

29 September 2026

Development Management
Wokingham Borough Council
Civic Offices
Shute Road
Wokingham
RG40 1BN

Dear Sir/Madam

PROPOSED INSTALLATION OF A SUBSTATION AND METER WITH ASSOCIATED ENCLOSURES

BUILDING 820, ESKDALE ROAD, WINNERSH TRIANGLE BUSINESS PARK, WINNERSH, RG41 5UX

Introduction

This Planning Statement has been prepared by Union4 Planning on behalf of Winnersh Midco S.A.R.L ('the Applicant') and forms part of a full planning application for the installation of a substation and meter with associated enclosures at land to the east of Building 820, Eskdale Road, Winnersh Triangle Business Park, Winnersh, RG41 5UX.

This application is submitted to secure an increased electricity supply for the incoming tenant (OQC). Building 820 is intended to be used by OQC for research and development purposes in connection with OQC's development, testing and operation of superconducting quantum computing systems designed for deployment within data-centre environments. The facility will support the assembly, integration, testing and ongoing development of OQC's quantum computing technology, together with associated laboratory, technical, engineering and office functions.

OQC's systems are developed for use by enterprise and public-sector customers, including HM Government of the United Kingdom, and Building 820 will form part of OQC's wider UK research, development and operational infrastructure. As such, a high-capacity electrical supply on site is required to help facilitate this process, with infrastructure upgrades to ensure a long-term resilient power source is secured.

The electricity supply to Building 820 is currently served from the SSE network via an onsite SSE substation rated at 1000kVA. As part of this application, a new 2500kVA capacity PowerOn substation is proposed on site, replacing the existing 1000kVA supply. The new substation will be served from the existing 5MVA High Voltage (HV) supply installed to the Winnersh Business Park by PowerOn as part of previous infrastructure upgrade works.

Although the principle of installing the substation and meter enclosure is acceptable under Permitted Development with PowerOn as the statutory undertaker, the dimensions of the substation proposed is larger than the standard size and as such does not fall within the scope of Permitted Development. The positioning of the new substation and meter enclosure will also necessitate the repositioning of a small number of car parking spaces, as laid out under the extant planning permission for the site (Ref: 193285).

The structure of this Planning Statement is as follows:

- Section 2 provides an overview of the site's location and description

- Section 3 sets out the planning history
- Section 4 describes the proposed development
- Section 5 sets out the policy context pertaining to the Site
- Section 6 outlines the key planning considerations
- Section 7 provides a summary and conclusions

Site Location and Context

The Site is positioned to the south of Eskdale Road and west of Borrowdale Road within the wider Winnersh Triangle Business Park, located within a built-up area on the north side of Winnersh within the jurisdiction of Wokingham Borough Council.

The application site contained within the red line, measuring approximately 250sqm, consists of an area of hardstanding within the wider car parking and service yard area. This area forms part of the wider '820' site which comprises a large commercial building (Building 820) formed of 3 units (C6-C8), accommodating a mix of Business (Class E(g)) and storage and distribution (Class B8) uses.

Parking is located on both sides (east and west) of the building, accommodating 120no. car parking spaces, 6no. motorcycle spaces and 32no. cycle spaces. A delivery servicing yard area is also located to the eastern extent of the wider site and to the south of the application site.

The wider Site has four entrance points. One access point is located via Eskdale Road to the north-west corner, with three further entrance points located along the eastern extent of the wider Site, with access via Borrowdale Road. Pedestrian access to Building 820 is via Eskdale Road.

The immediate surrounding area is light industrial and commercial in nature (Use Class E) all within the Winnersh Triangle Business Park complex, constructed since the mid-1980s. The business park occupies an area of almost 40 hectares and accommodates a wide range of spaces, including offices, light industrial units, and hospitality.

