

**ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR & MAIDENHEAD**  
**PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PANEL**

2 March 2022

Item: 2

<b>Application No.:</b>	21/02508/FULL
<b>Location:</b>	Imperial College of Science And Technology Buckhurst Road Ascot SL5 7PY
<b>Proposal:</b>	Redevelopment of the Silwood Park Science Park to include demolition of the existing business centre and construction of a new life science centre building, café pavilion, refurbishment of and alterations to existing buildings and associated parking and landscaping.
<b>Applicant:</b>	NSS IV (Real Estate) LLP
<b>Agent:</b>	Neil Rowley
<b>Parish/Ward:</b>	Sunninghill And Ascot Parish/Sunningdale And Cheapside
<b>If you have a question about this report, please contact:</b> Michael Lee on or at michael.lee@rbwm.gov.uk	

**1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The application seeks detailed planning permission for the redevelopment of the Silwood Park Science Park to include the demolition of the existing Business Centre and the erection of a new Life Science building along with a new café and the refurbishment and alterations to the existing buildings on site together with the associated parking and landscaping.
- 1.2 The proposed Life Science building, by virtue of it being materially larger than the building it would replace and the new café building representing a new building, would represent inappropriate development in the Green Belt, by definition. The development would also cause limited harm to the openness of the Green Belt and be contrary to one of the purposes of the Green Belt, namely safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. Therefore, a case of Very Special Circumstances (VSC) would need to be demonstrated where harm to the Green Belt and any other harm is clearly outweighed by other considerations to be acceptable in Green Belt terms.
- 1.3 The refurbishment of the existing buildings, pursuant BLP Policy QP5 and paragraph 149(c) of the NPPF, would not represent an inappropriate form of development that would be harmful to the openness of the Green Belt.
- 1.4 The limited impact on the setting of the Manor House is mitigated by the retention and enhancement of mature landscape screening, and the minor harm arising is outweighed by public benefits. No other additional harms have been identified by officers. The proposal is acceptable in respect of impact on the character of the area in general, impact on the highway and parking provision and other environmental considerations.
- 1.5 The proposal represents a significant benefit in terms of employment and education through the creation of additional direct and indirect employment opportunities and the relationship with Imperial College London. The proposal would also bring about sustainability and ecological benefits.
- 1.6 In the overall balancing exercise for establishing VSC, it is considered that the identified harm is clearly outweighed by other considerations, and therefore VSC exists which justifies the development in the Green Belt.

<b>It is recommended the Committee authorises the Head of Planning:</b>	
<b>1.</b>	<b>To grant planning permission with the conditions listed in Section 15 of this report and on the satisfactory completion of a Unilateral Undertaking to secure a carbon offset contribution.</b>

<b>2.</b>	<b>In the event the above undertaking is not completed the Committee authorises the Head of Planning to refuse planning permission as the proposal would fail to meet the terms of the Council's Interim Sustainability Position Statement and Borough Local Plan policy SP2.</b>
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## **2. REASON FOR COMMITTEE DETERMINATION**

- The Council's Constitution does not give the Head of Planning delegated powers to determine the application in the way recommended as it is major development; such decisions can only be made by the Panel.

## **3. THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDS**

- 3.1 Silwood Park comprises the Science Park, Imperial College London education and student buildings and the former Manor House and associated outbuildings together within the wider Silwood Park and parkland measuring approximately 100ha. Silwood Park and parkland, including the application site is located to the north of the A329 London Road and the west of the B383 Buckhurst Road within the Green Belt to the north of Sunninghill. The primary access is located off Buckhurst Road and serves the science park, university buildings and the former Manor House. There is an additional access off London Road to the south.
- 3.2 The Science Park comprises a cluster of 6 buildings within the south-east corner of the wider site and measures approximately 2.5 ha. The Business Centre building to be demolished is a large single storey structure with dual ridge pitched roof with approximately 2,100 sq.m floorspace. The remaining buildings to be refurbished have a combined floorspace of approximately 4,000 sq.m. The buildings themselves are of a similar appearance comprising of a red brick construction with part pitched roofs and green fenestration detailing. The remainder of the site comprises areas of hardstanding for car parking set amongst areas of mature woodland and landscaping.
- 3.3 Immediately to the north of the Science Park lies the university buildings with the Manor House to the west. The site benefits from extensive mature tree planting throughout and around the site boundaries which contributes to the verdant appearance of the wider Silwood Park site.
- 3.4 Immediately to the west of the Science Park area lies the former Manor House, a Grade II Listed Building, and associated land is subject to a current application for its conversion to 21 residential units together with the demolition of the existing outbuildings and the erection of 13 new dwellings within the grounds. Application 21/02205/FULL remains under consideration and will be referred to committee at a future date.
- 3.5 To the south west of the Science Park is an area of woodland that serves as a buffer from the Science Park to the London Road to the south with the settlements of both Sunningdale further to the south and Sunninghill to the south west.

## **4. KEY CONSTRAINTS**

- 4.1 The following are the main constraints associated with the site:
- Designated Metropolitan Green Belt
  - Area TPO (001/2020)
  - Adjacent to Grade II Listed Buildings
  - Flood Zone 1

## **5. THE PROPOSAL**

- 5.1 The proposals include the following key elements:
- Erection of a 5,260 sq.m Life Science Building following demolition of Business Centre.
  - New Café Building.

- Refurbishment and alterations of existing buildings.
- Alterations to car parking layout.
- Retention of existing mature trees and landscaping.

5.2 The proposal has been designed to rejuvenate the existing Science Park and to redevelop the Business Centre to provide a Life Sciences building that is to provide for the specific needs of the science and research professions.

5.3 The entire Science Park area is considered to be previously developed land (PDL).

### **Appearance**

5.4 The Business Centre is to be demolished and replaced with a three storey building with associated plant on the roof within designated enclosures. The building would be of a modern appearance with extensively glazed elevations.

5.5 The existing buildings to be refurbished are two storey buildings of a red brick construction and part hipped roofs. The proposal would entail alterations to the roof to improve the overall appearance of the roof form and the elevations and fenestration being replaced with vertical timber cladding.

### **Height and Massing**

5.6 The alterations and refurbishment to Units A – F will not result in any increase in the overall floor area or height of the existing buildings. The changes to the roof forms of the buildings to provide gable ends will however result in a small increase in the overall mass of the roof which is discussed below.

5.7 The proposed Life Sciences building however would result in a material increase in the overall height and mass over and above the Business Centre building that is to be replaced. The height of the proposed building would be approximately 15.4m compared to the existing buildings height of approximately 8.8m.

### **Accessibility**

5.8 The nearest bus stops are situated on either side of the B383 that serve the 01 and 28 bus services that provide services to Ascot, Sunninghill and Windsor.

