



**TOWN AND COUNTRY
PLANNING ACT 1990**

**Planning, Design and
Access Statement**

**Two Storage Shelters
(retrospective)**

**The Beacon
Mosquito Way
Hatfield
AL10 9WN**

**On behalf of
Air Business Ltd**

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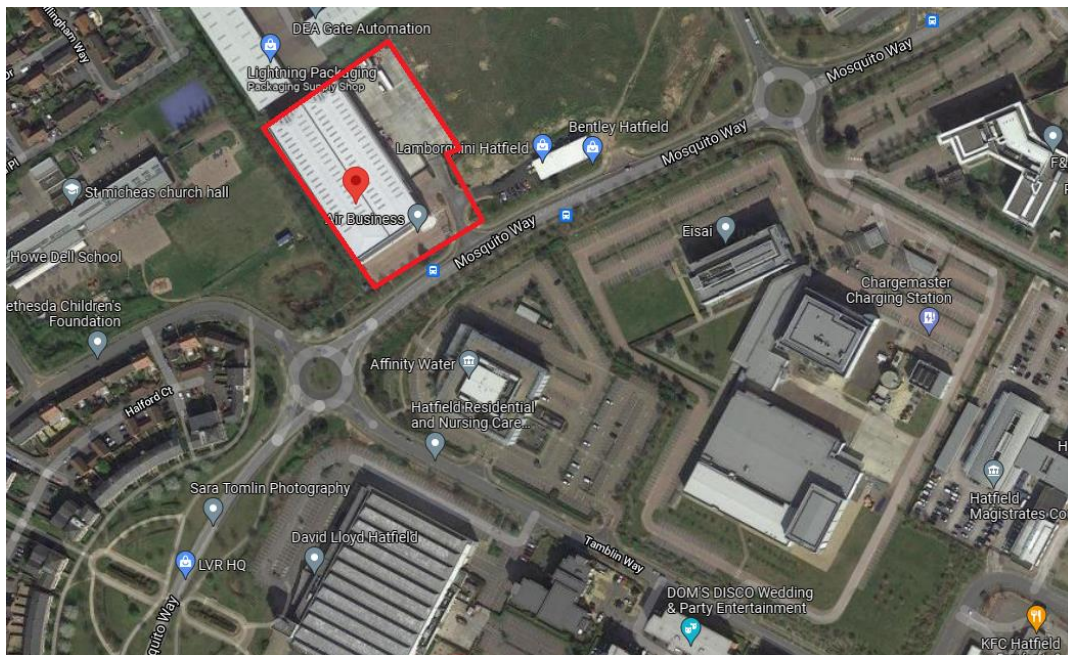
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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 My name is Hayden Todd and I am an Associate Director with Aitchison Raffety, Chartered Town Planning Consultants. I have a Bachelor's Degree in Environmental and Resource Planning (Hons) and am a Member of the Royal Town Planning Institute.
- 1.2 This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application for two storage shelters at The Beacon, Mosquito Way, Hatfield, AL10 9WN. It is noted that the shelters have been erected in response to a pressing need for covered outdoor storage space in the service yard.
- 1.3 This Planning Statement demonstrates why the development is acceptable having regard to adopted local policies and national planning guidance.

2. SITE DESCRIPTION AND SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 The site is a 1.2 hectare plot located on the northern side of Mosquito Way, near the junction with Tamblin Way, in Hatfield. The site forms part of the extensive Hatfield Business Park and is on the former Hatfield Aerodrome. The site is located approximately 1km west of Hatfield town centre.



Approximate extent of the application site

- 2.2 The site is the headquarters of Air Business Ltd and is in mixed use, incorporating offices and warehouse floor space (storage and distribution).
- 2.3 The site consists of a large and recently constructed three storey warehouse. The building is set back from the site frontage and extends along the western boundary. It has a rectangular footprint with a simple building form and flat roof. The building is finished in various shades of composite cladding, resulting in a high quality contemporary finish. Two lightweight storage

shelters have been erected adjacent to the warehouse in the northern end of the site, which are the subject of this application.

