

REPORT TO THE WESTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	05.12.2012		
Application Number	W/11/01663/REM		
Site Address	Land West Of Biss Farm West Ashton Road West Ashton Wiltshire		
Proposal	Approval of reserved matters for employment development comprising B1 B2 and B8 uses and associated access and landscaping pursuant to outline permission ref 05/00744/OUT		
Applicant	Persimmon Homes (Wessex) Ltd		
Town/Parish Council	West Ashton		
Electoral Division	Southwick	Unitary Member:	Francis Morland
Grid Ref	386962 157248		
Type of application	Reserved Matters		
Case Officer	Mr Kenny Green	01225 770344 Ext 01225 770251 kenny.green@wiltshire.gov.uk	

Reason for the application being considered by Committee

Councillor Francis Morland has requested that this item be determined by Committee due to:

- * Scale of development
- * Visual impact upon the surrounding area
- * Relationship to adjoining properties
- * Design - bulk, height, general appearance
- * Environmental/highway impact
- * Car parking; and
- * To enable public debate on controversial proposals and as requested by West Ashton Parish Council.

1. Purpose of Report

To consider the above application and to recommend that the reserved matters be approved.

Neighbourhood Responses - 32 letters of representation received from third parties

West Ashton Parish Council Response - Objects, for the reasons set out in the report.

2. Report Summary

The main issues to consider are:

- * Established Principle of Development/Economic Growth
- * Layout and Scale
- * External Appearance / Design and Detailing
- * Access
- * Landscaping
- * Impacts on Neighbouring land use(s)

3. Site Description

The land which is the subject of this application relates to 13.9 hectares located on the north-east side of West Ashton Road on the edge of Trowbridge. The land is currently used for agricultural purposes and is roughly triangular in shape. It is separated from existing residential properties to the north by a strip of farmland and Blackball Brook along with clusters of bushes and trees. Open farmland abuts

the site to the east and south. The western boundary of the site is formed by an approximate 2 - 3.5 metre high mature hedgerow, beyond which and opposite the public highway, there is a mixed residential development comprising 2 and 2.5 storey properties using a mix of materials including brick and render with a varied roofscape of pitched roofs, gabled fronts and projecting end gables.

Green Lane Wood and Biss Wood, situated to the north and south of Blackball Brook, provides a distant landscaped backdrop to the site.

The site's landscape character is defined as "rolling clay lowland" and the applicant's describe it as "large scale open, flat and relatively featureless agricultural land" approximately 40 metres AOD (above ordnance datum). Near the A350, the land starts to rise reaching approximately 85 metres AOD, in the village of West Ashton, approximately 1.2 miles distant from the site.

One Public Right of Way (PROW) crosses the site (West Ashton FP16) which leads west from the site to the A350. Over the A350, the footpath and a bridleway lead westwards to Stourton Water (a total distance of 1.25 miles). A second footpath leads off north-east towards Ashton Common. There is another PROW on the opposite side of West Ashton Road where West Ashton FP14 crosses the River Biss and leads to Drynham Lane and the White Horse Business Park beyond.

Roadside pavements from Trowbridge along West Ashton Road stop on the northern side before reaching Blackball Bridge, and extends only to the recent residential development. The remainder of the road has grass verges.

The adopted West Wiltshire District Plan -1st Alteration identifies the site for future employment use under Policy E1(A). This followed on from the former District Council's decision to grant outline permission in 1998. The Local Plan states that:

"the site is well related to the town, residential areas and the town centre, whilst not being so close as to cause environmental or amenity problems. The site has no adverse implications for the interests of nature conservation. In particular, the ancient semi-natural woodland of Biss and Green Lane Woods. The site offers an excellent opportunity to provide an attractive landscaped site, integrated with the proposed country park and adjacent residential areas, which could cater for a wide range of employment uses".

The Emerging Wiltshire Core Strategy (reference 134 of the schedule of proposed changes) identifies the site as being of "strategic" importance to the overall strategic development of the Town.

4. Relevant Planning History

98/01149/OUT - Development of land to the west of Biss Farm, West Ashton Road for employment uses B1, B2 and B8 with all matters reserved granted on 8 October 1998

01/01617/FUL - Section 73 renewal for the above application granted on 6 February 2003

05/00744/FUL - A further renewal application granted for six years on 7 June 2005

W/10/03031/FUL - Renewal of planning permission W/05/00744/FUL to allow five years to submit reserved matters pursuant to ref 98/01149/OUT was refused at committee (contrary to officer recommendation) on 15.09.2011.

This decision was successfully appealed on 24 May 2012. An award of Costs was also granted against the Council for the aforementioned refusal. The site therefore has the benefit of planning permission for employment development.

(Application W/11/01697/FUL is a duplicate application to the one granted planning permission on appeal and is still pending a decision as it was deferred by members on 4th of January 2012 until the Wiltshire Core Strategy has been approved).

5. Proposal

This application seeks Approval of Reserved Matters (namely: the siting, design and external appearance; along with the means of access and landscaping) for an employment development comprising a mix of B1, B2 and B8 uses with associated access and landscaping on a land holding which has extant approval. The application is made pursuant to previously approved outline application 05/00744/FUL, which was granted on 7 June 2005.

