

Committee Report

Item No: 7C

Reference: DC/22/04002

Case Officer: Daniel Cameron

Ward: Elmswell & Woolpit.

Ward Member/s: Cllr Helen Geake. Cllr Sarah Mansel.

RECOMMENDATION – GRANT HYBRID PLANNING PERMISSION SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS

Description of Development

Hybrid Application. Full planning Application for B8 storage and E(g) office uses for Land Parcels 4 and 5. Outline Planning Application for B2 light industrial, B8 storage and E(g) office uses for Land Parcel 6.

Location

Land At Lawn Park Business Centre, Warren Lane, Woolpit, IP30 9RS

Expiry Date: 17/03/2023

Application Type: FUL - Full Planning Application

Development Type: Major Small Scale - Manu/Ind/Storg/Wareh

Applicant: C & K Smith

Agent: Mr James Bailey

Parish: Woolpit

Details of Previous Committee / Resolutions and any member site visit: This application was previously considered at the meeting of 18th January 2023. Minutes note that members deferred the application for an update to come forward with regards to ecology and landscaping comments which were not available at the time of the original meeting. Further information was requested with regards to heritage impacts, particularly with regards to listed buildings located on Haughley New Street and with regards to previous refusals of planning permission at Lawn Farmhouse; the highways impact with regards to the road surface of the Old A45 and with regards to HGV movements and the movements of smaller vehicles on the surrounding road network; amenity impacts regarding to light and noise impacts from the proposed development of parcels 4 and 5. Updated information is provided prior to report.

Has a Committee Call In request been received from a Council Member (Appendix 1): No

Has the application been subject to Pre-Application Advice: Yes (DC/22/00404)

Update on Ecology and Landscaping Matters

Comments from Place Services Ecology and Landscaping were received on the 27th and 30th January respectively and are available on the planning file.

Place Services Ecology note no objection subject to securing biodiversity mitigation and enhancement measures within development. Conditions are suggested to achieve this and have been added to the recommendation within the report below.

Similar conclusions are noted from the Place Services Landscaping response, which does note concerns with regards to the screening of the site at present, but notes that conditions to limit the heights of stored goods on Plots 4 and 5 (which are already included within the scheme of recommended conditions) will act to limit the impact of the development to below that of the neighbouring buildings which also provide some screening in and of themselves. Conditions are suggested to secure landscaping details prior to commencement of development and to secure the management of said landscaping to ensure it thrives on site and is fit for purpose. Again, these are added to the recommendation within the main report.

Heritage Report

Following the last meeting, further heritage advice was secured from Place Services Heritage.

They consider the immediate surroundings of the listed buildings, Lawn Farmhouse and Lawn Cottage, have already been compromised by the development of Lawn Farm Business Park. They note that use of landscaping mitigates the issue to an extent, however, they also note harmful issues arising from the position of lighting poles in close proximity to Lawn Cottage. In summation, they identify a level of less than substantial harm in the low to medium range. This is a slight increase over that identified at pre-application stage and they note that the balancing of the harm to the setting of the heritage assets should be undertaken in line with the requirements of the NPPF which is set out within body of the report below in Section 9.

No harm to listed properties located on Haughley New Street is identified, nor is harm to the Grade I listed Haughley Park, further to the east.

Highways Impacts

Review of the comments from the Highway Authority and National Highway Authority note no objections to the application and it has been confirmed verbally with the Highway Authority that consideration of the junction into the site was undertaken and that there was sufficient highway capacity to take the accommodate the additional HGV movements proposed by this application. With regards to the necessity of a slip road onto the A14 at this location, this was considered by Highways England during both this and the original application, with no requirement for the additional highways infrastructure was found.

The supporting documents brought forward with the application notes an HGV routing plan utilising only roads shown within the Suffolk HGV Routing Map. Similar routing plans apply to the other

users of the site and the applicant has no records of complaint regarding their vehicles which are also tracked. Travel Plans for staff working on the site are in place. Control over access from small and medium sized vehicles not connected with the site would not be able to be controlled via planning condition as the enforcement of such a condition would render it useless in practice. A scheme of signage directing users to the site is already in place and advertised as the preferred route to and from the site.

It is understood through the applicant that Bacton Transport are in discussions with Elmswell Parish Council regarding a speed reduction on the Old A45, however, this has not progressed to discussions with the Highway Authority, which would be the next step towards implementing a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO). The applicant has confirmed their support of such a measure and would be happy to be involved with the work should that be necessary, however, no such requirement has been noted by the Highway Authority. It should be noted that a TRO is a separate legal process and may not be successful as it requires support from other stakeholders, notably the Police, which is not secured at this time. Members could consider a planning condition in this regard; however, it is advised that such a condition would fail the necessity test set out within NPPF as no requirement for a TRO is noted in the comments from the relevant Highway Authorities and further, would tie the development to the outcome of a legal process which the Local Planning Authority has no control over and could take significant time to progress.

Concern regarding the state of the road surface on the Old A45 was also raised. This related to the spreading of mud and other debris on the road from the quarry operated by AggMax and located to the east of the application site. It is noted that concern over the road surface related to an operator not connected to the applicant and from a site not under their control. Investigation by Officers notes that wheel-washing conditions have been applied to planning permission given on the site which raises the question of whether enforcement action from the relevant Planning Authority (Suffolk County Council in this instance) would be able to resolve the issue. Given the site is not within the ownership of the applicant, it would not be reasonable to require they address the issue which is not of their making or within their control.

Amenity Impacts

Further comments were sought from the Environmental Health Team, received on 27th February. Having reviewed the committee report and action sheet, and taking into consideration their original comments, they have no further comments to make at this time.

They confirm that sufficient information has been submitted with the application to give certainty that subject to the conditions previously requested being applied, there are no adverse amenity impacts to nearby residential dwellings from light and noise pollution arising from development on Plots 4 and 5.

Development on Plot 6 can similarly be conditioned to ensure sufficient information is presented with submission of any reserved matters application that may come forward to ensure that Members have sufficient certainty on these issues in the future.

Conclusions

Officers consider that sufficient information regarding the issues raised by Members at the previous meeting of 18th January 2023 with regards these issues is now present, and that Members can undertake debate and reach a valid conclusion with regards to the planning application presented.

Having had the benefit of the additional information presented here, Officers consider that their recommendation of approval still remains and that the conditions that Officers would suggest should Members resolve to approve the application is provided below and has been updated to reflect the consultation responses received from Place Services Landscaping and Ecology and is produced here for clarity:

Full Planning Permission:

- Development to be commenced within 3-year time scale.
- Development to accord with submitted drawings.
- Use class confirmation – B8 storage with E(g) office (no change of use within B or E use classes).
- Limit to external storage height and location of storage.
- Car, HGV and cycle parking to be provided as shown.
- Provision of EV charging points.
- Archaeological investigation to be agreed and undertaken.
- Fire hydrants to be provided.
- SuDS landscaping and maintenance details.
- Sustainability details to be agreed, including 10% requirement for renewable power generation.
- Lighting to comply with submitted details.
- Limit to external noisy works.
- Noise management plan to be submitted and agreed.
- Hours of work.
- Acoustic fencing to be erected.
- Bin storage details to be agreed.
- Details of security fencing to be agreed.
- Work to be undertaken in accordance with ecological appraisal recommendations
- Natural England Great Crested Newt Mitigation Licence
- Biodiversity enhancement strategy
- Wildlife sensitive lighting scheme
- Landscape details
- Landscape management plan

Outline Planning Permission:

