underwood had raised the issue of surface water running off the site onto her land, aggravating problems that already existed. Councillor Bridgman stated that he had looked at the HELA, which was the document that had brought forward a number sites, including the one in question, for potential development in the emerging local plan. The flood history for the site referred to in the document was that the site was not within the Environment Agency's flood outline data and had not flooded during the 2007 floods. Parish flood reports however, detailed that there was run

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off from the A4 and surrounding fields which often caused flooding of Midgham Marsh. It was clear from the Officer's report that surface drainage was an issue and the way Officer's sought to address this was detailed in condition 12 and there were a huge number of elements to this condition. Taking account of the HELA and what was proposed in condition 12, Councillor Bridgman asked why Ms Underwood felt the condition would not avert the issues that she had raised. Ms Underwood stated that in 2007 Midgham Marsh definitely flooded and the cattle were up to their stomachs in water. Councillor Bridgman clarified that he was not implying that Midgham Marsh had not flooded however, there were no reports that the site in question had flooded. Councillor Bridgman stated that it was a question of why the proposed development site would exacerbate the problem given the proposed condition. Ms Underwood felt that the extra areas of tarmac and hard standing would push more water towards Midgham Marsh.

Agent Representations:

Mr Walker in addressing the Committee raised the following points:

- He was from Savills and was the planning agent for the application and was speaking on behalf of the applicant Ptarmigan and Thatcham Limited.
- The proposal was for an appropriate and acceptable development that would bring significant benefits. The application was the result of the applicant working positively and proactively with the Council to address comments and concerns.
- The proposed development would significantly support the local economy. The proposal would develop around 20,000sqM of employment floor space in Thatcham where there was a current pressing demand for such a development. The Council's employment evidence base identified the need for an additional 62,000sqM of industrial floor space including B2 and B8 uses and it had been demonstrated that the availability for industrial and logistic floor space in Thatcham was at only 4 percent of current need, so supply was currently constrained.
- The proposal would provide flexible employment space that made a substantial contribution to the current and future market requirements and help ensure Thatcham remained a key part of the Thames Valley economic region.
- The proposal would deliver around 300 high quality jobs including apprenticeships, skilled technical roles and managerial positions. It would also create about 150 jobs in the construction phase and generate significant business rate receipts.
- The application site was in an ideal location to meet the identified need for local jobs. It was in a sustainable location, which created a natural extension of the Colthrop Business Park.
- The site was not within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), which covered nearly three quarters of West Berkshire and was not subject to any designations relating to ecology or heritage.
- Three areas of concern had been raised by Members at the site visit and these were highways, the appearance and visual impact of the building and surface water drainage. Mr Walker moved on to address each of these areas in turn.
- 1 - Highways: the application was supported by a detailed transport assessment undertaken by qualified highways engineers and had concluded that the additional movements generated by the development would not have an unacceptable impact on local roads. The site benefitted from an access directly onto the A4, with a footpath access provided. The Council's Highway Officers had raised no objections.
- 2 - Appearance of the building: work had taken place closely with Officers and the Council's appointed landscape consultant to agree a position on the matter. The Officer had deemed the visual impact of the site to be acceptable. The 15 metre

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height was similar to a number of existing buildings within the existing business park.

- The site benefitted from semi mature planting on the eastern boundary with trees up to 15 metres in height. The proposal included new planting, which would strengthen the eastern and northern boundaries with a minimum depth of 10 metres and up to 50 metres in some areas.
- As part of the reserved matters process a study would be undertaken to confirm an appropriate external colour of the buildings to ensure they sat comfortably within the landscape. This approach was now standard for modern industrial estates across the country and would ensure any visual impacts were minimised further, particularly compared to other existing buildings in the areas due to their prominent white colour.
- 3 - Drainage: The drainage condition in the Officer's report had been agreed to, which required water to be drained at the same level as the current developed site. As demonstrated by the submitted flood risk assessment the site naturally drained water to water courses to the south west boundary and the site would have a sustainable drainage system, which would accommodate a one in 100 year flood event plus increases due to climate change. The site would not increase the risk of flooding to nearby land including land to the east.
- Mr Walker agreed with the Officer's conclusion in paragraphs 7.1 and 7.2 of the report in that the proposed development complied with the development plan and Policy CS9 and all technical matters had been addressed. If any minor adverse impacts were identified these were outweighed against the substantial economic benefits associated with the development including meeting local need and job creation. It was hoped that the Committee would approve the plans in line with the Officer recommendation.

