

MAIDENHEAD DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PANEL

20 September 2023

Item: 2

Application No.:	22/03270/OUT
Location:	Maidenhead Office Park Westacott Way Littlewick Green Maidenhead SL6 3QH
Proposal:	Outline application for access only to be considered at this stage with all other matters to be reserved for demolition of the existing buildings and redevelopment of the site for industrial and logistics use within Use Classes E(G)(iii), B2 and B8, with surface car parking, landscaping, and associated works.
Applicant:	Anglesea Capital LLP
Agent:	Mr Phil Brown
Parish/Ward:	White Waltham Parish/Hurley And Walthams
If you have a question about this report, please contact: Sarah Tucker on 01628 796292 or at sarah.tucker@rbwm.gov.uk	

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The proposal seeks outline planning permission for the demolition of the existing buildings on the site and redevelopment for industrial and logistics use within Use Classes E(g)(iii), B2 and B8, with surface car parking, landscaping and associated works. All matters are reserved, except for maximum floorspace and access. The report sets out the relevant Development Plan and other policy considerations relevant to this planning application as well as the necessary consultation responses that have been submitted during the course of the application. The report also sets out the main material planning considerations and assessment in relation to this planning application.
- 1.2 The site is allocated for employment development in the Green Belt under Policy ED2 of the Borough Local Plan (BLP). The proposal results in a scheme that is not in conformity with the Use Classes set out in Policy ED2, given the introduction of a B8 use and the loss of office floorspace. However, the development seeks to take the land from an underperforming economic use (office) to one where there is a need in the Borough (logistics) as demonstrated through independent review, and this is a public benefit of the scheme. This is a considered a material consideration that outweighs the lack of conformity with Policy ED2. Whilst the development is defined as inappropriate development in the Green Belt, with harm to the openness of the Green Belt, very special circumstances exist to outweigh the harm by way of inappropriateness, as set out below.
- 1.3 It has also been demonstrated that the outline proposals would not result in unacceptable harm to the appearance of the surrounding area, residential amenities, to parking and highway safety, ecology, trees, landscaping and has the potential to introduce sustainability measures to reduce the carbon footprint of the development, subject to the use of appropriate conditions and/or securing through the legal agreement.

It is recommended the Committee authorises the Head of Planning:

1.	<p>To grant planning permission on the satisfactory completion of an undertaking to secure the following infrastructure in Section 10 of this report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery and maintenance of biodiversity net gain; • Travel plan; and, • Provision of local jobs <p>and with the conditions listed in Section 13 of this report.</p>
2.	<p>To refuse planning permission if an undertaking to secure the infrastructure in Section 10 of this report has not be satisfactorily completed for the reason that the proposed development would not be accompanied by the required mitigation of biodiversity net gain, a travel plan and provision of local jobs.</p>

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; such decisions can only be made by the Committee as the application is for major development

3. THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

- 3.1 The application site comprises an existing office park which was constructed in the early 1990's and which has been in use since then. The site is accessed off Westacott Way, in the open countryside to the south-west of Maidenhead. Westacott Way was built entirely to serve the office park and connects to Bath Road in Woolley Green to the north by way of a roundabout that is 1.4km from the site itself. Directly to the north of the site lies the main railway line, and over that, agricultural fields and residential properties on Cherry Garden Lane. To the south of the site lies the White Waltham airfield and the edge of Maidenhead itself. To the east lies another commercial property, Briggs Equipment, also accessed from Westacott Way and to the west lie agricultural fields. The site is surrounded by substantial stands of Leylandii trees, apart from the eastern boundary with the adjacent commercial property. The site and the surrounding land is mostly flat.
- 3.2 The site itself comprises a number of late 20th century office blocks with existing landscaping, extensive parking and an amenity area to the west of the site that includes a large number of trees and a pond. There are a number of trees on site that form part of the existing landscaping.

4. KEY CONSTRAINTS

- 4.1 The site lies within the Green Belt. The site is also allocated under Policy ED2 of the BLP as an Established Employment Site in the Green Belt for Use Class E(g) and Industrial Uses. The site is subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) which relates to trees on the edges of the site and within the amenity area but does not include the trees within the car parking areas or the Leylandii trees that surround the application site. Two public rights of way, PROW9 and NCR 4, cross Westacott Way. The site lies within Flood Zone 1.

5. THE PROPOSAL

- 5.1 The application seeks outline planning permission for the demolition of the existing buildings on site and redevelopment for industrial and logistics use within Use Classes E(g)(iii), B2 and B8 with surface car parking, landscaping and associated works. All matters are reserved, except for maximum floorspace and access. The access is proposed to be retained as existing. The proposed floorspace is 55,741 sqm, with the current site at 27,692 sqm, an uplift of 28,049 sqm.
- 5.2 The application has been submitted alongside a parameter plan which sets out the broad area for redevelopment and would be secured via a recommended condition. This does not include the majority of the existing amenity area or the trees at the northern part of the site (inside the stand of Leylandii trees) and leaves a 5m wide strip for future planting on the southern side of the site. The maximum height of any building on site would be 16m as shown on the submitted parameter plans.
- 5.3 The scheme has been revised during the course of the application to retain the amenity area and in response to concerns raised by the Airfield and the Airfield Advisory Team (AAT) which is part of the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), there has been a reduction in the amount of development on the site from 61,783 sqm to 55,741 sqm.
- 5.4 The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 allows for outline planning permission to be applied for, with other matters reserved for determination at a later stage. As set out above, the current application seeks outline planning permission, with access only to be determined here. The issues of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale are all reserved matters, and are not determined at this time. The layout plans are therefore illustrative, apart from the parameter plan which sets out the scope of development on the site. Subsequent reserved matters applications would determine the exact appearance, landscaping, layout and scale within the site.

6. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Reference	Description	Decision
93/01071/FULL	Development to provide 28799 sq m of business and light and industrial use.	Application permitted
94/01132/FULL	Redevelopment to provide 16700 sq m of 2 storey space for B1 use and ancillary car parking.	Application permitted
94/01133/REM	Site entrance roundabout and access road.	Application permitted
94/01135/FULL	Redevelopment to provide 1858 sq m of two storey space for B1(c) use and ancillary car parking.	Application permitted
96/29822/FULL	Site entrance roundabout.	Application permitted
97/31622/FULL	Redevelopment to provide 10243 sq m of 2 storey B1 use space with ancillary car parking.	Application permitted

7. DEVELOPMENT PLAN

7.1 The main relevant policies are:

Borough Local Plan

Issue	Policy
Spatial Strategy for the Borough	SP1
Climate Change	SP2
Sustainability and Placemaking	QP1
Green and Blue Infrastructure	QP2
Character and Design of New Development	QP3
Building Height and Tall Buildings	QP3a
Development in Rural Areas and Green Belt	QP5
Economic Development	ED1
Protected Employment Sites	ED2
Historic Environment	HE1
Nature Conservation and Biodiversity	NR2
Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows	NR3
Renewable Energy	NR5
Environmental Protection	EP1
Air Pollution	EP2
Artificial Light Pollution	EP3
Noise	EP4
Infrastructure and Developer Contributions	IF1
Sustainable Transport	IF2

8. MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

National Planning Policy Framework Sections (NPPF) (2021)

Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development

Section 4 - Decision-making

Section 6 – Building a strong, competitive economy

Section 9 - Promoting Sustainable Transport

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

National Planning Policy Guidance

Viability

Other Local Strategies or Publications

Other Strategies or publications material to the proposal are:

RBWM Landscape Assessment
RBWM Parking Strategy
Interim Sustainability Position Statement
Corporate Strategy
Environment and Climate Strategy

9. CONSULTATIONS CARRIED OUT

Comments from interested parties

10 occupiers were notified directly of the application.