If granted, over 33,000 square metres of employment floor space would be provided. This equates to about 44% of the net development area (measuring just over 7.5 hectares within a total site area of 13.9 hectares). At this stage in the process, no end users have been confirmed; however, it is envisaged that a range of employment users would be able to locate to this edge of town site. The predominant use would be B1 office space. The development would be split into four phases, starting with the B1 uses which would be built parallel with West Ashton Road, the landscape bunds, the balancing pond located in the top north-west corner of the site; and, the access entry off the East Trowbridge Distributor Road (ETDR). Phase B would complete much of the internal development, Phase C would see most of the remainder of the ETDR completed and the required completion of the landscape buffer along the south-eastern boundary, leading to Phase D which would see the last part of the site built out, all the while complying with the extant outline permission and its associated conditions.

Two-storey B1 use premises of a 'domestic scale' are proposed to form the key external frontages (i.e. the development site facing West Ashton Road and the ETDR), with the larger units located more centrally within the site and towards the northern boundary, with very robust tree planting and landscape provision. The designed vernacular and the proposed building materials reflect those found locally, but in the main, brick would be used, predominantly red in colour, but enhanced by some buff brick and rendered facades under slated roofs. The fenestration treatment and especially to those public facing directions is again predominantly domestic in scale and rhythm, complemented in places by glazed panels.

Access to the business park site would be obtained directly off the ETDR in two places. No vehicular access is permitted off the West Ashton Road. The employment premises would be served off a looping 7.3 metre wide spine road with 2 metre wide pavements on both sides, which would link up with a wider, extended footpath network, including the proposed re-routing of PROW West Ashton FP16 (which would run to the south and south-east of the development area through the 30 metre wide landscaped buffer). The spine road would be complemented by an avenue of tree planting and the car parking, service areas and yards would be provided centrally again augmented with tree planting, internal landscaping and where appropriate for security reasons, service areas would be enclosed.

The layout recognises and provides for a robust / strategic 30 metre wide landscape buffer around the development site. This buffer would contain native woodland planting including within the northern landscape buffer a mix of semi mature and heavy standard tree planting and native shrubs set in a meadow grassland along with 3.5 metre high undulating landscaped bunds running alongside, although set back from, the West Ashton Road and the ETDR. This means that there would be at least 30 metres landscaped separation between any of the proposed new buildings and the brook, the ETDR and the West Ashton Road in order to comply with the extant outline permission (and specifically to conditions 8 and 19) in order to mitigate against flood risk and visual impact.

Cohesive, well integrated street columns and street furniture are also proposed to create a sense of continuity and place - which shall hopefully provide for an enjoyable working environment.

6. Planning Policy

Wiltshire _ Swindon Structure Plan 2011 - DP4 Main Settlements

West Wiltshire District Plan - 1st Alteration 2004

E1A New Employment Allocations / T4B New Distributor Roads / C31a - Design / C32 - Landscaping / C35 - Light Pollution / C38 - Nuisance / T10 - Car Parking / U1a - Foul Water Disposal / U2 - Surface Water Disposal

Government Guidance

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and The Noise Policy Statement for England (NPSE)

The Emerging Wiltshire Core Strategy

Strategic Objective 1 - Delivering A Thriving Economy / Strategic Objective 2 - To Address Climate Change (NB: Strategic Objective 3 is not relevant as it relates to affordable housing) / Strategic

Objective 4 - Helping to Build Resilient Communities / Strategic Objective 5 - Protect and Enhance the Natural, Historic and Built Environment / Strategic Objective 6 - Ensure that Essential Infrastructure is in place to Support our Communities

Core Policy 1 - Settlement Strategy / Core Policy 29 - Trowbridge Community Area / Core Policy 35 - Existing Employment Sites / Core Policy 36 - Economic Regeneration / Core Policy 41 - Sustainable Construction and Low Carbon Energy / Core Policy 50 - Biodiversity and Geodiversity / Core Policy 51 - Landscape / Core Policy 52 - Green Infrastructure / Core Policy 57 - Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping / Core Policy 60 - Sustainable Transport and Core Policy 61 - Transport and Development

7. Consultations

West Ashton Parish Council - Objects on the following grounds:

A 30 metre landscaping buffer must be provided around the site. No landscaping or buffering is shown between the Business Park and the adjacent field running alongside the East Trowbridge Distributor Road. There are some trees at the entrance to the Business Park, onto the East Trowbridge Distributor Road but they do not continue along its length; and therefore, it will present a building line above the trees when viewed from the A350.

There is a lack of an Environmental Impact Assessment and appropriate assessment under the Habitats Regulations 2010.

There is a lack of any agreed Transport Plan for the site.

Other comments and observations made by the Parish Council -

There appears to be a very high density of buildings. This is supposed to be a light industry Business Park, but drawing P549/06 has an illustration of an articulated lorry of 16m approx. in length indicating that it is intended to use the Business Park.

What existing approval is there for the 'other adjacent land' in the applicant's control? What are their plans for it? Should they be expected to provide this as a condition now?

There is little indication on the application of what occupation in general is undertaken by the residents of the Paxcroft Mead development, which suggests there is no clear understanding of the types of jobs that should be encouraged on the Business Park.

The proposed Business Park buildings give the impression of being costly to build and therefore it seems an unlikely cost that the developer will want to incur. Would this application therefore, if approved be subject to a refining, possibly to a less costly solution once approved?

Queries are raised over the submitted Design Statement in terms of lack of boundary planting, the accuracy of plans, what tangible benefits will accrue off-site_ The Parish Council also questions the timeframes for any on-site implementation.

In view of the Parish Council's strong views on the development of this site we have instructed Councillor Francis Morland to 'call in' this planning application for consideration by the Planning committee.

The Former Vision Director For Trowbridge - Supported the application.

