CASE OFFICER'S REPORT

Application Reference:	PL/2023/08855
Application Type:	Full planning permission
Date of Site Visit:	9th November 2023
Consultation ends:	23rd November 2023
Target Date:	7th December 2023
Extended Target Date:	15th December 2023
Case officer:	James Repper

Site Address:	Oaklands Industrial Estate, Braydon, Royal Wootton Bassett, SN5 0AN
Proposal:	Erection of two new employment buildings (alterative to application 18/11078/FUL).
Recommendation:	Approve with Conditions

SITE DESCRIPTION:

The application site is located on an industrial estate located to the Northeast of Royal Wooton Bassett, outside of any settlement boundary, as defined by Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) core policies 1 (Settlement Strategy), 2 (Delivery Strategy) and 19 (Spatial Strategy for the Royal Wotton Bassett & Cricklade Community Area). Despite being outside any defined settlement boundaries the site is well established having been in place for a considerable period of time. The site is surrounded by other commercial buildings and their associated parking provisions and open countryside.

PROPOSAL:

This is a full planning application described as “alterative (to make different without changing into something else) to the previous application 18/11078/FUL” proposing two employment buildings under use class E and associated parking plus any associated works.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

N/99/00834/FUL ERECTION OF BUILDING FOR STORAGE OF FURNITURE
N/99/01065/FUL ERECTION OF 6 UNIT INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS
N/99/02455/FUL ERECTION OF 6 INDUSTRIAL UNITS
N/99/02846/FUL ERECTION OF BUILDING FOR THE STORAGE OF FURNITURE (RE-SUBMISSION OF 99.00834.FUL)
N/03/03060/FUL ERECTION OF SIX INDUSTRIAL UNITS
N/06/01179/S73A Retention of Enclosed Storage Compound & Associated Hardstanding
N/06/01377/CLE Use of Buildings for Employment Purposes (Classes B1, B2 and B8)
N/07/00504/COU Retention of B1, B2 & B8 Employment Uses in Units 4-7
N/07/01454/S73A Continued use of Enclosed Compound for B8 Uses with adjoining Ancillary Service Area
N/07/00454/CLE Certificate of Lawfulness for Use of Three Buildings (Units 1, 2 and 3) to House Engineering Works (B2) Use
N/09/01591/FUL Erection of 1no Industrial Buildings (B1 Use) Replacing Existing B8 Compound and Ancillary Service Areas.
N/10/03566/COU Change of Use of Land and Part Building from Agricultural to Equestrian Use
N/10/03516/FUL Demolition of Existing Commercial Buildings and Re-Development of Five Live/Work Units & Associated Works
N/12/00903/FUL Part Conversion & Demolition of Existing Buildings & Re-Development to Form Three Live-Work Units & Associated Works Including Access Improvements, Parking & Landscaping

16/00390/APD Proposed Timber Framed Haybarn
18/11078/FUL Erection of new employment buildings and reorganisation of associated space

POLICIES:
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)
National Design Guidance (Planning practice guidance for beautiful, enduring and successful places) 2019

Wiltshire Core Strategy:
CP1 (Settlement Strategy)
CP2 (Delivery Strategy)
CP19 (Spatial Strategy for the Royal Wooton Bassett & Cricklade Community Area)
CP34 (Additional Employment Land)
CP50 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity)
CP51 (Landscape)
CP57 (Ensuring High Quality Design & Space Shaping)
CP60 (Sustainable Transport)
CP62 (Development Impacts on the Transport Network)
CP64 (Demand Management)

REPRESENTATIONS:

Highways – No Objection

Lydiard Tregoze Parish Council – No Comment

Letters – One response has been received via the period of public consultation from an organisation operating under the name of North Wiltshire Swifts commenting as follows:

- There appears to be no demonstration of ecological mitigation or enhancement in this application. We would like to see the inclusion of swift/universal bird boxes. Swifts in the UK are on the Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) Red List and are classified as Endangered on the IUCN Red List assessment of extinction risk for Great Britain. Their numbers declined by 60% between 1995 and 2020 and by 41% in just 10 years up to 2018, that is over 5% per annum! They are also listed by WSBRC as a Wiltshire Critical Species. Our comments are impartial observations, neither supporting nor objecting to the application.

  If the construction of the building is not suitable for integrated bricks then external boxes are an alternative. Impeckable produce a contemporary design of box which can be made to match the colour of the building https://www.impeckable.co.uk/ , and Vivara Pro also produce a long-lasting box http://www.vivarapro.co.uk/.

  The design of the swift box is also suitable for the red-listed house sparrow. Both are colonial birds and so it is best to have at least 6 boxes on each of the two proposed buildings, preferably positioned on the north, east or west elevations with clear flight access, at a height of 4m+ with a clear drop.

ISSUES:
The main considerations which are material to the determination of this application are listed below:

- Principle
- Character & Design
- Neighbouring Amenities
- Highways
- Drainage
- Biodiversity

PLANNING ASSESSMENT:

Principle:
Under the provisions of section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and the provisions of the NPPF i.e. para 2, applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. At the current time, the statutory development plan in respect of this application consists of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) (Adopted January 2015); and any 'saved' policies of the North Wiltshire Local Plan (NWLP) 2011 (adopted June 2006).

The site is located upon an existing industrial estate and the principles of the development were established under the previous application (18/11078/FUL). The underlying policy context has not significantly changed in the intervening years and as such the general principle of commercial development for the site is established. This principle acceptability is however subject to the details, such as its implications for the character of the area and neighbouring amenities. These will, therefore, be addressed in more detail below.

