# CASE OFFICER'S REPORT

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| **Application Reference:** | PL/2023/08968 |
| **Application Type:** | Full planning permission |
| **Site Inspection:** | 29 November 2023 |
| **Consultation ends:** | 20 March 2024 |
| **Case officer:** | Helena Carney |

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| **Site Address:** | Hatfield Farm, Oare, Wilts, SN8 4JE |
| **Proposal:** | Replacement of Units 1 and 2 with new buildings with altered footprint |
| **Recommendation:** | Approve with Conditions |

**POLICIES**

Wiltshire Core Strategy (adopted January 2015):
Core Policy 41: Sustainable Construction and Low Carbon Energy
Core Policy 42: Standalone Renewable Energy Installations
Core Policy 51: Landscape
Core Policy 57: Ensuring High Quality Design & Place Shaping

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

**ISSUES**

- Impact upon amenity of occupiers of neighbouring properties
- Design and visual impact
- Impact upon trees
- Climate change
- Buried archaeology

**RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

- 20/00108/FUL - Extension to light industrial unit mainly for storage of inventory, approved 02/04/2020
- PL/2023/02964 - Change of external colour of the whole unit (existing and new extension) from forest green to anthracite grey (RAL7061), approved 03/07/2023

**REPRESENTATIONS**

Wilcot and Huish with Oare Parish Council: no objection

Wiltshire Council Highways Officer: no comment

Wiltshire Council Arboricultural Officer: no objection subject to condition (final comment)

Assistant County Archaeologist: no objection

Wiltshire Council Climate Officer: no objection subject to condition

Third Party representations: none received at time of writing

**ASSESSMENT**

This application site relates to an existing commercial building located within an existing commercial complex. The commercial building subject of this application is sited adjacent to the northern boundary of the application site. The application site is accessed directly off the A345 which runs to the west.

A number of trees are located along the northern and eastern boundaries adjacent to the existing building. The application site is located within the North Wessex Downs National Landscape.

The Proposals:
This application is seeking planning permission for the construction of 2no. commercial buildings following the demolition of an existing commercial unit.

Impact upon amenity of occupiers of neighbouring properties:
The proposed development involves the construction of 2no. replacement units following the demolition of the existing commercial building located within an established trading estate, with a neighbouring commercial building located to the south.

It is acknowledged that the proposed development involves the construction of two separate buildings compared to one as per the existing arrangement and will result in additional built form to the north-west of the neighbouring commercial unit. However, the proposed new units will be sited no closer to the neighbouring unit compared to the existing situation and as such it is considered that the proposed development will not materially impact upon the occupiers of the neighbouring unit as a consequence of overbearing impact or overshadowing.

Furthermore, there are no nearby residential properties that stand to be affected by the proposed development with the nearest being located at least 120m to the north.

Design and visual impact:
The existing commercial unit lies within a rural area within the North Wessex Downs National Landscape. Paragraph 182 of the NPPF states: “Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues.”

The proposed buildings will replace an existing building (comprising units 1 & 2) within an existing commercial complex. Whilst it is acknowledged that the proposed buildings will be slightly higher

and occupy a larger footprint compared to the existing commercial building that they will replace, it is considered that they will be constructed to an acceptable scale, commensurate to the size of the application site. The proposed units will be constructed to a design appropriate for the setting within an existing commercial complex. Furthermore, the buildings will be constructed of appropriate materials (brick with composite cladding above). It is also noted that the cladding and roof of both units will be painted in the same colour (RAL 7016) recently approved for use on one of the units (planning permission ref: PL/2023/02964).

The proposals also involve the installation of solar panels on the south facing roof slopes of both new buildings. The solar panels will face into the site, towards the neighbouring unit and not towards the open countryside. Therefore, the proposed solar panels will not result in a detrimental impact upon the visual amenity of the wider rural area or to the special qualities of the North Wessex Downs National landscape.

The proposed development will be contained within the existing complex and will be read in context with neighbouring commercial buildings.

Given the above, the proposed development is considered not to result in harm to visual amenity or to the special qualities of the National Landscape and is therefore acceptable.

Impact upon trees:
The proposals involve the construction of 2no. buildings following the demolition of an existing commercial building. As mentioned above, a number of trees are located along the northern and eastern boundaries, adjacent to the existing building to be removed and the new buildings to be constructed.