Member Questions to the Agent:

Councillor Pask asked Mr Walker why there was no flexibility in terms of the height of the buildings. Other business such as Xtrac were known to operate adequately in a building that was 10 metres high. The use B8 implied 24 hour a day operation and he asked Mr Walker to comment on if this was a possibility. Mr Walker stated that he did not know yet who the final operator for the site would be as it was only an outline application. There was the potential for the site to operate 24 hours per day however, Mr Walker drew attention to the noise assessments that were submitted with the application and concluded that the scheme could operate in such a way that would not increase the background noise levels that already existed. Mr Walker stated that this could be confirmed as part of a reserved matters application.

Councillor Pask asked Mr Walker if there was any flexibility regarding the height of the buildings if the application was approved. Mr Walker stated that he felt that they had demonstrated as a part of the application that the height of 15 metres for buildings away from the road was acceptable. The building would be coloured in such a way as to limit its impact. Tests had been carried out on bringing the height down and it had been concluded that it would not materially change the visual impact in the agent's opinion. No objection had been received from the landscape consultant who had been appointed by the Council. Some impact had been found, however this needed to be weighed in balance to other factors.

Councillor Jeremy Cottam noted that Mr Walker had referred to traffic modelling and he queried who had carried this out. Mr Walker confirmed that the transport assessment was carried out by a highways engineer appointed directly by the applicant and assessed by the Council's Highway Officers. Mr Walker was not sure who had provided the traffic

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modelling. Councillor Cottam asked what the highways engineer had been responsible for and Mr Walker confirmed that they had been appointed by the applicant to assess the impact of the development in highways terms. It had been concluded that the development was acceptable on highways grounds and this had also been the view of the Council's Highway Officers.

Councillor Cottam referred to environmental assessments and asked if any regard had been given to noise and vibration of the lorries. Mr Walker reported that the noise report submitted with the application considered the noise and vibration associated with the development to be acceptable.

Councillor Keith Woodhams referred to the 980 vehicle movements and asked Mr Walker how many were expected to pass through Thatcham in a 24 hour period. Mr Walker explained that 980 was the absolute worst case scenario of the whole development being of B8 use. If it was of B2 use there would be 482 movements so it was likely to be somewhere in the middle of the two figures. Regarding the traffic assessment it expected about half of the traffic to go east and the other half west.

Councillor Woodhams referred to a comment made earlier by a speaker, that there was a reluctance to reduce the height of the buildings from 15 metres to 12 metres because it would restrict the use of robots and Councillor Woodhams asked if this was correct. Mr Walker reiterated that it was felt that 15 metres was acceptable in visual terms. Evidence had been provided on the point of height that pointed to the fact that the average height of the type of buildings proposed was increasing due to a number of reasons, one of which being automation. The average internal height for the type of buildings proposed was 14 metres and therefore what was proposed was below average. The developer wanted to develop a scheme that was attractive to the market and anything lower would not be attractive.

Councillor Woodhams asked Mr Walker to confirm how many people were expected to be employed on the site. Mr Walker stated that the estimation was 250 to 300 and jobs would be of high quality. The site was also expected to generate 150 jobs in the construction phase. Councillor Woodhams asked Mr Walker to expand on what he meant by 'high quality' and Mr Walker explained that increasingly jobs in warehouse environments were skilled and required the operation of machinery. It would also offer a large number of managerial positions.

Ward Member Representation:

Councillor Pask in addressing the Committee raised the following points:

- He thanked Members that had been able to attend the site visit and also view the site from Ms Underwood's land, which had been essential. He hoped Members had noticed the surprise element of being sandwiched between a railway line and the busy A4. He hoped Members had noted the peacefulness of the area. Councillor Pask understood that construction noise had to be accepted during any development however the Committee would be considering the longer term implications of a built development.
- Lockdown had happened two years previously and although Bucklebury was about a mile north of the site, a constant thumping noise had been heard all summer. Councillor Pask had investigated the noise and found that pile driving was taking place on Gable Way. After a quiet word with the foreman the piling stopped at inappropriate times. However, Councillor Pask highlighted how far the noise had travelled.
- Councillor Pask was aware of a building on Gable Way that was erected two years ago, which was 44,000sqM feet, and currently had a 'to let' sign on it. Councillor

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Pask strongly supported the economic growth of the district and understood with the growth of online shopping that there was a need for distribution and B8 type buildings however, it was a question of where these buildings were placed. Councillor Pask was however concerned that there was a huge difference between high tech businesses like Xtrac and Thatcham Research to a 24 hour a day operation for distribution. Councillor Pask acknowledged distribution units were required however in his view they should be located closer to major intersections of transport such as nearer to Theale with better access to the M4 or the other side of Newbury with better access to the A34.