The planning officer posted a notice advertising the application at the site on 9/01/2023 and the application was advertised in the Maidenhead Advertiser on 22/12/2022

14 representations were received supporting the application, summarised as:

Comment	Where in the report this is considered
1. Proposal would bring jobs to the area and boost the local economy.	Noted. See section 10.
2. In need of local jobs and boost skills for local people.	Noted. See section 10.
3. More jobs created for the Maidenhead community.	Noted. See section 10.
4. Better than residential development.	Noted.
5. It would transform unused space into employment space and adds electric charging points.	Noted. See section 10.
6. More jobs for people who can then support the local community and support local shops.	Noted. See section 10.
7. Objections seem a cut and paste from a website and people encouraged to object.	Noted. The application is considered in accordance with relevant development plan policies.

335 representations were received objecting to the application, summarised as:

Comment	Where in the report this is considered
1. Buildings would be of a height that would infringe the transitional surfaces set out in the CAA's Safeguarding Plan for runways, which could compromise the ability of the airfield to retain its CAA license due to non-compliance with the statutory regulations.	See section 10.

2.	Risk at night of lights on site proving a distraction to aircraft.	See section 10.
3.	Airfield is both a historic and economically beneficial asset to the Borough and any development that jeopardises the safe operation of the Airfield must not be approved.	See section 10.
4.	Object to the size of the proposed development. Existing office buildings are already large buildings.	See section 10.
5.	Larger and taller buildings would be detrimental to both the visual and spatial openness of the Green Belt than the existing.	See section 10.
6	Proposal more than 100% larger than the existing, and therefore does not conform to the NPPF.	See section 10.
7	Harm to character and appearance of Green Belt, especially if the existing trees are removed.	See section 10.
8	Access should be considered as significant increase in HGV vehicles and increased density of traffic.	See section 10.
9	Proposed use is not the same as existing and therefore also fails local and national policy.	See section 10.
10	Inappropriate development in the Green Belt with no very special circumstances put forward.	See section 10.
11	Transport statement lacking in sufficient detail to make a considered decision.	See section 10.
12	Club members were not directly consulted on the development.	Noted. However, the Council carried out formal consultation in line with statutory duties.
13	Development has ignored flight safeguarding map and therefore affects safety at airfield.	See section 10.
14	Proposal is a hideous warehouse and would visually desecrate a valuable and unique asset.	See section 10.
15	Spoil on site would increase site levels and increase overall heights of buildings, so that they would be up to 21m above the airfield.	See section 10.
16	Suggested replacement screening would take up to 30 years to replace existing trees.	See section 10.
17	Occupiers in these buildings will complain about the noise from aircraft and will ask for restrictions to the airfield.	See section 10.

18	Detrimental impact on neighbouring business operation.	The site is an existing commercial use and this would continue. See section 10.
19	Traffic increase in Burchett's Green Lane and Burchett's Green Road would be extremely unwelcome.	See section 10.
20	The Flying Club is unique in its history dating back to 1935 and the owners are working hard to retain the 1940s feel of the airfield. To change the backdrop to major urbanisation would be utterly out of context.	See section 10.
21	Proposal does not take into consideration the impact on local villages caused by the increased number of commercial vehicles.	See section 10.
22	Concern the Westacott roundabout will be unsafe with the increased traffic, especially with an increase in lorries.	See section 10.
23	The proposals would result in increased pollution and noise.	See section 10.
24	Not enough residents were consulted on the proposal.	the Council carried out formal consultation in line with statutory duties. See section 10.
25	Transport Assessment does not address the potential for traffic increase in Burchett's Green, the environmental impact of the additional HGV traffic, or the community impact of the HGV traffic arriving and departing 24/7.	See section 10.
26	Harm to wildlife and rural nature of paths and bridleways in Littlewick Green.	See section 10.
27	Whilst the application suggests that all HGV traffic will turn right from Westacott Way onto the A4, the A4/A404 Maidenhead Thicket is often gridlocked and the lorries would use smaller roads causing chaos. Small rural villages are not the place for massive commercial enterprises.	See section 10.
28	Logistics developments should be site next to existing road infrastructure not rural and residential areas.	See section 10.
29	Buildings will tower over everything and the increase in volume is over 300% higher than existing, building heights should be reduced.	See section 10.
30	Developer does not own the trees that provide screening, and the heights of the buildings will be taller than the existing trees.	See section 10.
31	Density of employment is a lot lower with logistics and would provide jobs for a lot less people than the existing use.	See section 10.

32	Impact on protected species is unacceptable.	See section 10.
33	Loss of biodiversity on site which will result in a biodiversity net loss, they cannot provide a 10% net gain on site.	See section 10.
34	No mitigation for construction cranes being used next to an airfield.	See section 10.
35	The Dust Mitigation Strategy is a generic assessment and there is no mitigation for building next to an airfield.	See section 10.
36	This part of the A4 and the intersection with the A404(M) are accident blackspots. Adding thousands of vehicle movements including large numbers of HGV's will have a significant impact on safety and traffic flow.	See section 10.
37	Noise emission report focusses on light duty vehicles and seems to omit reference to HGV's, which maybe up to 800 new HGV movements per day.	See section 10.
38	Logistics operations may run up to 24 hours per day, causing substantial nuisance and a new level of vehicle nuisance.	See section 10.
39	Increased traffic and danger to road safety as a result of the proposals.	See section 10.
40	Roundabout on the A4 was built to deal with office traffic only and not suitable for large lorries with trailers that logistic companies use especially with large increase in HGV's.	See section 10.
41	Would destroy the current ambience of the historical WWII airfield.	See section 10.
42	Office occupancy is now recovering after Covid and there is no need or justification for re-purposing these buildings.	See section 10.
43	Drawings do not show enough landscaping.	The application is in outline with only access to be determined. Landscape will be a reserved matter, if outline permission is granted.
44	The Airfield is an important heritage asset retaining its character as a pre-WWII aerodrome and the former headquarters of the Air Transport Auxiliary and it should retain its historic runway layout. The development site was formerly part of the airfield. The design of any new development should be an opportunity to enhance the airfield's character as a heritage asset. New buildings should not be higher than the original wartime hangers.	See section 10.

45	Traffic already travels too fast on the A4 and is oblivious to the fact there is an exit on the roundabout.	See section 10.
46	Proposed logistics centre will aggravate the ability of residents of Bath Road existing and accessing their properties.	See section 10.
47	Concerns with the comments of the highway officer with regards predicted HGV movements, congestion on the A4/A404, especially since the A4 is a single lane road here which will cause tailbacks.	Noted. See section 10.
48	Concerned that the Highway Officer has not taken cyclists, walkers and horse riders into account in the assessment of the proposals.	See section 10.
49	Neither Traffic Assessment or Highway Officer comments assess the likely destination of the increase in HGV traffic.	See section 10.
50	Increase in air pollution.	See section 10.
51	Loss of wildlife and habitats.	See section 10.
52	Build programme would have serious impacts on local residents.	This is covered by environmental health legislation.
53	Affect property values of nearby residential properties.	This is not a material planning consideration in the determination of the application in accordance with relevant development plan policies.
54	Biodiversity offset is nowhere near the site and is not sufficient to offset the loss.	See section 10.
55	Description of development is misleading as it is not an office park development.	The description of development includes details of the existing use and the proposed use.
56	Development will affect cyclists using the A4 for cycling time trails and leisure cycling.	See section 10.
57	Application does not fully analyse risks to small aircraft using the airfield.	See section 10.
58	Transport Assessment does not take into account or consider horse riders.	See section 10.