Part of the Site lies within Flood Zone 2 as identified in the Environment Agency Flood Map (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Environment Agency - Flood Zone Map



Source: Gov.uk (2026)

Site History

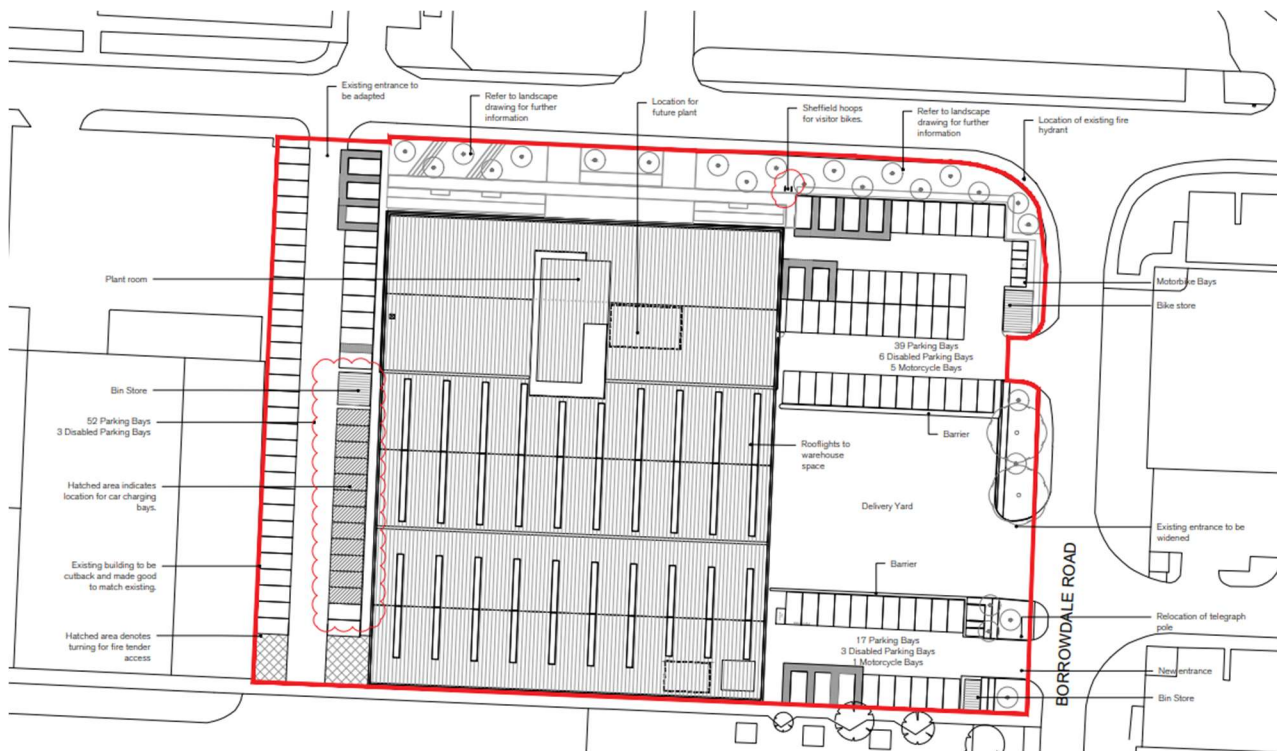
The Site has an extensive planning history, in accordance with the Wokingham Borough Council online planning register.

The main application of relevance to the current proposal is that determined under application reference 193285, which was validated in December 2019. The description of development was as follows:

"Full application for the proposed change of use from warehouse (Use Class B8) to mixed Use Class B1 and B8 following part demolition of existing building (part of units C5-C8), including erection of a rooftop extension to create internal plant rooms, external alterations including new cladding and external plant areas, changes to fenestration, modification of existing landscaping and parking layout and creation of new parking."

The application was approved in February 2020, with a site layout as set out below at Figure 2.

Figure 2: Reference 193285 - Proposed Site Plan (PL.050 Rev.A)



Source: Spratley and Partners (2019)

Class B1 has since been revoked in September 2020 and replaced with Class E(g). Any use falling within Class E(g) including offices, research and development of products and processes, as well as light industrial processes are considered acceptable uses on Site.