### **Application Site Access**

5.9 The existing access off the B383 Buckhurst serves all parts off the wider Silwood Park. This existing access into the site is to be retained and the proposed Science Park will use this access. There is an additional access to the south off the London Road.

5.10 The existing access leads to a security barrier from which vehicles access the individual elements of the park including the former Manor House, university buildings or science park. The existing parking areas are to be changed to provide for the proposed café and grounds as part of the proposal.

### **Parking**

5.11 The existing car parking areas are located around Units A – F with a further parking area located around the Business Centre. The site currently has 211 car parking spaces. The scheme proposes a total of 224 car parking spaces of which 45 will be provided with electric vehicle charging points.

5.12 Footways from the B383 Buckhurst Road will stay unchanged with the sites vehicular and pedestrian accesses continuing unchanged.

- 5.13 The development will provide for 100 secure and covered bicycle spaces which will be provided in two secure units located adjacent to Unit C and the Life Sciences building.

### **Landscaping**

- 5.14 The existing site, and the wider Silwood Park is dominated by extensive mature trees and landscaping and as such the retention of and additional soft landscaping forms an integral part of the proposal. Trees are of particular importance to the site, and therefore the proposal, as the site is subject to an area TPO (Reference 001/2020/TPO).
- 5.15 The trees around the boundaries of the site are to be retained with additional planting provided both throughout the site and around the boundaries with an extensive area of soft landscaping proposed around the proposed café.
- 5.16 The application is accompanied by a Landscape Plan (P20545-00-001-GIL-0100) that demonstrates the protection and retention of the existing trees on site together with the additional landscaping that is proposed.
- 5.17 The additional landscaping proposed will, in conjunction with the retention of the boundary trees will ensure the site continues to be well screened from view.

### **Buildings to be demolished**

- 5.18 The existing Business Centre (the floor and roof plan and elevations are shown on Plan No's 6537-SBA-BC-00-BC-A-02100 Rev. PO2; 6537-SBA-BC-00-BC-A-02101 Rev. PO2; 6537-SBA-BC-00-BC-A-02200 Rev. PO2 & 6537-SBA-BC-00-BC-A-02201 Rev. PO2) is the only building to be demolished. The other buildings (Units A – F) are to be refurbished with alterations to the roof form to 'gable' each of the existing hipped roof forms.

### **Environmental Sustainability**

- 5.19 The proposal includes a range of energy efficiency measures including air source {heat pumps (ASHP) and solar photovoltaic arrays that will, in part, be used to power the Life Science building and Units A - F. It seeks to meet the Councils' Interim Sustainability Statement and demonstrates that energy consumption and carbon emissions will be reduced by approximately 32% over and above Part L Building Regulation requirements.

## **6. Planning History**

- 6.1 The site has a moderate planning history dating back to the late 1980's that primarily relates to minor alterations and changes to the Science Park buildings, alterations and changes of use to Silwood Manor House and farm and other applications relating to the inclusion of the site within the SHLAA. There is limited history of direct relevance to the current proposal.

## **7. DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

- 7.1 The main Development Plan policies applying to the site and proposal are:

### **Adopted Borough Local Plan (2021)**

- 7.2 The Borough's development plan comprises the Borough Local Plan (Adopted February 2022). The policies which are considered relevant to this site and planning application are as follows:

<b>Policy/Issue</b>	<b>Adopted Plan Policy</b>	<b>Local</b>
Climate Change	SP2	
Green and Blue Infrastructure	QP2	
Character and Design of New Development	QP3	

Development in Rural Areas and the Green Belt	QP5
Economic Development	ED1
Protected Employment Sites	ED2
Historic Environment	HE1
Managing Flood Risk and Waterways	NR1
Nature Conservation and Biodiversity	NR2
Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows	NR3
Renewable Energy	NR5
Artificial Light Pollution	EP3
Noise	EP4
Infrastructure and Developer Contributions	IF1
Sustainable Transport	IF2

7.3 The Ascot, Sunninghill & Sunningdale neighbourhood Plan 2011 – 2026 (2014) also forms part of the Development Plan. The relevant Policies are set out in the table below:

Trees	NP/EN2
Biodiversity	NP/EN4
Respecting the Townscape	NP/DG1
Density, footprint, scale & bulk	NP/DG2
Good quality design	NP/DG3
Heritage assets	NP/DG4
Energy efficiency and sustainability	NP/DG5
Retaining and encouraging employment	NP/E1
Encouraging micro and small businesses	NP/E2
Parking and Access	NP/T1
Silwood Park	NP/SS9

## 8. MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

### 8.1 National Planning Policy Framework Sections (NPPF) (2021)

- Section 4: Decision making
- Section 6: Building a strong, competitive economy
- Section 9: Promoting sustainable transport
- Section 11: Making effective use of land
- Section 12: Achieving well-designed places
- Section 13: Protecting Green Belt land
- Section 14: Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- Section 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- Section 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

### 8.2 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)

- Planning Obligation and Developer Contributions SPD
- Sustainable Design and Construction SPD
- Borough Wide Design Guide SPD

### 8.3 Other Local Strategies or Publications

- Interim Sustainability Position Statement
- Environment and Climate Strategy

## 9. CONSULTATIONS CARRIED OUT

### Comments from interested parties

7 occupiers were notified directly of the application. The planning officer posted a notice advertising the application at the site on the 21<sup>st</sup> October 2021 and the application was advertised in the Local Press.

No letters of comment have been received.

### Consultees

Consultee	Comment	Where in the report this is considered
Lead Local Flood Authority	No objection subject to conditions	10.vi
Historic England	No formal comments received.	10.iii
Conservation	No in principle objection to the development. The Life Science building would be visible from the Manor House and Grounds. Such views would be glimpsed and as such the scheme represents less than substantial harm at a relatively minor level.	10.iii
Ecology	No objections subject to conditions	10.viii
Highways Authority	No objection subject to conditions.	10.vii

### Other Groups

Parish Council	The Parish consider the scheme is inappropriate development in the Green Belt although they agree that VSC's have been demonstrated. Serious concern however has been raised about the level of parking and they consider this to be inappropriate given the potential increase in vehicular movements.	10.i and 10.vii
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## 10. EXPLANATION OF RECOMMENDATION