- 2.4 The site is accessed from Mosquito Way. There is a dedicated staff parking area on the site frontage with Mosquito Way. A secondary parking area and service yard is located on the eastern side of the warehouse. The site has approximately 90 parking spaces, including the service yard.
- 2.5 To the north, west and south, the site adjoins various headquarters and industrial buildings. Directly to the east is Howe Dell School. Further to the east and south are residential properties. A former hanger is located approximately 150m south of the application site on Tamblin Way, which is Grade II Listed. The directly surrounding area has an industrial character.
- 2.6 The site is in Flood Zone 1 where it is at low risk of flooding.

3. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 The proposal seeks retrospective permission for two storage shelters.
- 3.2 The proposed storage shelters have rectangular footprints with pitched roofs. The shelters measure 8m wide, by 12m deep, with a side height of 3m and a ridge height of 5.2m. A steel frame supports a durable green PVC cover.
- 3.3 The shelters provide a covered temporary storage area for machinery and packages in the service yard to assist with collections and deliveries. The shelters are an important part of the effective and efficient day to day operation of the business and are needed to protect goods from the elements.



Storage shelters (suppliers information)

4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 Planning permission for erection of a three storey building for B8 (storage and distribution) (4,915 sq metres, gross external) and B1 (office/light industrial) (1,797 sq metres, gross external) use, together with 100 car parking spaces, 10 cycle parking spaces, boundary treatment, landscaping, lighting and access (6/2017/0624/MAJ) was approved 03 October 2017.

5. PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

Local Planning Policy

- 5.1 The starting point for assessing development proposals is always the Development Plan. Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states:

“If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the Planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise”

- 5.2 The Development Plan relevant to the assessment of this application consists of the Saved Policies from the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan (2005). The Council is in the process of preparing a new Local Plan which will replace the saved policies when/if adopted. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is also an important planning consideration.

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan (2005)

- 5.3 Welwyn Hatfield District Plan contains the local planning framework, policies and proposals, that were intended to guide development and use of land in the district up until 2011. Several of the policies have been saved and continue to form part of the Development Plan. The policies most relevant to the assessment of this application are set out below:-

Policy SD1	Sustainable Development
Policy GBSP2	Towns and Specified Settlements
Policy R1	Maximising the Use of Previously Developed Land
Policy R19	Noise and Vibration Pollution
Policy M1	Integrating Transport and Land Use
Policy M14	Parking Standards for New Development
Policy D1	Quality of Design
Policy D2	Character and Context Policy
Policy EMP1	Employment Areas
Policy EMP2	Acceptable Uses in Employment Areas
Policy EMP13	Design Criteria for Employment Development

Draft Local Plan Proposed Submission 2016 (emerging Local Plan)

- 5.4 The Council is in the process of preparing a new Local Plan which is still subject to change and can only be given limited weight in the assessment of this application. The relevant policies are set out below:-

Policy SP 1	Delivering Sustainable Development
Policy SP 2	Targets for Growth

Policy SP 3	Settlement Strategy and Green Belt boundaries
Policy SP 4	Transport and Travel
Policy SADM 2	Highway Network and Safety
Policy SP 8	The Local Economy
Policy SADM 10	Employment development
Policy SP 9	Place Making and High Quality Design
Policy SADM 11	Amenity and Layout
Policy SADM 12	Parking, Servicing and Refuse

Other relevant policies and guidance

- 5.5 The below national policy and guidance is also directly relevant to the assessment of the appraisal:-

Supplementary Design Guidance
Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Guidance
Hatfield Aerodrome Supplementary Planning Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

- 5.6 Central Government advice relevant to this application is contained within the National Planning Policy Framework. The most relevant aspects of the Framework are summarised below.
- 5.7 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- 5.8 Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways. Paragraph 8 identifies the three dimensions to sustainable development which are economic, social and environmental.
- 5.9 Paragraph 11 sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development as the central aspect of planning policy and decision taking. In terms of determining development proposals, this means approving schemes which accord with the Development Plan without delay. Where there are no relevant Development Plan policies or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or*
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.*
- 5.10 Section 4 requires local planning authorities to approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. Paragraph 38 states that decision makers should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

- 5.11 Section 6 ‘Building a strong, competitive economy’ notes that planning should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. It notes that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account local business needs and wider opportunities for development
- 5.12 Section 9 ‘Promoting sustainable transport’ at paragraph 111 confirms that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.
- 5.13 Section 11 ‘Making effective use of land’ seeks to promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses.
- 5.14 Section 12 ‘Achieving well-designed places’, at paragraph 126 states that the creation of high quality beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. It notes that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

