

## DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



**WOKINGHAM**  
**BOROUGH COUNCIL**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                      |
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| <b>Application Number:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | 242433                                                               |
| <b>Site Address:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Riseley Business Park, Basingstoke Road, Riseley, Wokingham, RG7 1NW |
| <b>Expiry Date:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | 25 December 2024                                                     |
| <b>Site Visit Date:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 27 September 2024                                                    |
| <b>Proposal:</b> Application to vary conditions 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 of planning consent 240150 for the change of use from office to education use with associated external alterations and its curtilage including provision of a fenced multi use games area. Condition 2 refers to the approved details and the variation is for amendments to parking, the entrance area and fenestration, addition of a bin store and relocation of the MUGA; condition 3 relates to a Parking Management Strategy, 4 to a Travel Plan, 5 to biodiversity enhancements and 6 to landscaping details, and the variation is to change the wording of those conditions following submission of related information. |                                                                      |

### **PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS**

Contaminated Land Consultation Zone  
Affordable Housing Thresholds  
Bat Roost Habitat Suitability  
Scale and Location of Development Proposals – **Riseley (Limited Development Location) and Countryside**  
Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone – **Green and Amber Risk Zones**  
Nuclear Consultation Zone – **12km Zone**  
Tree Preservation Orders  
Landscape Character Assessment Area  
SSSI Impact Risk Zones  
Local Plan Update Submitted Sites

### **PLANNING POLICY**

|                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>National Policy</b>      | National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)<br>National Design Guide                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Core Strategy (CS)</b>   | CP1 – Sustainable Development<br>CP2 – Inclusive Communities<br>CP3 – General Principles for Development<br>CP6 – Managing Travel Demand<br>CP7 – Biodiversity<br>CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals<br>CP11 – Proposals Outside Development Limits |
| <b>MDD Local Plan (MDD)</b> | CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development<br>CC02 – Development Limits<br>CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping<br>CC06 – Noise<br>CC07 – Parking                                                                                       |

|              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|--------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|              | CC09 – Development and Flood Risk<br>CC10 – Sustainable Drainage<br>TB12 – Employment Skills Plan<br>TB15 – Major Town, and Small Town/District Centre development<br>TB16 – Development for Town Centre Uses<br>TB21 – Landscape Character<br>TB23 – Biodiversity and Development |
| <b>Other</b> | National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)<br>Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document<br>CIL Guidance + 123 List<br>Riseley Village Design Statement                                                                                                                    |

## PLANNING HISTORY

| Application No. | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Decision & Date                                                |
|-----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| 161065          | Prior approval submission for the conversion of 3no existing office buildings (Use Class B1(a)) to 47no residential apartments (Use Class C3).                                                                                                 | Approved<br>27/05/2016                                         |
| 202653          | Prior approval submission for proposed conversion of office building (Use Class B1(a)) to 16 no. residential units (Use Class C3).                                                                                                             | Refused<br>02/12/2020                                          |
| 201234          | Prior approval submission for proposed conversion of office building (Use Class B1(a)) to 17 no. residential units (Use Class C3).                                                                                                             | Refused<br>16/07/2020,<br>Dismissed at<br>Appeal<br>31/08/2021 |
| 210252          | Prior approval submission for proposed conversion of office building (Use Class E(i)) to 15 no. residential units (Use Class C3).                                                                                                              | Refused<br>18/03/2021,<br>Dismissed at<br>Appeal<br>01/08/2022 |
| 220655          | Full application for the proposed alterations to existing office building including insertion of 13no. roof lights at first floor and roof level, insertion of 2no. windows and change of 'garage-style' door to window at ground floor level. | Approved<br>16/05/2022                                         |
| 240150          | Full application for the change of use from office to education use with associated external alterations including the provision of a fenced multi use games area.                                                                             | Approved<br>11/06/2024                                         |

## CONSULTATION RESPONSES

### Internal

WBC Traffic Management – No comments received  
WBC Environmental Health – No objections