10.1 The key issues for consideration are:

- i Principle of development in the Green Belt
- ii Economic Impacts
- iii Climate Change and Sustainability
- iv Design Considerations, Impact on Character and Heritage Assets
- v Amenity Impacts
- vi Sustainable Drainage

vii Highways

viii Natural Environment

**i Principle of this development in the Green Belt**

- 10.2 The site currently comprises a number of existing buildings that are primarily two storey structures with pitched roofs with the exception of the Business Centre which is a single storey structure with a similar dual ridged pitched roof form. In addition, there are extensive areas of hardstanding for the associated parking and internal access roads. When the site is assessed against the definition of previously developed land (PDL) within the NPPF there is no doubt that the entire application site comprises PDL.
- 10.3 Whilst Policy NP/SS9 of the Neighbourhood Plan specifically refers to the area highlighted as Major Developed Site at Map 23 the subtext does state that the wider Silwood Park comprises the Business Centre and the remaining older two-storey units which are described as being tired and in need of renovation. The sub-text further states that Imperial College London and their agents wish to develop their education/research work at Silwood with the Silwood Business Park to serve as a base for an academic/research use.
- 10.4 Policy QP5 of the Borough Local Plan states that the Metropolitan Green Belt will be protected against inappropriate development and that planning permission will not be granted for inappropriate development (as defined by the NPPF) unless very special circumstances are demonstrated.
- 10.5 As required by Policy QP5 one must therefore consider the proposal against the requirements of the NPPF (2021). Paragraph 147 of the NPPF echoes Policy QP5 in stating that inappropriate development will not be granted except in very special circumstances. Paragraph 148 states that local planning authorities should ensure substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt and that 'very special circumstances' will not exist unless harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

Is the proposal inappropriate development in the Green Belt?

- 10.6 Paragraph 149 and 150 both set out the numerous exceptions to what constitutes inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Of particular relevance to the current application is paragraph 149(c), (d) and (g)(i) which state as follows:

**A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. Exceptions to this are:**

- c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;**
- d) the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;**
- g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would:  
– not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development; or**

- 10.7 With the development proposing the alteration of Units A – F and the replacement of the existing Business Centre it is necessary to assess the potential impacts, both spatially and visually, on the Green Belt to assess whether paragraph 149(c), (d) or (g) are of relevance and would the development, as a whole, constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt and therefore by definition harmful.

*Refurbishment of units A-F*

- 10.8 The scheme proposes the alteration of Units A – F that would comprise gabbling the existing hipped roof forms and their subsequent re-cladding. The overall footprint and ridge height would largely remain unchanged. The only increase in built form would be through the gabbling of the hipped roof. With Units A – F measuring from 2,792 to 5,418 cu.m and with the gabbling adding from approximately 132 to 194 cu.m the proposal, in this regard, would add from around 2.5% to 6% additional of built form to each of the units. Such limited increases in built form, in conjunction with there being no increase in the footprint or overall height of Units A – F, the scheme would not result in disproportionate additions over and above the original building(s). As such, this aspect of the development would not constitute inappropriate development and is, in principle, acceptable in the Green Belt subject to compliance with relevant policies within the development plan.

#### *Replacement Life Sciences Building*

- 10.9 The other element of the scheme is the replacement of the existing Business Centre with the Life Science building where both sub-points (d) and (g) allow for the replacement or redevelopment provided the replacement or redeveloped building is not, respectively, materially larger or where there would be no greater impact on the Green Belt than the existing.
- 10.10 The existing Business Centre is a single storey building with a dual ridged hipped roof form. The building measures approximately 2,135 sq.m and approximately 8.8m to the ridge with a total approximate volume of approximately 8,000 cu.m. The proposed Life Science building would comprise a 3 storey flat roof building with additional plant enclosures on the roof. The total footprint would measure approximately 1,753 sq.m with a height of 15.4 m. and an approximately total volume of 26,996 cu.m. This represents an approximate increase in built form of approximately 235%.
- 10.11 Under paragraphs 149 (d) of the NPPF, the replacement or alteration of a building is acceptable provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces. In addition, paragraph 149(g) allows for the limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings) which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development. Due to the increase in built form the proposed replacement Life Science building would be materially larger than the Business Centre building it is to replace. It is for this reason that this aspect of the proposal does not accord with either sub-points (d) or (g) of paragraph 149 of the NPPF. The Life Science building would therefore represent inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

#### *Proposed café building*

- 10.12 The proposed café must also be considered in relation to the potential for harm to the Green Belt. The café building would be sited within a central part of the site largely surrounded by Units A – F and the proposed Life Sciences buildings. The building would be of a contemporary circular building of a flat roof design approximately 4 metres in height with a volume of approximately 1,257 cu.m. Whilst this would impact upon the openness of the Green Belt from a spatial aspect it is considered that the overall harm would be limited due to the siting of the building in a central part of the site surrounded by larger buildings. The café, notwithstanding this, would represent inappropriate development in the Green Belt.
- 10.13 Therefore, the proposed development, taken as a whole, would constitute in appropriate development in the Green Belt.

#### Other Harm to the Green Belt – Impact on openness and purposes

- 10.14 The sub-text to Policy QP5 of the BLP states that the BLP seeks to manage development pressures so as to protect and enhance the quality and distinctive character and heritage of the borough's settlements and countryside that surrounds them. As such, and whilst not part of the policy itself, it is necessary to consider other potential impacts on the Green Belt in terms of openness. Paragraph 137 of the NPPF states that the Government attaches great importance to



Green Belts and that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. Furthermore paragraph 138 of the NPPF goes on to state that the Green Belt serves 5 purposes:

- to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns;
- to assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

- 10.15 As inappropriate development in the Green Belt the proposal is, by definition, harmful to openness. In terms of actual openness, paragraph 001 (Reference ID: 64-001-20190722) of the NPPG advises that when considering the potential impact of development on actual openness of the Green Belt, that openness is capable of having both a spatial and visual aspect, and the permanence and degree of activity likely to be generated should be taken into account.
- 10.16 The alteration and refurbishment of Units A – F would result in the gabling of the existing hipped roof form together with the re-cladding of the buildings. Whilst discussed below in more detail with regards to character and appearance officers are of the opinion that the appearance of the proposed buildings would be an improvement over the existing brick buildings which are of a somewhat tired and dated appearance. The enhanced appearance together with there being no increase in footprint or height and only a minimal increase in built form would ensure there would be, at most, a minimal impact on the openness of the Green Belt by virtue of the new gable ends.
- 10.17 The proposed Life Science building, whilst having a similar footprint as the existing Business Centre the additional height of the 3-storey building together with the additional plant enclosures would have an impact on the openness of the Green Belt by virtue of the increase in built form and the corresponding increase in height that would result in the countryside being encroached upon over that which exists. As such the scheme would conflict with this reason for including land within the Green Belt. However, such harm is mitigated when the visual element of the assessment is considered as set out in the NPPG. Such mitigation is set out below in more detail under the Design and Character section of this report. The site benefits from extensive tree cover on its boundaries and throughout the site. With tree heights ranging from 10 to 22 metres and the quantum of tree cover together with the building being proposed within the same footprint as the existing Business Centre it is considered that the visual harm to openness, is limited to moderate.
- 10.18 The proposal would be sited within the same envelope of built form on site and as such would not result in the sprawl of any large built-up areas nor would there be any coalescence of neighbouring towns or villages. Moreover, the scheme would not harm the setting or special character of any historic towns. Lastly, in seeking to redevelop the site that comprises PDL the scheme would not prevent any urban regeneration. There is therefore only some conflict with one of the five purposes of the Green Belt
- 10.19 While the proposal is considered to cause harm to the Green Belt, the extent of built form is contained within the existing site boundaries and well screened by significant landscaping and planting. Paragraph 148 requires that substantial weight is given to this harm and such development should only be approved where very special circumstances clearly outweigh this, and any other harm.
- 10.20 The applicant has made a case for very special circumstances which are discussed in Section 12 of this report.

