

# APPLICATION FOR FULL PLANNING PERMISSION

## CASE OFFICER REPORT

|                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>APPLICATION REFERENCE:</b>   | PL/2026/03334                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>APPLICATION TYPE:</b>        | Full planning permission                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>SITE ADDRESS:</b>            | North Wing 1st Floor, Wincanton PLC, Methuen Park, Chippenham, SN14 0WT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION:</b> | Enlarging of existing louvres in the external wall, installation of new louvres within the external wall, increasing the size of an existing plant compound adjacent to the building to house additional fan coil units, which includes: enlarging the slab, modifying and extending the existing fencing / screening. |
| <b>RECOMMENDATION:</b>          | Approve with Conditions                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

### PROPOSAL

Planning permission is sought for operational development at the existing office building occupied by British Telecommunications at Methuen Park House, Bath Road, Chippenham. The proposal comprises the enlargement of existing louvre openings and the installation of additional louvres within the building's external elevations to facilitate ventilation equipment. There are two existing louvre openings on the north west elevation which are being increased in size to 350mm x 700mm, with a further 3 louvres installed on this elevation. On the north east elevation 4 existing louvres are being increased in size to 350mm x 700mm. They are above the first floor windows.

*Below: Extract of submitted existing and proposed north east elevations:*



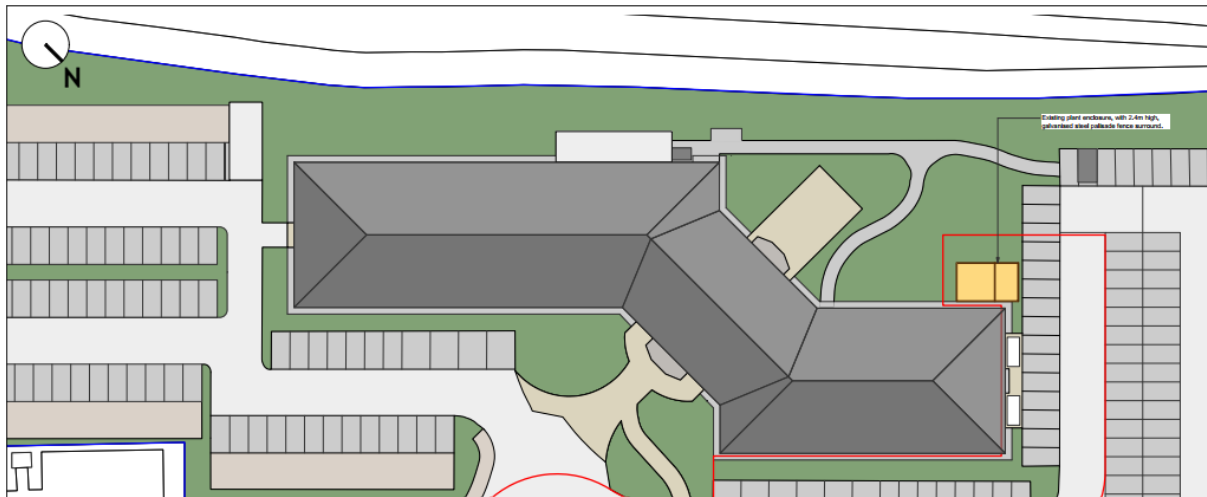
*Below: Extract of submitted existing and proposed north west elevations:*