Character & Design:
Core Policy 57 states that new development is expected to create a strong sense of place through drawing on the local context and being complementary to the locality. Commercial developments, such as this, are acceptable in principle subject to there being no adverse impacts.

Good design helps to provide a sense of place, creates or reinforces local distinctiveness, and promotes community cohesiveness and social wellbeing; The layout and design of new developments must also be based on a thorough understanding of the site itself and its wider context, and seek to maximise the benefits of the site's characteristics. This will require careful consideration of the site layout. No two sites share the same landscapes, contours, relationship with surrounding buildings, street pattern and features. The proximity of poor quality or indistinct development is not a justification for standard or poor design solutions. New development should integrate into its surroundings whilst seeking to enhance the overall character of the locality; A high standard of design is required in all new developments, including extensions, alterations, and changes of use of existing buildings.

In this instance, it is considered that the proposed buildings are fairly utilitarian in their design as are the surrounding units making up the remainder of the estate. As such it is considered that the proposed design of the units would not appear incongruous for the industrial estate causing no harm to the street scene and would not harm the character of the wider area. As per the previously approved application the minor variations in design of the proposals in this application are considered to be of an acceptable scale, mass, height and design to maintain the character of the application site, would not cause harm to the street scene and would maintain the character of the surrounding area.

Neighbouring Amenities:
WCS policy CP57 (Ensuring High Quality Design & Space Shaping) requires that development should ensure the impact on the amenities of existing occupants/neighbours is acceptable and ensuring that appropriate levels of amenity are achievable within the development itself. The NPPF includes that planning should "*always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings"*. Residential amenity is affected by significant changes to the environment including privacy, outlook, daylight and sunlight, and living areas within private gardens and this, therefore, needs to be carefully considered accordingly.

The nearest residential properties are located to the northwest nearly 100m away beyond further commercial buildings making up the industrial estate. As such it is considered that the proposed works would have no tangible effects, over and above those already experienced at the residential site's amenity spaces, therefore, the proposals cause no harm to the enjoyment of designated amenity spaces.

Highways:
In terms of highway impacts, the existing class E uses on site and the addition of a relatively minor total increase in this intensity of use would not result in a significant increase in vehicle movements through the site and the existing access. The planning statement indicates there will not be a significant uplift of vehicle movements and our highways officers have raised no objection to this section of the proposals.

Formalised parking areas are included in the plans and their provision will be secured via a condition attached to any permission.

Drainage:
The proposals are detailed to connect to a package treatment plant as there is no public sewer serving the industrial estate. No details have been provided in relation to this connection, therefore, any permission would have a condition attached requiring these details be provided.

Biodiversity:
It is noted that North Wiltshire Swifts have raised concerns relating to the lack of “swift bricks” and other biodiversity additions. The site itself is not left to nature but instead is made up of areas of concrete and macadamized stones offering very limited biodiversity and consequently the development is not considered to require any specific mitigation due to lack of established harm. Whilst in principle there would be no objection to adding these measures, to make this a conditional requirement of the planning permission would not be considered reasonable in terms of being necessary. However, an Informative can added to the decision notice to bring the comment from North Wiltshire Swifts to the attention of the applicant. It could also be subject to Building Regulations.

CONCLUSION:
The proposal would be of an acceptable overall scale and would result in limited implications for the street scene, the character of the area and impacts on the transport network. Similarly, due to its scale and location, it is considered that the proposal would be unlikely to have a significant impact on the amenities enjoyed by the occupiers of nearby dwellings.

The proposal would therefore accord with the aims and objectives of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and other Government guidance and is recommended that planning permission be granted for the proposal.

RECOMMENDATION:
Approve subject to the following conditions

Conditions: (4)

1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

REASON: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents:

Application Form & Certificate Received 12th October 2023
Plans Ref:
Location Plan Received 12th October 2023
Proposed Site Plan DWG: LPC 1031 PR 101 Received 12th October 2023
Proposed Elevations Block A DWG: LPC 1031 PR 103 Received 12th October 2023
Proposed Floor Plans Block A DWG: LPC 1031 PR 102 Received 12th October 2023
Proposed Elevations Block B DWG: LPC 1031 PR 105 Received 12th October 2023
Proposed Floor Plans Block B DWG: LPC 1031 PR 104 Received 12th October 2023

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3 No part of the development hereby permitted shall be brought into use until the access, turning area and parking spaces have been completed in accordance with the details shown on the approved plans, not loose stone or gravel. The areas shall be maintained for those purposes at all times thereafter for the life of the development.
REASON: In the interests of highway safety.

4 No development shall continue on site beyond slab level until details of the works for the disposal of sewerage including the point of connection to the existing package treatment plant, and the capacity of that plant to deal with the expected new inputs, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. No building shall be first occupied until the sewerage details have been fully implemented in accordance with said approved plans.

REASON: The application contained insufficient information to enable this matter to be considered prior to granting planning permission and the matter is required to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority before development continues in order that the development is undertaken in an acceptable manner, to ensure that the proposal is provided with a satisfactory means of drainage and does not increase the risk of flooding or pose a risk to public health or the environment.

Informatives: (2)

5 Any alterations to the approved plans, brought about by compliance with Building Regulations or any other reason must first be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority before commencement of work.

6 Swifts in the UK are on the Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) Red List and are classified as Endangered on the IUCN Red List assessment of extinction risk for Great Britain. Their numbers declined by 60% between 1995 and 2020 and by 41% in just 10 years up to 2018, that is over 5% per annum! They are also listed by WSBRC as a Wiltshire Critical Species. Our comments are impartial observations, neither supporting nor objecting to the application.

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