The development was completed in 2022, providing a total of 120no. car parking spaces, of which 12no. spaces are accessible.

Proposed Development

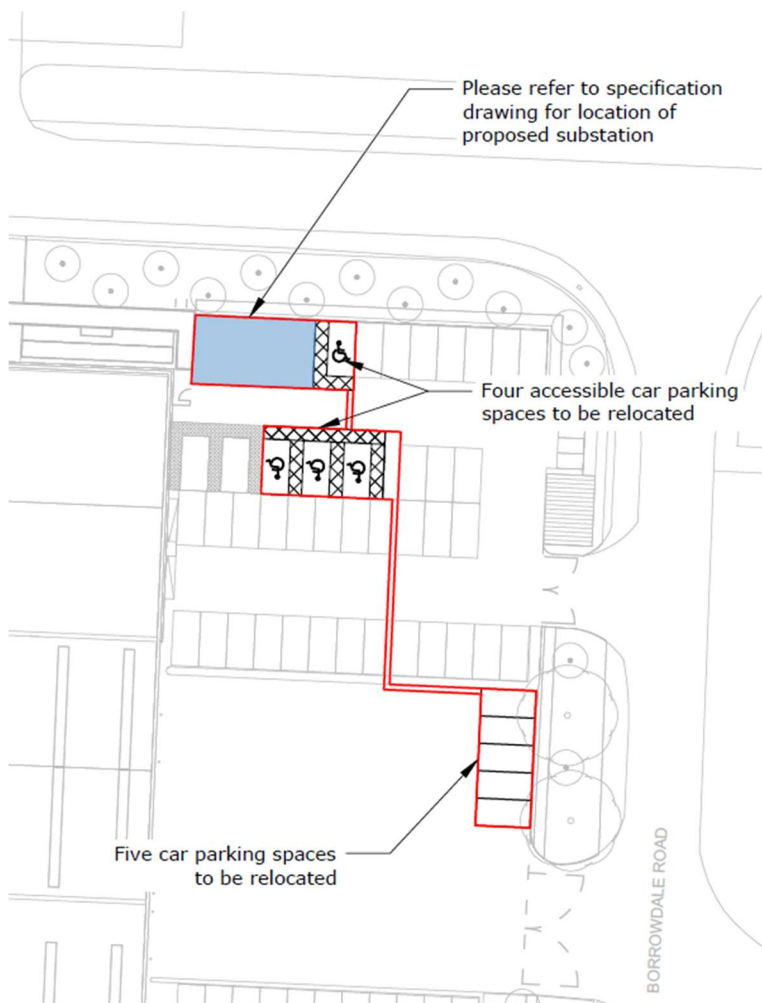
The application seeks full planning permission for the installation of a substation within the car parking area of Building 820. The description of proposed development reads as follows:

"Proposed installation of a substation and meter with associated enclosures"

The proposed Site Plan and Substation and Meter Location is shown in Figure 3 and 4 respectively. The substation and meter will be installed within the north-eastern extent of the Site within the existing car parking area closest to Building 820, with access from Borrowdale Road.

