

## **Committee Report**

**Item No: 7B**

**Reference: DC/22/02971**

**Case Officer: Bradly Heffer**

**Ward: Stradbroke & Laxfield.**

**Ward Member/s: Cllr Anders Linder.**

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## **RECOMMENDATION – GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION WITH CONDITIONS**

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### **Description of Development**

Planning Application - Erection of extension to existing factory facility to provide additional packing and storage space

### **Location**

Roger Skinner Ltd, Queen Street, Stradbroke, IP21 5HL

**Expiry Date: 05/04/2023**

**Application Type: FUL - Full Planning Application**

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

**Applicant: Roger Skinner Ltd**

**Agent: Hollins Architects Surveyors and Planning Consultants**

**Parish: Stradbroke**

**Site Area: 1.49 hectares**

**Details of Previous Committee / Resolutions and any member site visit: None**

**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 – application ref. DC/22/00056.**

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## **PART ONE – REASON FOR REFERENCE TO COMMITTEE**

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The application is referred to committee for the following reason/s:

The site for this development is located adjacent to a site proposed for residential development pursuant to a plan allocation, to the south of Mill Lane, which is also to be considered at this meeting. The Chief Planning Officer has determined that both applications should be considered by Committee due to the locational proximity of both sites and also the consideration of impacts arising from the development proposals and how they might relate to one another.

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## **PART TWO – POLICIES AND CONSULTATION SUMMARY**

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### **Summary of Policies**

NPPF - National Planning Policy Framework

NPPG-National Planning Policy Guidance [not policy *per se* but explanation and elaboration of national planning policies].

#### **Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan – November 2023**

LP09 - Supporting a Prosperous Economy

LP15 - Environmental Protection and Conservation

LP16 - Biodiversity & Geodiversity

LP17 - Landscape

LP19 - The Historic Environment

LP23 - Sustainable Construction and Design

LP24 - Design and Residential Amenity

LP26 - Water resources and infrastructure

LP27 - Flood risk and vulnerability

LP29 - Safe, Sustainable and Active Transport

SP03 - The sustainable location of new development

SP05 - Employment Land

#### **Stradbroke Neighbourhood Plan – March 2019**

STRAD1 – Development Strategy and Principles

STRAD2 – Design Principles

STRAD5 – Flood Mitigation

STRAD8 – Highway Access and Pedestrian Movement

STRAD9 – Parking Provision

STRAD11 – Historic Environment and Design

STRAD12 – Light Pollution

STRAD13 – Employment Sites

### **Consultations and Representations**

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

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

## **A: Summary of Consultations**

### **Parish Council**

**Stradbroke Parish Council has commented as follows:**

*'Should Mid Suffolk Planning Officers be minded to grant permission for this development, the Parish Council strongly supports the proposed conditions submitted in the Environmental Health Officer's response dated 23 January 2023 and recommend they are included in full. These are as follows:*

- 1. Construction management plan*
- 2. Construction hours*
- 3. Noise - plant and equipment*
- 4. Requirement for noise assessment*
- 5. External lighting*

*The Parish Council also strongly supports the inclusion in full of the conditions submitted by Place Services on 30 January 2023, namely:*

- 1. Soft Landscaping scheme*
- 2. Hard Landscaping scheme*
- 3. Landscape management plan*
- 4. Advanced planting*

*The Parish Council notes that there is currently a holding objection from Place Services regarding insufficient ecological information and would expect any conditions resulting from a response to the requests for information contained in their consultation response dated 31 January 2023 to be included in full.'*

### **National Consultee**

**Historic England** has no comment and suggests that the advice is sought from the Council's specialist conservation and archaeological advisers.

The **Internal Drainage Board** recommends that surface water discharge from the site is attenuated to Greenfield Runoff Rates wherever possible.

**Anglian Water** advises that there are no assets within the development site boundary. In addition the foul drainage for this development is in the catchment of Eye-Hoxne Water Recycling centre which has available capacity for flows. The preferred method of surface water disposal would be to a SuDS. It is requested that a condition and informatives are added to a notice in the event of permission being granted.

### **County Council Responses**

**SCC Highway Authority** has no objection to the proposals and recommends the inclusion of conditions on a grant of planning permission.

**SCC Public Rights of Way** identifies that there are public rights of way adjacent to the site (on the southern and western boundaries). No objection is raised but it is advised that PROW must remain open, unobstructed and safe for public use at all times, including throughout any construction period. Further advisory comments are also provided.