- Outline commencement requirement. Reserved matters to be made within 3 years, commencement within two of reserved matters approval.
- Reserved matters details to include access, appearance, layout, landscaping and scale.
- Development to accord with indicative drawings.
- Use class confirmation – B2 light industrial, B8 storage or E(g) office.
- Archaeological investigation to be agreed and undertaken.
- Fire hydrants to be provided.
- Sustainability details to be agreed, including 10% requirement for renewable power generation.
- Lighting details, including light spill to be submitted.
- Noise details to be submitted.
- Hours of work to be agreed.
- Work to be undertaken in accordance with ecological appraisal recommendations
- Natural England Great Crested Newt Mitigation Licence
- Biodiversity enhancement strategy
- Wildlife sensitive lighting scheme
- Landscape details
- Landscape management plan

And the following informative notes as summarised and those as may be deemed necessary:

- Pro-active working statement
- Public Rights of Way informative
- Land contamination informative

In coming to this conclusion, Officers reflected on the comments for the Economic Development Team noting a lack of the type of business units require within the District and the comments from the emergent Joint Local Plan which identifies Lawn Farm Business Park as a strategic employment site where their use is protected and proposed expansions acceptable in principle and their district-wide importance is emphasised. While Officers accept the limited weight that can be attributed to the emergent Joint Local Plan, it does give an indication on the future direction of travel for the site. Within the policy explanation, a clear need for flexible commercial space is clear, which would be brought forward on Plot 6.

Moreover, in regards to highways impacts, the site is well placed with regards to access to the A14 and benefits from existing highways infrastructure to support HGV movements. The HGV routing map for Suffolk does not recommend HGV movements outside of their shown routes and these are the routes that HGV vehicles arriving at or leaving from the site are already making use of. Support for the implementation of a speed reduction on the Old A45 is noted but would be

progressed outside of the planning system and is subject to third-party approval. The road surfacing issues relating to another user of the Old A45 are also noted.

No amenity issues are noted that cannot be dealt with via planning conditions already proposed to be applied to the development and ecological and landscaping can be dealt with in a similar manner.

Finally, with regards to the balancing exercise, the low to medium level of less than substantial harm identified in the further heritage comments are noted. The development as proposed would still bring benefits to the district in terms of FTE employment and wider benefits in terms of supporting development further afield in the district. The land in question, while presenting a link to the agricultural heritage of Lawn Farmhouse in particular, is no longer farmed and would likely remain as grass, although Members should note that outline planning permission for plot 4 is in place.

Members should be certain to refamiliarise themselves with the specifics of the application which is set out within the report below. They should note that it has not be altered since its original submission for use at the meeting of January 18th 2023.

PART ONE – REASON FOR REFERENCE TO COMMITTEE

The application is referred to committee for the following reason:

The Head of Economy considers the application to be of a controversial nature having regard to the nature of the application.

PART TWO – POLICIES AND CONSULTATION SUMMARY

Summary of Policies

NPPF - National Planning Policy Framework
NPPG-National Planning Policy Guidance

Core Strategy Focussed Review (2012)

FC01 - Presumption In Favour Of Sustainable Development
FC01_1 - Mid Suffolk Approach To Delivering Sustainable Development

Core Strategy (2008)

CS01 - Settlement Hierarchy
CS02 - Development in the Countryside & Countryside Villages
CS03 - Reduce Contributions to Climate Change
CS04 - Adapting to Climate Change
CS05 - Mid Suffolk's Environment

Local Plan (1998)

GP01 - Design and layout of development
HB01 - Protection of historic buildings
HB14 - Ensuring archaeological remains are not destroyed
CL02 - Development within special landscape areas
CL08 - Protecting wildlife habitats
E02 - Industrial uses on allocated sites
E03 - Warehousing, storage, distribution and haulage depots
E04 - Protecting existing industrial/business areas for employment generating uses
E06 - Retention of use within existing industrial/commercial areas
E08 - Extensions to industrial and commercial premises
E10 - New Industrial and commercial development in the countryside
E12 - General principles for location, design and layout
T09 - Parking Standards
T10 - Highway Considerations in Development

Neighbourhood Plan Status

This application site falls within the Woolpit Neighbourhood Plan which was formally adopted on 31st October 2022. Accordingly, the Woolpit Neighbourhood Plan enjoys full material weight. In particular attention is drawn to the following policies which will be discussed in further detail within the relevant sections of the report below:

Policy WPT6 – Location and Sustainability of Business Sites

Policy WPT11 – Settlement Gaps and Key Views

Consultations and Representations

[Click here to view Consultee Comments online](#)

During the course of the application Consultation and Representations from third parties have been received. These are summarised below.

A: Summary of Consultations

Town/Parish Council (Appendix 3)

Elmswell Parish Council Comments Received 27th September 2022

Elmswell Parish Council objects to this application for the following reasons:

1. The Proposal seeks to impinge on the adjacent Listed properties at Lawn Cottage and Lawn Farmhouse to the detriment of their setting and to the enjoyment of those occupying them. Previous attempts to develop this site have failed, including at Appeal, on these grounds.
2. The doubling of employees which would result should this application succeed will exacerbate the existing problems as these people travel by car to and from work along the inadequate roads in Woolpit village as well as down the single-track Warren Lane in Elmswell.
3. The resultant nuisance and pollution, including light pollution, from a dramatic increase in industrial activity on the site adjacent to the growing built-out residential mass of Woolpit runs counter to NPPF strictures on sustainability.

Wetherden Parish Council Comments Received 20th September 2022

No comments for the above planning application.

Woolpit Parish Council Comments Received 7th September 2022

Woolpit Parish Council objects to this application on the following grounds:

This industrial site will be immediately adjacent to the Grade 2 listed properties of Lawn Farmhouse and Lawn Cottage and will be severely detrimental to their setting and to the quality of life of occupants of these dwellings and of neighbouring houses.

On several occasions applications and appeals for 5 dwellings on the former farmyard /scaffolding

site have been refused because of the proximity to these listed buildings.

Some 300 people are employed on this site, and this will rise to some 600 when all the land available is developed. It will not be possible to control their travel routes to and from work and many already pass through the already narrow Warren Lane, Wood Road and Borley Green then onto congested Heath Road by the School and Health Centre or travel along equally unsuitable roads to access the A14 via Elmswell.

There is no public transport or safe cycle or pedestrian access to the site.

There is much more light pollution from the existing development than was expected and we can only expect more. This is detrimental to both human and animal life

There will be loss of habitat for birds of prey and the animals they rely on.

Suffolk is a rural county. This proposal will add to the urbanization of farmland alongside the A14 and contribute to the feel of driving through a ribbon of development. Industrial development should be confined to the designated areas near the major towns.

Woolpit is the fourth largest centre of commercial development in Mid Suffolk and its proximity to the A14 encourages workers to travel large distances to work. Additional employment areas should be located on already existing sustainable sites near centres of population with public transport and lower travel-to-work distances.

If the application is approved the following requirements should be incorporated:

1. In order to encourage sustainable travel to work, a footbridge should be provided over the A14 to give pedestrian/cycling access to the site from Old Stowmarket Road or from Warren Lane south.
2. An HGV ban should be placed on Warren Lane and Wood Road together with the imposition of other measures to discourage workers private vehicles using these roads.

Officer's note that Haughley Parish Council was consulted in response to this application, however, no response was received.

National Consultee (Appendix 4)

Anglian Water Comments Received 17th August 2022

No connection to Anglian Water sewers is proposed as part of the development. Therefore, Anglian Water have no comments.