The adopted Scoping and Vision Study for Trowbridge (dated August 2010) formed the first phase in an emerging Masterplan for the town. It is anticipated that the Masterplan will be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document under the Core Strategy. The Scoping and Vision Study states the following in respect of opportunities for Employment Growth:

"The town provides higher order services for towns such as Melksham, Westbury and Warminster and therefore opportunities for Trowbridge should be considered in this context"

"There is a need for these employment uses to be maintained and further employment opportunities secured"

"Trowbridge has been identified as an area for housing and employment growth in the former RSS and emerging Wiltshire Core Strategy. The Masterplan will need to appropriately respond to this"

requirement by identifying suitable locations for such growth. This growth also provides Trowbridge with the policy framework to secure additional housing and employment within a sustainable location, and the scale of development envisaged provides an opportunity to help deliver new services and facilities which are urgently needed in the town".

The Scoping and Vision Study goes on to state:

"The employment allocation to the southeast provides an opportunity to move some town centre uses which would best be relocated and provide opportunities for high quality employment provision which is currently absent in the area".

It also identifies that office stock in the town centre is poor and the centre is not attracting new office occupiers. This is recognition of the fact that in the current and foreseeable economic conditions leisure, retail and some residential uses are the higher value land uses that are most attractive to developers in the town centre. Thus new employment opportunities will be more likely to be delivered at new, high specification locations outside of the town centre. This is the case with the Biss Farm site.

The Scoping and Vision Study also recognises that the high level of out-commuting experienced by Trowbridge is a key issue for the town that must be addressed. In order to do so, it is self-evident that there is a need for local employment opportunities of the type offered by this application.

Conclusion

This application is wholly consistent with both existing and emerging Wiltshire Council Planning Policy (further evidenced by the previous permission given to this scheme) in respect of land allocated for employment uses. Moreover, the proposal entirely meets the policies and aspirations of Transforming Trowbridge as it reinforces the role of Trowbridge as a "service hub" for a large hinterland. It will provide further demand and attraction for investment in the town centre and recognises the limitations in the ability of the town centre in current market conditions to provide anything like sufficient opportunities for strategic employment growth, which is more appropriate on sites outside of the centre. Given these facts, this application is supported.

Highways Authority - Following meetings with the applicant and agent, the overall road layout, parking (including cycle parking) and servicing provision for this extensive development is acceptable and no highway objection is offered subject to a planning condition requiring full construction details of the internal road layout have been submitted for the written approval of the Council.

Environment Agency - No objections are raised, however advises that surface water drainage should be subject to another condition as it has not been discharged. The site plan shows that the proposed development would not be located within 30 metres of the Blackball Brook - thus meeting the requirements as previously set by application 05/00744/FUL. Safeguards should be implemented during the construction phase to minimise risks of pollution and detrimental effects to water interests in and around the site. Such safeguards should cover the use of machinery, oils/chemicals and materials, the routing of heavy vehicles, the location of work and storage areas, and the control and removal of spoil and waste.

Wessex Water - No objection subject to an informative.

Wiltshire Council Spatial Planning - Supports this application. This site shall be carried forward into the Core Strategy. Any employment land we are still seeking to bring forward should not be removed from the development plan until such time as it has been implemented. This site is certainly seen as an important component of the future employment land supply in Trowbridge.

The site should be mapped as already having consent and there was an oversight (in not notating its existence) in terms of the preparation of the Core Strategy consultation document. As the site already has permission, it should have been listed as a 'Principal Employment Area' which the proposed policy would seek to protect.

Wiltshire Council Environmental Protection - No objections raised.

Wiltshire Council Tree and Landscape Officer - No objections are raised in Arboricultural or landscape terms, subject to conditions. These should include approval of landscaping pre-commencement; carrying out and maintaining the approved landscaped scheme, retention of the existing hedgerow along the West Ashton Road (except where highway improvement work and pedestrian footpath links are proposed). A condition should also require that large specimen trees should be supplied and planted at a ratio of 25% Semi mature and 75% extra heavy standard (such as Oak, Lime and Hornbeam).

As a precautionary note, it is suggested that the Ash is substituted for another species or simply increase the number of other larger specimen trees within the scheme.

Wiltshire Council Ecologist - In terms of the reserved matters application, I have also revisited the ecological measures already secured for the site under 04/02105 (the East of Trowbridge development) which include plans for a Country Park extending across the northern corridor of the application site. These measures are within the approved landscape plans (Swale Corridor Country Park Proposals, Drawing number 20204-09 K, East of Trowbridge development) and the approved Habitat Creation, Management and Monitoring Plan (HCMMP, Pegasus Planning Group, May 2006). With this in mind, I have the following comments to make:

The lighting proposals for the development needs to be clarified. The agreed HCMMP states that there will be no lighting within the Country Park (the northern part of the site) and the current proposals should confirm this.

The planting scheme (Planting Plans, P.0678_10-A, 19th May 2011) needs to be in accordance with the planting proposals in the agreed 'Swale Corridor Country Park Proposals' (as referenced above): the current plans include fewer proposed tree standards along Blackball Brook, and no marginal planting has been included around the balancing pond.

Wiltshire Council Urban Designer - No objection subject to an appropriate landscaping scheme which incorporates trees of an appropriate size and maturity along the site boundaries, in particular adjacent to the larger scale B2 and B8 buildings.

8. Publicity

The application was advertised by site notice/press notice/neighbour notification. Expiry date: 8 July 2011

Summary of points raised:

32 letters of representation have been received from third parties raising the following comments:

The following supportive/positive comments were submitted

There seems to be adequate car parking provision on site, but local residents would not like to see business park users parking adjacent to residential areas.