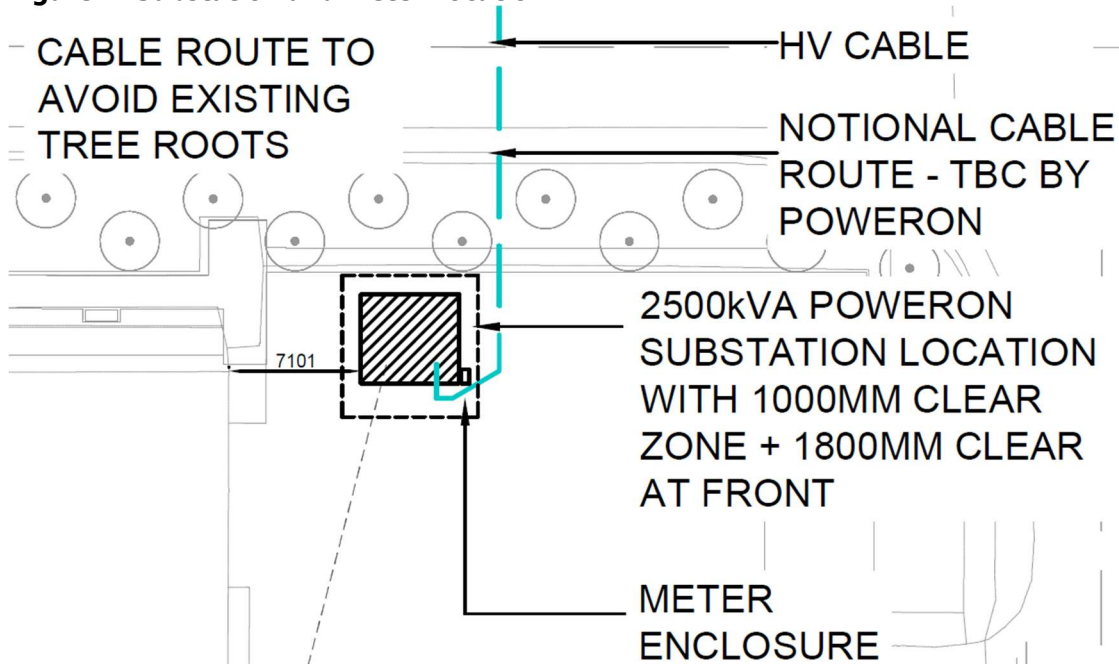
The proposal will involve the repositioning of four accessible parking spaces and the re-provision of five standard car parking spaces within the delivery yard area of the Site. One accessible parking space will have their 1.2m access zone alternated as part of the proposal whilst three accessible parking spaces will be repositioned directly opposite their current location, closest to the building. Subsequently, five standard car parking spaces will be re-provided in the existing delivery yard area.

Figure 3: Proposed Site Plan



Source: Motion (2026)

Figure 4: Substation and Meter Location

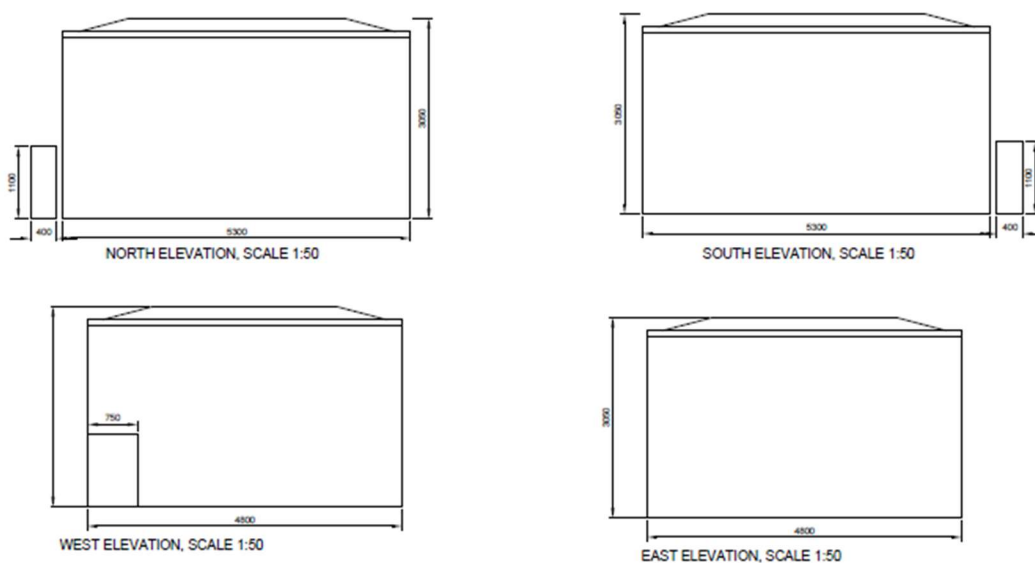


Source: Hoare Lea (2026)

The external dimensions of the substation GRP enclosure will measure 5.3m in length, by 4.8m in width, by 3.05m in height.