Historic England Comments Received 17th August 2022

Historic England provides advice when our engagement can add most value. In this case we are not offering advice. This should not be interpreted as comment on the merits of the application.

We suggest that you seek the views of your specialist conservation and archaeological advisers.

National Highways Comments Received 15th August 2022

Referring to the planning application referenced above, dated 15 August 22, notice is hereby given that National Highways formal recommendation is that we recommend that planning permission not be granted for a specified period.

Further National Highways Comments Received 24th November 2022

Referring to the planning application referenced above, dated 15 August 22, notice is hereby given that National Highways formal recommendation is that we recommend that planning permission not be granted for a specified period.

Final National Highways Comments Received 7th December 2022

Referring to the planning application referenced above, dated August 22, notice is hereby given that National Highways formal recommendation is that we offer no objection.

County Council Responses (Appendix 5)

SCC Archaeological Service Comments Received 19th August 2022

This site lies in an area of archaeological potential recorded on the County Historic Environment Record. Trenched Evaluation (MOLA, 2018) identified two trenches in the south-eastern most extent of the site which contained undated deposits of extensive burnt debris that contained substantial quantities of fire cracked flint. As a result, there is high potential for the discovery of further below-ground heritage assets of archaeological importance within this area, and groundworks associated with the development will likely damage or destroy any archaeological remains which exist.

There are no grounds to consider refusal of permission in order to achieve preservation *in situ* of any important heritage assets. However, in accordance with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (Paragraph 205), any permission granted should be the subject of a planning condition to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage asset before it is damaged or destroyed.

SCC Fire and Rescue Service Comments Received 6th September 2022

Access and Fire Fighting Facilities

Access to buildings for fire appliances and firefighters must meet with the requirements specified in Building Regulations Approved Document B, (Fire Safety), 2019 Edition, Volume 1 - Part B5, Section 11 dwelling houses, and, similarly, Volume 2, Part B5, Sections 16 and 17 in the case of buildings other than dwelling houses. These requirements may be satisfied with other equivalent standards relating to access for fire fighting, in which case those standards should be quoted in correspondence.

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service also requires a minimum carrying capacity for hard standing for pumping/high reach appliances of 15/26 tonnes, not 12.5 tonnes as detailed in the Building Regulations 2000 Approved Document B, 2019 Edition.

Water Supplies

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service recommends that fire hydrants be installed within this development on a suitable route for laying hose, i.e., avoiding obstructions. However, it is not possible, at this time, to determine the number of fire hydrants required for firefighting purposes. The requirement will be determined at the water planning stage when site plans have been

submitted by the water companies. Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service recommends that proper consideration be given to the potential life safety, economic, environmental and social benefits derived from the provision of an automatic fire sprinkler system.

Consultation should be made with the Water Authorities to determine flow rates in all cases.

Sprinklers Advised

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service recommends that proper consideration be given to the potential life safety, economic, environmental and social benefits derived from the provision of an automatic fire sprinkler system.

Consultation should be made with the Water Authorities to determine flow rates in all cases.

SCC Flood and Water Team Comments Received 23rd August 2022

The following submitted documents have been reviewed and we recommend a holding objection at this time:

- Site Location Plan Ref 175/2022/03 P2
- Site Layout Plan Ref 175/2022/07 P3
- Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy Ref 175/2022/FRADS P1

A holding objection is necessary because whilst the LLFA is generally happy with the level of detail for the outline application (plot 6), the level of detail provided for the full application (plots 4 & 5) is not sufficient and only indicative. The LLFA recommends full and final detailed design is submitted for the full application.

Further SCC Flood and Water Team Comments Received 26th October 2022

The following submitted documents have been reviewed and we recommend maintaining holding objection at this time:

- Site Location Plan Ref 175/2022/03 P2
- Site Layout Plan Ref 175/2022/07 P3
- Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy Ref 175/2022/FRADS P2
- Email from Applicant to LPA 2nd September 2022

A holding objection is necessary because whilst the LLFA is happy with the level of detail for the outline application (plot 6), the level of detail provided for the full application (plots 4 & 5) is sufficient, but additional information is required relating to the landscaping and establishment of the SuDs features.

For plots 4&5 it is recommended that a landscaping and establishment plan detailed for the first five years for all SuDs features be provided unless the LPA is minded to condition this requirement.

SCC Highways Team Comments Received 3rd November 2022

Notice is hereby given that the County Council as Highways Authority does not wish to restrict the grant of permission due to the application not having a detrimental effect upon the adopted highway.

Please note: It is an OFFENCE to carry out works within the public highway, which includes a Public Right of Way, without the permission of the Highway Authority.

Any conditions which involve work within the limits of the public highway do not give the applicant permission to carry them out. Unless otherwise agreed in writing all works within the public highway shall be carried out by the County Council or its agents at the applicant's expense.

SCC Travel Planning Team Comments Received 15th August 2022

No comment on this application.

Internal Consultee Responses (Appendix 6)

Economic Development Comments Received 14th September 2022

Economic Development fully supports this application.

This development brings forward a further phase of a now established and successful employment site, well located for the A14, a recognised driver for growth in the district and region.

There is an undersupply of suitable modern business accommodation available locally, this development will be supportive of this need, providing opportunity for businesses wishing to grow and to locate within the district and adjacent to the A14.

Environmental Health – Air Quality Comments Received 31st August 2022

This application does not meet the criteria for requiring an air quality assessment, and I have no objections with regard to air quality.

Environmental Health – Land Contamination Comments Received 20th September 2022

Many thanks for your request for comments in relation to the above application. Having reviewed the Phase I report by Norfolk County Laboratories I can confirm that I agree with the findings of the report that the risks from the former uses of the site are low. The report recommends that additional sampling is undertaken to confirm the low risk however I feel that it would not be necessary for these to be undertaken by means of condition. I therefore have no objection to the proposed development from the perspective of land contamination.

Should the developer wish to undertake the precautionary works then we would be willing to review their findings but this would be outside of the planning framework.

Environmental Health – Noise, Odour and Smoke Comments Received 5th September 2022

Plots 4 & 5

Lighting - I am not satisfied that the lighting diagram considered light intrusion to neighbouring residential premises. The Kingfisher plan dated 04/05/2022 clearly states that for light trespass they were unable to calculate this but also indicate that this passed.

I require clarification that this has been considered. I shall also require that the submitted scheme shall include a polar luminance diagram (based on the vertical plane and marked with 1,2,5,10 lux contour lines at the windows of the nearest residential premises).

Noise - The consultant has made some assumptions with regards to a 1.8 m close board fence being installed. The Nova Acoustic reports ref: 7709CK -v2 and CK7710-V2 dated 08/06/2022 appear to be robust and consider site vehicle movements and activities at both plots.

The reports author also makes the following recommendations regarding mitigation:
closed board acoustic fence has been should be installed along the eastern perimeter of the proposed development as per Appendix C. - A noise management plan should be implemented, and all staff trained on noise reduction processes. The findings of this report will require written approval from the Local Authority prior to work

Based on the reports for the full application, I recommend the following conditions is added to any permission granted for plots 4 and 5:

- Limit on external noise levels.
- Noise management plan to be agreed.
- Operating hours to be limited to 06:00 – 18:00 weekdays, 06:00 – 15:00 Saturdays, none at all on Sundays and public holidays.
- Acoustic fencing to be erected as specified within submitted acoustic report.

Plot 6

I am unable to see any supporting documents in terms of noise/light/odour/smoke for this plot within the application documents. As such I am unable to recommend that this hybrid application is approved due to insufficient supporting evidence.