59	The Transport Assessment has not considered the impact of the potential development of the film studio at Little Marlow directly onto the A404, which will be gridlocked.	See section 10.
60	Whilst the proposed developed area is reduced there is still a road proposed that cuts across the existing pond.	See section 10.
61	Loss of leylandii trees is dangerous as used by landmark by inexperienced flyers.	See section 10.
62	Lack of a definitive plan raises doubts about the actual location of the proposed buildings. Buildings should be situated further back from the perimeter on the south side of the site- crucial that the layout is the final location.	See section 5.
63	Affect historical heritage listed buildings including St Mary's Church, Waltham Grange, Shottesbrooke Park and Church which contribute to the unique character and charm of the local landscape.	See section 10
64	Office park could be a Local Green Space.	See section 10
65	Height of the original hangers on site was 10-11m tall, development will be huge increase on this.	See section 10
66	The airfield is a local employer and provides flight training with 60-70 active students.	See section 10
67	The economic benefits of the site are not considered to be very special circumstances and there are no other benefits to the proposal.	See section 10

Statutory consultees

Consultee	Comment	Where in the report this is considered
Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA)	No objection subject to conditions. Concern regarding the most recent illustrative layout does not accommodate the previously designed drainage scheme.	See section 10.

Consultees

Consultee	Comment	Where in the report this is considered
RBWM Highways	No objection subject to a condition and S106 obligation.	See section 10.
RBWM Environmental Protection	No objection, subject to condition.	See section 10.

RBWM Ecology	No objection, subject to condition.	See section 10.
Berkshire Archaeology	No objection, subject to a condition	See section 10.
Airfield Advisory Team UK Civil Aviation Authority	<p>Following recommendations:</p> <p>The final design's heights should not penetrate the obstacle limitation surfaces relevant to White Waltham Airfield.</p> <p>A building induced turbulence assessment should be undertaken if the aerodrome authority deems that the proposed scheme has the potential to adversely impact flight safety owing to differences between the proposed scheme and the existing site.</p> <p>A glint and glare assessment should be completed for the proposed site taking in to account all runways and associated circuits.</p> <p>Ensure that the final design of any lighting considers the potential impact to aviation.</p> <p>Ensure that the aerodrome is communicated with before any planned crane usage.</p> <p>Obtain approval by the aerodrome of the Wildlife Strike Management Plan, their acceptance of any increased risk or change to their existing wildlife management protocols.</p> <p>Conclude that the aerodrome authority should be consulted at all stages of the application process and should have the opportunity to provide their local knowledge and subject matter expertise on any assessments undertaken to define the impact of the redevelopment on the aerodrome.</p>	See section 10
Nature Space	Following surveys no great crested newts are likely to be absent there is a very low risk of GCN's will be impact by the development.	Noted.

Others (e.g. Parish and Amenity Groups)

Group	Comment	Where in the report this is considered
White Waltham Parish Council	We have to say that this is a very confusing and misleading application. Could it be intentional? Ostensibly, it appears to be an outline application for access and only that is ticked in the Application list.	See section 10

However, under the following Description of Proposal, the wording starts by asking to demolish the existing building ready for redevelopment. Access is only mentioned at the end. Another concern is why do many of the 49 documents reference the potential completed project, while applying for demolition? We should be very grateful if you could tell us exactly what we are considering, please!? The proposal on the planning portal refers to the applications being of 'the assessment of access at this time...' whereas in Savills' Planning Report says it is for 'Outline planning application for demolition of the existing buildings and redevelopment of the site...' We are commenting on the published application reason for 22/03270/OUT not Savills' definition. But does that mean we have missed our opportunity to comment on the latter? White Waltham Parish Council has many concerns regarding this application, although we are aware that, ultimately, the project is more than likely to be approved within the BLP. But we do ask that all the usual studies, like the impact of likely increased traffic from logistic companies, an ecological study, Environmental Impact Assessment and the like are carried. This request is made in the knowledge that the applicants have suggested they are not necessary.

Demolition

Locals will not enjoy looking at a demolition site while the fine detail of what will be built is argued. Experience tells us that it could go on for years, as the application for the previous development did. In addition, there would not appear to be any provision to protect the trees and hedging to be retained, nor the pond, grass, woodland and all the wildlife there.

Wildlife

We have many concerns about potential effects on wildlife (as recognised in reports submitted with the application) and are very much against building over the existing pond and woodland habitat. It is not good enough to propose a 10% biodiversity gain, possibly elsewhere. You cannot have a biodiversity gain by building over the existing wildlife site, nor by felling trees vital to the local bat population? If the existing pond and woodland actually has to be built over, we consider it vital for a replacement habitat to be established, next to the site, beforehand. It is recognised in the applicant's reports and by all wildlife experts, that great crested newts, toads and other wildlife rely on a series of ponds in an area, so to remove one depletes local biodiversity. This statement also applies to mammals, invertebrates and birds and 'green corridors'. Although none of the submitted wildlife surveys confirm bats, great crested

news or badgers in residence, each of them admits to the likelihood of them being present. Proper field research needs to be carried out in the main pond to confirm (or not) the presence of the common toad and any other amphibians. There is a very strong possibility that there are toads in the pond and, of course this is a species of principal importance and a Berkshire priority species. There is clear evidence of badger setts on the site and it is unclear as to how these will be fully-protected. The bat survey indicates that bats may be present in some of the buildings, so further investigation is necessary when bats are likely to be flying.

Flood Authority Recommendation

We note the objections of this authority and their recommendation that the application is not granted.

Tree Heights

We have been told that it would be acceptable to increase the height of the new development because the trees will grow to shield it. However, the trees referred to are off site and owned by the West London Aero Club. We understand that the Civil Aviation Authority has already requested a reduction in height to improve airfield safety.

Development footprint

The density of buildings on the plans submitted with the application does not seem necessary. An increase from 27692sqm to 61,783sqm is more than 50%. It is hardly protecting the Green Belt! Is this acceptable to RBWM planners? May we suggest that the developers could still increase their footprint, though not by 50%, and retain the woodland and pond. And the pond could still be used as part of the drainage system.

Local heritage

We are pleased to see that Berkshire Archaeology places considerable significance on what archaeology could still remain in situ. We can testify to Roman and prehistoric remains found in many places in the area and near the development site and can only add to their request to excavate before demolition is allowed.

Traffic

We believe that a comprehensive traffic study should be carried out before any permissions are given. This should include predictions of increased traffic movements if the logistic potential is realised. Would it be possible to place restrictions on any permission given

if it were thought that traffic increases would be unsustainable?

Neighbourhood notification

The most relevant neighbours which adjoin the property have not been notified. These are West London Aero Club and W W Westacott, the farmers. White Waltham Parish Council is against the demolition of Maidenhead Business Park before the plans for its redevelopment are known. We hope this and our suggestions will be taken into account when determining the result of this application.