6. PLANNING APPRAISAL

Principle of Change of Use

- 6.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has at its heart the achievement of sustainable development, which has economic, social and environmental dimensions, to be sought simultaneously. The key economic objective expressed in the NPPF, is to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity. Paragraph 80 of NPPF requires councils to create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. It advises that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, considering both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.
- 6.2 Policy EMP1 of the District Plan seeks to concentrate economic growth in existing employment areas, such as Hatfield Business Park. Policy EMP2 of the District Plan confirms that within the designated employment areas, Use Class B1, B2 and B8 will be permitted subject to various criteria relating to the scale of the use, highway safety, residential amenity and appropriate parking provision.
- 6.3 Policy SP 1 of the Draft Local Plan reinforces the sustainability aspiration of the NPPF and confirms that the Council will plan positively in a way that supports economic growth. Policy SADM 10 of the Draft District Plan reiterates the need to focus new employment development in the designated areas and to protect them from inappropriate changes of use.
- 6.4 The application site lies within the Hatfield Business Park, which is a designated employment area. The proposal seeks retrospective permission for the erection of two storage shelters that would be used for purposes ancillary to the main operation of the business. The proposed shelters are within the previous development curtilage and would not result in any material change of use. The proposed shelters are in the service yard and are required to provide a much needed covered outdoor storage area for deliveries and collections. The shelters assist with the effective and efficient operation of this important local business.

- 6.5 As such, the proposed development is for a minor ancillary form of development that would contribute positively towards the productivity of this important local business, in full compliance with the aspirations of saved Policies EMP1 and EMP2 of the District Plan, emerging Policies SP 1 and SADM 10 of the Draft District Plan and the NPPF.

Character and Appearance

- 6.6 The NPPF seeks a high quality of design and that new development is sympathetic to local character, while not preventing appropriate innovation or change.
- 6.7 Policies D1 and D2 of the District Plan requires a high quality design and that development respects the character and local context, preserving and where possible enhancing the character of the existing area. Policy EMP13 of the District Plan relates specifically to employment development and requires a high standard of design and site layout.
- 6.8 Emerging Policy SP 9 in the Draft District Plan requires a high quality design that fosters a positive sense of place by responding to the listed principles in an integrated and coherent way.
- 6.9 Hatfield Business Park consists of various industrial and commercial buildings that have been constructed in a diversity of sizes, styles and forms. The buildings are informally arranged and set on plot sizes that range from small to substantial. The diverse industrial character provides a flexible environment for further changes.
- 6.10 The application site consists of a recently constructed three storey warehouse, which is set back from the highway in a substantial plot. The area surrounding the warehouse is predominantly covered in hardstanding surfaces that are used for parking, manoeuvring and loading/unloading. The proposed development is for the introduction of two small storage shelters that respect and preserve the diverse industrial character of the site and surrounding area.
- 6.11 The proposed storage shelters are appropriately positioned in the service yard adjacent to the warehouse and authorised bin and screened storage areas. The storage shelters are well integrated with the general arrangement of the main building and surrounding structures. As such, the proposal provides a sympathetic and coherent addition to the existing development.
- 6.12 The proposed storage shelters have been carefully positioned in the northern section of the service yard, where they are set back a considerable distance from the highway, reducing their visual prominence and mitigating any potential impact on the street scene. The shelters are also positioned adjacent to a landscape buffer, which along with the extensive parking area and warehouse, screens the structures from most normal viewpoints. Furthermore, any potential glimpsed views of the shelters would be read and understood in the context of this substantial warehouse and service yard in an industrial area, where they would not harm visual amenity.
- 6.13 The proposed storage shelters are modest in size and have a low profile. The shelters would be viewed in the immediate context of the substantial warehouse, where they would represent a minor and subservient addition to this commercial site. As noted above, any potential glimpsed views from outside the site would be read and understood within the

context of the surrounding industrial development, where they would represent a minor and insignificant form of development.

- 6.14 The proposed storage shelters have a simple form which is compatible with the surrounding development. They are also of a style and design that respects the character of the site and surrounding area. The shelters are lightweight in appearance and finished in green, which would help integrate them into the site and adjoining landscape.
- 6.15 The proposed storage shelters represent a minor form of development and would not have any implications on the setting or significance of the nearby Listed Hanger as a designated heritage asset.