Further Environmental Health – Noise, Odour and Smoke Comments Received 31st October 2022

I am now satisfied that the Tetra Tech report ref: 784-B042059 dated 23 September 2022 revision 1 addresses the questions I raised and demonstrates that the levels at the nearby residential premises from plots 4 and 5 will be within the ILP guidance levels. I would still require the previously suggested conditions to be added to any permission granted for these plots.

I am still unable to see any noise impact assessment from this plot or other supporting documents with regards to Plot 6.

Officers note that as the application on Plot 6 is made in outline only, such additional details would not usually be present at this stage in the application, given the spread of final uses sought, it is considered that a more appropriate time to require this information would be on submission of any reserved matters application as the required reports could then be varied to suit the end user of Plot 6.

Environmental Health – Sustainability Comments Received 25th August 2022

Many thanks for giving me the opportunity to comment on the Application. I have reviewed the available documents and request that a condition be applied to secure a scheme for the provision and implementation of water, energy and resource efficiency measures for the lifetime of the development which shall be submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority.

Place Services – Ecology Comments Received 17th October 2022

Holding objection due to insufficient ecological information on European Protected Species (Great Crested Newt).

Officers note that previous development on site has taken place in line with Natural England's District Level Licencing scheme whereby development impacts are offset through the creation of off-site habitat creation for Great Crested Newts. It is understood that a similar approach would be taken here. Consultation on additional information in this regard is being undertaken with Place Services – Ecology and an update is to be reported at committee.

Place Services – Landscaping Comments Received 5th September 2022

Full application – Parcels 4 and 5

The full application is supported by the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Arboricultural Report and Landscape Strategy drawing.

The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been carried out in line with the principles set out on the third edition of "Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment"(GLVIA3) and includes an assessment of landscape and visual receptors. This report has been undertaken following the development of two parcels of land to the north of the site under granted permission DC/18/01279. We are generally in agreement with the baseline findings of the report, however there is a lack of detail provided with regards to the proposed layout of parcels 4 and 5, only details of the proposed small office building have been submitted therefore we are unable to assess if the likely visual and landscape character effects on the site and surrounding landscape have been adequately considered.

Given the site sensitivities and visibility we would recommend that a number of type 3 wireframe visualisations should be produced to demonstrate that effect of the development have been minimised; by considering the mass and location of the built form and that any proposed vegetative screening has been located for maximum effect. Therefore, we reserve judgement until further details of the buildings and layout have been submitted.

The Arboricultural Report fails to include details, location or protection measures for the areas of native species planting undertaken as part of the mitigation measures for DC/18/01279.

The Landscape Strategy focuses on the location of the proposed structural planting, though provides insufficient details of species, hard landscaping or boundary treatment. The indicated swales and SuDS are welcome, though also require further details regarding their visual appearance, management and maintenance.

Outline application – Parcel 6

The outline application is supported by the Arboricultural report and Landscape Strategy drawing (see above comments), the submitted LVIA does not include this parcel.

No details, indicative location or layout has been provided therefore we are unable to provide any further comment at this stage.

Summary

Considering the above, we recommend that a holding objection be placed until such time that further details are submitted and agreed. The holding objection is a temporary position to allow reasonable time for the applicant and the LPA to discuss what additional information is required to overcome the concern(s). If minded for approval, we would be happy to suggest some appropriately worded landscape conditions for use as part of any granted permission. Should you have any queries please feel free to contact me.

Officers note that additional information is being sought from Place Services – Landscaping to ensure the nature of the application is fully understood with regards to the open-air storage use of plots 4 and 5 and to gain further detail on the nature of additional information required or, should additional information not be required, to enquire to any planning conditions they would want to see imposed. Again, an update shall be reported at committee.

Public Realm Team Comments Received 26th August 2022

Thank you for consulting Public Realm on this application. Public Realm officers have no comment to make.

Waste Management Team Comments Received 1st September 2022

No objection subject to conditions to ensure that the development is suitable for a 32 tonne Refuse Collection Vehicle (RCV) to manoeuvre around the site to make collections from the businesses. Please provide plans of the waste storage facilities for the business units/offices, these must be sufficient capacity to accommodate all the waste types to be collected and appropriate segregation. Details of storage compounds requirements can be located within the waste guidance on table 6. A dropped curb should always be used to enable safe manoeuvrability of the bins from the compound/storage area to the RCV.

B: Representations

At the time of writing this report at least 2 letters/emails/online comments have been received. It is the officer opinion that this represents 2 objections. A verbal update shall be provided as necessary.

Views are summarised below:

- Impact on listed properties contrary to policy HB1 and paragraphs 201 and 202 of the NPPF.
- Noise and light pollution associated with site likely to increase as a result of the works. Proposed landscaping will not adequately shield the neighbouring properties from light and noise pollution.
- Intensification of the use of the highway, particularly by lorries and HGVs.
- Removal of trees will lead to a loss of ecological habitat.
- Development does not accord with Development Plan, particularly policy E10. There is no overriding need for the development to be located within the countryside and will lead to a loss of farmland.

(Note: All individual representations are counted and considered. Repeated and/or additional communication from a single individual will be counted as one representation.)

PLANNING HISTORY

REF: 4422/16	Screening Opinion for proposed industrial development of Lawn Farm.	DECISION: EIA 29.11.2016
REF: DC/17/04953	Planning Application - Erection of two storage buildings for the use by Suffolk Lowland Search and Rescue	DECISION: GTD 24.01.2018
REF: DC/17/04954	Planning Application. Erection of a single storey extension	DECISION: GTD 10.01.2018
REF: DC/18/01279	Hybrid Application. (1) Erection of 2No warehouses, 2No offices, creation of car parking and storage yards, landscaping, sustainable urban drainage system, infrastructure and highway improvements. (2) Outline Planning Application. (Access and Landscaping to be considered) for erection of 1No warehouse, erection of an office and associated car parking and storage yard.	DECISION: GTD 24.08.2018
REF: DC/18/04293	Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/18/01279- Condition 8 (Programme of Archaeological Work), Condition 9 (Site Investigation and Post Investigation Assessment), Condition 10 (Construction Environmental Management Plan), Condition 15 (Farmland Bird Mitigation Strategy) and Condition 18 (Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy)	DECISION: GTD 27.03.2019
REF: DC/18/04409	Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/18/01279- Condition 23 for Full (Construction Surface Water Management Plan) and Condition 27 for Outline (Construction Surface Water Management Plan)	DECISION: REF 05.03.2019
REF: DC/19/00550	Planning Application - Erection of a B1 commercial building for use in association with new Suffolk Lowland Search and Rescue base.	DECISION: GTD 21.03.2019
REF: DC/19/01603	Discharge of Conditions application for DC/18/01279 - Condition 7 - Landscaping Scheme	DECISION: GTD 16.04.2019