Further comments received 12/7/23:

- Predicated a further 750 HGV movements concerned about HGV traffic causing unacceptable congestion and safety hazards on the Holloway at the Westacott Way/A4 roundabout, Cherry Garden Lane at the A4 junction and Burchetts Green Lane at the A4 junction
- Concerned that the increase in HGV traffic will cause congestion on the A4 in several places: Westacott Way/A4 roundabout, vehicles turning in and out of side road sand the Shire Horse PH; HGV's do not stop as quickly as the private car and will potentially increase risk to people and animals crossing the road and cyclists, West on the A4 in the event the A404 is blocked, and the Transport Assessment has not considered the massive potential development application of the film studio at Little Marlow directly onto the A404; the A404 will be gridlocked and the alternative routes through the lanes will be used
- Concerned about increase in pollution likely to be caused by the additional HGV's and note that the pollution assessment made by the applicant only includes the office park in its scape, pollution on the A4 and the Westacott Way roundabout should be taken into account
- Green Belt- we see no very special circumstances to support this development and that this outline proposal amounts to inappropriate development in Green belt;- as the proposed increase in built area which is over x2 that of the current buildings and the height of the buildings which is too high in the context of the surrounding area
- Habitat and Biodiversity Loss- application proposed that net loss of biodiversity at the site is offset by management plans at a site at Bisham which trades pond and hedgerow habitat for grassland, scrub and woodland. We do not

	<p>believe it is appropriate to offset the biodiversity loss elsewhere or that the proposal is sufficient to offset what will be lost</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We note that the proposed developed area has been reduced by that is still proposed a road cuts across the existing pond. We request that the developed area should be further reduced to completely avoid any impact on the pond. We also request that the biodiversity offset should be provided in the immediate locality rather than several km away 	
<p>Littlewick Green Society</p>	<p>This property is set in green belt land and it is important to maintain the rural nature of the surroundings without urbanisation which will be irreversible. Littlewick Green Society objects to this application on the following grounds:</p> <p>The demolition will leave an eyesore to blight the visual appearance of the local area if it is not developed appropriately thereafter. The plans to build a distribution centre would also have major consequences as the new buildings will be much taller than those they replace. Apart from the visual impact, this would affect the operations at White Waltham airfield as light aircraft cannot operate in areas where there are tall structures immediately adjacent to the runways. The applicants have suggested that they would allow the existing line of trees to grow to mitigate the visual intrusion but they are not entitled to do so as the trees belong to the airfield and the CAA would not permit a raising of the height of the trees. The next concern is the increase in traffic and noise caused by the constant movement of heavy goods vehicles possibly 24 hours a day. The projected estimates are that there would 750 movements to and from each day which equates to more than one every minute. This huge addition of HGV movement would be highly detrimental to the rural environment around Westacott Way and cause even more congestion on the A4. Consequently, we very much hope that this application will be refused. I hope that the planning committee will take the views of the LGS membership into account when reviewing this application.</p> <p><i>Further comments received:</i></p> <p>The proposed warehouse building is huge, covering more than double the footprint of all of the current office buildings combined. It would also be twice the height creating a blight on the visual amenity from the surrounding green belt countryside.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The traffic estimations show that large articulated juggernauts will be coming and going 24 hours a day 	<p>See section 10</p>

	<p>causing both noise and traffic problems in what is currently a peaceful rural environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All of this traffic would have to use the A4 with the clear impact that would have on the local community. The roundabout at the top of Westacott Way is simply not suitable for such traffic movement. • Serious concerns have been raised by White Waltham airfield because of the impact that such a large building could have on pilots' ability to make safe take offs and landings. This airfield is of local historical interest due to the role it played in WWII and its future should be protected. 	
Hurley Parish Council	<p>Hurley Parish Council objects to the proposals at this site. The Councillors do consider that they should have been consulted on this and future applications as the site entrance/exit is located on the A4 and impacts Hurley Parishioners. The Parish Council objects as the application would result in a significant increase in HGV movements on the A4 in both directions, the Council supports the many concerns expressed by White Waltham Parish Council, the application is unnecessarily complex for an outline application relating to access only where the applicant states on the original application form that there is to be no change to access, and Councillors note the significant concerns expressed by the owners and operators of the adjacent airfield.</p> <p><i>Further comments received:</i></p> <p>Hurley Parish Council strongly objects to the previous and revised proposals at this site. The site entrance/exit is located on the A4 and impacts Hurley Parishioners. The Parish Council objects as the application would result in a significant increase in HGV movements on the A4 in both directions. This will impact residents of Burchetts Green, Littlewick Green, Knowl Hill and beyond in a particularly adverse way due to both the number of vehicle movements and the size of those vehicles. Hurley Parish Council supports the objections raised by neighbouring parish councils, the airfield, village groups and private individuals. The location is well suited to its current use. These new proposals, through the sheer bulk of the built structures and the number of vehicle movements, would represent a significant overdevelopment within a predominantly rural location.</p>	
Bisham Parish Council	<p>The Cllrs were extremely concerned that this item had only just been brought to their attention, despite the potential impact on the parish; particularly in terms of air and road traffic movements. The Cllrs asked that, before the application is considered, a thorough impact analysis of air and road traffic movements is undertaken and reported to the affected parishes.</p>	See section 10

<p>Burchetts Green Village Association</p>	<p>No assessment of the consequential impact of additional traffic on Burchetts Green or neighbouring villages where there are existing traffic issues.</p> <p>Burchett's Green Road has become a rat-run with high volume of traffic using it as a cut-through- there is real danger that this will increase as a result of the development.</p> <p>The traffic assessment states there could be over 800 HGV movements over a 12 hour period.</p> <p>The scope of the TA did not extend to include the impact of Burchett's Green or neighbouring villages and there has been no consultation with these communities.</p> <p>Request that the planning committee considers the very real concerns of the BGVA and the residents of Burchett's Green Village.</p>	<p>See section 10</p>
<p>Fiennes Park Residents Association</p>	<p>The residents of Fiennes Park, whose 26 houses all lie on Westacott Way strongly object to the planning application for a logistics hub at Maidenhead Office Park, also on Westacott Way. The application reference number is 22/03270. We have lived in Littlewick Green for over 8 years and we are concerned about the impact that this development would have on our community. The proposed hub would be a major development, with up to 750 HGV movements each day, leading to considerably increased traffic congestion, pollution and safety hazards in the immediate area where we live and where our children play. The development would be located in a green belt area, with no Very Special Circumstances to support more than doubling the size of the developed buildings on the site. This would be a loss of valuable open space, which would clearly have a negative impact on the local wildlife. The height of the buildings proposed are significantly larger than any other buildings in the area, which on top of the traffic congestion, pollution and safety issues, would introduce a visual blight on an area of largely unbroken natural beauty. We urge you to reject this planning application. The development would have a negative impact on our community and on the environment, and present a significant hazard to road users and residents in the area.</p>	<p>See section 10</p>
<p>Cllr Brar</p>	<p>As the above outline application is in my neighbouring ward I would like to comment on the above application.</p> <p>The proposed development the scale and existing office buildings are already large buildings. The proposed buildings will impact on visual impact on Green Belt. The</p>	<p>See section 10</p>