The meter GRP enclosure will be located to the east of the proposed transformer, measuring 0.4m in length, by 0.75m in width, by 1.1m in height. These dimensions are indicated in the proposed elevation plans extracted at Figure 5 below.

Figure 5: Substation and Meter Enclosure Dimensions



Source: Hoare Lea (2026)

As part of the development, an LV switch room will be required to be installed to safely step-down electrical power to Building 820. The LV switch room will be installed internally within Building 820. Furthermore, cable ducts will be installed below ground that will connect the proposed Substation to Building 820 and the wider electricity supply. These elements do not require planning consent, although it is mentioned as part of this planning application for completeness. All the cables will be routed to avoid any tree roots.

Planning Policy Context

This section provides an overview of the planning policies and legislative framework, which together provide the context against which an application for planning permission must be considered. It identifies those national and local policies which are contained within statements of Government policy or the Development Plan for the area, or which otherwise may be material to the consideration of the proposals.

In accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, any planning application for new development should be assessed in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The relevant Development Plan documents for the application site comprise the following:

- Wokingham Adopted Core Strategy (adopted January 2010); and
- Wokingham Adopted Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (adopted February 2014)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was revised on 17 August 2026 and is a material consideration in decision making.

In addition to the above, Wokingham Borough Council is in the process of producing a new Local Plan. The Draft Local Plan underwent Regulation 19 consultation between 30th September and 13th November 2024. The draft Local Plan was then subsequently submitted for examination on Friday 28th February 2025.

The Inspectors have since provided their post hearing letter on 5 August 2026 which found that the Development Plan was likely to be capable of being sound subject and legally compliant subject to a number of 'main modifications'. As such, the emerging policy context is considered to carry considerable material weight and will be identified in this section of the Planning Statement.

National Planning Policy Framework (August 2026)

The revised NPPF was published on 17 August 2026. The NPPF sets out the national framework that all development must accord with.

Policy DM3 'Determining development proposals' paragraph 1(b) identifies that when considering development proposals, local planning authorities should take a proportionate approach to the consideration of the planning matters raised by the proposals in a way that reflects their scale, complexity and potential impact. Paragraph 1(f) states that local planning authorities should not refuse applications for development which should clearly be approved, having regard to their accordance with the development plan, the policies in this Framework and any other material considerations.

Policy DM4 'Emerging development plan proposals' paragraph 1(a) states that when preparing and considering development proposals, relevant policies in emerging development plans may be given weight according to the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given).

Policy S1 'Positive plan making' paragraph 1(a) identifies that the development plan should plan positively for future growth and change by seeking to meet the development needs of their area as a minimum. This means providing for objectively assessed needs for businesses and other uses, including supporting infrastructure.

Policy S3 'Presumption in favour of sustainable development' paragraph 1(a) identifies that decisions on development proposals should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development with Policy S4 in the Framework being applied when considering development proposals within settlements.

Policy S4 'Principle of development within settlements' paragraph 1 states that development proposals within settlements should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in this Framework.

Policy W3 'Renewable and low carbon energy development and electricity network infrastructure' paragraph 1(a) identifies that in considering proposals for electricity network infrastructure, substantial weight should be given to: the benefits for improving energy security, supporting economic development and/or the transition to a net zero future. Paragraph 2 states that applicants should **not** be required to demonstrate the need for electricity network infrastructure.

Annex B 'Glossary' defines electricity network infrastructure as the following:

"Infrastructure that facilitates the transmission of electricity from generation sources to end users, including transmission, distribution, and interconnection. This infrastructure is essential for the operation and expansion of the electricity network and includes components such as substations, converter stations, interconnectors, and cables."