REF: DC/19/02099	Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/18/01279 - Condition 4 (Visibility Splays), Condition 5 (Access), Condition 19 (Landscape and Ecological Management Plan), Condition 31 (Route Management) and Condition 34 (Sign Modification)	DECISION: GTD 24.07.2019
REF: DC/19/02339	Hybrid Application - Full Planning Application for conversion of cartlodge to residential dwelling and Outline Planning Application (some matters reserved) - Erection of 3no. dwellings and details for access and layout (following demolition of storage buildings).	DECISION: REF 30.07.2019
REF: DC/19/03361	Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/18/01279 - Conditions 6 (Highways-Surface Water Discharge), Condition 12 (Surface Water Design), Conditions 13 (SuDS Details) and Condition 23 (Construction Surface Water Management Plan).	DECISION: GTD 13.01.2020
REF: DC/19/03500	Application under Section 73 of the Town & Country Planning Act, Permission: DC/18/01279 without compliance with condition 7 (Landscaping Scheme) to relocate a landscape bund	DECISION: GTD 12.02.2020
REF: DC/19/03851	Outline Planning Application (some matters reserved -access and landscaping to be considered) for development comprising of a mixture of B1/B2/B8 uses.	DECISION: GTD 20.02.2020
REF: DC/20/00233	Submission of details under Outline Planning Permission DC/18/01279 - Appearance, Layout and Scale for erection of 1no. warehouse, erection of an office and associated car parking and storage yard.	DECISION: GTD 01.04.2020
REF: DC/20/01416	Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/18/01279- Condition 16 (Construction Environmental Management Plan), Condition 17 (Farmland Bird Mitigation Strategy), Condition 24 (Surface Water Drainage Scheme), Condition 25 (Surface Water Drainage Implementation, Maintenance and Management) and Condition 27 (Construction Surface Water Management Plan)	DECISION: GTD 27.05.2020

REF: DC/20/02823	Planning Application. Erection of self contained B1 commercial units (4No.) and a proposed A1 commercial unit.	DECISION: GTD 02.10.2020
REF: DC/20/03548	Hybrid Application - Full Application for conversion of existing building into a dwelling and Outline Application (some matters reserved, access and layout to be considered) for erection of 5 no new dwellings.	DECISION: REF 03.11.2020
REF: DC/20/05069	Application under S73a to vary or remove a condition relating to DC/19/00550 dated 21/03/2019. Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to vary (Condition 2 Approved Plans and documents) - to facilitate building to be split into two class E units, as no longer to be used in association with Suffolk Lowland Search and Rescue as a new base.	DECISION: GTD 11.02.2021
REF: DC/20/05871	Planning Application. Erection of 2No self contained commercial units E(g), 1No retail unit E(a) and 1No restaurant E(b). (Alternative to scheme granted under DC/20/02823)	DECISION: GTD 16.02.2021
REF: DC/21/01481	Submission of Details (Reserved Matters) Application relating to DC/19/03851. Appearance, Layout and Scale for development comprising of a mixture of B1/B2/B8 uses. Relocation of the vehicle maintenance and service depot, including bodywork, accident and paint repairs, and associated buildings. Provision of landscaping and drainage.	DECISION: GTD 07.05.2021
REF: DC/21/03061	Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/19/03500- Condition 23 (SUDS Implementation) and Condition 27 (Decentralised Energy)	DECISION: GTD 22.06.2021
REF: DC/21/03565	Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/19/03500- Condition 5 (Surface Water) and Condition 28 (Route Management)	DECISION: GTD 24.06.2021
REF: DC/21/04524	Application for a Non Material Amendment relating DC/21/01481 - Additional roof vents added; ducting amended; rooflights relocated; doors and windows relocated; truck wash amended; environmental station relocated; and a smoking shelter added.	DECISION: GTD 09.09.2021

Full details are set out in the covering letter.

REF: DC/21/06430 Application for a Non Material Amendment relating to DC/21/01481 - Additional roof vents added; ducting amended; retaining embankment; alterations to surface water attenuation pond; and a reduction in car parking. **DECISION:** GTD
10.12.2021

Full details are set out in the covering letter.

REF: DC/21/06542 Application for Discharge of Conditions for DC/19/03851- Condition 3 (Construction Phase Management), Condition 7 (Surface Water Drainage), Condition 9 (Landscaping), Condition 12 (Environmental Management Plan) and Condition 16 (Construction Management) **DECISION:** GTD
17.02.2022

REF: DC/21/06933 Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/19/03851- Condition 11 (Sustainability Measures) **DECISION:** GTD
26.01.2022

REF: DC/22/00144 Application under Section 73 of The Town and Country Planning Act following grant of Planning Permission DC/20/05871 for Variation of Condition 2 (Approved Plans and Documents) in order to reposition one of the approved buildings to avoid a gas main. **DECISION:** GTD
21.02.2022

REF: DC/22/00638 Planning Application - Erection of 1no Class E(g) commercial building **DECISION:** GTD
04.04.2022

REF: DC/22/01735 Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/19/03851- Condition 13 (Landscape and Ecological Management Plan) and Condition 14 (Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy) **DECISION:** GTD
19.07.2022

REF: DC/22/02992 Application for approval of Reserved Matters (Appearance, Layout and Scale) and Discharge of Conditions 5 (Noise Impact Assessment), 6 (Lighting Assessment), 7 (Surface Water Drainage Scheme), 8 (SUDS Components/Piped Networks), 10 (Provision of Parking and Turning), 12 (Construction Environmental Management Plan), 13 (Landscape and Ecological Management Plan), 14 (Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy), and 15 (Wildlife Sensitive Lighting Design Scheme) pursuant to Outline Planning Permission **DECISION:** WFI
08.07.2022

DC/19/03851 dated: 20.02.2020 - Use of land for B8 and E(g) uses including construction of hard standing area to facilitate storage, and erection of an office block.

REF: DC/22/04086	Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/22/02993 - Condition 3 (Hours of Illumination)	DECISION: WFI 17.08.2022
REF: DC/22/04216	Planning Application - Erection of Hot Food Takeaway with Office above (revised application following permission DC/22/00144)	DECISION: GTD 18.10.2022
REF: DC/22/04479	Planning Application. Erection of 1No Class E(g) commercial building (revised application following planning permission granted under reference DC/22/00638) Revised position and size (Permission DC/22/00638 will not be constructed)	DECISION: GTD 21.11.2022
REF: DC/22/04909	Planning Application - Change of use of land and buildings from scaffolding business to scaffolding/mobile plant/vehicular hire business.	DECISION: PCO
REF: DC/22/04979	Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/19/03851 - Condition 8 (SUDS Component/Piped Networks)	DECISION: GTD 23.11.2022
REF: 4422/16	Screening Opinion for proposed industrial development of Lawn Farm.	DECISION: EIA 29.11.2016
REF: 2754/13	Proposed change of approved use of existing building from cafe use (Class A3) to office use (Class B1) and alterations to vehicle parking and turning area	DECISION: GTD 13.11.2013
REF: 3325/11	Application for a non-material amendment following a grant of planning permission 0668/10 - Removal of existing portacabins, toilet block and unauthorised hardstanding and erection of new cafe building with associated separate access and egress, turning area, parking and landscaping. Change of hard surfacing material for lorry parking bays from tarmac to concrete.	DECISION: GTD 20.10.2011
REF: 0668/10	Removal of existing portacabins, toilet block and unauthorised hardstanding and erection of new cafe building with associated	DECISION: GTD 24.03.2011