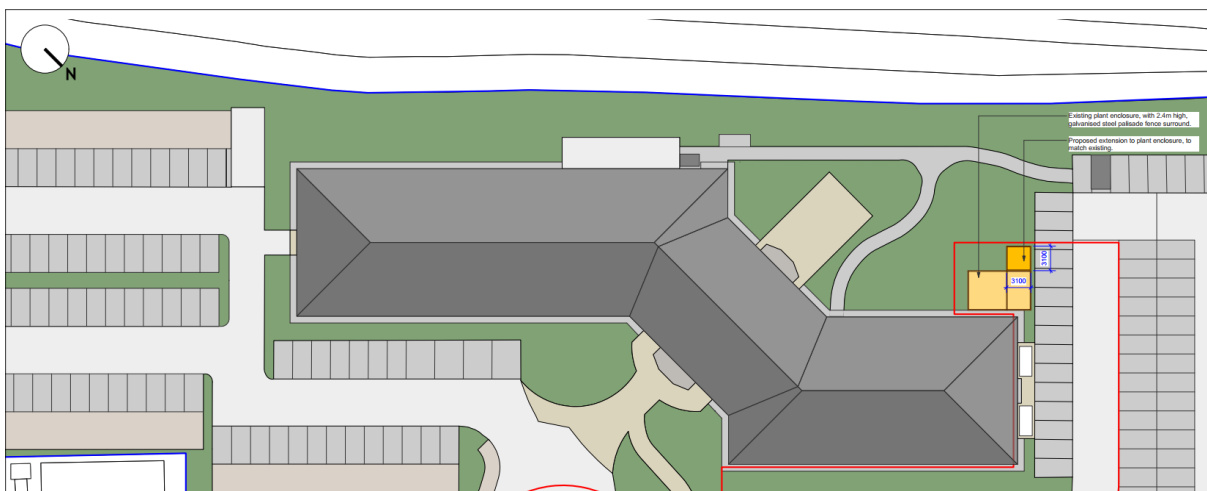
The proposal also includes the extension of an existing plant compound to the rear (northwest) of the building to accommodate additional fan coil units, together with associated works including the enlargement of the existing concrete slab and the modification and extension of the existing galvanised steel palisade fencing surrounding the compound. The submitted photograph below shows the existing plant enclosure, which is proposed to be extended:



*Below: Extract of existing block plan showing existing plant enclosure:*



*Below: Extract of proposed block plan showing extended plant enclosure:*



No changes to the use of the site, parking provision or access arrangements are proposed.

## SITE DESCRIPTION/CONTEXT

The application site comprises an established office building known as the Wincanton Building, located within Methuen Park Business Park on the eastern side of the A350 West Cepen Way, Chippenham. The building is three storeys in height and is set within a landscaped commercial environment. Mature tree planting provides screening along the site's western boundary adjacent to the A350 and along the northern boundary, beyond which are commercial premises including the KFC and Costa drive-through restaurants. To the east and north-east of the building are areas of car parking and associated hard and soft landscaping serving the development. The surrounding character of the area is predominantly commercial in nature, comprising offices, employment uses and associated infrastructure. The site is not located within a Conservation Area, nor is it subject to any landscape or ecological designation.

The location of the site is shown on the aerial photograph below, identified by the red flag.



## PLANNING HISTORY

| Proposal / Summary                                                                                                                    |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| N/03/01639/FUL THREE STOREY OFFICES AND CAR PARKING Approve with conditions                                                           |
| N/05/00628/FUL Installation of One Smoking Shelter and Erection of 1.80m High Perimeter Security Fence. Approve with conditions       |
| N/04/00682/FUL SERVICES COMPOUND TO SERVE APPROVED OFFICE DEVELOPMENT Approve with conditions                                         |
| PL/2022/06693 New AC Units, cable routes will be changed and applied for new units. Relocation of generator - Approve with conditions |

## RELEVANT POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

### National Planning Policy:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
- National Design Guide

### Development Plan:

The development plan for Wiltshire comprises the *Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS)* (adopted January 2015) and any made neighbourhood plans, which remains the principal statutory planning document guiding development across the county. In line with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, planning decisions must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Though the development plan is considered as a whole, those parts deemed to be particularly relevant to this application are listed below:

The adopted *Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS)*, with particular regard to:

- Core Policy 1 Settlement Strategy;
- Core Policy 2 Delivery Strategy;
- Core Policy 10 Spatial Strategy Chippenham Community Area
- Core Policy 35 Existing Employment Land
- Core Policy 57 Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping;

Chippenham Neighbourhood Plan Made May 2024

Wiltshire Design Guide (adopted April 2024)

## **ISSUES**

The main issues that need to be addressed in this case include:

- Whether the development is acceptable in principle (CP 1 and 2)
- Whether the scheme constitutes high quality design (CP 57)
- Whether the scheme would have an acceptable impact upon the reasonable living conditions of the adjoining occupants (CP 57)

## **CONSULTATION RESPONSES**

Chippenham Town Council: No objection.

## **REPRESENTATIONS**

In accordance with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), the application was publicised by way of:

- Neighbour notification letters sent to adjoining and nearby properties
- A site notice displayed near the site

These methods were used to inform interested parties and provide a period of 21 days for comments to be submitted.

No representations had been received at the time of writing.