	<p>footprint looking at the plans is 100% larger than the existing. Policy QP5 states this will be inappropriate development in the Green Belt. This will generate extra traffic going through Burchetts Green Village and there will be congestion on A4 as well.</p> <p><i>Further comment received:</i></p> <p>The above application is on the border to my ward in Burchett's Green. The residents of Burchett's Green concerned the impact of additional traffic, noise and pollution will cause to the village. This will create extra traffic movement through the village and in terms of HGV there will extra 76 movement during the peak times. You are talking about 760 movement of traffic with in the day. The Traffic Assessment did not include the impact it will have on Burchett's Green and the neighbouring village. The environment impact, air pollution this also is unacceptable development in Green Belt. The A4 is already very busy and the drivers will seek to avoid the increased traffic congestion at the A4 which I believe do not have the capacity to handle high volume of traffic.</p>	
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10. EXPLANATION OF RECOMMENDATION

10.1 The key issues for consideration are:

- i Principle of Development;
- ii Green Belt;
- ii Climate Change and Sustainability;
- iv Design, Character and Landscape impacts;
- v Highways Impacts;
- vi Ecology and Biodiversity;
- vii Impact on amenity of neighbouring buildings;
- viii Impact on Heritage Assets;
- ix Trees;
- x Drainage; and,
- xi Other Material Considerations.

Principle of Development

10.2 The site is allocated under BLP policy ED2 as an Established Employment site in the Green Belt. The policy states that these sites will be retained for economic and employment uses. Policy ED2 section (5) states that 'Within Established Employment Sites in the Green Belt, proposals that improve and/or upgrade the E(g) (office and/or research and development uses) and industrial uses will be supported. Proposals to intensify the use may also be supported, subject to the provisions set out in national policy with regards to development within the Green Belt.' Policy ED2 section (6) also sets out that for all sites, a 'nil net loss' of commercial floorspace principle will apply.

10.3 The site is a long standing office park dating from the early 1990's. However, given that the proposals would include Use Class B8 (logistics) which is outside the uses stated in Policy ED2 and would result in a loss of office floorspace, the application has

been submitted alongside a Needs Assessment which has been the subject of independent evaluation. The applicants in their submission, state that they cannot let the majority of the office park and that occupancy levels are low. This has been verified as part of the independent evaluation and the conclusions of that evaluation with regard to office and industrial use are set out below:

Office Use

- 10.4 There is surplus of vacant space on site and little prospect that this space can be re-let in the short to medium term due to significant disruption in the market due to Covid, with a sharp shift away from office working to working at home becoming long term trends. However, the scale of vacancy in the short term demonstrates that any short term harm can be managed by existing stock within the Borough. In the medium term the Council has the opportunity, market willing, to provide a new supply in the town centre. As such, any medium term aspirations for office growth can be managed via the BLP or any review of it. The office market is weaker than expected when the BLP was drafted. The scale of vacant office space in the Borough and the wider market is such, that it is therefore concluded that it is likely that some floorspace can be released without causing harm to overall supply in the Borough.

Industrial Uses

- 10.5 The Council's assessment in the BLP did not suggest that the Borough was attractive to logistic uses; however, the applicant's assessment is that there is a positive need for space and suppressed demand. The short term analysis confirms that there is limited scope to absorb any increase in demand, with almost no availability in the current market. With regard to future supply, the Council is limited to the Triangle site alone in the BLP to meet all future needs.
- 10.6 The industrial market has strengthened post Covid and it has been identified that the Borough has only one site to meet this need. The Borough has not been favoured by logistics operators in the past and did not have enough land to meet logistics demand; however, post Covid this no longer holds true and logistic operators are, by necessity, looking at new opportunities to address needs to which this site would contribute

Summary on independent evaluation on applicant's needs assessment

- 10.7 The proposals which form part of the current application would move from a land use that is in less demand (office) to one which is recognised as being stronger in demand (industrial and logistics). Given the quantum of office space, the loss of the site is unlikely to cause significant concern in the Borough and there would be no loss of economic land as a result of the proposals, with the land effectively being recycled into a new economic use.
- 10.8 The proposal is contrary to BLP Policy ED2 as it includes Use Class B8 which is not a use that is included in the policy and there would not be a nil net loss of office floorspace. However, evidence assessed at the BLP inquiry was collated prior to the Covid pandemic which has fundamentally changed the office and logistics market in the country as a whole, as evidenced above. Furthermore, there is now a clear need for Use Class B8 logistics uses in the Borough, with a lack of sites available. Paragraph 83 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should recognise and address the specific location requirements of different sectors, including for storage and distribution operations at variety of scales. In paragraph 81, it further 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. As such,

the current economic climate for office and logistics is a material consideration of some considerable weight, as well as the requirement for decisions to be flexible as set out in the NPPF. Given this, the non compliance with some parts of BLP Policy ED2 is outweighed by the change in economic circumstances since the BLP was adopted and the need to support economic growth, given that there is a clear need for logistics use (Use Class B8) within the Borough. Furthermore, it is also a material planning consideration that, as the independent evaluation of the applicant's need assessment references, there would be no harm to the loss of the office space on the site, since the town centre is proposed to be developed for office use and could absorb any future increase in demand.

- 10.9 Given the material planning considerations set out above, the policy requirements, including the need to be flexible to changing economic circumstances as set out in the NPPF and the fact that the proposals have demonstrated that there would be no harm to the overall office stock, on balance, the proposals are acceptable. The recycling of existing employment land into a new economic use is a public benefit of the scheme. Given this, the principle of development is considered acceptable from a land use perspective.

Green Belt

- 10.10 Policy QP5 of the BLP sets out that the Green Belt will be protected against inappropriate development and that planning permission will not be granted for inappropriate development unless very special circumstances are demonstrated. The NPPF at paragraph 147 states that inappropriate development is by definition harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Paragraph 148 of the NPPF further states that 'When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. Very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm of the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal is clearly outweighed by other considerations.'
- 10.11 Paragraph 149 of the NPPF states that the construction of new buildings is inappropriate in the Green Belt, subject to certain exceptions that are not relevant in this case. The proposals are a material increase compared to the existing and as such, the proposal is considered inappropriate development and very special circumstances are required to outweigh this if planning permission is to be granted. The proposals would represent an indicative 101% increase in area on the existing buildings and an indicative increase in volume of 330% (based on the proposed maximum floorspace). This is over and above what would normally be acceptable in Green Belt policy terms and so again, requires a demonstration of very special circumstances in order to be acceptable.
- 10.12 The applicants have stated in their application submission that the economic, social and environmental benefits of the scheme addresses the shortfall in the BLP and that the benefits associated with the scheme of bringing an underperforming protected employment site back into productive use and thereby providing jobs for the local workforce, would constitute very special circumstances. The applicants have also submitted a social value report which states that the predicted economic value of the proposal from 2/3 years after construction would be £7m and from 10 years of occupation would be £74m to the local economy, as well as the provision of 891 jobs within this timescale. The document also includes a social value action plan which includes specific initiatives to promote local employment and provide job opportunities to people with disadvantaged backgrounds. The local job creation would be secured

by way of a S106 agreement. These public benefits of the scheme are material planning considerations of considerable weight.