	separate access and egress, turning area, parking and landscaping.	
REF: 1226/09	Environmental Scoping Opinion for proposed strategic lorry park and associated road services	DECISION: EIA 13.08.2009
REF: 1522/09	New cafe building, associated parking & landscaping	DECISION: REC
REF: 3870/08	Screening Opinion	DECISION: EIA 25.11.2008
REF: 0067/08/EQ	Proposed lorry park	DECISION: REC
REF: 1538/04/	REPOSITIONING OF CAFE AND TOILET FACILITIES TOGETHER WITH ASSOCIATED PARKING	DECISION: GTD 12.05.2005
REF: 0567/95/	LAYOUT OF PICNIC AREA, CAR PARK AND STATIONING OF MOBILE CATERING UNIT AND ANCILLARY WORKS; ALTERATION TO EXISTING VEHICULAR ACCESS.	DECISION: GTD 15.08.1995
REF: 0019/96/A	THIS IS A SPLIT DECISION - SEE A/19/96/A AND A/19/96/R	DECISION: WDN 04.12.1996
REF: 0887/96/	RETENTION OF PORTABLE CATERING UNIT, STATIONING OF TOILET ACCOMMODATION AND PRIVATE FOUL SEWAGE SYSTEM.	DECISION: GTD 27.11.1996
REF: 1717/17	Application for Outline Planning Permission for the conversion of brick outbuilding to form a dwelling and the erection of 3no. new dwellings following demolition of storage buildings	DECISION: REF 06.11.2017
REF: 0567/17	Erection of new dwellings	DECISION: ECP 09.02.2017
REF: 4422/16	Screening Opinion for proposed industrial development of Lawn Farm.	DECISION: EIA 29.11.2016
REF: 0611/16	External and internal alterations as specified in Design, Access and Heritage Statement. (Retention of)	DECISION: GTD 16.09.2016
REF: 1150/14	Variation of Condition 9 of planning permission 2396/09 (working hours) "Change of use and alterations to	DECISION: REF 05.06.2014

agricultural buildings to be used as scaffolding company storage, office and staffroom" to vary the hours of the permitted use to between the hours of 0600 -1800 Monday to Friday and between the hours of 0700 -1500 Saturday

REF: 0489/14	Certificate of existing lawful development: Erection of kennels.	DECISION: LU 21.07.2014
REF: 1156/13	Retention of stabling, kennels and menage.	DECISION: DIS 26.06.2014
REF: 0876/10	Regularise demolition of wall; remove tie beams; replace part of roof structure; replace missing wall bricks; repair and repoint brick wall cracks; remove brick and concrete floor and install new floor; replace internal door; inject chemical DPC; insert 5 new rooflights and 3 new window openings; clad part of external walls; install kitchen and WC.	DECISION: GTD 13.08.2010
REF: 2396/09	Change of use of and alterations to agricultural buildings to be used as scaffolding company storage, office and staff room.	DECISION: GTD 12.11.2009
REF: 1226/09	Environmental Scoping Opinion for proposed strategic lorry park and associated road services	DECISION: EIA 13.08.2009
REF: 0757/09	Change of use from B1 to B8 - Scaffolding distribution, storage with office facility.	DECISION: REC
REF: 0067/08/EQ	Proposed lorry park	DECISION: REC
REF: 2080/06	Conversion and change of use of outbuildings to B1 office use and erection of garage and store.	DECISION: GTD 24.01.2007

PART THREE – ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATION

1. The Site and Surroundings

- 1.1 Lawn Farm Business Park is located to the south of the village of Elmswell and east of the village of Woolpit. The villages of Haughley and Wetherden are located further east of the site. The wider site is a roughly triangular parcel of land set to the immediate north of the A14 and to the immediate west of Warren Lane and Wood Road as they travel towards

Borley Green. At present, Bacton Transport Services, PreCon Products and TruckEast are all located on the site. A small group of black weatherboarded buildings are arranged to the immediate east around The Hungry Stag Café.

1.2 Two listed buildings are notable within the immediate surrounding area. Lawn Farmhouse and Lawn Cottage are both Grade II listed, and which were previously involved in agriculture although that use has since ceased with Lawn Farmhouse now utilised by a scaffolding company.

1.3 Historic England gives the following list descriptions for the two properties:
 Lawn Farmhouse - *II Farmhouse, late C17. Red brick in Flemish bond, with old colourwash. A band at 1st floor and a dentil course beneath the eaves; parapet gables. Concrete plain tiled roof with axial C17 chimney of red brick. 2 storeys. 3 windows. C19 3-light casements with transomes, and at ground storey with chambered heads. C19 6-panelled entrance door with a canopy on console brackets. A C18 rear service wing on 2 storeys: red brick with similar details, but with flint fabric at the rear. Hipped plain tile roof. Ovolo-moulded first floor beams to earlier range.*

Lawn Cottage - *II House, probably C17 with C19 alterations. 1 storey and attics. 3-cell lobby- entrance plan. 3 windows. Timber-framed, encased in mid C19 red-brick. Glazed pantiled roof, once thatched; axial chimney, the shaft rebuilt in C19 red brick. C19 raking casement dormers. C19 3-light small-pane casements with chambered heads. C20 gabled entrance porch, boarded and battened door.*

1.4 A non-listed dwelling is noted to lie between the two listed buildings and is identified as Lawnswood.

1.5 A public right of way crosses through the site running roughly north to south following the route of internal roads within the site. No landscape designations affect the site itself although the dense woodland to the immediate east of Warren Lane is part of a special landscape area.

1.6 Planning history on the site is complex with most of the site already benefiting from planning permission for use as B1 office, B2 light industrial and B8 storage uses. It should be noted that changes introduced in 2020 altered the Use Class Order, such that B1 uses became Class E uses with office use specifically falling under Use Class E(g), hence the description of development sought and the difference between this application and the older permissions on the site. The older permissions are set out within the table below:

Ref.	Description	Decision
DC/18/01279	Hybrid application. (1) Erection of 2no. warehouses, 2no. offices, creation of car parking and storage yards, landscaping and highways improvements. (2) Outline (access and landscaping to be considered) for erection of 1no. warehouse, erection of an office and associated car parking and storage yard.	Granted

DC/20/00233	Submission of RM details under Outline DC/18/01279 (appearance, layout and scale) for erection of 1no. warehouse, erection of an office and associated car parking and storage yard.	Granted
DC/19/03851	Outline planning application (access and landscaping to be considered) for development of mix of B1/B2/B8 uses.	Granted
DC/21/01481	Submission of RM details under Outline DC/19/03851 (appearance, layout and scale) for development of mix of B1/B2/B8 uses. Relocation of vehicle maintenance and service depot, including bodywork, accident and paint repairs and associated buildings. Provision of landscaping and drainage.	Granted
DC/21/03296	Full application. Construction of an area of hardstanding for stationing of lorries. Erection of single-storey modular building, external lighting and 2m high security fence.	Granted

- 1.7 At present the site is laid to grass and slopes towards the south. The site is within flood zone 1 and lies between areas of grade 3 and grade 4 agricultural land.

2. The Proposal

- 2.1 The proposed development brought before Development Control Committee is a hybrid application such that part of the application is made part in full and part made in outline such that it would require a further reserved matters application. If approved, conditions would be set out such that it would be clear which applied to the full part of the application and which related to the part made in outline.
- 2.2 With regards to this application, all works to plots 4 and 5, for the creation of a E(g) office and B8 storage use are made in full. All development relating to plot 6 is made in outline, such that only the principle of a B2 light industrial, B8 storage or E(g) office use on the site is considered at this time and would be subject to a reserved matters application if it were approved.
- 2.3 The proposed user of plots 4 and 5 is a building materials stockist, specialising in drainage and block paving which would be stored onsite. Storage height is to be limited to 5m high which is the same restriction that PreCon Products have on their open-air storage of materials. Access is taken off an internal road providing a route to the old A45, with access to the site being made at either junction 47A or junction 48 of the A14.
- 2.4 Together, plots 4 and 5 would cover some 4.04ha of land and development would entail a small office/administration building, car parking, cycle parking and HGV parking on site.

The office building would be a simple, single storey building with mono-pitched roof incorporating 52no. photovoltaic panels which would face east.

