

**WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - PLANNING, PUBLIC PROTECTION AND GOVERNANCE**

DELEGATED APPLICATION

Application No: 6/2018/2946/FULL
Location: Plot 5610, Hatfield Business Park, Gypsy Moth Avenue, Hatfield, AL10 9BS
Proposal: Erection of temporary secure vehicular storage area with associated security fencing
Officer: Mr David Elmore
Recommendation: Granted

6/2018/2946/FULL

Context	
Site and Application description	<p>The application site covers part of Plot 5610, located to the northern side of Hatfield Business Park. Plot 5610 is laid in grass and bounded in wire mesh fencing and remains one of the few remaining undeveloped plots in the Business Park.</p> <p>A bus depot backs onto the southern boundary of the site. To the immediate north-east is a pond with pedestrian access to it. Soft landscaping and a pedestrian/cycle path separates the north-east boundary of the site from Hatfield Avenue. On the opposite side of Hatfield Avenue are residential properties in Cornflower Way.</p> <p>Access to the site would be taken off Gypsy Moth Avenue via an existing vehicular access road that currently provides access to Toolbank and the bus depot.</p> <p>Temporary planning permission for an 18 month period is sought for a vehicular storage area with boundary security fencing. The vehicular storage would be in association with Cambria Automobiles principal car dealerships on Plot 4100 in Hatfield Business Park. The application description initially included associated lighting and CCTV however these aspects have since been omitted at the request of the applicant.</p> <p>A planning application for the whole of Plot 5610 is currently under consideration (planning ref: 6/2018/3255/FULL) for a permanent pre-delivery inspection facility with additional vehicle storage, as well as further servicing bays and valeting facilities, in association with the principal dealership and servicing facilities at Plot 4100.</p>
Constraints (as defined within WHDP 2005)	<p>EMPL - EA6 (Hatfield Business Park) PAR - PARISH (HATFIELD) ROW - FOOTPATH (HATFIELD 033) - Distance: 34.5 Wards - Hatfield Villages CP - Cycle Path (Cycle Facility / Route) - Distance: 0.84 HAT - Hatfield Aerodrome HEN - No known habitats present (medium priority for habitat creation) SAGB - Sand and Gravel Belt</p>

<p>Relevant planning history</p>	<p><u>Application site</u> Application Number: 6/2018/3255/FULL Decision: Under consideration Proposal: Erection of a pre-delivery inspection facility (Use Class B8), together with car storage area, staff car parking, cycle parking, boundary treatment, landscaping, lighting and access</p> <p><u>Plot 4100</u> Application Number: 6/2017/2105/RM Decision: Granted Decision Date: 09 January 2018 Proposal: Approval of reserved matters (access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) for the erection of three buildings comprising motor retail showrooms, vehicle servicing/workshop facilities, MOT facilities, office use and valeting, together with associated parking and landscaping of the approved outline planning permission 6/2015/2043/OUTLINE, dated 05/07/2016.</p> <p>Application Number: 6/2017/2342/FULL Decision: Granted Decision Date: 19 December 2017 Proposal: Erection of a temporary automobile showroom for up to two years with associated access, parking and landscaping.</p> <p><u>Wider Business Park</u> Application Number: 6/2015/2043/OUTLINE Decision: Granted Decision Date: 05 July 2016 Proposal: Redevelopment to provide floorspace equivalent to 537 Units of Development (UD) (as set out in Schedule 1) for Use Classes B1, B2, SG and Hotel use on plots 4100, 5000, 5600 and for Use Classes B1, SG and Hotel use on plot 6000 with all matters reserved except access</p> <p>Application Number: S6/1999/1064/OP Decision: Approval Subject to s106 Decision Date: 29 December 2000 Proposal: Demolition of existing (unlisted) buildings, removal of runway and other hard standing areas and redevelopment for the following purposes: as a business park comprising uses within use class B1, B2, B8 and Sui Generis use; housing; new university campus (use class D1 and D2) to include replacement De Havilland sports and social club and associated playing fields; two hotels; primary school and associated facilities; district centre; works of conversion to enable recreation use of existing listed hangar; aviation heritage centre. Together with associated highway, transport and service infrastructure (including a strategic transport corridor), landscaping and open space, diversion of Ellenbrook. Means of access to be determined.</p>		
<p>Consultations</p>			
<p>Neighbour representations</p>	<p>Support: 0</p>	<p>Object: 1</p>	<p>Other: 0</p>
<p>Publicity</p>	<p>Site Notice Display Date: 14 December 2018 Site Notice Expiry Date: 7 January 2019</p>		
<p>Summary of neighbour responses</p>	<p>34 Cornflower Way – Objection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns regarding vehicle noise and on-site lighting 		

Consultees and responses	Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council (Public Health & Protection) – No objection subject to hours of deliveries condition Hertfordshire County Council (Highways) – No objection Hertfordshire County Council (Historic Environment Advisor) – No objection Hertfordshire County Council (Ecology) – Comment. Compensatory planting recommended
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Relevant Policies