- 10.13 The application is also supported by an economic viability assessment which states that the current size of development at 55,741 sqm was the smallest development that would be economically viable on this site. The NPPG states that viability helps to strike a balance between the aspirations of developers and landowners in terms of returns against risk and that the aim of the planning system is to secure maximum benefits in the public interest through the granting of planning permission. As such, the applicant's viability assessment has been independently assessed.
- 10.14 The viability of a 30% increase in floorspace with the current scheme under consideration was tested. The independent valuer concluded that the approach to the applicant's viability is in accordance with the NPPG. The basic approach is to calculate the Residual Land Value (RLV) for both scenarios, then compare that to the Benchmark Land Value (BLV). If the RLV is lower and/or not sufficiently higher than the BLV, then the project is not considered viable. Both scenarios result in a positive RLV; however, in the 30% floorspace increase, the RLV is smaller and results in a deficit of £14 million, so that the majority of the profit would be wiped out and the scheme would be unviable. In the currently proposed scheme, the viability is marginal, since the deficit is £5million; however, once development profit is accounted for, the scheme would be viable. The independent review concluded that the current proposal is therefore viable.
- 10.15 The economic viability of the scheme is a material planning consideration of great weight. The NPPG states that the weight given to a viability assessment is a matter for the decision maker, having regard to all the circumstances of the case. Without economic viability, development is not achievable and the re-development of a smaller scheme that would be appropriate development as defined by the NPPF would not be deliverable here. Given this, it is considered that the economic viability of the current proposal is part of the positive economic elements of the scheme and as such is a very special circumstance in Green Belt policy terms.
- 10.16 Notwithstanding the above, Green Belt policy is also concerned with the impact of development on openness. Paragraph 137 of the NPPF states that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open.
- 10.17 The parameter plans which would be secured by a recommended condition, show that the form of built development would be mostly contained within the existing built up area and car parking area, with the majority of the existing amenity area left open. The site is screened by existing Leylandii trees, although the majority of these trees are owned by the adjoining Airfield and are not included within the TPO. However, they are in situ and they do provide considerable screening from views from the airfield and surrounding properties. The application also includes an area allocated for succession planting and this would be required as part of any landscape reserved matters application. Furthermore, the heights of the proposed buildings have been reduced to a maximum height of 16m, which would be secured by recommended condition. Given this proposed maximum height of 16m, the current Leylandii would screen the proposed buildings on site. Whilst concerns have been raised regarding the heights of the ground level, this can be controlled by way of a recommended condition requiring details of a waste audit and details of proposed levels as part of any reserved matters application.

- 10.18 Given the above, openness would be affected by virtue of the substantial increase in area and volume of buildings on site. However, this would be contained within currently built-up areas and car parking, with the amenity area left open. Furthermore, the visual impact would be greatly reduced by the existing screening. Since the proposal is a material increase on the existing in terms of area and volume, it is acknowledged that there is harm to the openness of the Green Belt. This is however, considered to be outweighed by the very special circumstances set out above.
- 10.19 In summary, with regard to Green Belt, the applicant has put forward economic and social arguments as very special circumstances. These include financial inputs into the local economy on a site that is currently struggling with occupancy levels, as well as local jobs, the latter of which would be secured by a S106 agreement. Furthermore, it has been demonstrated and confirmed through independent review, that the development of the site is only economically viable at the proposed size. These are all material considerations of some considerable weight. As such, they are considered to constitute very special circumstances that outweigh the harm to the Green Belt by way of inappropriateness and any other harm to the Green Belt. With regard to openness, the site is well screened by stands of existing Leylandii trees and the overall heights of the building can be controlled by recommended condition; however, it is acknowledged that the openness of the Green Belt will be harmed by the proposal, but that very special circumstances exist that outweigh this harm. It is also a material consideration that the site itself is allocated for employment uses and is previously developed land. Given this, on balance, the impact on the Green Belt is considered acceptable.

Climate Change and Sustainability

- 10.20 Policy SP2 of the BLP seeks to ensure that new development is adaptable to and mitigates against climate change, that together with the Interim Sustainability Position Statement (ISPS) seeks to ensure that new development is, ideally, net zero or at least 20% more efficient than that required by the current Building Regulations.
- 10.21 The application has been submitted alongside an Energy and Sustainability Statement which sets out a number of sustainability measures as part of the construction, as well as measures to minimise energy efficiency and improve water resource management. Furthermore, the application includes sustainability calculations in order to address the requirements of the ISPS can be met.
- 10.22 The proposed development would be designed to minimise pollution, be adaptable to climate change and also consider health and wellbeing. The submitted report states that the proposal would reach net-zero carbon; however, given that the application is for outline permission, a condition is recommended which would secure the submission of an updated Energy and Sustainability Statement as part of a future reserved matters application. This would provide further details of sustainable design and construction measures to be incorporated into the development when the final designs are known. This would be secured by a recommended condition. This would ensure compliance with the requirements of policy SP2 of the BLP and the Council's Interim Sustainability Statement.

Design, Character and Landscape impacts

- 10.23 The design, scale and layout of the proposed scheme is not a matter for this application and is a reserved matter to be considered at a later stage if the current scheme is granted outline permission. However, the parameter plans show that the form of built development would be mostly contained within the existing built up area and car parking area, with the majority of the existing amenity area left open and that the

heights of the proposed buildings would be a maximum of 16m. This is appropriate and would be secured by recommended condition.

- 10.24 Landscape is also a reserved matter and details of planting on site would be assessed at that stage. However, the impact of the proposal on the landscape is a matter for consideration here. The application is supported by a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), which concludes that the effects on the agreed visual receptors the impact would be moderate to minor which is not deemed to be significant. It is also of note that any viewpoints of the site from the north looking southwards would be viewed in the context of the visual clutter of the existing railway infrastructure. The landscape impacts of the scheme are therefore not considered to be detrimental to the visual amenity of the area.
- 10.25 Concerns have been raised by the users of the Airfield and the Airfield itself of the visual impact of the proposal. However, this has to be seen in context of the existing office park and with the existing screening. Whilst they would be viewed by planes flying in and out of the Airfield, the nearest Airfield buildings from the site are 527m from the boundary of the existing office park, and from this distance, the impact on the visual amenity would be minimal.

Highways Impacts

- 10.26 The application is supported by a Transport Assessment (TA) and Framework Travel Plan as required by BLP Policy IF2. Data included in the TA dates from 2022 surveys. The application has been reviewed by a Highways Officer and sets out that the proposals would lead to an overall reduction in vehicular trips, albeit with a significant increase in HGV movements. The TA includes details of junction capacity modelling on the A4 Bath Road/Westacott Way roundabout which sets out that despite the increased HGV activity as a result of the proposed development, the roundabout would continue to operate within capacity.
- 10.27 The NPPF states in paragraph 111 that development should only be refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety or the impacts on the road network would be severe. In this case, the Highways Officer has concluded that it is unlikely that the proposal would significantly increase the traffic generation to a point where it would lead to a severe highway safety concern. Whilst it is acknowledged that local residents have raised concerns regarding the increase in HGV movements, the criteria for assessment in the NPPF is whether the impacts on the road network are severe or an unacceptable impact on highway safety. The Highways Officer considers that this is not the case as set out above.
- 10.28 The existing access to the site would be retained and the proposals would extend the footways on both sides of Westacott Way and realign the kerbs in order to facilitate two-way HGV movements. Other works include upgrading the pedestrian and cycle access for the two public rights of way crossing Westacott Way by creating a small area of hardstanding away from the existing agricultural access to provide for a dropped kerb crossing with tactile paving. The proposals also include signage on approach to the pedestrian crossing to warn motorists that pedestrians and cyclists will be crossing the carriageway. These works would be secured via a S278 Agreement which would encompass other proposed improvements on Westacott Way. This would ensure that the proposal would not unduly affect the two PROW that cross Westacott Way.
- 10.29 The applicant proposes a shuttle bus service to and from Maidenhead railway station, set out in the Travel Plan, which would improve the sustainability of the site, which is

not currently well served by public transport. The travel plan would be secured by way of a recommended condition and a S106 obligation.