- Councillor Pask understood that the consideration was access however Members were being bombarded with other concerns such as height and drainage. Councillor Pask stressed the point that noise carried and in Bucklebury the work taking place in the existing buildings could be heard and therefore the proposal would have an impact. Councillor Pask was not suggesting that there was no scope for development in the Gable Way part of Colthrop, but he felt that the proposal was a step too far.

Member Questions to Officers

Councillor Linden noted that there was a shortage of B8 buildings in West Berkshire and he asked Mr Bryan Lyttle what the wider implications of the district not achieving sufficient levels of B8 was. Mr Lyttle responded that as a plan led authority the intention was to meet employment needs. West Berkshire was 74 percent AONB and had designated employment areas in the AONB. The site in question was a designated employment area and without such areas the area could become a commuter district.

Councillor Bridgman stated that he wanted to understand what had happened between the Core Strategy document and policy CS9 and the Employment Land Review. CS9 detailed that there was an excess level of B2 and it needed to be reduced and the level of B8 needed to be retained. Councillor Bridgman explained that the Employment Land Review now stated that there was a shortfall of B1, B1C, B2 and B8 and he queried this difference and wanted to understand why agricultural land was now being turned into industrial floor space. In response, Mr Lyttle reported that time had moved on and highlighted that the Employment Land Study was refreshed on 2020 and market conditions had changed. If another review was undertaken it was likely there would be more changes due to what was happening globally including Brexit. There were also changes to the existing employment land supply in that some offices were converting into housing. Mr Lyttle explained that there were two systems in operation, the Local Plan Review and the development land process, which worked on different time scales.

Councillor Cottam asked Mr Dowding what traffic modelling had been done to assess the impact of the new development. Mr Dowding clarified that in the worst case scenario there would be 320 car movements arriving, 170 HGV movements arriving, 320 car movements departing and 170 HGV movements departing within a 24 hour period. This equated to a 4.36 percent increase in traffic on the A4. Standard modelling had been used and it was expected that 52 percent of the traffic would travel towards Thatcham and 48 percent would go towards Theale. Gareth Dowding stressed that this was the worst case scenario, based on all the units being B8. As reported by the agent, it was unlikely that the entire use of the site would end up being B8. Mr Dowding reported that a 4.36 percent increase in traffic on the A4 was minor in real terms and would equate to less than one percent additional lorry movements per day. Mr Dowding explained that the A4 was classed as a freight route and a strategic motorway diversion route between Newbury and Theale. It was one of the busiest roads in West Berkshire and all of these points needed to be factored in when considering the modelling. Mr Dowding stated there were no justifications for refusing the application on highways grounds.

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Councillor Cottam further asked if the A4 was a trunk road that happened to go through Thatcham town, which was regulated by traffic lights with housing on either side. He pointed out that the road also went through Theale and asked if any allowances were made for this. Mr Dowding confirmed that the A4 was not a trunk road but an A class road. The modelling was based on widths of the road and the type of road it was and the junctions that served it. The modelling took into account residential developments because this impacted on the flow of traffic on and off the road however, it was also strategic national diversion route for the M4 and this needed to be kept in mind.

Councillor Woodhams was concerned about the additional mixed traffic expected to use the northern distributor road in order of avoiding the A4 congestion. It was known that HGVs shook the foundations of houses along this route and the road was narrow in certain areas. Councillor Woodhams asked what actions the Highway's Department would take to prevent HGVs using that route, which was not suited to HGV traffic. Mr Dowding commented that this route was not positively signed for HGVs and the A4 was signed as the designated freight route. The actions of the Highways Department would be to not signpost the northern distributor road as an alternative route. Satellite navigation companies were also strongly encouraged to list appropriate roads. Councillor Woodhams further asked Mr Dowding if signs could be erected that stated no HGVs unless for access. Mr Dowding stated that the route along Floral Way needed to be maintained for some HGV movements but it would not be signed as a purposeful route for all lorry movements.

Councillor Mayes noted that it had been mentioned that the Cox's Lane traffic could not turn right towards Thatcham. He queried if the proposal was approved why traffic could not enter through Gables Way through the existing warehouse development area. Mr Dowding expected that this was because it was private land that was not available as an access route. Mr Dowding pointed out that Cox's Lane did not appear to have a no right turn ban. Councillor Mayes disagreed with this.

Councillor Pask noted that Mr Dowding had stated that the A4 was a strategic freight route and asked for it to be confirmed that the proposed cycle lane around the Henwick Fields would not reduce the width of the road to make it unsuitable. Mr Dowding reported that the cycle ways that had been constructed throughout Thatcham had been designed to current standards.