#### **iv Economic Impacts**

- 10.21 Policy ED1(1) of the Borough Local Plan states that a range of different types and sizes of employment land and premises will be encouraged to maintain a portfolio of sites to meet the diverse needs of the local economy. Further, Policy ED1(2) states that the Royal Borough will seek to make provision for at least 11,200 net new jobs across a range of floorspaces. Policy

ED2 (Employment Sites) designates Silwood Park as a protected employment area for technology and educational uses.

- 10.22 The subtext to Policy NP/SS9 of the Neighbourhood Plan states that the overarching Intent to Policy NP/S9 is to encourage the University's overall plans for the future of Silwood Park but to retain it as an education and research site which will also provide for additional employment opportunities. In addition, the NPPF states that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. Furthermore, paragraph 96 ensures that there should be faster delivery of other public service infrastructure such as further education colleagues. While the scheme would not delivery any new such infrastructure it would facilitate continued and enhanced collaborative space between the University and the commercial life science organisations that will occupy the buildings. This would allow for high quality additional space to facilitate research and development in such life science professions.
- 10.23 In order to support their economic argument the applicant has provided a Needs Assessment which is summarised below. Prior to this it is pertinent to consider the Local Plans Evidence base which highlights the need for such an employment related development. This evidence base has formed part of the examination into the Council's recently adopted Borough Local Plan.
- 10.24 The Berkshire Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA) Study (February 2016) refers, inter alia, to the Thames Valley Berkshire Skills Priority Statement which specifically highlights the life-science sector that is both buoyant and growing whilst the Central Berkshire Economic Development Needs Assessment (October 2016) states that the Borough (RBWM) that the Ascot/Sunningdale area generally has a lower level of office supply and is seen as more a niche market.
- 10.25 Moreover, the Economic Development Needs Assessment (EDNA) is of particular importance. Table 4.3 of the 2016 EDNA states that RBWM has, based on labour demand, a net floorspace requirement of 222,080 sq.m B Class Floorspace. When past completions are factored into the assessment, Table 4.8 of the ENDA states that the RBWM figure drops to 221,080 sq.m. This encompasses the total B Class uses (aspects of which would now fall into Use Class E). It is evident there is a significant need for additional B Class Floorspaces within which there is a need for specific science and research related floorspace.
- 10.26 The applicants Needs Assessment highlights the marked difference for both general office space and lab space. The Needs Assessment refers to reports and publications from the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) that confirms there has been a contraction in the need for office space as a result for increased levels of homeworking following the Covid-19 pandemic. Despite the Covid-19 pandemic there has been an increase in lab space demand. The Needs Assessment states that RBWM is expected to need between 8,750 – 26,500 sq.m of lab space by 2025. This is set against an approximate 286 sq.m of lab space to be delivered in RBWM in 2022 that equates to just 0.4% of all LEP lab space demand.
- 10.27 The lower figure assumes that RBWM's historic share of all national life science jobs (1.2%) continues unchanged. The Needs Assessment however states that the upper figure is based on RBWM attracting 28% of all the Thames Valley LEP life science jobs.
- 10.28 RBWM's unique location within the Thames Valley LEP area straddles both Eastern and Central Berkshire, with proximity to world renowned universities including Imperial College London, Oxford and London. Together with the cluster of a specialist workforce, the Needs Assessment states Silwood Park, is well placed to serve as an international hub for such life science related work. It is evident that there is both a significant demand for such life science lab space within RBWM and the surrounding Thames Valley Berkshire LEP area both quantitatively and qualitatively. Bespoke new developments such as that proposed will enhance the Borough's reputation locally and regionally particularly when there are developments such as the Berkshire Science Park to the south of Reading in Wokingham.

- 10.29 Officers have reviewed numerous publications and reports that are available on the Thames Valley Berkshire LEP website all of which both highlight and confirm the importance of the 'life sciences' sector to the local, regional, national and even international economy with life science sector described as 'thriving'.
- 10.30 Additional reference is made to the economic benefits below under Section 12 regarding the 'Very Special Circumstances'. It is evident however that, notwithstanding the Green Belt issues, there is clear in principle support for the continued economic and educational uses at Silwood Park that the proposal would deliver and expand upon these.

### **iii. Climate Change and Sustainability**

- 10.31 The Council seeks for developments to make the fullest contribution to reducing CO2 emissions, including a minimum 20% reduction in CO2 emissions is sought over that brought about via current Building Regulations, with 12% of the energy demand being met by on site renewables as stipulated in the Council's Interim Sustainability Position Statement. An offset contribution is also sought in relation to remaining regulated emissions.
- 10.32 The application is supported by an energy statement that details a range of sustainability measures including photovoltaics and air source heat pumps in conjunction with the use of specific materials in the construction of the Life Science building are to be used, that will contribute to a 32.9% reduction in carbon emissions over that brought about by current Part L Building Regulations.
- 10.33 Whilst further reductions could have been achieved with the use of ground source heat pumps, wind turbine(s) and biomass these were discounted as a result of the sites constraints including its visual sensitivities and tree routes. As set out in the recommendation in Section 1 above, the proposal is subject to a Unilateral Undertaking being agreed to secure the carbon offset contribution so that the scheme accords with the objectives of Policies SP2, NR5 and the Interim Sustainability Position Statement.
- 10.34 Furthermore, the proposal provides a series of sustainability improvements that are in line with the Council's adopted Environment and Climate Strategy.

### **iii Design Considerations, Impact on Character and Heritage Assets**

#### *Design and Impact on character*

- 10.35 Policy QP3 of the BLP ensures new development will be expected to achieve sustainable high-quality design with a range of design principles to be assessed including respecting the local, natural or historic character paying regard to urban grain, layouts, density, height, skylines, scale, bulk, massing proportions, trees etc.
- 10.36 The land to the west contains the former Manor House and associated former gardens. The Manor House is a Grade II Listed Building and as such the need for a high-quality design is of particular importance in seeking to respect and conserve the setting of the Manor House.
- 10.37 Before considering the design related merits of the proposal, the Neighbourhood Plan gives some background to the need for the site's redevelopment. The sub-text to Policy NP/SS9 of the Neighbourhood Plan describes the Silwood Park Campus as being 'to some degree tired and in need of renovation and around 50% of the space is currently vacant'.