WBC Drainage – No objections  
WBC Highways – No objections  
WBC Landscape and Trees – No objections  
WBC Ecology – No comments received  
WBC Public Rights Of Way – No comments received  
WBC Community Safety – No comments received  
WBC Education (School Place Planning) – No comments received  
WBC Cleaner and Greener – No comments received  
WBC Ecology Newts – No comments received

#### **External**

Thames Water Utilities Ltd – No comments received  
South East Water – No comments received  
Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue – Advisory commentary

### **REPRESENTATIONS**

|                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Parish/Town Council | No comments received                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Ward Member(s)      | No comments received                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Neighbours          | Two objections received on the following grounds: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Information is too sparse to support, no supporting documents or plans (<b>Officer comment: All of the plans and supporting documentation has been published to the Council's website for review.</b>)</li> <li>- Encroachment</li> <li>- Loss of parking spaces</li> <li>- Unacceptable noise levels</li> </ul> |

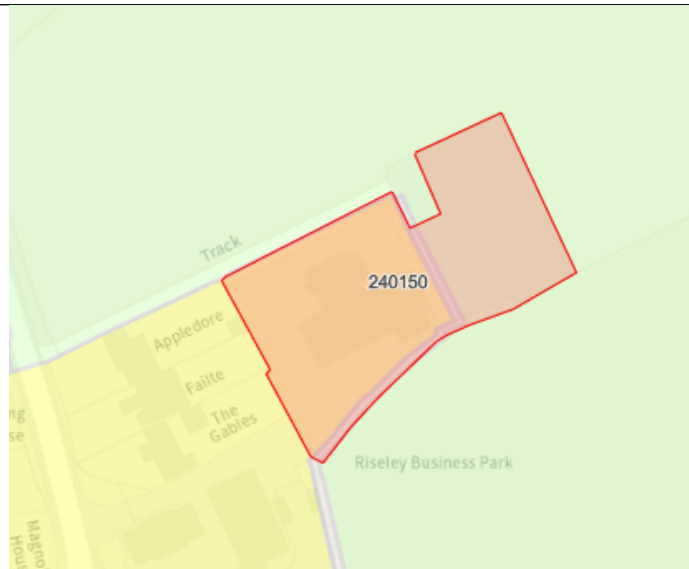
### **APPRAISAL**

#### **Site Description:**

The application site consists of a large office building located down a private road accessed from Basingstoke to the west. The access road is shared by the application site and the neighbouring residential buildings to the south-west, with 2no. parking spaces being sited on the road.

The site itself has a large parking area to the front that is well visually enclosed by mature vegetation to the south, west and north. This area also includes 10no. parking spaces which are allocated to the neighbouring residential buildings previously mentioned. To the rear of the building is a large concreted parking area, enclosed by 6 foot close boarded timber fencing.

The majority of the site (main office building, access and front parking area) are all located within the settlement of Riseley, a limited development location. On the other hand, the rear parking area is located outside of development limits and within the designated Countryside:



**Figure 1:** Application red-line overlayed on the Council's settlement boundaries (area shaded yellow is the settlement of Riseley, the area shaded green is the designated Countryside.)

This policy overlap is visually evident from the site's surroundings which are characterised by residential properties to the immediate west and south of the site, whereas the north and east is characterised by open countryside.

### **Proposal Description:**

This applications seeks approval for the proposed variation of conditions 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 of planning consent 240150, namely:

- Amendments to parking, the entrance area and fenestration, addition of a bin store and relocation of the Multi Use Games Area (Condition 2)
- The variation of conditions 3, 4, 5 and 6's wordings to 'compliance only' following the submission of the information required by them.

### **Principle of Development:**

The National Planning Policy Framework has an underlying presumption in favour of sustainable development which is carried through to the local Development Plan. The Managing Development Delivery Local Plan Policy CC01 states that planning applications that accord with the policies in the Development Plan for Wokingham Borough will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The principle of development for the change of use from office to education use in this rural location, including suitability of location, was already found acceptable under previous planning consent Ref. 240150. Nothing herein contained within the current application is deemed to affect this conclusion, therefore no objections are raised on the principle of development.