Policy DP3 'Key principles for well-designed spaces' paragraph 1 identifies that development proposals should respond to their context (the history, character and features of their site and its setting), so that they integrate with and enhance their surroundings such as through the use of appropriate materials.

Policy TR4 'Street design, access and parking' paragraph 1(e) states that to contribute to creating well-designed places, transport considerations should be integral to the design of development. Proposals should provide a suitable number of parking spaces for a range of transport modes where appropriate, reflecting the location and nature of the development (including its connectivity), any locally-set standards in the development plan, and including adequate provision of spaces.

Policy F4 'Assessing flood risk for decision-making' paragraph 1 states that to inform the assessment of flood risk and, where relevant, appropriate mitigation, a site-specific flood risk assessment should accompany all development proposals in Flood Zones 2. Paragraph 3 states that a site-specific flood risk assessment should be appropriate to the scale, nature, and location of development.

Policy F6 'Development in areas at risk of flooding from rivers or the sea' paragraph 1(a) identifies that with regard to sites within flood zone 2, development proposals should be refused if the use is incompatible with the risk from river or sea flooding, as set out in Annex F, Table 3.

Annex F 'Managing Flood Risk and Coastal Change', Table 2 'Flood risk vulnerability classification' identifies electric network infrastructure as essential infrastructure. Annex F, Table 3 identifies that essential infrastructure is acceptable in Flood Zone 2.

Policy F7 'Ensuring development is safe from flooding' paragraph 1 states that development proposals should not present a risk from flooding to potential occupiers, users, or visitors, and should not increase flood risk

elsewhere. Following, paragraph 2 lists criteria when development should be allowed in an area at risk of flooding:

- "a. Within the site, the most vulnerable development is located in areas of lowest flood risk, unless there are overriding reasons which justify a different arrangement;*
- b. The development will be safe throughout its lifetime taking account of the vulnerability of its users;*
- c. Any residual risk can be safely managed, and safe access and escape routes are included where appropriate, as part of an agreed emergency plan;*
- d. The development is appropriately flood resistant and resilient such that, in the event of a flood, it could be quickly brought back into use without significant refurbishment; and*
- e. It can be demonstrated that flood risk will not be increased elsewhere."*

Wokingham Adopted Core Strategy (January 2010)

The Wokingham Core Strategy was adopted in January 2010. The Development Plan Document (DPD) sets out where development will occur within the borough to 2026.

Policies considered relevant to the application are:

- Policy CP3 General Principles
- Policy CP4 Infrastructure Requirements

Wokingham Adopted Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (February 2014)

The Wokingham Adopted Managing Development Delivery Local Plan was adopted in February 2014. This DPD expands upon the objectives laid down in the Core Strategy, providing more detailed policies to use when considering development proposals.

Policies considered relevant to the application are:

- Policy CC07 Parking
- Policy CC09 Development and Flood Risk (From All Sources)

Wokingham Emerging Local Plan (Regulation 22 Submission)

The emerging Local Plan for Wokingham was submitted for examination on Friday 28th February 2025. The emerging Local Plan covers the period of development up to 2040.

Policies considered relevant to the application are:

- Policy SS1 Sustainable Development Principles
- Policy SS15 Securing Infrastructure
- Policy C5 Parking
- Policy C8 Utilities
- Policy FD1 Development and Flood Risk (From All Sources)
- Policy DH1 Place Making and Quality Design

Planning Considerations

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that, if regard is to be had to the Development Plan for the purpose 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.

We have considered the following planning matters to be pertinent to the proposed development:

- Principle of Development
- Highways and Parking
- Design
- Flooding

Principle of Development

The proposal is for the installation of a substation and meter with associated enclosures at Building 820 within Winnersh Triangle Business Park. As such, it is considered that Policy CP4 of the Wokingham Core Strategy and Policy SS15 and C8 of the emerging Local Plan apply.

Policy CP4 states that planning permission will not be granted unless appropriate arrangement for the improvement and provision of infrastructure, services and other facilities required for the development taking account of the cumulative impact of schemes are agreed.