#### *Refurbishment of existing buildings (A-F)*

- 10.38 The existing Units A-F are two storey buildings with green fenestration detailing and pitched roofs giving the buildings a near identical appearance whilst the Business Centre is of a similar materials palette with a dual-ridged pitched roof. The age and choice of materials palette, as set out in the Neighbourhood Plan, is such that the buildings are of limited architectural merit. In order for the site to fully achieve its full economic potential the site and buildings are in need of redevelopment.

- 10.39 The alterations to Units A – F would comprise re-cladding the buildings in a vertical timber boarding and ‘gabling’ the pitched roofs which have an unsympathetic protruding ridge. The gabling of the roofs would result in a simpler overall roof form which would, together with the simple materials pallet for the re-cladding, result in an enhancement of the appearance of Units A – F.
- 10.40 Furthermore, the timber boarding cladding is considered to be simple yet attractive and respects the surrounding largely wooded character of the site and surrounds that are dominated by extensive tree cover. With regard to scale, form, massing and density, the alterations to the buildings would not result in an increase in the overall footprint or ridge height with the only additional massing resulting from the proposed gabling of the Units’. Despite the minor increase in mass at roof level the proposal would, it is considered, enhance the overall character and appearance of the buildings and the site itself. The impact on the character of the surrounding area would be limited by virtue of the extensive tree cover.

*Replacement Life Sciences building*

- 10.41 The proposed Life Science building would comprise a three storey building with flat roof with plant enclosures being sited on the roof with a modern contemporary approach proposed for the buildings overall appearance. The design proposes a grid approach to the design that will serve to differentiate between floors with vertical curtain walling and fenestration to further articulate and break up the overall mass of the building. The proposed design approach is considered to represent a sustainable high quality approach to the design of the Life Science building.
- 10.42 The applicant has stated in their submitted Design & Access Statement that they propose a materials palette that will seek to respect both the Manor House and surrounding woodland setting with a range of colours being proposed including lightly coloured terracotta colours.
- 10.43 The building itself, whilst it would have a similar footprint to the Business Centre that it would replace, would be considerably higher. The Business Centre has an overall ridge height of approximately 9m while the Life Science building would measure approximately 14.5m to the roof and 17m to the top of the plant enclosures.
- 10.44 Policy QP3 of the Borough Local Plan seeks to ensure that new development respects the surrounding environment with regard to, inter alia, building heights. Principle 7.5(2) of the Borough Wide Design Guide SPD ensures that building heights do not result in adverse impacts on skylines and the character of the area, public realm and the natural environment. Such objectives however need to be balanced against Section 11 of the NPPF, and in particular paragraph 130(c) that require planning decisions to make the most effective use of land and are sympathetic to local character while not preventing or discouraging innovation or change such as increased densities. Moreover, the Life Sciences will, in conjunction with the refurbishment of Units A – F, result in a material increase in additional science and research floorspace within the Borough. Reference to the need for this specific sort of science and research employment floorspace is set out below.
- 10.45 The Life Sciences building would be sited on largely the same footprint as the existing Business Centre with the surrounding area, as noted above, being dominated by an extensive mature woodland and tree coverage with tree heights ranging from 10 to over 20 metres. In addition, the accompanying Arboricultural Impact Assessment demonstrates that the existing boundary trees are to be retained.
- 10.46 With such an extensive tree coverage around the site boundaries and with the proposed Life Sciences building being a minimum of approximately 65 metres from Buckhurst Road and 90 metres from London Road the potential for views of the proposed building from the surrounding public realm would be, at most, extremely limited to glimpsed views during winter months. Such

limited views are not considered harmful to the surrounding character and appearance of the area.

- 10.47 Views of the proposed Life Sciences building would be limited to from within the Science Park site itself and from the additional university buildings immediately to the north. Such views however would be framed within the overall context of the existing site which comprises both university and commercial buildings and would be considered an enhancement to the site's life science and education context.

#### *Proposed Café building*

- 10.48 Regarding the proposed café building, this would be sited in a roughly central part of the site within a landscaped area and would serve as a pleasant ancillary feature for staff and visitors to the Science Park. The building itself would be of a circular design with a green sedum flat roof that would result in an attractive yet contemporary appearance whilst minimising the overall height and mass of the building. The need for a high quality design is, as outlined above, of particular importance due to the site making up the wider setting of the former Silwood Manor House which is a Grade II Listed Building.

#### *Impact on Heritage*

- 10.49 The Conservation Officer has stated that whilst the buildings the subject of this application contribute little to the significance of the listed building, they do still form part of their setting.
- ;
- 10.50 Regarding the alterations and refurbishment of Units A – F the Conservation officer raises no in principle objection subject to the materials to be used being agreed. Such details are the subject to **Condition 3** in Section 15 below. The Conservation Officer has requested that a pigmented zinc roofing material would work well in this location. Further, the Conservation Officer has stated the greening of the central area around the café is welcome with the design representing an interesting approach.
- 10.51 Whilst raising no overall in principle objection a request was made for additional wire line drawings for the Life Science building to be submitted to demonstrate the extent that the proposed Life Science building will be visible from the Manor House and surrounding lawn areas.
- 10.52 The wire line drawings do demonstrate that there would be views of the Life Science from the Manor House and grounds these would be glimpsed, particularly in winter months. The Conservation Officer has confirmed that such views would not represent substantial harm to the setting of the former Manor House and grounds.
- 10.53 The Officer has confirmed that the glimpsed views would represent less than substantial harm pursuant to paragraph 202 of the NPPF, and that such harm would be at the lower end of the scale. Such minor harm however would be mitigated against through the protection of the existing trees and additional landscaping being secured (**conditions 5 and 6**). Furthermore, it is considered that the public benefits, outlined below in Section 12, would clearly outweigh any such potential harm to the setting of the listed Silwood Manor House.

#### **v Amenity Impacts**

- 10.54 Policy QP3(m) of the BLP ensures new development has no unacceptable effect on the amenities enjoyed by the occupants of adjoining properties in terms of privacy, light, disturbance, vibration, pollution dust, smell and access to sunlight and daylight.
- 10.55 The application site is located within the wider Silwood Park site with additional education buildings to the north and east and woodland to the south. Then nearest residential property, known as East Lodge, is located approximately 22 metres to the north east of Unit A.
- 10.56 With the only material change proposed being the 'gabling' of the roof it is considered that there would be no material change in the amenities such as availability of daylight and sunlight, loss of

privacy experienced by the occupants of East Lodge as a result of the proposed changes to the built form of Unit A.