It is good to see a policy which encourages walking and cycling, as an alternative to using cars. It is also good to see the extended path and cycleway network being proposed as part of this application, especially if the network links up to the existing networks in Paxcroft Mead and Biss Meadow Country Park. Will there be a dedicated cycle lane from Broadcloth Lane roundabout? Such a network would link up many large housing developments and would maximise options for avoiding car use.

The landscaping of the development looks very attractive. Will there be a pedestrian access to the edge of the balancing pond? Will an island be built to encourage water fowl nesting? The land around here tends to waterlog, with trees and shrubs dying in the winter because roots get starved of oxygen. Soft landscaping should be conditioned to ensure it is maintained.

All in all, the proposals look to be a high-quality development. Let's hope it will bring sorely needed high-quality jobs to the area.

The following material objections/ concerns were raised

Jobs / On-site uses

There are no jobs in Trowbridge. There is a considerable amount of outward commuting from Trowbridge to Bath, Swindon and Bristol.

Doubts are raised over whether this development will bring much needed business/jobs into the area. A parking study prepared by Mouchel, states that Trowbridge is 'economically deprived', local retailers I am sure, would agree.

The site may well be zoned for employment, but it will probably end up with small storage units, offering little employment opportunities.

There is a local rumour spreading that the site could be used as a waste recycling centre. Would that be acceptable?

What kind of restrictions will there be on the uses of the new units?

Highways

Little consideration has been given to the infrastructure and the affect the development will have upon the highway infrastructure. An improved road infrastructure is required. Perhaps the developer could contribute towards this. The Yarnbrook crossroads is at standstill at peak times. Any proposed alterations to the West Ashton traffic lights will achieve nothing, due to what can be described as a bottleneck at Yarnbrook.

Traffic volumes have increased significantly since the outline permission was granted, and therefore the traffic impact on the existing urban area needs to be revisited. In particular, I would suggest that, if granted, there should be a condition that no unit should be occupied until the Trowbridge Distributor Road shown in the plans has been constructed and brought in to use. In addition, there should be restrictions to the use by HGVs of West Ashton Road between the County Way roundabout and the proposed roundabout on the Trowbridge Distributor Road.

Why is this still under consideration? It was my understanding that the Hilperton Gap road was no longer to be built. Indeed that the very same developer had built on some of the proposed route? The application is based on the existence of this road, as is the Transport Plan.

The original schemes were granted initially based on the assumption that the Westbury Bypass would be built - but that has also been dropped. Recently the businesses at Westbury Trading Estate were badly hit by measures taken to protect the weak bridge at Station Road. The Transport Study does not place this matter in the wider context, e.g. Bradford on Avon & Staverton Bridges, & it does clearly identify that the junctions at West Ashton Road (both ends) & Yarnbrook are over capacity.

What design measures are being put into place to ensure the speed limits will be observed? Will there be an electronic speed display sign? Will the 30 mph limit be extended well beyond the proposed pedestrian crossing?

Can the existing manhole on West Ashton road be investigated to remedy the clanking noise it makes every time a vehicle runs over it?

Visual Impact

Computerised tin sheds do not employ many people. We don't want tin sheds built in the countryside. The number and spacing of the proposed units seems to be an over-use of the site, and there are concerns over the design of the units. The time for building business 'sheds' is long gone, and if the business park is to be built, good design is a high priority, especially given that this is a greenfield site. Romantically, the vista from West Ashton Crossroads is currently inviting, reminiscent of the fabled "dreaming spires" of Oxford. Practically, the vista is part of a landscape designed by the late Lord Long at great expense - we were built to receive a proposed visit by Queen Victoria - he designed to impress.

Impacts on Neighbours / Local Residents

This is a residential area; it is not a suitable location for Commercial/Industrial use.

This sort of site should be located further away from residential areas and closer to better communication links.

The development would adversely affect local residents' quality of life. This side of Trowbridge has seen lots of development over the past 15 years. It is time to call a halt to more development. Why does this not apply to the other side of the Town?

The development would result in noise and air pollution.

The Council says it has a plan for the future, but it clearly does not take into account the views of the residents of West Ashton Road, West Ashton village and the surrounding area.

The Town Council's vision states: "Working together to achieve the best quality of life for everyone". Their mission statement reads: "Working together to promote and develop the wellbeing of our Community".

In theory you can achieve both by declining the proposed development and if there is still a need that helps others in the Community with this development, find a more suitable location.

Flood Risk

The site is flood plain and developing on it could mean that the park could be more likely to be at risk of flooding. Any future flooding caused by developing this site would be held against the Council.

Ecology

Loss of feeding ground for bats. Loss of wildlife (foxes, deer, hedgehogs, pheasants, herons, birds of prey and many common birds including blue tits, blackbirds which live in the hedgerow).

Has the Council and its predecessor complied with environmental impact assessment requirements in approving this project? Have Environmental Impact Assessment(s) or appropriate assessment under the Habitats Directive/UK regulations 2010 been undertaken?

To permit this scheme to proceed to construction without full compliance with UK and European biodiversity law could be unlawful.

Environmental Issues

The assurances provided by the Environment Agency bear little credit. The advice and guidance is unreliable. What about sewage disposal?

What sustainable considerations have been given to: water supply source, disposal of surface water (especially during heavy storms); the covering of a natural sump soak-away producing a near flood, and the inevitable pollution of the River Biss?

Increased noise problems will be created. There is a hospice nearby to this site.