Councillor Cottam asked Officers to confirm if use B2 or B8 was preferred in terms of the planning application. Mr Butler confirmed that the mix of B2 and B8 was not specified in the application. A condition could be applied that stipulated B2 and B8 however, he advised that this would be unreasonable because there was little justification for doing so.

Debate:

Councillor Law stated that he had been involved in the development of the Core Strategy 13 to 14 years ago and it had been identified that Thatcham required some respite from development at this point. The Core Strategy process had identified some of the strengths and benefits of the district, one being that it was at the cross roads on southern England and therefore in an ideal position for logistics and warehousing. Councillor Law was a founder Member of the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and again West Berkshire had been identified as being in an ideal position for warehousing. Councillor Law commented on the economy regarding the likes of Amazon and he stated that the automated computerised robotic warehouse industry was one of the only areas, which was increasing in value in terms of investment. Councillor Law referred to a point raised by the Ward Member and queried if the proposal was not located at the site in question where should it go and the answer to this was within the Local Plan. The site in question

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was one of the location identified and Thatcham had been nominated as a place for employment development. Councillor did not question the sincerity of the concerns that had been raised about the application and he understood the objections. Members had to make a decision that was based on policy. Policy CS9 in the current Local Plan was in support of the application. Industrial development was also supported by the Council's own recently approved Economic Development Plan and the Economic Development Officer had shown support for the application. Councillor Law had been pleased to hear the agent talk about high value jobs and he acknowledged that automation required high skilled members of staff. Councillor Law stated that he was supportive of the application.

Councillor Bridgman proposed a no notice motion to extend the meeting beyond 10pm if Councillor Macro as Chairman deemed the business could be concluded by 10.30pm. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Linden. Councillor Macro asked Members to vote on the proposal and the motion was supported.

Councillor Jeremy Cottam stated that he had an engineering background and had worked in a manufacturing and warehousing industry for over three decades. He was aware of how these types of business worked and operated. He did not feel that Thatcham was an ideal base for logistics because it had no road north and no road south. Thatcham had a large road going through the middle of an inhabited area.

Councillor Cottam stressed that he did not agree that jobs would be generated out of an automated warehousing system. There might be two or three people required to operate the system but there were no highly skilled jobs involved. If there was a problem the company that had installed the robotic system would send someone in to fix it. Councillor Cottam was aware of a business in Thatcham that had needed to close because it could not recruit enough agency drivers. West Berkshire Council itself did not have enough drivers.

Councillor Cottam stated that he had raised a question earlier in the meeting regarding B2 and B8 because Thatcham had lost much of its B2. He was aware as a local businessman that there was a demand for small businesses. Councillor Cottam was concerned regarding the highways impact of the proposal. Councillor Cottam stressed that he had joined the Council to be able to provide his knowledge and background and this was an example of where he could do this. Councillor Cottam felt despair regarding the proposal and the simplistic view of the economy. Councillor Cottam stated that he could not support the application. Councillor Cottam added that he had been very surprised not to see comments from Environmental Health regarding the proposal within the report. Councillor Cottam was concerned about the impact on the air quality, noise and vibration from the HGVs on the local community. Councillor Cottam had been minded to propose B2 use as this would create better jobs for local people however, had heard from the Officer that this would likely be appealed. Councillor Cottam was concerned that the mathematics were being considered rather than the reality of the application and would therefore be voting against the proposal.

Councillor Linden said that he had listened carefully and sympathised with Councillor Law. He sympathised with the concerns raised however, felt that Officers had made their case and if refused the Council would likely lose at appeal. The site was suitable for distribution. Councillor Linden acknowledged that there were issues in Thatcham and the proposal would cause a problem in Thatcham and/or Woolhampton. Councillor Linden however, did not feel that there was a solid reason to refuse the application and therefore proposed Officer recommendation to approve planning permission.

Councillor Richard Somner had listened to Councillor Cottam and understood his concerns and plea to reject the application. Councillor Somner noted that if a business

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was to locate to the vacant building referred to by the Ward Member, or any other unit in the district, then there would be an increase in traffic anyway and the Council would have no control over this. Councillor Somner referred to Mr Dowding's comments regarding the use of the A4, which he felt was crucial. Councillor Somner understood the concerns of residents however, explained that he lived in Calcot where he could never not hear the motorway or the railway. The application was about potential and was supported by policy, there was a clear statement from the Economic Development Officer supporting the application and there was evidence that the district needed to attract businesses. Councillor Somner stated that he was happy to support Councillor Linden's proposal.