3. The Principle of Development

- 3.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires 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'.
- 3.2 As Members are aware, the examination of the Council's emerging Joint Local Plan (JLP) is currently paused, pending the submission of additional information. Within the emerging JLP, the site is allocated under reference LA120 for delivery of Class E/B2/B8 employment uses, with scope to provide flexibility within the use classes such that buildings might change use within the confines of Class E/B2/B8 without the need for express planning permission to do so provided the building itself did not change. Strategic Policy SP05 identifies Lawn Farm as part of the range of sites through which the Council would seek to meet the current and future economic needs. Nevertheless, Members are advised that the weight that may be attached to JLP as part of the consideration of development proposals is limited at this stage, it should be noted that the strategic policies are programmed to come forward at an earlier point.
- 3.3 Policy CS1 identifies a settlement hierarchy based on the services, facilities and access within the locality and accordingly directs development sequentially towards the most sustainable areas. The application site itself is located within the countryside as it does not fall within the established settlement boundaries of Elmswell, Woolpit, Haughley or Wetherden.
- 3.4 CS2 flows from CS1 and identifies the acceptable forms of development for countryside areas and includes new-build employment generating proposals where there is a strategic, environmental or operational justification for their location. In this instance, making use of the existing infrastructure at Lawn Farm Business Park, as well as the proximity of the site to the A14 would provide the strategic and operational justification for the location of the development.
- 3.5 The NPPF, however, is not as proscriptive with regards to the locations of businesses. At paragraph 84, the NPPF requires that planning decisions enable the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings. Paragraph 85 goes on to recognise that sites to meet local business needs in rural areas may have to be found beyond existing settlements and in locations not well served by public transport. Taking both of these into account, it is considered that the fact that the site lies outside of the established settlement boundaries is not a determinative factor which would prove fatal to this application. CS2 allows for such new-build development and while the NPPF would support this approach it does not restrict development to new-build buildings but would allow existing businesses to expand as well.

- 3.6 Policies E6 and E8 seek retain to employment sites in their employment generating uses and extensions to existing employment sites respectively.
- 3.7 Woolpit Neighbourhood Plan contains policy WPT6. It gives support to the redevelopment of brownfield sites and development of greenfield sites for business and industrial use, provided that certain criteria are met, including:
- Being within the capacity of existing infrastructure and road layout of the village, providing additional capacity if necessary.
 - Having good access to the A14 avoiding the village centre.
 - Mitigating traffic and road impacts from development.
 - Improve pedestrian and cycle links with the built-up area of the village.
 - Providing enough on-site parking to meet the use.
 - Avoidance of nuisance (noise, fumes, smells, light or other source of disturbance) to neighbours.
 - Be submitted with a lighting plan that will keep pedestrians and other road users safe without detrimental effect on the environment.
 - Mitigate the visual aspects of development on the rural setting of Woolpit.
 - Enhance the environment.

Provided these can be delivered, there is no in principle objection to development from the Woolpit Neighbourhood Plan.

- 3.8 Given the above, it is considered that the principle of development is established. The development site has both operational and strategic justification for its location, making use of existing infrastructure already in place and moreover, would receive full support from the NPPF. No other conflicts with policies E2, E3, E6 or E8 are noted. It is therefore considered that planning policies would support the principle of the outline element of the application and that the full element would be further scrutinised within the following report below.

4. Nearby Services and Connections Assessment of Proposal

- 4.1 The site is immediately adjacent to the A14, a key strategic HGV route through the county. Access from the A14 can be taken from Junction 47A which is located close to the site. Access to the A14 is taken from Junction 48, close to Tot Hill, allowing vehicles to join the A14 travelling in either direction. The route from Junction 47A to Junction 48 is noted within the HGV traffic routing plan for Suffolk as being a tertiary route for HGVs, meaning that they either need to begin or end their journey on this part of the highway network in order to make use of it. No HGV routes are noted that would allow those vehicles to travel through Elmswell, Haughley or Wetherden.

5. Site Access, Parking and Highway Safety Considerations

- 5.1 Policy T10 of the Local Plan requires the Local Planning Authority to consider a number of highway matters when determining planning applications, including the provision of safe access, the safe and free flow of traffic and pedestrian safety, safe capacity of the road network and the provision of adequate parking and turning for vehicles. Policy T10 is a general transport policy which is generally consistent with Section 9 of the NPPF on promoting sustainable transport, and therefore is afforded considerable weight.

- 5.2 Access to the site suitable for the use of HGVs is already in place and utilised on a daily basis by the existing businesses already located on Lawn Farm Business Park. Parking is to be delivered on site for cars, bicycles and HGVs in line with the adopted parking standards of the Local Planning Authority. Consultation with the Highway Authority notes no issues with the proposed development, with no issue noted regarding the additional HGV traffic that would access the site.
- 5.3 Paragraph 111 of the NPPF confirms that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe. In this instance, no such evidence has been provided with regards to any adverse highway impacts relating to the proposed development.

6. Design and Layout

- 6.1 As already noted, the design of the office building proposed to serve plots 4 and 5 is simple but would fit well with the functional nature of the buildings already on the site. The rest of those parcels would be utilised as open-air storage with maximum storage height of 5m, which is noted as being the limit on open-air storage at the PreCon Products. No conflict with the design policies present within GP01 or E12 of the Local Plan nor with the NPPF are identified.
- 6.2 With regards to parcel 6, Members are reminded that development of this parcel would be subject to a reserved matters application which would cover aspects of appearance, layout, scale, landscaping and access

7. Landscape Impact, Trees, Ecology, Biodiversity and Protected Species

- 7.1 Policy CS5 of the Core Strategy seeks to protect and conserve landscape qualities taking into account the natural environment and the historical dimension of the landscape as a whole rather than concentrating solely on selected areas, protecting the District's most important components and encouraging development that is consistent with conserving its overall character. However, blanket protection for the natural or historic environment as espoused by Policy CS5 is not wholly consistent with the Framework and is afforded limited weight.
- 7.2 Paragraph 170 of the NPPF states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils.
- 7.3 With regards to landscaping, previous development on the site has already created a sizable landscape buffer planted with trees which would be expanded by this application and planted in a similar manner, matching the dense woodland on the other side of Warren Lane/Wood Road. Only one existing tree (category U) is proposed to be removed to accommodate the development of plots 4 and 5 and construction exclusion is proposed to be erected to preserve existing root protection areas. Consultation with the Council's Arboriculture Officer and with Place Services – Landscaping notes no issue with the

baseline conclusions of the supporting landscaping details, however, concern is raised regarding the lack of detail regarding building on plots 4 and 5, given that only a small office building is proposed with the rest of the site to be used as open-air storage, this is not surprising. Officers are engaging with Place Services – Landscaping to see whether they are clear on the nature of the application and to see whether the additional information is necessary.

- 7.4 In a similar vein, comments from Place Services – Ecology with regards to Great Crested Newts are being examined and additional dialogue is being sought with regards to whether additional information is required, or whether the use of the District Level Licensing Scheme to offset impacts is acceptable as has been the case elsewhere on the site. Both of these issues could either be resolved through dialogue or through additional detail submission and re-consultation.
- 7.5 At this point attention is drawn to policy WPT11 of the Woolpit Neighbourhood Plan. It seeks to retain a separate and distinct identity for Woolpit and surrounding settlements, looking to make sure development safeguards the integrity of the gap and the quality of the landscape. Ten key views are noted within the policy, including looking west towards Woolpit from the junction of Warren Lane and the old A45.
- 7.6 The view towards Woolpit takes in the existing businesses on the Lawn Farm Business Park site, and in expanding the use of the site, it is not considered that the view towards Woolpit would be adversely affected by the proposed development.