The development would lead to noise from traffic and increased pollution and congestion.

Wiltshire is well behind its carbon emissions target.

Plans and Supporting Information

Objections and concerns are raised against the level and type of information submitted. The Design Statement and Transport Plan are considered to be flawed, unless the infrastructure is provided.

There is an over-reliance placed on old, historic data. Have the principles been established_ There have been a significant number of accidents recorded at the main bends along West Ashton Road.

The White Horse Alliance submitted the following objections

The obstacles to determining this matter have not been resolved.

The development is still without a viable transport plan complying with the conditions imposed when planning permission was first granted. Mr Creedy has informed us that the Council does not yet have a preferred route, design, or funding stream for the Yarnbrook-West Ashton improvement.

The Campaign for Better Transport (Bristol and Bath Travel to Work Area) raised the following objections

The emerging Core Strategy puts the emphasis on developing brownfield sites in Trowbridge with greenfield sites pushed to the end of the plan period. The importance of placing new employment in Trowbridge itself is emphasised, as is the re-use of buildings and the modernisation of existing trading estates. Why, in the current policy context, are we allocating employment in an unsustainable place remote from the town and remote from public transport corridors_ The development is obviously unpopular with local people.

9. Planning Considerations

Established Principle of Development/ Economic Growth

Although the applicant is recognised as being a national house builder, there should be no doubt over what is being proposed under this application. It would appear that many third parties have misunderstood what is being applied for. This is an application for reserved matters pursuant to an extant outline permission, which established the principle of the development. It is no longer open for the Council to consider for discussion the principle of development of this site for employment

purposes. Contrary to some received objections, no houses are proposed at this site and erroneous objections raised thereto, cannot be considered.

Fundamentally, it is essential to note that the application proposal is entirely consistent with the Development Plan. The site is allocated for employment development (defined as Policy E1A) and the strategic importance of this site as a future business park is to be enshrined within Wiltshire's Core Strategy (citation: Pre-Submission Document and Schedule of Proposed Changes) which will be considered by a Planning Inspector in the coming months at an Examination in Public (EiP). The site's continued formal Policy allocation and the extant permissions (as cited above) establishes a very clear principle: confirming that the site is ideally suited for a business park to provide for a wide range of employment uses; and in so doing, make a positive contribution towards providing jobs, stimulating the economy and creating an attractive landscaped site which integrates well with its surroundings.

The Coalition Government has repeatedly asserted its top planning priority as being 'to promote sustainable economic growth and jobs'. The Government's clear expectation is that the answer to development and growth should wherever possible be 'yes', except where this would run contrary to an adopted Development Plan and/or compromise the key sustainable development principles set out in National Planning Policy. Within the published NPPF, the Coalition Government sent out a clear message that it expects local planning authorities to *give appropriate weight to the need to support economic recovery, and that applications that secure sustainable growth are treated favourably*. It has further been confirmed that Planning Inspectors and the Secretary of State will *"attach significant weight to the need to secure economic growth and employment"*.

Trowbridge Town Council and the former Trowbridge Vision Director have made clear statements in terms of fully supporting this development on the edge of Town for employment purposes. Trowbridge Town Council have argued that this site is *"an important element in the delivery of growth for the town and for the delivery of infrastructure improvements"*...

Adopted and Emerging policies recognise that this site acts as a significant positive element in the overall strategic development of the Town. It accords with the Town Council's Strategy which supports further development to the South and East of the town, in areas well connected to the A350 whilst close to the town centre as the most sustainable locations for further growth of the town. It is furthermore, able to deliver welcomed improvements to local transport infrastructure which shall make areas to the north of the town better connected to the main A350.

As stated above, the delivery of this strategically important employment site satisfies Council Policy requirements and satisfies the aspirations of Transforming Trowbridge; and it shall greatly help towards reinforcing the role of Trowbridge as a "service hub" for a large hinterland.

Following pre-application discussions and negotiations, the final detailed submission is fully supported by officers and the reasons for this are explained below.

Layout and Scale

The proposed layout and siting of 15 building blocks comprising a mix of B1, B2 and B8 uses, the internal road layout, parking provision, the means of accessing the site (via the ETDR), the detailed public footpath and cycling links through and around the site (including the proposed diversion of PROW West Ashton FP16); and, the extensive tree planting and landscaping throughout the site have all been rigorously assessed, and the details are found to be acceptable.

The two-storey B1 uses have been deliberately sited parallel, but set back at least 30 metres from the West Ashton Road and the ETDR. In doing so, this not only accords with the extant outline permission, but it also respects local residential properties through the proposing domestic scaled architecture and vernacular. It is also considered good urban design. It should also be noted that only one B1 use (type 1) could be argued to be sited "opposite" existing residential properties located along West Ashton Road - but even then, it must be noted that the B1 use premises will be constructed behind a 3.5 metre high landscaped bund and at least 55 metres from any residential property - with the rest facing a landscaped buffer before reaching out towards open farmland or woodland.

Having the B1 uses around the western, eastern and southern perimeter not only presents a lower scaled frontage, which reflects the scale and massing of the residential development on the west side of West Ashton Road, but along with robust landscaping and tree planting (both proposed and conditioned) they will assist towards screening the larger warehouse units and allow for an appropriately scaled road hierarchy 'not a highway dominated development' and sensitive internal parking and service areas. The formation of various through-routes and links with the wider footpath network is fully supported which would create a positive interaction between buildings and the landscaped areas.