Policy SS15 criterion 2 states that development proposals must secure necessary new, and/or improvements to existing, infrastructure via direct provision or an appropriate contribution that makes the development acceptable. Proposals must also ensure appropriate arrangements are in place to secure the future management and maintenance of infrastructure that is or will be provided, and plan and design utilities from the outset to minimise future disruption when upgrades and/or repairs are required.

Policy C8 criterion 1 states that development proposals must demonstrate that there is sufficient capacity for electricity on and off site to service the development, and that agreement has been or will be sought from the appropriate utility/service providers.

This planning application is accompanied by a letter of support from OQC, the intended future occupiers of Building 820. As set out in the letter, OQC will require additional power requirements to become a future tenant of the property. This is due to their specialist nature of research and development activities in supporting the UK's sovereign capability in superconducting quantum computing. The power requirement will principally support a cleanroom fabrication facility and a large-scale cryogenics laboratory housing a number of dilution refrigerators and associated control electronics.

The existing electricity provision for the Site is capped at 1000kVA. The proposal will install a new substation, upgrading the existing network infrastructure electricity capacity on Site up to 2500mV. This will help support Building 820 for any incoming tenant requirements as well as future-proof best use of the Site as capacity requirements evolve over time. The new substation will be served from the existing 5MVA High Voltage (HV) supply installed to the Winnersh Business Park by PowerOn as part of previous infrastructure upgrade works. As such, there will be sufficient capacity to serve the development with agreement already sought and approved by the appropriate utility/service providers.

The new substation and meter has been located to the north-western corner of the existing eastern car parking area. This enables utility/servicing providers to carry out future maintenance on Site without any access barriers and minimises disruption as far as possible.

In support of this, Policy W3 of the NPPF encourages electricity network infrastructure to be built, with substantial weight given to the benefits of infrastructure providing energy security and supporting economic development. Reliable, uninterrupted electricity supply is paramount to the success of the Site, enhancing long-term viability as more intensive tenant demands and business operations evolve. The proposal will help support continued economic enhancement at the Site with OQC to form a principal part of the wider Winnersh Triangle Business Park complex. As such, the development will contribute to meeting identified development needs with the development considered sustainable under emerging Policy SS1.

It is therefore concluded that the proposal is acceptable in principle.

Highways and Parking

The proposal will involve the repositioning of four accessible parking spaces and the reprovision of five standard car parking spaces within an area adjacent to the delivery yard area on the Site. As such, Policy TR4 of the NPPF, Policy CC07 of the Wokingham Adopted Management Development Delivery Local Plan and Policy C5 of the emerging Local Plan are considered to apply.

Policy TR4 states that proposals should provide a suitable number of parking spaces for a range of transport modes where appropriate, reflecting the location and nature of the development (including its connectivity), any locally set standards in the development plan, and including adequate provision of spaces. Policy CC07 states that planning permission will only be granted where the proposal demonstrates that the new scheme retains an appropriate overall level of off-street parking. In relation to this, Policy C5 states that development proposals should provide and retain vehicle parking that caters for the needs of all users (including people with disabilities and visitors) that is appropriate to the location and the scale of development.

All existing 120 car parking spaces will be retained by the development as approved under application reference 193285, with only a small number of minor relocations required.

This planning application is accompanied by a Highways Technical Note prepared by Motion. The five relocated standard car parking spaces will be located on the eastern end of the delivery yard area for Building 820. Swept path analysis has been prepared for access to the car parking spaces as well as the service vehicles to the loading area, appended to the Technical Note. The Swept Path Analysis illustrates that there will not be any impact on the operation of the service bays for Building 820 or the local highway network.

In summary, it is considered that the proposed development would maintain highway safety and provide suitable car parking provision in line with the previous consent and in accordance with the NPPF and local adopted and emerging policies.

Design

The proposed substation will be positioned towards the northern extent of the site and as such, there is the potential for a degree of visibility from Eskdale Road. Consideration of Policy CP3 of the Wokingham Core Strategy and Policy DH1 of the emerging Local Plan should therefore be given.