Councillor Linden proposed that the Officer recommendation to approve planning permission be supported and this was seconded by Councillor Somner. At the vote the motion was carried (Councillor Macro and Councillor Pask abstained from voting).

RESOLVED that the Service Director of Development and Regulation be authorised to grant planning permission subject to the following conditions:

Conditions

1. Approval of reserved matters

Details of the appearance, landscaping, layout and scale (hereinafter called "the reserved matters") shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority before any development takes place. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To comply with Section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

2. Time limit for reserved matters

Application(s) for approval of the reserved matters shall be made to the local planning authority not later than three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

3. Commencement of development (outline)

The development hereby permitted shall take place not later than two years from the date of approval of the last of the reserved matters to be approved.

Reason: To comply with Section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

**4. Approved plans
Approved plans (amended)**

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans/documents:

668-004-PLO7 (Parameter Plan);

1909-11-PLO3-A (Junction access scheme);

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668-001-PLO2 (Location Plan).

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

5. Network Rail

No development approved by this permission shall take place until details of the outlet and inlet control for the disposal of surface water have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority (in consultation with Network Rails Senior Drainage Engineer). Thereafter the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the development does not affect the safety and continued running of the neighbouring railway. In accordance with policy CS5 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026.

6. Minerals

No development shall take place until a phased layout scheme for maximising the potential for incidental extraction where practicable has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. In addition, no development within a development phase shall commence until the following has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:

- (a) A method for ensuring that minerals that can be viably recovered during the development are recovered and put to beneficial use;
- (b) A method to record the quantity of recovered mineral (for re-use on site or off-site) and the reporting of this quantity to the Local Planning Authority.

Thereafter all works for each phase shall be carried out in accordance with the methods agreed throughout the construction period.

Reason: To ensure the minimum amount of mineral sterilisation occurs and in accordance with Replacement Minerals Local Plan for Berkshire Policies 2 & 2A, and Minerals and Waste Local Plan Policy 9. A pre-commencement condition is necessary, as once the development is built there will be no opportunity to design the scheme so as to maximise the potential for mineral extraction.

7. CMS

No development shall take place until a Construction Method Statement (CMS) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the demolition and construction works shall incorporate and be undertaken in accordance with the approved CMS. The CMS shall include measures for:

- (a) A site set-up plan during the works;
- (b) Parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors;
- (c) Loading and unloading of plant and materials;
- (d) Storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development;

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- (e) Erection and maintenance of security hoarding including any decorative displays and/or facilities for public viewing;
- (f) Temporary access arrangements to the site, and any temporary hard-standing;
- (g) Wheel washing facilities;
- (h) Measures to control dust, dirt, noise, vibrations, odours, surface water run-off, and pests/vermin during construction;
- (i) A scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from demolition and construction works;
- (j) Hours of construction and demolition work;
- (k) Hours of deliveries and preferred haulage routes;
- (l) Protection of watercourses within the vicinity of the site.

Reason: To safeguard the amenity of adjoining land uses and occupiers, and in the interests of highway safety. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, Policies CS13 and CS14 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026, and Policies OVS.5, OVS.6 and TRANS.1 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 (Saved Policies 2007). A pre-commencement condition is required because the CMS must be adhered to during all demolition and construction operations.

8. Working hours

No minerals extraction or construction works shall take place outside the following hours, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority:

7:30am to 6:00pm Mondays to Fridays;

8:30am to 1:00pm Saturdays;

No work shall be carried out at any time on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of adjoining land uses and occupiers. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, and Policy CS14 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026.

9. Lighting design

Prior to occupation of any unit a lighting design strategy for biodiversity for all the buildings on site and the car parking areas shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The strategy shall:

- (a) Identify those areas/features on site that are particularly sensitive for bats and that are likely to cause disturbance in or around their breeding sites and resting places or along important routes used to access key areas of their territory, for example, for foraging; and
- (b) Show how and where external lighting will be installed (through the provision of appropriate lighting contour plans and technical specifications) so that it can be clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent the above species using their territory or having access to their breeding sites and resting places.

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All external lighting shall be installed in accordance with the specifications 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: Bats are sensitive to light pollution. The introduction of artificial light might mean such species are disturbed and/or discouraged from using their breeding and resting places, established flyways or foraging areas. Such disturbance can constitute an offence under relevant wildlife legislation. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, and Policy CS17 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026.

10. CEMP

No development shall take place (including demolition, ground works, vegetation clearance) until a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The CEMP shall include the following:

- (a) Risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities.
- (b) Identification of "biodiversity protection zones".
- (c) Practical measures (both physical measures and sensitive working practices) to avoid or reduce impacts during construction (may be provided as a set of method statements).
- (d) The location and timing of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features.
- (e) The times during construction when specialist ecologists need to be present on site to oversee works.
- (f) Responsible persons and lines of communication.
- (g) The role and responsibilities on site of an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) or similarly competent person.
- (h) Use of protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs.