In recognising that the larger B2 / B8 uses tend to have larger, often bland elevations, it is to be welcomed that in this particular submission, the proposed arrangement positions these larger units at an oblique angle to the brook towards the northern periphery of the site. With the provision of a mixed and heavily planted northern boundary comprising semi mature and extra heavy standard trees to complement the use of standards and feathered standards (which is recommended as a condition), the landscaped buffer and the internal planting / landscaping, these buildings will be well screened, and although the roofscapes will be visible, as the landscaping develops and matures, the development will blend more and more with its surroundings. It will not be hidden, but equally, it will not be visually obtrusive or harmful.

External Appearance / Design and Detailing

As stated above, the design and detailing of the buildings pick up upon the established local built vernacular. The mix of using red (lbstock) brick complemented by some buff brick facades and a limited use of cream coloured render using largely 'domestic scaled' architecture is considered appropriate and entirely compliant with the relevant conditions attached to the extant outline permission. The proposed massing and roofscape are not cause for concern, nor is the proposed use of grey coloured Russell Grampian interlocking roof slates. Where used on sections of the B2 and B8 premises, recessive coloured profile sheeting would be used. To avoid an entire facade being dominated by such a material, it is welcomed that the plans show elevations being broken up by use of brick and appropriate wall openings.

Landscaping

As reported above, the Council's tree and landscape officer is fully satisfied with this development and recommends the use of a planning condition requiring a mix of 25% semi mature and 75% extra heavy standard tree planting within the northern 30 metre wide landscape buffer to complement the proposed mix of standards and feathered standard trees within a grassland meadow, which shall provide a very robust northern backdrop and help assimilate this development into the wider landscape. The 30 metre wide landscaped buffer on the western and south / south-eastern perimeter of the site shall also present a clear and robust landscaped edge, which would be enhanced by smaller shrub and ornamental planting. Whilst the floodplain and bunding cannot be regarded as public open space, sufficient informal landscaped areas will be provided along with enhanced cycle and footpath links. The landscaping scheme does not seek to screen every building from public vantage points, as this would be completely unreasonable. There would be sections of buildings glimpsed through the landscaped buffers, but given the domestic scale of those buildings, this is not seen as being inappropriate or unacceptable. All in all, the proposals have the full support of officers.

Access

As reported above, the Council's highways authority report no objections to the proposed development and asserts that the development would not have a detrimental impact on highway safety. If approved, a condition requiring more details pursuant to the internal road layout, is recommended.

It should not be forgotten that the applicant is both committed and legally tied (through a s.106 Agreement) to providing new highway infrastructure needed to serve both the approved residential development (under application 04/02105/OUTES - which was finally granted in October 2011) and this strategic employment site. The Agreement stipulates that public access to a completed ETDR (East Trowbridge Distributor Road) and HRR (Hilperton Relief Road) must be provided prior to the occupation of more than 225 of the 650 permitted dwellings and 50% of the gross floor area of any

buildings permitted at this employment site. If no development commences on the employment site, the trigger is 450 dwellings.

As a backstop, the Agreement provides that both of the aforementioned roads shall in any case be completed and be open for use by the public before the fourth anniversary of the residential occupation of the first dwelling. The Agreement also commits the applicant to undertaking, at various specified trigger points, improvements to the West Ashton Road comprising carriageway widening, kerbing and drainage, improvements and lane-width adjustments at the junction with the A350; and improving Blackball Bridge.

In considering the appeal for refused application W/10/03031/FUL, the Planning Inspector accepted the previously submitted traffic modelling forecasts contained within the applicants' Transport Assessment and recognised that the above commitments would deliver material highway improvements; and more importantly, it is necessary *to note that in light of all currently committed development, capacity would be exceeded with or without this particular proposal. The works to the County Way and the Yarnbrook junctions that could be conditioned to take place as part of this proposal would, while making only a small improvement to the overall problem of congestion, nevertheless be sufficient to mitigate the impact of the additional traffic generation*".

The recent appeal decision re-established that with adequate conditions, there is no highway reason why this site could not be developed as a strategic business park.

Impacts on Neighbouring land use(s)

The adopted West Wiltshire District Plan - 1st Alteration recognised that in identifying this site for employment development it would be *"well related to the town, residential areas and the town centre, whilst not being so close as to cause environmental or amenity problems"* (citation: paragraph 3.3.5 of the aforesaid Plan).

The proposed distance and separation between the proposed buildings, internal roads and parking areas on the site and existing residential properties to the north and west is considered acceptable and the development as proposed, should not result in significant and/or detrimental nuisance. The additional provision of robust landscaping will ensure the development integrates sensitively with its surroundings.

There is no doubt, the development of this greenfield site will bring about a material change to many an outlook and during the course of construction, there may be a degree of disturbance. The site has however strategic importance in terms of delivering future new jobs, supported by new infrastructure at a sustainable location (located close to a future workforce). A Construction Method Statement, required by a planning condition, would adequately deal with construction / delivery hours and on-site management in terms of pollution controls.

The site and development proposal would have no adverse implications for the interests of nature conservation. A suitably worded condition can deal with concerns about light pollution affecting the Country Park. Given the importance of protecting local nearby habitat, it is recommended that a lighting plan be submitted as a further conditional requirement, and that it is made clear that the Council would not support inappropriate levels of lighting near the northern part of the site, in accordance with the previously approved Habitat Creation Management _ Monitoring Plan (HCMMP, dated May 2006).

In terms of flood prevention works, the applicants' proposed realignment of the blackball brook and the re-formed floodplain are shown on the submitted plans (i.e. Drawing No. P.0678_01-1), and are acceptable.