The council's Arboricultural Officer was consulted to consider the potential impact of the proposed development on existing trees and provided the following comment:

"*Whilst the I have no objection to the proposals in principle, I do object to the altered footprint of the new buildings resulting in the loss of significant well-established trees to the North of the site, when it is clear that a little alteration in the layout could mean that the buildings could be positioned in such a way that the trees could be retained and offered protection during demolition of the existing buildings and construction of the proposed.*

*The applicant should reconsider the layout to accommodate the trees. An AIA, AMS, tree constraints plan and tree protection plan are also required to ensure that the demolition and construction will not impact on the trees. All the above documents should be prepared in accordance with BS5837:2012 by a qualified Arboriculturalist and should be submitted prior to determination to establish the feasibility of the proposals.*

*Until a revised layout has been submitted, I object to this application*".

The above objection was brought to the attention of the agent and a Tree Survey Report was provided to address the concerns of the council's Arboricultural Officer. In consideration of the Tree Survey Report submitted, the council's Arboricultural Officer removed their objection subject to a condition, commenting "*The Arb Officer is satisfied with the information provided following their previous comments. Please can a mitigated planting plan be conditioned and approved in writing,*

*and to be planted the following planting season that the proposal has been completed*." This requirement was brought to the attention of the agent and a mitigation planting plan was provided, showing the extent of the tree works and details of new planting to mitigate the loss of existing trees.

In consideration of the mitigation planting plan, the council's Arboricultural Officer raised no objection subject to condition, commenting "*I am satisfied that the mitigated planting plan is sufficient. Please can this be added as an approved document and the following condition included:*

*Condition:*
*All soft landscaping comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting season following the completion of the development; 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 ten 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.*

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

Therefore, subject to the above condition, the proposals are considered acceptable.

Climate change:
It is proposed to install solar panels on the south facing roof slopes of both new buildings. In consideration of this part of the proposals, the council's Climate Officer provided the following comments:

"*This is a proposal that falls below the climate team's normal thresholds for comment, save for the provision of solar panels to the roof. The provision of solar panels to the roofs is a positive climate action that will help to address the operational energy needs at the site and potentially provide excess energy to the grid. This is consistent with CP41, CP42 and CP57 of the development plan, as well as the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF is very clear that planning should support the transition to a low carbon future and radical reductions in greenhouse gases. One way to do this is to support renewable energy generation which will reduce our current reliance on fossil fuels to meet society's energy demands.*

*I note that the proposal will involve demolition and construction. It is a shame that the existing buildings shall not be reused because the process of demolition and new build results in higher levels of embodied carbon than reuse and extension. The replacement buildings are modest in size. CP41 requires non-residential development to meet relevant BREEAM "Excellent" standards. There is a caveat to this within policy stating that the impact of the requirement on viability will be taken into consideration. In acknowledgement that the cost of BREEAM certification can be disproportionately high on smaller schemes, the planning service has historically taken the view that schemes below 1,000 sqm do not need to meet BREEAM standards.*

*In light of the above and given the proposal to include relatively large south facing solar arrays I have no objection subject to condition: Prior to each building being first brought into use the proposed roof mounted solar array for that building shall be provided in accordance with the*

*approved plans. REASON: In the interests of meeting the spatial planning objective of addressing climate change as expressed through CP41, CP42 and CP57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy.*"

Buried archaeology:
The Assistant County Archaeologist was consulted on the proposed development who confirmed that there were no archaeological issues to raise.

Conclusion:
In conclusion the proposals seem fitting with regards to scale, design and materials. The proposal is considered acceptable in the context of its surroundings and is in accordance with the general criteria set out in the aforementioned policies of the local development plan.

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**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
Hatfield Farm Oare Unit and 2 redevelopment proposal - Supplementary information
Tree Survey Schedule (BS5837:2012) Ayers Forestry Limited, received 26/01/2024
Solar Panel Technical Specification, Solar Electric, Glass / Glass Model No STKP - 72 - 310
Location Plan
Drawing Ref: Hatfield_U1-2_PDWG_v1, Site and roof plans
Drawing Ref: Hatfield_U1-2_PDWG_v1, Unit 1 and 2 floor plans
Drawing Ref: Hatfield_U1-2_PDWG_v1, Unit 1 proposed elevations
Drawing Ref: Hatfield_U1-2_PDWG_v1, Unit 2 proposed elevations
Plan Ref: HF-003 New Planting - Plan - Hatfield Farm, received 12/03/2024

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

3 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved mitigation planting plan, Plan Ref: HF-003 New Planting - Plan - Hatfield Farm, received 12/03/2024.

All soft landscaping comprised in the approved mitigation planting plan shall be carried out in the

first planting season prior to the beneficial use of the development hereby approved or following 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 ten 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.

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

4 Prior to each building being first brought into use the proposed roof mounted solar array for that building shall be provided in accordance with the approved plans.

REASON: In the interests of meeting the spatial planning objective of addressing climate change as expressed through CP41, CP42 and CP57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy adopted January 2015.