The approved CEMP shall be adhered to and implemented throughout the construction period strictly in accordance with the approved details, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: There are some protected species in the vicinity of the application site. This condition is applied in accordance with policy CS17 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026. A pre-commencement condition is required because the CEMP must be adhered to throughout construction.

11. Drainage

No development shall take place until details of sustainable drainage measures to manage surface water within the site have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall:

- a) Incorporate the implementation of Sustainable Drainage methods (SuDS) in accordance with the Non-Statutory Technical Standards for SuDS (March 2015), the SuDS Manual C753 (2015) and the WBC SuDS Supplementary Planning

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Document December 2018 with particular emphasis on Green SuDS and water re-use;

- b) Demonstrate that the existing ground water level will not be temporarily or permanently lowered by the development;
- c) Include attenuation measures to retain rainfall run-off within the site and allow discharge from the site to an existing watercourse or piped system at no greater than 1 in 1 year Greenfield run-off rates;
- d) Include run-off calculations based on current rainfall data models, discharge rates (based on 1 in 1 year greenfield run-off rates), and infiltration and storage capacity calculations for the proposed SuDS measures based on a 1 in 100 year storm +40% for climate change;
- e) Include within any design calculations an allowance for an additional 10% increase of paved areas (Urban Creep) over the lifetime of the development;
- f) Include construction drawings, cross-sections and specifications of all proposed SuDS measures within the site;
- g) Include pre-treatment methods to prevent any pollution or silt entering SuDS features or causing any contamination to the soil, groundwater, watercourse or drain;
- h) Ensure permeable paved areas are designed and constructed in accordance with manufacturers guidelines if using a proprietary porous paved block system; otherwise ensure any permeable areas are constructed on a permeable sub-base material, such as MoT/DoT Type 3;
- i) Show that attenuation storage measures have a 300mm freeboard above maximum design water level. Surface conveyance features must have a 150mm freeboard above maximum design water level;
- j) Include a management and maintenance plan showing how the SuDS measures will be maintained and managed after completion for the lifetime of the development. The use of glyphosate as a weed control measure is not permitted. The management and maintenance plan shall incorporate arrangements for adoption by the Maintenance or Management Company (private company or Trust) or individual property owners, or any other arrangements, including maintenance responsibilities resting with individual property owners, to secure the operation of the sustainable drainage scheme throughout its lifetime. These details shall be provided as part of a handover pack for subsequent purchasers and owners of the property/premises;
- k) Include measures with reference to Environmental issues which protect or enhance the ground water quality and provide new habitats where possible;
- l) Include details of how surface water will be managed and contained within the site during construction works to prevent silt migration and pollution of watercourses, highway drainage and land either on or adjacent to the site;
- m) Include an Application for an Ordinary Watercourse Consent in case of surface water discharge into, the re-alignment of, or

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- culverting of a watercourse (i.e stream, ditch etc).;
- n) Include a verification report carried out by a qualified drainage engineer demonstrating that the drainage system has been constructed as per the approved scheme (or detail any minor variations thereof), to be submitted immediately following construction to be approved by the Local Planning Authority. This Report shall include plans and details of all key drainage elements (surface water drainage network, attenuation devices/areas, flow restriction devices and outfalls) and details of any management company managing the SuDS measures thereafter.

Thereafter the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that surface water will be managed in a sustainable manner; to prevent the increased risk of flooding; to improve and protect water quality, habitat and amenity and ensure future maintenance of the surface water drainage system can be, and is carried out in an appropriate and efficient manner. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, Policy CS16 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026), Part 4 of Supplementary Planning Document Quality Design (June 2006) and SuDS Supplementary Planning Document (Dec 2018). A pre-condition is necessary because insufficient detailed information accompanies the application; sustainable drainage measures may require work to be undertaken throughout the construction phase and so it is necessary to approve these details before any development takes place.

12. Ground levels and finished floor levels

No development shall take place until details of existing and proposed ground levels, and finished floor levels of the development, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory relationship between the proposed development and the adjacent land. These details are required before development commenced because insufficient information accompanies the application, and the agreed details will affect early construction activities. This condition is applied in accordance with the NPPF, Policies ADPP6, CS14 and CS19 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026), and the Quality Design SPD (June 2006).