For the avoidance of any doubt, the site has been subject to two recent EIA Screening Opinions (which were adopted by the Council on 29 September 2010 pursuant to application W/10/03031/FUL and 10 June 2011 pursuant to this REM submission) and a thorough ecological assessment undertaken by the Council's Principal Ecologist. The Council's adopted position is that this development does not constitute an EIA development which would necessitate the submission of an Environmental Statement and decided that all environmental considerations could be (and were) duly

considered through the normal planning process augmented with appropriate surveys and statements produced by the applicants and their consultants. It should be noted that the Planning Inspector at the recent appeal did not consider that one was required

Conclusion and Recommendation

Planning permission has already been granted for this use. The committee is simply looking at the details reserved for subsequent approval.

The National Planning Policy Framework contains a presumption in favour of sustainable development, and states within paragraph 14, that proposals which accord with adopted Development Plans should be approved without undue delay. This strategic development relates to an allocated site which has the full support of Trowbridge Town Council, the former Vision Director of Trowbridge, the Highways Authority, the Council's Head of Spatial Planning, the urban designer and Tree and Landscape officer and planning officers. No objections are raised by the Council's Ecologist or the EA. The scale, layout, design and detailing, including the access arrangements and parking provision and landscaping proposals are all considered acceptable, and as a consequence, this application is recommended to committee for approval.

Recommendation: Approval

For the following reason(s):

The principle of developing this site as a strategic employment site has been fully established (following the approval of the extant outline application 05/00744/FUL, and most recently on appeal: application W/10/03031/FUL). The reserved matters hereby approved are considered wholly compliant with the adopted development plan and emerging Council policies.

Subject to the following condition(s):

- 1 No development shall commence on site (including any works of demolition), until a Construction Method Statement, which shall include the following:
 - (a) the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors;
 - (b) loading and unloading of plant and materials;
 - (c) storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development;
 - (d) the erection and maintenance of security hoarding including decorative displays and facilities for public viewing, where appropriate;
 - (e) wheel washing facilities;
 - (f) measures to control the emission of dust and dirt during construction;
 - (g) a scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from demolition and construction works; and
 - (h) measures for the protection of the natural environment.
 - (i) hours of construction, including deliveries;

has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The approved Statement shall be adhered to throughout the construction period. The development shall not be carried out otherwise than in accordance with the approved construction method statement without the prior written permission of the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To minimise detrimental effects to the neighbouring amenities, the amenities of the area in general, detriment to the natural environment through the risks of pollution and dangers to highway safety, during the construction phase.

POLICY: West Wiltshire District Plan 1st Alteration 2004 - POLICY: C38, as well as the NPPF and NPSE.

- 2 The developed shall be carried out fully in accordance with the recommendations contained within the Ecological Assessment published by Aspect Ecology Ltd dated May 2011.

REASON: In order to protect protected species and their associated habitats.

POLICY: The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 3 No phased development shall commence on site until external lighting details for the site have been submitted to the local planning authority for its written approval. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

REASONS: In order to protect against inappropriate levels of lighting detrimentally impacting upon local, neighbouring properties and nature conservation interests.

POLICY: The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and West Wiltshire District Plan – 1st Alteration – Policy C35 and C38.

Note: The applicant is expected to carefully consider any lighting scheme and to have due cognisance of its impact upon neighbouring properties and occupiers as well as to nature conservation interests; and especially have regard to the recommendations contained with the Habitat Creation Management and Monitoring Plan, dated May 2006.

- 4 For the avoidance of any doubt, and excepting those sections where the existing hedgerow fronting West Ashton Road shall be cut back and opened up pursuant to highway improvements and providing pedestrian linkages, the remainder of the hedgerow and identified tree shall not be cut down, uprooted or destroyed, other than in accordance with the approved plans, without the prior written approval of the Local Planning Authority. Any topping or lopping approval shall be carried out in accordance BS3998: 1989 British Standard for Tree Work or arboricultural techniques where it can be demonstrated to be in the interest of good arboricultural practise.

If any tree is removed, uprooted, destroyed or dies, another tree shall be planted at the same place, at a size and species and planted at such time, that must be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

No equipment, machinery or materials shall be brought on to site for the purpose of development, until a scheme showing the exact position of protective fencing to enclose all retained trees and hedgerows beyond the outer edge of overhang of their branches in accordance with British Standard 5837: 2005: Tree in Relation to Construction, has been submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and; the protective fencing has been erected in accordance with the approved details. The protective fencing shall remain in place for the entire development phase and until all equipment, machinery and surplus materials have been removed from the site. Such fencing shall not be removed or breached during construction operations without prior written approval by the Local Planning Authority.

In this condition "retained tree" means an existing tree / section of hedgerow which is to be retained in accordance with the approved plans and particulars; and the paragraphs above shall have effect until the expiration of five years after the completion of the development.

No fires shall be lit within 15 metres of the furthest extent of the canopy of any tree or group of trees to be retained on the site or adjoining land and no concrete, oil, cement, bitumen or other chemicals shall be mixed or stored within 10 metres of the trunk of any tree or group of trees to be retained on the site or adjoining land].

REASON: To prevent trees being retained on or adjacent to the site from being damaged during the construction works and in the interest of visual amenity.