8. Land Contamination, Flood Risk, Drainage and Waste

- 8.1 Land contamination details were supplied with the application and were reviewed by the Environmental Health Team. No issues have been identified and should the additional measures outlined within the plan be necessary, the Environmental health Team have requested to be made aware of the results, however, note this is more for information purposes. An informative is considered to be the most appropriate mechanism to secure this information should it become available.
- 8.2 With regards to flood risk, the site benefits from an existing drainage pond designed to take surface water run-off from across the entirety of the site. Consultation with the Lead Local Flood Authority notes no issue with the plots forming part of this application from utilising the drainage as it exists on the site. Comments note a lack of detail for landscaping and maintenance of landscaping around the drainage basin on site and note that these could be provided via use of planning condition which is considered reasonable.
- 8.3 Waste comments note the need to ensure that a waste tender can make a route around the site. Given that the highways within the site are designed to allow HGVs to make access, it is considered that waste tenders would be able to traverse the site as well. Details of bin locations as also requested can be secured via planning condition.

9. Heritage Issues

- 9.1 Policy HB1 of the Local Plan seeks to protect the character and appearance of buildings of architectural or historic interest, particularly protecting the settings of Listed Buildings. Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving a listed building, its setting or other architectural or historic features from which it draws significance. In practice, a finding of harm to the historic fabric of a listed building, its setting or any special features it possesses gives rise to a presumption against the granting of planning permission.
- 9.2 The Council's Heritage Team were consulted on the application and do not consider it necessary to provide comment in this instance. Full comments were given during pre-application discussions and are considered to be relevant here. They consider that the impact of the proposed development would be of a low level of less than substantial harm given that landscaping would buffer the development site and that the current setting of Lawn Farmhouse is dominated by the scaffolding business operating from the building.
- 9.3 Paragraph 202 of the NPPF states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, as is the case here, the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. The level of heritage harm must therefore be weighed, and considered in the context of the environmental, social and economic benefits that the scheme will bring about. With specific regard to the economic benefits of the scheme, these are significant, with the application considered to generate some twenty FTE jobs within the district.
- 9.4 Specific reference is made within the Parish Comments as well as in the objections to an appeal decision which turned on heritage grounds within the setting of Lawn Farmhouse. DC/20/03548 was another hybrid application seeking conversion of an existing building to a dwelling with outline planning permission for another five. The Appeal Inspector concluded that the proposed residential development would have a harmful effect on the setting of Lawn Farmhouse with the public benefits of the scheme not being held to be sufficient to outweigh the identified harm (APP/W3520/W/21/3267909). That development was located immediately adjacent to Lawn Farmhouse and a little way to the north of Lawnswood and Lawn Cottage. The Inspector also found the site to be unsustainable for residential uses having regard for the reliance on the private motor vehicle to make connections to the surrounding villages, and through the loss of the scaffolding business from the site.
- 9.5 With specific regard to this application, the same issues are not found to affect the development proposed, which would be a greater remove from Lawn Farmhouse and which carry significant public benefits.

10. Impact on Residential Amenity

- 10.1 Saved Policy H16 of the Local Plan seeks to protect the existing amenity of residential areas. Paragraph 130 of the NPPF sets out a number of core planning principles as to underpin decision-taking, including, seeking to secure a high standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.

- 10.2 Consultation with the Council's Environmental Health Team note no issues with the proposed development of plots 4 and 5 with conditions noted which would restrict hours of work on site, the illumination of the site and control noise from the site. With regards to plot 6 there is concern from the Environmental Health Team at the lack of information available, however, given the use of this land is made in outline and given the range of end users who might reasonably take on the site, it is considered more reasonable to impose conditions to require that information to come to the Local Planning Authority as part of the submission of reserved matters. This approach allows for bespoke reports to be prepared once the end user of the site is known. An office user is likely to give rise to fewer noise concerns but may have more issues around illumination than a storage warehouse might, which again would have very different impacts compared to an industrial user.
- 10.3 It is considered that the proposed development of plots 4 and 5 would not have detrimental adverse impacts on the nearby residential properties identified as Lawn Farmhouse, Lawnswood or Lawn Cottage given the intervening distance between the site and those buildings as well as the additional landscaping which is proposed.

11. Parish Council Comments

- 11.1 Both Elmswell and Woolpit Parish Council's voice their objections to the application and fall into three broadly similar categories. Firstly, impact on the setting of the listed buildings of Lawn Farmhouse and Lawn Cottage which has already been addressed in Section 9 of this report. Secondly, additional traffic impacts arising from the movement of workers to and from their place of work and finally, additional pollution impacts.
- 11.2 With regards to the impact of vehicle movements, HGV movements to and from the site are already strictly controlled, while the movements of workers would be much more difficult to control or enforce, however, the increase in the number of employees at the site would be minimal compared to the estimated impact given within the Parish responses with an additional 20 jobs being created against the estimated 300 given by the Parish Council.
- 11.3 Finally, with regards to pollution, no objection is noted from Council's Environmental Health Team and no comment relating to complaints received by them have been made. The existing site is already governed by conditions to restrict light, noise and other forms of pollution, similar conditions are proposed to be applied here.

PART FOUR – CONCLUSION

12. Planning Balance and Conclusion

- 12.1 The principle of development is considered to be established. The site is in existence and makes a certain amount of spatial sense to congregate the various HGV dependent businesses within one site with existing infrastructure. The site forms part of the emergent

JLP to deliver economic growth within the two districts and is well placed adjacent to the A14.

- 12.2 The adopted development plan would support the expansion of the site as would the NPPF and no conflict with the Woolpit Neighbourhood Plan is noted.
- 12.3 The only issue identified with consultees (excepting Parish Councils) is with regards to landscaping and ecology and additional confirmation is being sought from those consultees such that the recommendation is to delegate authority to the Chief Planning Officer to ensure those additional details, if required, are suitable and to grant planning permission subject to the conditions laid out below.

RECOMMENDATION

That the authority of Development Control Committee be delegated to the Chief Planning Officer to GRANT Hybrid Planning Permission following agreement from the relevant consultees relating to ecology and landscaping and subject to conditions as summarised below and those as may be deemed necessary by the Chief Planning Officer:

Full Planning Permission:

- Development to be commenced within 3-year time scale.
- Development to accord with submitted drawings.
- Use class confirmation – B8 storage with E(g) office (no change of use within B or E use classes).
- Limit to external storage height and location of storage.
- Car, HGV and cycle parking to be provided as shown.
- Provision of EV charging points.
- Archaeological investigation to be agreed and undertaken.
- Fire hydrants to be provided.
- SuDS landscaping and maintenance details.
- Sustainability details to be agreed.
- Lighting to comply with submitted details.
- Limit to external noisy works.
- Noise management plan to be submitted and agreed.
- Hours of work.
- Acoustic fencing to be erected.
- Bin storage details to be agreed.
- Details of security fencing to be agreed.

Outline Planning Permission:

- Outline commencement requirement. Reserved matters to be made within 3 years, commencement within two of reserved matters approval.
- Reserved matters details to include access, appearance, layout, landscaping and scale.

- Development to accord with indicative drawings.
- Use class confirmation – B2 light industrial, B8 storage or E(g) office.
- Archaeological investigation to be agreed and undertaken.
- Fire hydrants to be provided.
- Sustainability details to be agreed.
- Lighting details, including light spill to be submitted.
- Noise details to be submitted.
- Hours of work to be agreed.

And the following informative notes as summarised and those as may be deemed necessary:

- Pro-active working statement
- Public Rights of Way informative
- Land contamination informative