13. Electric vehicle charging points (prior approval)

No construction shall commence on any unit until details of electric vehicle charging points have been provided for that unit have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. No unit shall be first occupied until the charging points associated with that unit have been provided in accordance with the approved details. Thereafter, the charging points shall be maintained, and kept available

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and operational for electric vehicles at all times.

Reason: To secure the provision of charging points to encourage the use of electric vehicles. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, and Policy CS13 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026.

14. Layout

The detailed layout of the site shall comply with the Local Planning Authority's standards in respect of road and footpath design and vehicle parking and turning provision. This condition shall apply notwithstanding any indications to these matters which have been given in the current application.

Reason: In the interest of road safety and flow of traffic and to ensure waste collection. This condition is imposed in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, 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).

15. Gates onto highway

Any gates to be provided at the access where vehicles will enter or leave the site, shall open away from the adjoining highway and be set back a distance of at least 20 metres from the edge of the highway, or from the limit of any potential adoption under Section 38 of the Highways Act 1980, whichever is the greater.

Reason: In the interest of road safety and to ensure that vehicles can be driven off the highway before the gates are opened. This condition is imposed in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy CS13 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026).

16. Visibility splays (amended)

No unit shall be first occupied until visibility splays of 2.4 metres by 160 metres have been provided at the access. The visibility splays shall, thereafter, be kept free of all obstructions to visibility above a height of 0.6 metres above carriageway level.

Reason: In the interests of road safety. This condition is imposed in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy CS13 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026). Note: Temporary construction access is governed by Condition 8 (CMS)

17. Parking

The detailed layout provided at reserved matters stage shall include details of the vehicle parking and turning spaces/areas within the development. The car parking should enable the site to adapt to a combination of B2 and B8 uses. Such details shall show how the parking spaces are to be surfaced and marked out. No unit shall be first occupied until the vehicle parking and turning spaces for that unit have been completed in accordance with the approved plans (including any surfacing arrangements and marking out). The parking

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and turning spaces shall thereafter be kept available for parking and manoeuvring of vehicles at all times.

Reason: To ensure the development is provided with adequate parking facilities in order to reduce the likelihood of roadside parking which would adversely affect road safety and the flow of traffic. This condition is imposed in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, 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).

18. Access

No development shall take place until details of the proposed accesses into the site have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The accesses shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details. The construction of the site access shall be the first development operation, and no other development operation shall take place until the site access has been completed in accordance with the approved details, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the site access is constructed before the approved buildings in the interest of highway safety. This condition is imposed in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and Policies CS13 and CS14 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026).

19. Highways works

No development shall take place until engineering details of the proposed off site highway works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These works shall include:

- (a) Formation of new vehicular and pedestrian access with splitter island that prohibits right turn movements from the access.
- (b) Provision of turn right lane within the A4 Bath Road including a central island that prohibits right turn movements from the access.
- (c) The application and provision of a Traffic Regulation Order prohibiting right turn movements from the access. It must be noted that a section of the access road will need to be adopted under Section 38 of the Highways Act 1980 to enable any enforcement of the TRO.
- (d) The realignment of the main A4 Bath Road carriageway and associated footways / cycleways northwards to enable the provision of the required sight lines onto the A4 Bath Road.
- (e) Shortening of the westbound layby to the east, to enable the provision of the required sight lines onto the A4 Bath Road.
- (f) Alterations to the A4 Bath Road / Cox's Lane junction.
- (g) Alterations to the eastbound bus stop layby.
- (h) Alterations to surface water drainage.
- (i) Any other associated works including, but not limited to resurfacing when required, alterations and potential replacement of signage and street lighting, etc.

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As a first development operation, the above engineering operations shall be constructed in accordance with the approved drawing(s).

Reason: To ensure that the access into the site are constructed before the approved buildings in the interest of highway safety. This condition is imposed in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and Policies CS13 and CS14 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026).

20. Cycle parking/storage

No construction shall commence on any unit until details of cycle parking/storage have been provided for that unit have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. No unit shall be first occupied until the cycle parking/storage facilities associated with that unit have been provided in accordance with the approved details. Thereafter the facilities shall be maintained and kept available for that purpose at all times.

Reason: To ensure the provision of cycle parking/storage facilities in order to encourage the use of cycles and reduce reliance on private motor vehicles. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, Policy CS13 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026, Policy P1 of the Housing Site Allocations DPD 2006-2026, Quality Design SPD, and the Council's Cycle and Motorcycle Advice and Standards for New Development (November 2014).

21. Travel Plan (amended)

No unit shall be first occupied until a Travel Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Travel Plan shall be implemented from the development first being brought into use. It shall be reviewed, and updated as appropriate, within 6 months of first implementation, in agreement with the Local Planning Authority. After that the Travel Plan shall be annually reviewed and updated as appropriate and all reasonable practicable steps made to achieve the agreed targets and measures within the timescales set out in the plan and any subsequent revisions.