## **ASSESSMENT**

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states:

*"If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purposes 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."*

In accordance with this statutory requirement, this application has been assessed against the relevant policies of the Development Plan, including the Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015) and, where applicable, any made Neighbourhood Plans. Consideration has also been given to the policies of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as a material consideration in the assessment.

## **Principle of Development**

### *Policy Context*

Core Policies 1 and 2 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy establish the settlement strategy for Wiltshire and seek to direct development to sustainable locations. Chippenham is identified as a Principal Settlement where development is supported, subject to compliance with other relevant development plan policies.

### *Assessment*

The application site forms part of an established office development within Methuen Park Business Park, Chippenham. The proposal comprises alterations to the existing building and the extension of an existing plant compound to facilitate the continued operation of the office use. The development does not involve a change of use, the loss of employment land or the introduction of a new use.

Given the location of the site within an established commercial area of Chippenham and the limited nature of the works proposed, there is no objection to the principle of development. The acceptability of the proposal therefore turns on its detailed impacts, which are assessed below.

### *Conclusion*

The proposed development is acceptable in principle and accords with Core Policies 1 and 2 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy.

## **Design and Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area**

### *Policy Context*

Core Policy 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy seeks to secure a high standard of design that responds positively to local character and reinforces a sense of place. Paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires developments to be visually attractive, sympathetic to local character and to contribute positively to the overall quality of an area.

### *Assessment*

The proposed works comprise the enlargement of existing louvre openings and the installation of additional louvres within the north-west and north-east elevations of the existing office building. The amended louvres would measure approximately 350mm by 700mm and would be positioned above first-floor window level. Given the substantial scale of the host building, the relatively small size of the louvres and the fact that they are proposed to match the appearance of the existing aluminium louvres, they would not appear incongruous or visually intrusive within the elevations.

The proposal also includes the extension of an existing plant compound adjacent to the building. The extension would utilise matching galvanised steel palisade fencing and would remain closely associated with the existing compound and building. The compound is located within the developed curtilage of the site and is screened from wider public views by existing landscaping and mature trees. Consequently, the extension would have a negligible impact on the character or appearance of the area.

Taking these matters into account, the proposal would preserve the commercial character of the site and would not result in any adverse visual impacts.

### *Conclusion*

The proposal would not result in harm to the character or appearance of the site or surrounding area and is therefore considered to accord with Core Policy 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the design objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.

## **Amenity**

### *Policy Context*

Core Policy 57 (criterion vii) of the Wiltshire Core Strategy seeks to ensure that development protects the amenity of existing occupants and provides acceptable living and working environments. Paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework similarly requires development to secure a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

### *Assessment*

The application site is located within an established business park comprising office, commercial and employment uses. There are no residential properties in the immediate vicinity of the site.

The proposed development comprises minor alterations to the existing office building, including the installation and enlargement of ventilation louvres and the extension of an existing plant compound. Given the nature and scale of the works, together with the separation distances to neighbouring commercial premises, which are approximately 40 metres away, the proposal would not result in any unacceptable impacts in terms of outlook, privacy, overbearing effects or loss of light.

### *Conclusion*

The proposal would not give rise to any unacceptable impacts on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers and is considered to accord with Core Policy 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

## **PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSION**

The proposal comprises minor operational development associated with the continued use of an existing office building within the established employment area of Methuen Park. The development would facilitate the ongoing operation of the site through the provision of additional ventilation infrastructure and a modest extension to an existing plant compound.

The proposed works have been assessed against the relevant provisions of the Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework. The development is acceptable in principle and, by reason of its scale, design and siting, would not result in harm to the character or appearance of the area. Furthermore, the proposal would not adversely affect the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

No objections have been raised to the development and there are no material considerations which indicate that planning permission should be withheld.

Accordingly, the proposal is considered to accord with the relevant policies of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework and planning permission is therefore recommended for approval.

## **RECOMMENDATION: That Planning Permission be GRANTED, subject to conditions**

### **1. Time Limit**

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).

### **2. Approved Plans**

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

- Location Plan SL\_P26015\_DWG\_0\_EX00\_Rev\_P01 received 26th May 2026
- Proposed Block Plan SL\_P26015\_DWG\_0\_PR01\_Rev\_P01 received 26th May 2026
- Existing and Proposed North West elevations SL\_P26015\_DWG\_0\_PR30\_Rev\_P01 received 26th May 2026
- Existing and Proposed North East Elevations SL\_P26015\_DWG\_0\_PR31\_Rev\_P01 received 26th May 2026

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