- 10.57 Regarding issues that may arise from the proposed use of the site in terms of noise, pollution, dust etc., units A – F and the Business Centre are currently used as office space by a range of commercial organisations. The proposed Life Sciences science, research and lab space uses would be relatively benign in terms of their levels of noise and disturbance. As such the use of Units A – F and the Life Science building would not result in terms of impacts including noise and disturbance would not have any material change to or impact on the amenities of the occupants of East Lodge.
- 10.58 With the exception of East Lodge the other nearest residential properties are those to the south of London Road. These are separated by the extensive tree cover and are in excess of 100 metres from the proposed Life Science building and Unit F. With such a generous separation distance it is considered that the increase in built form associated with the Life Science building and the minor works to Unit F or their use would not impact upon the amenities of the properties to the south of London Road.

#### Amenity conclusion

- 10.59 It is not considered that the proposal is likely to have any material impact upon the amenities of existing or adjoining residents. As a consequence, it is considered that the proposal fully accords with the objectives of Policy QP3(m).

#### **vi Sustainable Drainage**

- 10.60 The application is accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment & Drainage Strategy Report. This was reviewed by the LLFA with an initial response seeking clarification on soakaways and exceedance flows with the proposed blue/green roofs being welcomed. The initial response advised withholding permission until the first two points had been addressed.
- 10.61 Upon the receipt of additional information the LLFA have confirmed that their initial comments regarding soakaways and exceedance flows have been satisfactorily addressed.
- 10.62 The LLFA have therefore raised no objection to the development subject to a number of conditions (**Condition 13**) ensuring a full surface water drainage scheme is submitted which details all aspects of the surface water plan, supporting calculations and maintenance arrangements.
- 10.63 Policy NR1 of the BLP sets out that the Council will not grant planning permission for development, which poses or might pose an unacceptable risk to the quality of groundwater and/or which would have a detrimental effect on the quality of surface water. As set out in the updated response from the LLFA it is considered that subject to the imposition of the suggested condition that the proposal would accord with the objectives of Policy NR1 of the BLP.

#### **vii Highways Impacts**

- 10.64 The proposal has been assessed by the Highways Authority with regard to car and bicycle parking, sustainable transport and traffic generation and its associated impacts.
- 10.65 With regard to site context and accessibility, the Highways Authority confirms that the site is served by Bus Route 1 operated by the White Bus Company which provides a service every 1.5 hours between Ascot and Windsor. Furthermore, the Highways Authority states that the existing highway infrastructure does not provide a welcoming environment to encourage active modes of transport.

#### Parking

- 10.66 The scheme has been assessed for both bicycle and car parking in accordance with the 2004 Parking Strategy as a starting point. This does not include specific criteria for research and

development or Class E. The Highways Authority have considered the proposal against Class B1 office development. The Highways Authority have confirmed that this assessment, in conjunction with the parking accumulation survey that has been undertaken, concludes that the level of parking proposed at 224 parking spaces is acceptable.

- 10.67 The Proposed Ground Floor Site Plan (Drawing No. 6537-SRA-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-02003 Rev. P02) shows two enclosures that will allow for secure bicycle parking sheltered from the elements that show parking for 52 bicycles. The Highways Authority have requested a condition ensuring that the details of these structures are to be provided prior to the use first commencing (**condition 7**).
- 10.68 The Parish Council have raised concerns relating to the proposed parking provision at the site. They have stated in their response that they do not consider the level of parking sufficient as a result of the additional staff and the limited increase in parking proposed. The Transport Assessment has used the TRICS database to ascertain the likely increase in vehicular movements arising from the proposal. TRICS is a database that uses parking surveys to build up a detailed picture of the average vehicular movements associated with certain development types and is a more accurate way of estimating car park requirement for bespoke uses than general car parking standards.
- 10.69 In this case the Transport Assessment has used offices as the basis for establishing the projected increase. The Transport Assessment confirms that the assessment is based on a Business Park/Office trip rate which is the higher figure. With the scheme proposing science, research and development uses the actual trip rate is likely to be lower. Furthermore, the Parish state, inter alia, that there are no other services and is in a poor location. The Highways Authority have referred to a bus service that does provide for serves to Ascot and Windsor. Such provision together with the provision of new bicycle parking facilities, a travel plan and the detailed TRICS analysis using the higher Business Park/Office use the Highways Authority have confirmed the scheme is acceptable.

#### Sustainable Transport & Travel Plan

- 10.70 Policy IF2 of the BLP seeks to ensure that, inter alia, new development including offices and other such employment spaces are located close to shops, local services and facilities that provide safe, convenient and sustainable modes of transport.
- 10.71 The applicant has submitted a Travel Plan that seeks to encourage a reduction in the reliance upon the private car. The Travel Plan concludes that the current Census Modal Share suggests that 73% of staff would use the private car. The Travel Plan aims to reduce this to 70% in the first year, 65% in the second year and 60% in the third year. The submitted Travel Plan suggests a number of measures that would seek to reduce use of the private car.
- 10.72 Such measures include an active marketing campaign to ensure all staff are aware of the Travel Plan that includes information on the bus routes, stops and times of the Route 1 Bus Route, cycle lanes in the surrounding area, encouraging and promoting local lift share and car clubs etc. The Highways Authority have however suggested a condition ensuring a new Travel Plan is undertaken prior to the use commencing.
- 10.73 The sustainable transport objectives of Policy IF2 needs to be balanced against paragraph 105 of the NPPF which states that opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas and that such differences should be taken into account at both plan making and decision making stages of the planning system.
- 10.74 It is considered that the submitted Travel Plan strikes an appropriate balance between seeking to encourage future staff to use more sustainable modes of transport against the sustainability and accessibility constraints imposed by the site's location and surrounding highways infrastructure.

#### Traffic Generation

- 10.75 The Highways Authority have confirmed that the residual trips generated by the proposal is unlikely to have a severe impact on those that reside or commute within the surrounding area

when considered pursuant to paragraph 111 of the NPPF.

### Highways conclusion

- 10.76 The highways submissions have been considered and the impact of the proposal is not considered to represent an unacceptable increase in traffic, or a risk to road safety.
- 10.77 The Highways Authority have assessed the proposal and consider that it is acceptable in highways terms subject to a number of conditions. The suggested conditions include submission of a Travel Plan (**condition 16**).
- 10.78 Regarding the Travel Plan; the Highways Authority have acknowledged the site is not in a particularly sustainable location and together with the existing highways infrastructure is unlikely to encourage sustainable modes of transport. The provision of a further Travel Plan is considered necessary to inform employees about other modes of transport to reduce reliance on the private car.
- 10.79 The additional conditions regarding the provision of the parking spaces as shown on the plans and details for the bicycle shelters to be submitted to and approved are listed below as **conditions 7 and 8** below in Section 15.