NPPF
 D1 D2 GBSP1 GBSP2 M14
 Supplementary Design Guidance Supplementary Parking Guidance Interim Policy for car parking and garage sizes
 Others: Policies SD1, R2, R11, R17, R19, R20, D8, EMP1, EMP2, HATEAR1, HATAER2, HATAER3 of the District Plan and Hatfield Aerodrome Masterplan and SPG; Policies SP1, SADM2, SP9, SADM11, SADM16 and SADM18 of the Emerging Local Plan

Main Issues

Principal of use

Hatfield Business Park sits on the site of the former Hatfield Aerodrome, which was occupied first by the DeHavilland Aircraft Works, and later by British Aerospace (BAe), until it was closed by BAe in the mid 1990's with the loss of 8,000 jobs.

Following its closure, Goodman (formerly known as Arlington) in partnership with Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council, Hertfordshire County Council and St Albans District Council, developed a masterplan and Supplementary Planning Guidance document, which became the basis of the December 2000 outline planning permission, to facilitate the re-development of the site. Here, the over-arching principles of the document were to:

- Promote sustainable development on the site;
- Provide for a mix of uses on the site;
- Promote economic development on the site to help replace the jobs lost when BAe closed; and
- Provide work and homes for local people.

The application site is situated within the context of the wider Hatfield Business Park, which is designated as an employment area (EA6), under Policy EMP1 of the adopted Welwyn Hatfield District Plan (2005). The outline planning permission (S6/1999/1064/OP) was granted in accordance with adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG), November 1999 for the whole of the Hatfield Aerodrome site. The permission was subject to 26 Conditions and a Section 106 Agreement. The Hatfield Aerodrome SPG envisages a certain level of development floor space for each use class. Paragraph 4.139 and the corresponding table of the Section 106 Agreement for planning permission S6/1999/1064/OP set out a total of 197,996sqm of development floor-space on the Hatfield Business Park, spread over B1, B2, B8 and Sui-Generis uses (not including the hotel). The cumulative quantum of floor-space for the business park has been increased through a number of supplemental deeds and is a result of high market demand for B8 use in recent times.

The application site would be used for vehicular storage (a B8 use) in association with the principal Cambria Automobile car dealerships at Plot 4100. One of the two car dealerships is currently operating and the second is at its later stages of construction. The submitted covering letter explains that additional land is required as the current site cannot accommodate all of the storage requirements of new and used vehicles at peak times. This application proposes to facilitate this additional vehicle storage whilst a more permanent solution is sought for the whole of Plot 5610. Indeed, a permanent planning application for a pre-delivery inspection facility together with associated car storage, is now with the Local Planning Authority for consideration under reference:

6/2018/3255/FULL.

It is considered that the development proposal would provide a supportive economic function to the business at Plot 4100 in the short term, in line with the principle of economic development.

Whilst the development proposal would alter the quantum of development floor-space as set out in the Section 106, a supplemental deed is not required in this case given its temporary nature.

Taking account of the above, the proposed temporary development is deemed acceptable in principle.

Quality of design and impact on character of area

The use for vehicle storage would not appear harsh or obtrusive in this location, particularly given the presence of well-defined soft landscaping surrounding the outside of the site boundary.

To accommodate vehicles, the site would be covered with a geotextile membrane, over which 150mm of MOT type 1 road-stone would be laid to create a level surface. Land level alterations are very limited and would not harm local character.

This application also proposes replacement security paladin fencing. The security fencing would have a weldmesh construction to a height of 2.4m and coloured green. This type of fencing would not appear prominent in its surrounds and similar types of hard-boundary treatment are witnessed elsewhere within the Business Park. Each steel post would be fixed to a precast concrete ballast block as an additional security control measure. Each block would have a width of 600mm, depth of 1200mm and height of 900mm. Soft landscaping surrounding immediately adjacent to the discernible boundaries would significantly mitigate views of these blocks. The siting of vehicles on-site would further reduce their presence and noticeability. As such, their inclusion alongside the proposed boundary fencing would not detract from the area.

Highways

The highways authority have been consulted for this application and present no objection to the proposal.

It is noted that a vehicle crossover to the site exists from Hatfield Avenue, however this is not proposed to be utilised. The Highways Authority have assessed the proposal based on the proposed access arrangement as shown in drawing number: 6434-SK010. This can be secured through a planning condition.

Public Health and Protection

The Council's Public Health and Protection Team (PH&P) have been consulted for this application and set out the considerations relevant to environmental health for this application to include: noise from movement of vehicles and contaminated land.

In terms of noise, the application site is located next to a bus company and warehouse, both of which are expected to operate during unsocial hours and create noise. Information regarding hours of deliveries were not initially submitted with this application. On this basis the following condition was advised by the Council's PH&P Officer:

'No deliveries (including vehicles) shall be taken or dispatched from the site outside the hours of 07:00 – 20:00 Mondays to Fridays, 08:00 – 17:00 Saturdays nor at any time on Sundays, Bank or Public Holidays.'