Ecology and Biodiversity

- 10.30 The Preliminary Ecological Assessment shows an area of amenity space, an area of woodland, semi-improved and standing water at the south western edge of the site. There is therefore potential here for protected and notable spaces. Survey data shows that it is unlikely that the buildings or trees support bats and it is unlikely that the ponds within a 500m radius support great crested newts; however, a population of common toad (a species of principal importance for conservation) is present within the pond on site. The badger survey has shown that one of the mammal entrances on site is actively used by badgers.
- 10.31 The amended layout submitted during the course of the application would retain the amenity area and would provide for a significant improvement in retaining biodiversity value on site on the earlier scheme. The tree planting proposed would also be beneficial for wildlife. The on site precautions for protected species set out in the report are appropriate and these would be secured in a recommended Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) condition. The lighting proposals to avoid impacts on wildlife are appropriate and would also be secured by recommended condition.
- 10.33 Whilst the applicant has sought to accommodate on site, the required 10% biodiversity net gain would not be accommodated on site due to the type, layout and end use of the development. In this case, in order to provide the required net gain, the applicant has secured land for habitat creation at Hyde Farm, Bisham, which is within 5km of the site. This would involve habitat creation on existing farmland to be controlled by the applicant to secure the required 10% biodiversity net gain. In this case, this approach to biodiversity net gain is appropriate and would be secured for a minimum of 30 years through the S106 agreement.
- 10.34 Subject to the recommended conditions and completion of a S106 agreement, the ecological and biodiversity impacts of the proposal are acceptable and accord with Policy NR2 of the BLP.

Impact on amenity of neighbouring buildings and occupiers

- 10.35 The nearest residents to the site are the occupiers of properties in Cherry Garden Lane, the nearest of which lies 59m from the boundary of the site. Cherry Garden Lane then runs northwards towards the village of Woolley Green. The site is also separated from the residential properties here by the mainline railway line. The application has been submitted alongside a noise report and subject to the development being constructed and maintained in accordance with the recommendations set out within it with regard to plant and air handling units, which would be secured by recommended condition, the proposals would not result in unacceptable harm to the amenities of these properties. With regard to air quality and dust assessments submitted with the application, these are also acceptable and demonstrate that the development would not give rise to unacceptable impacts. Given this, the location of the railway line and the noise from this, the recommended noise condition, and the fact that there is an existing, long standing office park on site means that the impact on the amenity of neighbouring residential occupiers from the proposed development would not be unacceptably harmed. Similarly, there would be no unacceptable impact on the neighbouring commercial occupiers directly to the east of the site. In this context, a restriction of hours of use on site is not considered necessary to make the development

acceptable and would not therefore meet the relevant tests. Other residential properties lie between 420m to 900m from the site and would therefore be too far away to be affected by the proposals.

- 10.36 Concerns have been raised by the Airfield itself and many users of the airfield, including those that fly, regarding the impact of the proposals on the flight paths. This is because the proposed buildings, being higher than existing, may alter the way in which air masses move in proximity to the Airfield, thereby affecting transitional surfaces that the pilots experience in take-off and landing. A key planning consideration is whether any proposed building might potentially penetrate the airfield's obstacle limitation surfaces and thereby breach one of the key conditions of the CAA license. The Airfield have stated the development may affect their regulatory requirement set out in CAP 128 'Licensing of Aerodromes'. Considering this potential impact, the applicants have submitted an aviation report and the AAT (part of the CAA) were formally consulted on the application.
- 10.37 The proposal would affect the transitional surfaces for two runways: 07L/25R and 11/29. In reducing the maximum height of the buildings proposed, the Airfield's obstacle limitation surfaces would not be impinged on. The AAT have recommended the following:
- The height of the final design should not penetrate the obstacle limitation surfaces at the Airfield. This has been completed with the reduction in the proposed height parameters;
 - A building induced turbulence assessment should be undertaken if the ATT deems the proposed scheme has the potential to adversely impact flight safety owing to differences between the proposed scheme and the existing site. Since the Airfield has raised concerns regarding this, this assessment would be secured by recommended condition, with the submission of relevant reserved matters application;
 - A glint and glare assessment should be completed for the proposed site taking into account all runways and associated circuits. This would be secured by recommended condition, with the submission of the relevant reserved matters application;
 - Ensure the final design of any lighting considers the potential impact on aviation. This would be secured recommended condition; and,
 - Obtain approval by the aerodrome of the Wildlife Strike Management Plan. This would be secured by recommended condition prior to submission of the reserved matters applications.
- 10.38 Whilst acknowledging that the Airfield and the pilots that use it have concerns regarding the proposed development, the proposal has been amended to ensure that the heights would not affect the obstacle limitation surfaces of the runways, and the regulatory body, the AAT is satisfied with the proposals, subject to some recommendations which would be satisfactorily controlled by recommended conditions on the outline permission, with details to be submitted when reserved matters are applied for.
- 10.39 Given the above, the proposal, subject to the recommended conditions, would not have an unacceptable impact on the neighbouring buildings and/or occupiers.

Impact on Heritage Assets

- 10.40 The Airfield is of historical significance since it was used during World War II. The application site itself was once part of the Airfield, prior to its initial development. However, the boundary of the existing site is 527m from the nearest Airfield buildings and from this distance, the proposals would have negligible impact on this heritage asset. Since the proposed heights have been decreased to 16m and the screening provided by the existing stand of Leylandii trees, there would be little visual impact of the proposals on the runways.
- 10.41 Concerns have been raised regarding the impact of the proposals on other listed heritage assets in the local area, including St Mary's Church which is 1.1km from the site, Waltham Grange which is 977m away and Shottebrooks Park which is 1.86km away. From these distances, there would be no impact on these heritage assets as a result of the proposals.
- 10.42 The proposal has potential archaeological implications as the site lies near a scatter of prehistoric finds and Roman agricultural activity may also be evidenced since the site is approximately 500m south-east of a Roman village complex. Although recognising that there has been ground disturbance due to wartime and post war developments on site, there are still areas where archaeology may remain and therefore the application site falls within an area of archaeological significance, and a written scheme of investigation is therefore secured by recommended condition.

Trees

- 10.43 There is an existing TPO on site that includes the trees with the amenity area and the inside of the boundaries of the site. The majority of these trees would be retained, although any loss of trees would be mitigated by replanting along Westacott Way. There would be the loss of some trees in the existing car parking area of the site; however, these are predominately classified either as Class C or U trees and are ornamental trees that are not visible from outside the site and have little public benefit. Since landscaping is a reserved matter, appropriate planting details would be submitted as part of the relevant future reserved matters application.

Drainage

- 10.44 The Local Lead Flood Authority is satisfied that the proposed Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy would result in acceptable impacts on flood risk and drainage on site. Concerns have been raised that the latest illustrative layout conflicts with this; however, since this plan is illustrative and the design would be finalised prior to the commencement of development, it is considered that this could adequately be dealt with by way of a recommended condition. Subject to this recommended condition, there are no issues arising as a result of the proposal regarding drainage.