Reason: To ensure the development reduces reliance on private motor vehicles and provides the appropriate level of vehicle parking. This condition is imposed in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, Policy CS13 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026), Policy TRANS1 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 (Saved Policies 2007).

22. BREEAM (additional)

The development hereby permitted shall achieve a rating of "Excellent" under BREEAM (or any such equivalent national measure of sustainable building which replaces that scheme), unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall not be first occupied until a final certificate has been issued certifying that this rating has been achieved, and a

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copy of the certificate has been provided to the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the development contributes to sustainable construction. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, Policy CS15 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026) and Supplementary Planning Document Quality Design (June 2006).

23. Sustainability and Energy Strategy (additional)

On or before the submission of the first reserved matters application, relating to any or all of the reserved matters for each phase of the development, a detailed Sustainability and Energy Statement shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval. The Statement shall:

- (a) Be informed by the Sustainability Statement and Energy Strategy accompanying the outline application; and
- (b) Include a scheme for the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions, including through the use of low/zero carbon technology, with an aspiration to achieve zero carbon in accordance with Policy CS15.

No development within each phase of the development shall take place until approval of the above Statement has been granted in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the development within each phase shall be implemented in full accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure the development contributes towards the transition to a low carbon future. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, and Policy CS15 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026. A pre-commencement condition is required because the final measures contained within the statement may influence site layout and construction.

24. Skills and Employment Plan (additional)

No development shall take place an Employment and Skills Plan (ESP), in relation to the construction phase of the development, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The ESP will set out the measures that the developer will take to enhance the training and employment opportunities that are offered to the local workforce in West Berkshire in the construction process. The measures set out in the ESP should be appropriate and proportional to the scale and value of the development. The ESP should set out, through a method statement, how the following priorities will be addressed:

- (a) Promotion of employment opportunities generated on site to the West Berkshire workforce (but not excluding those outside of West Berkshire), with a focus on those who are not currently employed.
- (b) Creation of new apprenticeship starts specific to the development site. This should include how the developer will work directly with local employment and training agencies.
- (c) Identification of training and work placement opportunities on site with discussion on how these may be promoted to local people, working directly with local employment and training agencies.

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The Employment and Skills Plan should also:

- (d) Identify a lead contact who is responsible for managing the plan.
- (e) Set out a timetable for the implementation of the ESP which, for the avoidance of doubt, shall include a start date no later than the date of commencement of development.
- (f) Set out the process for how implementation of the ESP will be monitored and reported back to West Berkshire Council.

Thereafter approved ESP shall be implemented in full concurrent with the development of the site.

Reason: To promote local job opportunities in the district in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework. A pre-commencement condition is necessary because the ESP will need to be in place before any construction activities take place.

Informatives

1. Incidental works affecting the highway

Any incidental works affecting the adjoining highway shall be approved by, and a licence obtained from, the Principal Engineer (Streetworks), West Berkshire District Council, Transport & Countryside, Council Offices, Market Street, Newbury, RG14 5LD, telephone number 01635 – 503233, before any development is commenced.

2. Temp Signing Requires Written Consent

Any temporary signing affecting the adjoining highway shall be approved by, and a licence obtained from, the Principal Engineer (Streetworks), West Berkshire District Council, Transport & Countryside, Council Offices, Market Street, Newbury, RG14 5LD, telephone number 01635 – 503233, before any development is commenced.

3. Official Postal Address

Please complete and online street naming and numbering application form at <https://www.westberks.gov.uk/snn> to obtain an official postal address(s) once development has started on site. Applying for an official address promptly at the beginning of development will be beneficial for obtaining services. Street naming and numbering is a statutory function of the local authority.

4. Surface water drainage

Approval of the off-site works within the A4 must be subject to approval of an Ordinary Watercourse Consent application by the Land Drainage Authority outside of the Planning System. The Applicant should be advised that the culverting of the existing open ditch to the north of the A4 will not be acceptable to the LDA. We do however accept that culverting of the existing ditch on the south side of the A4 where the proposed access road crosses this watercourse into the site is unavoidable, although this will be subject to a separate OWC application.

5. Proactive statement

[Appropriate statement to be added depending on committee resolution]

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(3) Application No. & Parish: 22/00193/FUL - St Andrew's School, Pangbourne

This item was deferred to the next meeting of the Eastern Area Planning Committee.

(The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and closed at 10.07 pm)

CHAIRMAN

Date of Signature