Supporting information has since been submitted and explains that the intention is for vehicles to be delivered to, and taken from the site, during the hours of 8am and 7pm Monday to Friday, 8.30am and 6pm Saturday and 10am to 4pm Sunday. Whilst working on bank or public holidays is not expressed, it is necessary to restrict deliveries on these days as advised above.

Taking into account the temporary nature of the use and likely disturbance, there is no objection to the proposed hours of operation. The hours of deliveries can be secured through a planning condition and will have regard to both the days and hours advised by the Council's PH&P Team and that proposed.

Following further correspondence with Public Health and Protection, there is no objection in terms of contaminated land as the proposal would not involve ground disturbance.

Archaeology

The site lies within the former Hatfield Aerodrome, which is an area where a considerable amount of mainly prehistoric archaeology has been found. Hertfordshire County Council's Historic Environment Advisor has been consulted and considers that the hard-surfacing construction method is unlikely to disturb such features and on this basis present no objection.

Ecology

The application site is located within an area of medium priority for habitat creation. An Ecology Appraisal (Ecology Solutions, November 2018) has been submitted with this application. The main habitat/vegetation types identified on the site include: semi-improved grassland, rough grassland, treeline/wooded belt, tall ruderal vegetation and bare ground.

Hertfordshire Ecology have been consulted for this application and consider that the development proposal will result in the loss of an open grassland resource – albeit of relatively low intrinsic value. Paragraph 170(d) of the NPPF explains that planning decisions should contribute and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity. This is consistent with Policy SADM16 of the Emerging Local Plan.

The submitted Ecological Appraisal surveys the whole of Plot 5610 with suggested mitigation and enhancement measures, including: retaining bordering trees, adopting a sensitive lighting scheme, hedgehogs, nesting birds, nature planting and installation of bird boxes. External lighting details are also advised, to assess whether wildlife would be adversely affected as a result.

As the Ecological Appraisal is not site-specific Hertfordshire Ecology have provided a revised consultation response recommending compensatory planting and external lighting details. The applicant has since provided a planting plan with the confines of the application site (drawing number: 1222-01-201) which has been agreed. External lighting details can be secured through a planning condition.

Conclusion

Subject to the suggested planning condition, the proposed development accords with all relevant local and national planning policies.

Conditions:

1. This permission is for a temporary period, expiring on: 28 July 2020 when the use hereby approved must be discontinued, and the hardstanding hereby approved must be removed. Subsequently the land must be fully restored to its former condition.

REASON: To prevent prejudicing redevelopment proposals for the area and permission is only sought for an 18 month period.

2. All approved soft landscaping as shown on drawing number: 1222-01-201, must be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following completion of the development: and any plants which die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased within the temporary permission period must be replaced in the next planting season of the temporary permission period with others of similar size and species. All landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the guidance contained in British Standards 8545: 2014.

REASON: To ensure proper implementation of the agreed landscape details in the interest of the amenity value of the development in accordance with Policies GBSP2, D2 and D8 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005; Policy SADM16 of the Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council Draft Local Plan Proposed Submission August 2016 and the National Planning Policy Framework 2018.

3. Site access and egress must only be taken from the 'site entrance', as shown on drawing number: 6434-SK010, submitted and received on 15 November 2018.

REASON: To limit site access and egress to that proposed and to prevent use of the existing access to serve Plot 5610 from Hatfield Avenue as this would require further assessment in the interest of highway safety and the free movement of traffic.

4. Vehicle deliveries must not be taken or dispatched from the site outside the hours of 07:00 to 20:00 on Mondays to Fridays; 08:00 to 18:00 on Saturdays; 10:00 to 16:00 on Sundays nor any time on a Bank or Public Holiday.

REASON: To protect the living conditions of neighbouring residents, in accordance with Policy D1 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005, Supplementary Design Guidance 2005 (Statement of Council Policy), Policy SADM11 of the Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council Draft Local Plan Proposed Submission August 2016 and the National Planning Policy Framework 2018.

DRAWING NUMBERS

5. The development/works shall not be started and completed other than in accordance with the approved plans and details:

Plan Number	Revision Number	Details	Received Date
1222-401	B	Proposed Boundary Fencing	15 November 2018
6434-SK011		Site Location Plan	24 January 2019
6434-SK010		Proposed Site Plan	15 November 2018
1222-01-201		Planting Plan	24 January 2019

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

1. POSITIVE AND PROACTIVE STATEMENT

The decision has been made taking into account, where practicable and appropriate the requirements of paragraph 38 of the National Planning Policy Framework and material planning considerations do not justify a decision contrary

to the development plan (see Officer's report which can be viewed on the Council's website or inspected at these offices).

Informatives:

1. This permission does not convey any consent which may be required under any legislation other than the Town and Country Planning Acts. Any permission required under the Building Regulations or under any other Act, must be obtained from the relevant authority or body e.g. Fire Officer, Health and Safety Executive, Environment Agency (Water interest etc. Neither does this permission negate or override any private covenants which may affect the land.

Determined By:

Mr Mark Peacock
28 January 2019