Other Material Considerations

- 10.45 Concerns have been raised that not enough people were consulted on the application. However, the consultation on the application was carried out in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

- 10.46 One objector raised the issue of whether the office park could be a local green space. However, the existing office park has never been accessible to the public and has been in commercial use since it was built in the early 1990s. Furthermore, it is allocated in the BLP for employment uses. As such, it is not considered appropriate as a local green space.
- 10.47 Concerns have been raised that the occupiers of the buildings would not be happy about the noise of the airfield. However, there has been a commercial use on the site since the early 1990's adjacent to the Airfield and any future occupiers would be aware of the Airfield when commencing operation.
- 10.48 Concerns have also been raised regarding the loss of property values of nearby occupiers; however, this is not a material planning consideration and cannot be taken into account in the assessment of the current planning application.

11 CONCLUSION

- 11.1 The proposal seeks to develop an underperforming office park in an economy where the use of offices has substantially declined. The need to be flexible with regard to decisions on economic development is set out in the NPPF. The need for industrial and logistics floorspace in the Borough and the recycling of this underperforming economic land is a material planning consideration of some considerable weight. Whilst the proposal is inappropriate development as defined by the NPPF, very special circumstances exist to outweigh the harm to the Green Belt by way of inappropriateness. These include economic viability. The proposals are larger than existing and would result in some loss of openness; however, the site is well screened and the visual impact on the Green Belt would be limited. Given this, the impact on the Green Belt is considered acceptable.
- 11.2 As set out in the section above, there are no other adverse impacts that cannot be mitigated either through recommended condition or through the completion of a legal agreement that would outweigh the benefits of the scheme. The recommendation therefore is that planning permission is granted, subject to recommended conditions and the completion of the required legal agreement to secure appropriate provisions as set out in this report.

12. APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT

•	Appendix A - Site location plan
•	Appendix B - Parameter plan
•	Appendix C – Illustrative layout

13. CONDITIONS RECOMMENDED FOR INCLUSION IF PERMISSION IS GRANTED

- 1 Details of the appearance, landscaping, scale and layout (hereinafter called the 'reserved matters') shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before any part of the development is commenced.
Reason: To accord with the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995.
- 2 The Development shall commence within two years from the date of approval of the last of the reserved matters.
Reason: In accordance with the requirements of Section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

3 The development shall be implemented in accordance with the Parameters Plan 31439-PL-201C and with a maximum floorspace of 55741 sq m.
Reason: To ensure an appropriate form of development and to ensure overall height levels. Relevant policy - Borough Local Plan QP3.

4 The details submitted with the reserved matter applications should include existing and proposed ground levels and site sections.
Reason: To ensure an appropriate form of development and to ensure overall height levels. Relevant policy - Borough Local Plan QP3.

5 No development shall take place (including demolition, ground works and 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 relation to bats, badgers and toads;
- d) Invasive species removal method statement [if applicable];
- e) The location and timing of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features;
- f) The times during construction when specialist ecologists need to be present on site to oversee works;
- g) Responsible persons and lines of communication;
- h) The role and responsibilities on site of an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) or similarly competent person;
- i) 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 ensure that impacts on protected species and other biodiversity are minimised in accordance with Paragraphs 170 and 175 of the NPPF, and NR2 of the Borough Local Plan.

6 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; and,
- 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 the NPPF and in accordance with Policy NR2 of the Borough Local Plan.

7 Prior to commencement (excluding demolition) a surface water drainage scheme for the development, based on sustainable drainage principles, shall be submitted to and

approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Details shall include:

- Full details of all components of the proposed surface water drainage system including dimensions, locations, gradients, invert levels, cover levels and relevant construction details;
- Supporting calculations confirming compliance with, the Non-statutory Technical Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems, and BRE Digest 365; and,
- 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 the National Planning Policy Framework and the Non-Statutory Technical Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems, and to ensure the proposed development is safe from flooding and does not increase flood risk elsewhere, and in accordance with Policy NR1 of Borough Local Plan.

- 8 Prior to the commencement of any works of demolition or construction, a construction management plan showing how demolition and construction traffic, (including cranes), materials storage, facilities for operatives and vehicle parking and manoeuvring will be accommodated during the works period shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The plan shall be implemented as approved and maintained for the duration of the works or as may be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and the free flow of traffic and in accordance with Policy EP1 and EP4 of the Borough Local Plan.

- 9 The proposal shall be implemented and maintained at all times in accordance with the Noise and Vibration Assessment by AECOM dated November 2022.

Reason: To ensure the amenities of neighbouring occupiers and to accord with Policy EP4 of the Borough Local Plan.

- 10 No development shall take place/commence until a programme of archaeological work including a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) has been submitted to, and approved in writing, by the Local Planning Authority in writing. The WSI shall include an assessment of significance and research questions; and:

1. The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording;
2. The programme for post investigation assessment;
3. Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording;
4. Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation;
5. Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation; and,
6. Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the WSI.

The Development shall take place in accordance with the WSI approved prior to the submission of reserved matters. The development shall not be occupied until the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the approved WSI and the provision made for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition has been secured.

Reason: The site lies in an area of archaeological potential, particularly for, but not limited to, Prehistoric and Roman remains. The potential impacts of the development

can be mitigated through a programme of archaeological work. This is in accordance with national and local plan policy.

- 11 Prior to the commencement of development hereby permitted, a detailed Waste Audit addressing demolition and construction of the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Detailed Waste Audit must include details of:

1. The anticipated nature and volumes of waste that the development will generate, including demolition waste;

2. Measures to maximise the re-use on-site of waste arising from demolition/engineering/landscaping and how this will be achieved;

3. Steps to be taken to ensure effective segregation of wastes at source during demolition and subsequent construction of the development; and,

4. Any other steps to be taken to minimise the generation of waste throughout any required demolition and during construction of the development.

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that waste is managed sustainably during the development in accordance with the adopted Central and East Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Plan.

- 12 The reserved matters application for layout and scale shall be submitted with the following details:

- A building induced turbulence assessment for runways 07L/25R and 11/29;

- A glint and glare assessment taking into account all runways and associated circuits;

- A lighting design scheme that considers the potential impact on aviation; and,

- Details of a Wildlife Strike Management Plan

Reason: To ensure the development does adversely affect the operations of the adjoining airfield.

- 13 An updated Energy and Sustainability Statement shall be submitted with any Reserved Matters application to provide details of sustainable design and construction measures to be incorporated into the development to achieve, as far as possible, a net-zero carbon outcome on site. The approved details shall be implemented in full, entirely in accordance with the approved measures, and thereafter maintained.

Reason: To ensure that the development is designed to incorporate measures to adapt to and mitigate climate change in line with policy SP2 of the Borough Local Plan as informed by the guidance and requirements of the Position Statement on Sustainability and Energy Efficient Design - March 2021.

- 14 No building or use hereby permitted shall be occupied or the use commenced until a travel plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved Travel Plan shall then be implemented, monitored and reviewed in accordance with the agreed travel plan target to the satisfaction of the Council.

Reason: To ensure the highway impacts of the proposal are acceptable and in accordance with Policy IF2 of the adopted Borough Local Plan.

- 15 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.

Gtb-922-2a
Gtb-922-1a