## **viii Natural Environment**

### Landscape

- 10.80 The visual impact of the proposal has been assessed in Sections 10.i and 10.iv above. In terms of the detailed landscape and planting proposals, the submitted landscaping plan (Drawing No. P20545-00-001-GIL-0100) confirms that an appropriate landscaping scheme can be provided on and throughout the site. The additional landscaping focuses around the proposed café building to provide for a landscaped setting for the proposed café building and to provide for an outdoor space for future staff and visitors.
- 10.81 The site benefits from an extensive mature tree band around the boundaries and as such extensive landscaping around the site is not considered to be a particularly important requirement in this case. Additional reference is made to trees below.

### Trees

- 10.82 The site is subject to a TPO (TPO Reference: 001/2020/TPO) and as such the protection and retention of existing trees is of particular importance. The accompanying Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Tree Protection Plan (Plan No. Preliminary Tree Protection Plan) demonstrates that sufficient protection measures can be employed to ensure the protection of existing trees, particularly those around the boundaries of the site, during the construction phase.
- 10.83 Subject to the imposition of **Condition 5** relating to the implementation of the tree protection measures prior to and for the duration of the works, the scheme is considered to have an acceptable impact on the existing trees. An additional landscaping condition will secure a detailed landscaping scheme to be implemented prior to the use hereby approved commencing.

### Ecology

- 10.84 The Council's Ecologist has reviewed the Ecological Appraisal which they confirm has been prepared to an appropriate standard. The report confirms that some of the buildings and habitats on site have the potential to support roosting bats and serve as foraging areas for bats.
- 10.85 The site does not have suitable habitat for reptiles or Great Crested Newts although Cotoneaster and Rhododendrum, two invasive species were observed on site. The Council's Ecologist has recommended a number of conditions regarding a Construction Environmental Management Plan (**condition 9**), non-native species method statement (**condition 10**), external lighting (**condition 11**) and biodiversity enhancements (**condition 12**). With the importance placed on the natural



environment and the need to secure biodiversity enhancements by virtue of Policy NR2 of the BLP the suggested conditions are appropriate and necessary.

## 11. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE AND SECTION 106

11.1 A Section 106 agreement comprising the following elements is proposed:

- ☐ Carbon Offset contribution

11.2 The development is not CIL liable.

## 12. VERY SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND PLANNING BALANCE

### Very Special Circumstances

12.1 As set out in Section 10.i of this report, the proposal is inappropriate development in the Green Belt. and should not be approved except in Very Special Circumstances (VSC). Paragraph 148 of the NPPF states that VSC will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

12.2 It is therefore important to identify the harm that would arise from the proposed development and identify the weight attributed to this harm, so that this can be considered in the balancing exercise. The table below summarises the identified harm that would arise from the proposed development, and the weight attributed to that harm.

Harm	Can mitigation overcome harm?	Weight attributed to harm	Policy Reference
Inappropriate development In and harm to the openness of the Green Belt	No	Substantial	BLP Policy QP5 and NPPF 137 'great importance given to Green Belt', 138, LP GB1, GB2

### Scheme benefits

12.3 The proposal addresses a clear need for new lab and life science research and development space within the Borough. The benefits are:

- Creation of a new Life Science building and the retrofitting of Units A – F that will collectively create an approximate 9,500 sq.m of lab space against an undersupply of 21,000 sq.m within the Borough.
- Contributing towards the long-term science and research use of Silwood Park and the University in accordance with the BLP and Neighbourhood Plan.
- Creation of an additional 130 FTEs of employment and £27 million in Gross Value Added (GVA) for the UK economy on an annual basis.
- Creation of an additional 111 construction jobs for at least 1.5 years together with a total 217 indirect supply chain jobs.
- Increased educational and research opportunities through collaboration with Imperial College London for students at the University
- Creation of training and apprenticeship opportunities.
- Potential to foster the continued growth of UK Life Science profession which is identified as a growing profession within the South East and the UK as a whole.

### Summary of the considerations put forward as VSC, and weight attributed to them

12.4 The benefits arising from the proposal and the weight afforded to them are summarised in the table below.

<b>Material Consideration</b>	<b>Weight afforded</b>	<b>Policy Reference</b>
<p>Economic benefits arising from the proposed development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment, both direct on site, in the supply chain and support services but also indirectly through growth in local, regional and UK Life Science enhancement</li> <li>• Local apprenticeship schemes and associated skills and training for local people and key sectors such as school leavers and unemployed;</li> <li>• Additional space for and support for key growing profession in the Thames Valley LEP.</li> </ul>	Significant weight	<p>BLP Polices ED1 &amp; ED2. Neighbourhood Plan Policy NP/SS9.</p> <p>NPPF 8 a); 81,83, 84a), 85; RBWM Economic Development Strategy 2016;</p>
<p>Social and educational benefits arising from the proposed development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued use of Silwood Park for life science research and development.</li> <li>• Improved educational opportunities for imperial College London and students.</li> <li>• Enhanced science and research opportunities within the Borough and the surrounding Economic Functional Area.</li> </ul>	Significant weight	BLP Spatial Vision and Neighbourhood Plan NP/SS9.
<p>Sustainability benefits arising from the proposed development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An approximate 33% reduction in carbon emissions when compared to a Building Regulations Compliant Scheme</li> </ul>	Moderate	BLP Policy NR2 & Interim Sustainability Statement
Biodiversity benefits arising from the proposed development	Moderate	BLP Policy NR2

12.6 The weight afforded to the material considerations put forward as Very Special Circumstances are set out above. The weight attributed to the benefits of the scheme to the local economy and local educational benefits both attract significant weight. The sustainability benefits and benefits to biodiversity are afforded moderate weight. Whilst the harm to the Green Belt through inappropriateness is afforded substantial weight by definition, the additional Green Belt harm is limited given the pre-existing developed nature of the site and by virtue of the extensive woodland trees that surround the site.

12.7 Overall, it is considered that cumulatively, there are substantial benefits to the scheme which clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt and all other harms. As such, Very Special Circumstances exist, and the development is considered acceptable.

## Planning Balance

- 12.8 Whilst the proposal has been identified as inappropriate development in the Green Belt, Very Special Circumstances exist which clearly outweigh this harm to justify the development in the Green Belt.
- 12.9 No other additional harms have been identified by officers. The proposal is acceptable in respect of impact on the character of the area in general, impact on the highway and parking provision and other environmental considerations.
- 12.10 The proposal represents a significant benefit in terms of employment and education through the creation of additional direct and indirect employment opportunities and the relationship with Imperial College London. The proposal would also bring about sustainability and ecological benefits.