### **Character of the Area:**

### Policy Context:

With regards to well-designed places, paragraph 130 of the NPPF states planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);

Similarly, paragraph 134 states that development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes. This is supported by paragraph 125 of the NPPF too, which states:

*“Area-based character assessments, design guides and codes and masterplans can be used to help ensure that land is used efficiently while also creating beautiful and sustainable places.”*

The National Design Guide section B1, paragraph 67 also states that the built form of well-designed places should relate well to:

- the site, its context and the opportunities they present;
- the proposed identity and character for the development in the wider place;

Paragraph 68 follows on from this stating that houses and streets should establish an appropriate relationship with the pattern, sizes and proportions of existing houses in the local area.

Policy CP11 supports development in the countryside only where it maintains the high quality of the rural environment. Policy CP1(1) similarly only supports development that maintains or enhances the high quality of the environment, with policy CP3 supporting development of an appropriate mass, layout, built form, height and character to the area CP3(a) and which makes a positive contribution to the sense of place contributes to the buildings and spaces themselves and in the way they integrate with their surroundings CP3(f).

The Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document provides further guidance for developers with general guidance that development should respond positively to its site and local context (G1) and respond positively to the local character of the area (G2).

### Assessment:

- Relocation of parking into a retained section of existing parking to the north-east of the application site, partly on the footprint of the previously approved

MUGA.

- Re-siting and re-design of the MUGA to the south of the site, including an outdoor play area immediately adjacent to the main building's eastern elevation, with several areas of raised bed planters for horticultural and general landscaping purposes, plus an area in the south-eastern corner for future gym/play equipment.
- The entrance to the site has been altered to accommodate school traffic, including a small roundabout to create a drop off zone, plus a bin/cycle store.
- Minor amendments to the building's approved fenestration.

As outlined in the report for application 240150, the site is located down a long private road and as such is almost completely invisible from the street scene. The changes to the parking area and MUGA are still enveloped within the site's existing development footprint and would have no greater visual impact on the character of the area.

Similarly, the changes to the site's frontage and the fenestration alterations proposed would have no greater visual impact on the area and would be acceptable.

### **Neighbouring Amenity:**

The nature of the proposed variations warrant no additional overlooking, overbearing, loss of light or noise impacts.

### **Highway Access and Parking Provision:**

The application is supported by a Parking Management Strategy (Condition 3 of consent 240150) and a Travel Plan Statement (Condition 4 of consent 240150). WBC Highways have reviewed this documentation and have no objections to their contents.

The wording of conditions 3 and 4 will therefore be altered to 'compliance only'.

The other variations proposed have no greater impact on highway safety or the site's parking provision.

### **Flooding and Drainage:**

The nature of the variations proposed warrant no additional flood risk or surface water drainage concerns.

### **Ecology:**

The application is supported by a Biodiversity Enhancements Plan (ref: 0021 Rev.A, Condition 5 of consent 240150). WBC Ecology have not responded to the application so it is assumed that no objections are raised to the enhancements proposed and they are acceptable.

The wording of condition 5 will therefore be altered to 'compliance only'.

### **Landscape and Trees:**

The application is supported by a detailed Hard and Soft Landscaping Scheme (ref: PL04, Condition 6 of consent 240150). WBC Landscape and Trees have reviewed this plan and consider it acceptable.

The wording of condition 6 will therefore be altered to 'compliance only'.

**Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):**

When planning permission is granted for a development that is CIL liable, the Council will issue a liability notice as soon as practicable after the day on which the planning permission first permits development. Completing the assumption of liability notice is a statutory requirement to be completed for all CIL liable applications.

**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.

| <b>RECOMMENDATION</b>              |                  |
|------------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Conditions agreed:</b>          | Not required     |
| <b>Recommendation:</b>             | Approval         |
| <b>Date:</b>                       | 18 November 2024 |
| <b>Earliest date for decision:</b> | 23 October 2024  |

|                                                           |                   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Recommendation agreed by:<br/>(Authorised Officer)</b> | <i>MC</i>         |
| <b>Date:</b>                                              | <b>19.11.2024</b> |