- 5 Notwithstanding the details shown in respect to the landscaping treatment, no phased development shall commence on site until the following details have been submitted to the local planning authority for its written approval:-

- Full details and measures of protecting the retained section of hedgerow during the course of the phased development;
- A detailed planting specification showing all plant species, supply and planting sizes and planting densities,
- Finished levels and contours;
- Proposed and existing functional services above and below ground (e.g. drainage, power, communications, cables, pipelines etc indicating lines, manholes, supports etc);
- Large specimen trees shall be supplied and planted at a ratio of 25% Semi mature and 75% extra heavy standard (consisting of Oak, Lime and Hornbeam) within the northern landscape buffer. The remainder shall be a mix of standards, and feathered standards in locations to be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority; and to be planted in accordance with BS3936 (Parts 1 and 4), BS4043 and BS4428.
- Enhanced marginal planting around the balancing pond;

REASON: To ensure a satisfactory landscaped setting for the development and the protection of existing important landscape features.

POLICY: West Wiltshire District Plan - 1st Alteration Policy C32.

- 6 All soft landscaping comprised in the approved details of landscaping (Drawing no. P.0678-10-A sheets 1 & 2), shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding season following the first occupation of the building(s) or the completion of the development whichever is the sooner; All shrubs, trees and hedge planting shall be maintained free from weeds and shall be protected from damage by vermin and stock. Any trees or plants which, within a period of five years, die, are removed, or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a similar size and species, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority. All hard landscaping shall also be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with a programme to be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To ensure a satisfactory landscaped setting for the development and the protection of existing important landscape features.

POLICY: West Wiltshire District Plan 1st Alteration 2004 - POLICY: C31a and C32

- 7 No development shall commence on site until full construction details of the internal road layout have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority; and the internal roads shall thereafter be constructed in accordance with the approved details so that each new building, when occupied, is connected to the existing public highway by a completed road.

Reason: In the interests of road safety

- 8 The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out except in complete accordance with the details shown on the submitted plans:

SITE LOCATION PLAN – Drawing No P.0678_05 received on 31.05.2011

SITE LAYOUT PLAN – Drawing No. P.0678_01-1 received on 31.05.2011

PLANS & ELEVATIONS B2 UNIT D – Drawing No. P.0678_02A

PLANS & ELEVATIONS B2 UNIT I – Drawing No. P.0678_02A

PLANS & ELEVATIONS B8 UNIT G – Drawing No. P.0678_03A

PLANS & ELEVATIONS B2 UNIT H – Drawing No. P.0678_03A

PLANS & ELEVATIONS B1 UNIT TYPE T1 – Drawing No. P.0678_09 (T1) received on 31.05.2011

PLANS & ELEVATIONS B1 UNIT TYPE T2 – Drawing No. P.0678_09 (T2) received on 31.05.2011

PLANS & ELEVATIONS B1 UNIT TYPE T2 (HANDED) – Drawing No. P.0678_09 (T2) received on 31.05.2011

PLANS & ELEVATIONS B1 UNIT TYPE T3 – Drawing No. P.0678_09 (T3) received on 31.05.2011

PLANS & ELEVATIONS B1 UNIT TYPE T4 – Drawing No. P.0678_09 (T4) received on 31.05.2011
 PLANS & ELEVATIONS B1 UNIT TYPE T5 – Drawing No. P.0678_09 (T5) received on 31.05.2011
 PLANTING PLAN SHEET 1 OF 2 – Drawing No. P.0678_10-A received on 31.05.2011
 PLANTING PLAN SHEET 2 OF 2 – Drawing No. P.0678_10-A received on 31.05.2011
 BIN STORES AND SERVICE YARD FENCING – Drawing No. P.0678_11 received on 31.05.2011
 PHASING PLAN – Drawing No. P.0678_12 – received on 31.05.2011
 MATERIALS PLAN – Drawing No. P.0678_13 – received on 31.05.2011
 FOOTPATH LINKS – Drawing No. P.0678_14 – received on 31.05.2011
 TOPOGRAPHIC SURVEY AND EXISTING VEGETATION – Drawing No. P.0678_15 – received on 31.05.2011
 EXTENT OF DEVELOPABLE AREA – Drawing No. P.0678_16 – received on 31.05.2011
 ROOF PLAN – Drawing No. P.0678_17 – received on 31.05.2011
 CROSS SECTIONS – Drawing No. P.0678_18 – received on 31.05.2011
 HORIZONTAL GEOMETRY & SETTING OUT SHEET – Drawing No. P291/100 Rev C – received on 31.05.2011
 HORIZONTAL GEOMETRY & SETTING OUT SHEET – Drawing No. P291/101 Rev C – received on 31.05.2011
 HORIZONTAL GEOMETRY & SETTING OUT SHEET – Drawing No. P291/102 Rev C – received on 31.05.2011
 HORIZONTAL GEOMETRY & SETTING OUT SHEET – Drawing No. P291/103 Rev C – received on 31.05.2011
 VEHICLE SWEEP PATH ANALYSIS – Drawing No. P549/106 – received on 31.05.2011
 PROPOSED FINISHED FLOOR LEVELS – Drawing No. P549/07 – received on 31.05.2011

REASON: To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans that have been judged to be acceptable by the local planning authority.

Informative(s):

- 1 The developer is reminded that this development is still subject to those remaining extant conditions attached to the decision notice for application 05/00744/FUL which remain necessary and applicable and shall require formal discharge as per the requirements of each condition.
- 2 The developer is advised to contact Wessex Water's Developer Services to agree either means of diverting an existing public water main or means by which it shall be protected during the construction stages, to ensure that no development takes place until the aforesaid infrastructure has been properly protected. The developer shall also need to reach an agreement with Wessex Water over connecting the development to a public sewer.

Appendices:	
Background Documents Used in the Preparation of this Report:	

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