## **13. CONCLUSION**

- 13.1 The application therefore considered to comply with the requirements of the Borough local Plan when considered as a whole as well as the National Planning Policy Framework. Paragraph 11c) of the NPPF states that Local Planning Authorities should approve development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay. As such, in accordance with Section 38 (6) of the Planning Act, permission should be granted.

## **14. APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT**

- Appendix A – Site Location plan
- Appendix B – Proposed Site Plan
- Appendix C – Proposed elevations

## **15. CONDITIONS RECOMMENDED FOR INCLUSION IF PERMISSION IS GRANTED**

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be commenced within three years from the date of this permission.  
Reason: To accord with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).
- 2 The development shall not be occupied until samples of the materials to be used on the external surfaces of the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out and maintained in accordance with the approved details.  
Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the area. Relevant Policy: Policy QP3 of the BLP.
- 3 The use of the buildings shall be used solely for science, life science, research & development uses with ancillary office space and for no other use permitted by Use Class E unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.  
Reason: To ensure the development accords with the primary reasons for approving the development. Relevant Policy: Borough Local Plan Policy QP5 and Neighbourhood Plan Policy NP/SS9.
- 4 The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until samples and/or a specification of all the finishing materials to be used in any hard surfacing on the application site have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and thereafter undertaken in accordance with the approved scheme.  
Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the area. Relevant Policies - BLP Policy QP3.
- 5 The erection of fencing for the protection of any retained tree and any other protection specified shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved plans and particulars before any equipment, machinery or materials are brought on to the site, and thereafter maintained until the completion of all construction work and all equipment, machinery and surplus materials have been permanently removed from the site. Nothing shall be stored or placed in any area fenced in accordance with this condition and the ground levels within those areas shall not be altered, nor

shall any excavation be made, without the written approval of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect trees which contribute to the visual amenities of the site and surrounding area. Relevant Policies - BLP Policies QP3, NR2 and NR3.

- 6 The development shall not be occupied until the hard and soft landscaping scheme has been implemented within the first planting season following the substantial completion of the development in accordance with details that have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be retained in accordance with the approved details. If within a period of five years from the date of planting of any tree or shrub shown on the approved landscaping plan, that tree or shrub, or any tree or shrub planted in replacement for it, is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies, or becomes seriously damaged or defective, another tree or shrub of the same species and size as that originally planted shall be planted in the immediate vicinity.

Reason: To ensure a form of development that maintains, and contributes positively to, the character and appearance of the area. Relevant Policies - BLP Policy QP3 and NR3.

- 7 No part of the development shall be occupied until covered and secure cycle parking facilities have been provided in accordance with details that have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These facilities shall thereafter be kept available for the parking of cycles in association with the development at all times.

Reason: To ensure that the development is provided with adequate parking facilities in order to encourage the use of alternative modes of transport. Relevant Policies - BLP Policies QP3 and IF2.

- 8 No part of the development shall be occupied until vehicle parking space has been provided in accordance with the approved drawing. The space approved shall be retained for parking in association with the development.

Reason: To ensure that the development is provided with adequate parking facilities in order to reduce the likelihood of roadside parking which could be detrimental to the free flow of traffic and to highway safety. Relevant Policies - BLP Policies QP3 and IF2.

- 9 No development shall take place (including demolition, ground works, vegetation clearance) until a construction environmental management plan (CEMP: Biodiversity) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The CEMP (Biodiversity) 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, including precautionary measures in regard to the protection of bats, badgers, nesting birds, and hedgehogs and the control of invasive species.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: To minimise impacts on biodiversity in accordance with Borough Local Plan Policy NR2.

- 10 No development shall take place until a detailed method statement for removing or the long-term management / control of Cotoneaster and Rhododendrum on the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The method statement shall include measures that will be used to prevent the spread of these invasive species during any operations e.g. mowing, strimming or soil movement. It shall also contain measures to ensure that any soils brought to the site are free of the seeds / root / stem of any invasive plant listed under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended. Development shall proceed in accordance with the approved method statement.

Reason: To prevent the spread of invasive species and accord with BLP Policy NR2 and the NPPF.

- 11 No external lighting (including floodlighting) shall be installed until a report detailing the lighting scheme and how this will not adversely impact upon wildlife has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The report shall include the following figures and appendices:- A layout plan with beam orientation - A schedule of equipment - Measures to avoid glare - An isolux contour map showing light spillage to 1 lux both vertically and horizontally and areas identified as being of ecological importance.- Hours of operation of any external lighting. The approved lighting plan shall thereafter be implemented as agreed.

Reason: To ensure that wildlife is not adversely affected by the proposed development in line

with Policy NR2 of the BLP.

- 12 The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until a Biodiversity Enhancement Assessment have been submitted and approved in writing by the council that shall specify the measures to be undertaken to achieve a 10% biodiversity enhancement across the site. The biodiversity enhancements shall be installed as agreed.

Reason: To incorporate biodiversity in and around the development in accordance with BLP Policy NR2.

- 13 No development (excluding demolition) shall commence on the site until a surface water drainage scheme for the development, based on sustainable drainage principles has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Details shall include: 1. Full details of all components of the proposed surface water drainage system including dimensions, locations, gradients, invert levels, cover levels and relevant construction details. 2. Supporting calculations confirming compliance with the Non-Statutory Technical Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems. Where disposal of surface water runoff via infiltration is proposed the supporting calculations should be based on infiltration rates determined by testing carried out in accordance with BRE365. 3. Details of the maintenance arrangements relating to the proposed surface water drainage system, confirming who will be responsible for its maintenance and the maintenance regime to be implemented. The surface water drainage system shall be implemented and maintained in accordance with the approved details thereafter.

Reason: To ensure compliance with National Planning Practice Guidance and the Non-Statutory Technical Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems, and to ensure that the proposed development is safe from flooding and does not increase flood risk elsewhere.

- 14 Prior to the occupation of the development hereby approved Electric Vehicle charging details shall be submitted to an approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The charging infrastructure shall then be installed as approved.

Reason: To ensure provision is made for the installation of electric vehicle charging infrastructure. Relevant Policy: Policy IF2 of the Borough Local Plan.

- 15 The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the submitted Energy Statement.

Reason: To ensure a development that maximises sustainability measures and minimises the impacts on Climate Change. BLP policy SP2

- 16 No part of the development shall be occupied until an updated Travel plan has been submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the use of the site encourages sustainable modes of transport. Relevant Policies - Local Plan IF2 and QP3

- 17 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans listed below.

Reason: To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved particulars and plans.