Policy CP3 criterion (a) states that planning permission will be granted for proposals that are of an appropriate scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area together with a high quality of design without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users.

Policy DH1 identifies that all new development must be of high-quality design to endure over the lifetime of the development and create a strong sense of place. Development should make the most efficient use of

land and should be designed to be adaptable, so that, wherever possible, it can be used with flexibility over time. Development should use high-quality materials and external finishes that are durable and will weather attractively.

A 1.8m high solid metal panel fence runs along the perimeter of the entirety of the Site, including along the northern boundary with Eskdale Road. The existing fence is shown in Figure 5 below.

Figure 6: Existing Solid Metal Panel Fencing



Source: Applicant's own (2026); annotated by Union4 Planning

As shown in Figure 6, the substation and meter will be positioned inside the fence boundary, therefore the majority of views from Eskdale Road will be blocked. The only element of the proposed substation that may be visible will be the very top of the structure. Given the dimension of the substation GRP enclosure and that it is only 3.05m in height at the highest point, together with a consideration of the angle of vision from Eskdale Road, it is clear that the visual impact of the proposal on pedestrians and drivers along Eskdale Road is considered to be negligible.

The GRP enclosure for the substation and meter is made of robust, lightweight fibreglass. This material has a high weatherproof quality and is therefore able to be easily maintained long-term. The RAL colour of the GRP enclosures will be of a standard stock colour (Green) in the BS 5252 colour range in line with the other substation enclosures across Winnersh Business Park.

Overall, it is considered that the proposed substation and meter will be of high quality and is of an appropriate built form and height so as to not detrimentally impact the Site and surrounding area. Policy CP3 and DH1 is therefore considered to be satisfied.

Flooding

Part of the Site to the south falls within Flood Zone 2. As such, Policy CC09 of the Wokingham Management Development Delivery Local Plan and Policy FD1 of the emerging Local Plan applies.

Policy CC09 states that development proposals in Flood Zone 2 and 3 must consider the vulnerability of the proposed development. Policy FD1 states that an appropriately detailed, site-specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) is required for all development proposals in Flood Zones 2 and 3.

Whilst some of the wider site falls within flood zone 2, the proposed substation will be located in its entirety within Flood Zone 1. Whilst there will be the minor provision of replacement parking spaces within the area of the site within flood zone 2 (three accessible spaces), these works will consist simply of the marking out of parking bays on existing hardstanding. This is not considered to fall within the definition of development under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. As such, it is considered that the proposal does not require the submission of a Flood Risk Assessment. Notwithstanding this, we would however note that the proposed substations will sit on an area of existing hardstanding, so has no potential to increase run off or increase flood risk elsewhere.

It is also the case that a Flood Risk Assessment was submitted as part of the extant planning permission application for the Site (Ref: 193285). The results showed that the Site, including the delivery yard area, can cater for the 1 in 100 years flood event, with 40% allowance for climate change. The Council's Drainage Officer reviewed this arrangement and raised no objection.

It is therefore considered that the proposed development is safe in terms of flooding, adequately complying with Policy CC09 of the development plan and Policy FD1 of the emerging Local Plan.

Summary and Conclusions

This Planning Statement has been prepared by Union4 Planning in support of a planning application for the installation of a substation and meter with associated enclosures.

The building will provide necessary electrical infrastructure improvements that will help ensure the long-term viability of Building 820 as more intensive demands are requested by future tenants. The proposal will

therefore futureproof the use and aid in promoting economic productivity and enhancement as part of the wider Winnersh Triangle Business Park complex.

In conclusion, we consider that the proposed development is in accordance with the principles of sustainable development and accords with key policies at a national and local level. We would respectfully submit that planning permission should be granted.

We trust that the above information is clear, but please do contact us if you require any further clarification or information in relation to the submitted application.

Yours faithfully,



Luke Farmer
Planning Consultant