

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	250838
Site Address:	Former Dobbies Garden Centre, 166 Hyde End Road, Shinfield, Reading
Expiry Date:	29 April 2025
Proposal: Application for non-material amendment to planning consent 212717 to allow change of the wording of conditions 11 and 12 to exclude works of demolition for the development.	

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
203425	Application for a certificate of existing lawful development for Dobbies Retail Garden Centre Use Class E(a), Display or retail sales of goods, other than hot food Use Class E(b) Sale of food and drink for consumption (mostly) in premises.	Approved 29/07/2021
212717	Full planning application for redevelopment of the site to provide a new garden centre retail development incorporating restaurant/cafe, food hall and veterinary practice with ancillary works including car parking, access, outdoor display areas and landscaping, following demolition of existing buildings.	Approved 21/07/2022
223560	Application for submission of details to comply with the following condition of planning consent 212717 dated 21/07/2022 Condition 13 Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy. 27 Construction phase Emergency Plan 28 End User Emergency Plan. 37 Archaeology plan.	Approved 27/01/2023

APPRAISAL

Is the proposed change non-material?

Yes	☒
No	☐

Assessment:

The proposed Non-Material Amendment application seeks to amend the wording of conditions 11 and 12 of planning consent Ref. 212717, to allow for demolition to commence on site without triggering the requirements of these conditions, and therefore support the part implementation of the planning permission.

The original permission (212717) was approved as a Planning Committee item, and included condition 11 to secure details of the proposed vehicular access on to Hyde

End Road, and condition 12 to secure full details of the construction of roads, cycleways and footways. Both these conditions are at present “pre-commencement” conditions.

The supporting Cover Letter refers that since the granting of the planning permission, the site has been acquired by different freeholders, and Dobbies restructured its business in late 2024 resulting in the closure of 17 stores, including Shinfield. It was announced in January that the garden centre will be taken over by British Garden Centres.

At this stage, the new owners and operators are considering the details of the redevelopment scheme permitted under 212717, which expires on July 2025. The parties are unlikely to have concluded their deliberations before the permission expires and therefore are looking to part implement it to allow them extra time.

The proposal is therefore to amend the trigger of conditions 11 and 12 to “*With the exception of the demolition operations, before the commencement of development above finished ground floor level*” to allow additional time for consideration of the viability of the scheme. The conditions would therefore read (new trigger in bold):

Condition 11:

With the exception of the demolition operations, before the commencement of development above finished ground floor level details of the proposed vehicular access on to Hyde End Road to include visibility splays of 2.4m by 120m shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The accesses shall be formed as so approved, and the visibility splays shall be cleared of any obstruction exceeding 0.6 metres in height prior to the occupation of the development. The access shall be retained in accordance with the approved details and used for no other purpose and the land within the visibility splays shall be maintained clear of any visual obstruction exceeding 0.6 metres in height at all times.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and convenience in accordance with Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

Condition 12:

With the exception of the demolition operations, before the commencement of development above finished ground floor level full details of the construction of roads, cycleways and footways, including levels, widths, construction materials, depths of construction, surface water drainage and lighting shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure that roads and footpaths are constructed to a standard that would be suitable for adoption as publicly maintainable highway, in the interests of providing a functional, accessible and safe development. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

As mentioned, the applicant considers that this is necessary to allow part implementation of the proposal before the planning permission expires, to allow extra time whilst negotiations are underway between the new owners and operators of the site.

Conclusion:

With the above in mind, the change to the conditions trigger is acceptable and ultimately will not adversely affect or change the requirements of these conditions or permission, nor the level of information that needs to be provided or affect the future implementation of these details.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010):

In determining this application the Council is required to have due regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that persons with protected characteristics as identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application and there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation:	Approve – the change is non-material.
Date:	3 April 2025
Earliest date for decision:	N/A

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	Connor Corrigan
Date:	4/4/25