The proposed shelters would be viewed in the context of the service yard and warehouse where they would not result in any harm to the character of the business park

- 6.16 The proposed covered shelters are therefore compatible with the character and appearance of this designated employment area, in accordance with saved Policies D1, D2 and EMP13 of the District Plan, emerging Policy SP 9 in the Draft District Plan and the NPPF.

Amenity

- 6.17 A core planning principle, as set out in the NPPF, is to always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future users. This principle is reflected in Policies R19, D1 and EMP2 of the District Plan which seek to ensure that new development does not adversely affect the existing area in terms of built form or the operation of any uses from noise and vibration pollution. These approaches are reiterated in emerging Policy SAD

11 of the draft District Plan which requires new development to safeguard the amenity of surrounding properties.

- 6.18 The proposed storage shelters are modest in size and have a low profile. They are positioned in the northern section of the site where they are screened by the existing development and a landscaped area. The proposed storage shelters would not therefore result in any harm to the visual or residential amenity of the surrounding occupiers, as they would not be overbearing or result in a loss of light.
- 6.19 The proposed shelters provide a covered area in the service yard for the temporary storage of packages and machinery to assist with loading and unloading. The purpose of the proposal is to protect goods and machinery from the elements and has not changed or increased the intensity of the existing use. It is noted that the site is located within a large business park near various industrial uses where a degree of noise and disturbance would be expected. As such, this minor form of development has not resulted in a material increase in noise or general disturbance to any nearby users or residents.
- 6.20 The proposed development would not therefore harm the amenity or living conditions of the surrounding users or occupiers, particularly when taking into consideration the local context, in compliance with the provisions of saved Policies R19, D1 and EMP2 of the District Plan, emerging Policy SAD 11 of the draft District Plan and the NPPF.

Car parking and highway safety

- 6.21 The NPPF seeks to provide safe and suitable access for all users. It sets out the Government's approach to promoting sustainable transport and encourages solutions which reduce congestion and facilitate the use of sustainable modes of transport. It specifies that local parking standards should take into account the accessibility of a proposed development, the type, mix and use of the development, the availability of, and opportunities for, public transport, local car ownership levels, and an overall need to reduce the use of high emission vehicles. This is underpinned by a core principle of the Framework to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling. The NPPF clarifies that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.
- 6.22 Policy M14 of the District Plan 2005 requires developments to be assessed in accordance with the maximum standards contained in the Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Guidance. Specific guidance for the Hatfield Aerodrome car parking is provided within the document 'Hatfield Aerodrome' Supplementary Planning Guidance.
- 6.23 The Hatfield Aerodrome Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) reflects the sustainability aspirations contained in the NPPF and seeks to achieve good levels of integration with Hatfield and surrounding towns. In addition, it promotes passenger transport, walking and cycling as alternatives to private motorised vehicles.
- 6.24 The application site is sustainably located within Hatfield, where it has good access to public transport networks. It is surrounded by good quality pedestrian and cycleways, including Gypsy Moth Avenue and Mosquito Way, which have segregated foot/cycle ways.
- 6.25 The proposed development has resulted in the loss of approximately 8 parking spaces, which is a minor reduction when considering approximately 90 spaces would be retained. It is noted

that the proposed storage shelters are located adjacent to the bins in a part of the parking area that was surplus to requirements. Given the sustainable location of the site, the retained parking area is sufficient to cater for the day to day needs of the business. Importantly, the proposal would not result in the loss of any disabled parking spaces or effect the secure cycle storage area.

- 6.26 Furthermore, the loss of 8 parking spaces would result in a level of parking more aligned with the sustainability aspirations contained in the SPG, which seeks a reduction in parking over time.
- 6.27 As such, a sufficient level of parking has been retained and the proposal would not therefore give rise to conditions prejudicial to highway safety.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The proposal is for the erection of two covered storage shelters to improve the effective and efficient operation of this important business within a designated employment area.
- 7.2 The proposed storage shelters are modest in size and have been carefully positioned in the northern section of the site, where they would preserve the character and appearance of the street scene and surrounding area. An appropriate standard of design has been achieved.
- 7.3 The proposal would not harm the amenity of the surrounding users or occupiers.
- 7.4 Parking provision is acceptable and the proposal would not harm highway safety.
- 7.5 For the reasons outlined in this Statement, the proposed development is acceptable in planning terms.