**SCC Travel Plan** officer endorses the comments made by the Highway Authority.

The **SCC Archaeological Service** has confirmed there are no archaeological concerns or requirements.

The **Lead Local Flood Authority** recommends approval of the application, subject to the imposition of conditions.

The **SCC Fire and Rescue** officer has advised that access to buildings for fire appliances and firefighters must meet Building Regulations requirements. In addition, it is advised that no additional water supply for firefighting purposes is required in respect of this application.

### **Internal Consultee Responses**

The **Economic Development** officer supports the application and identifies that it *'...supports the sustainability and resilience of a significant local employer who have operated as an established and successful business in their current location for a considerable period of time. Being able to offer additional employment and to support their own logistics requirements should only enhance the current operational efficiency and business productivity...'*

**Place Services – Ecology** has no objection to the proposals, subject to the imposition of conditions on a grant of planning permission.

**Place Services – Landscape** has made various comments in relation to the proposals and has advised that conditions be added, in the event that planning permission is granted.

**Environmental Health – Sustainability** officer does not wish to impose conditional controls on an approval of planning permission, and has stated that the applicant may wish to consider installing solar PV panels on the roof.

**Environmental Health – Land Contamination** officer has no objection to the proposal but requests that the Local Planning Authority is contacted in the event of unexpected ground conditions being encountered. It is also advised that responsibility for the safe development of the site rests with the developer.

**Environmental Health – Noise Odour Light Smoke** officer has not raised an objection to the proposal. Following on from the receipt of a noise assessment, the Officer has recommended the imposition of conditions on a grant of planning permission.

The **Heritage Officer** considers that the proposal would cause no harm to the settings of identified heritage assets in the locality.

The **Public Realm** officer has no comment.

## **B: Representations**

At the time of writing this report at least 5 letters/emails/online comments have been received. It is the officer opinion that this represents 4 objections, 0 support and 1 general comment. A verbal update shall be provided as necessary.

Views are summarised below:-

- The proposed new bunding/planting and lagoon will not mitigate the adverse impacts of the development. The new bund would be better placed along the length of the building with a planting strip.
- The lagoon should be placed nearer the proposed extension.
- No indication of the height or width of the embankment has been given. Runoff could cause flooding problems. How will maintenance be undertaken?
- The proposed bunding will adversely affect views.
- Previously promised tree planting has not taken place.
- The extension conflicts with policy STRAD13 as it would be detrimental to the character of the countryside.
- The cladding may not be maintained properly.
- The use currently caused unacceptable smell and noise nuisance and further growth will have negative impacts locally.

Members are advised that the above is a summary of representations received. All representations can be viewed in full on the Planning website (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**

<b>REF:</b> DC/17/04027	Planning Application - Demolition of existing ancillary building and erection of extension for storage and staff facilities.	<b>DECISION:</b> GTD 27.09.2017
<b>REF:</b> DC/19/02653	Planning Application - Change of use of land for the siting of a portable office unit.	<b>DECISION:</b> GTD 17.07.2019
<b>REF:</b> DC/19/05830	Full Planning Application - Erection of extension to rear of factory and creation of parking spaces	<b>DECISION:</b> GTD 12.02.2020
<b>REF:</b> DC/20/01660	Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/19/05830 - Condition 4 (Construction Method Statement)	<b>DECISION:</b> GTD 10.07.2020
<b>REF:</b> DC/21/03850	Notification for Prior Approval for the Installation, Alteration or Replacement of	<b>DECISION:</b> FAN 02.09.2021

other Solar Photovoltaics (PV) equipment on the roofs of Non-domestic Buildings. Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 Schedule 2, Part 14, Class J

<b>REF:</b> DC/22/02971	Planning Application - Erection of extension to existing factory facility to provide additional packing and storage space	<b>DECISION:</b> PDE
<b>REF:</b> 2503/16	Removal of existing 10no. LPG storage tanks and provide 12no. LPG storage tanks in new location. Erection of fenced enclosure and separating masonry wall.	<b>DECISION:</b> GTD 03.08.2016
<b>REF:</b> 4194/15	Demolition of existing boiler house and ancillary buildings. Erection of new boiler house and ancillary accommodation	<b>DECISION:</b> GTD 25.01.2016
<b>REF:</b> 2140/15	New gas fire boiler. Height of exhaust stack.	<b>DECISION:</b> REC
<b>REF:</b> 2873/14	Demolition of existing single storey storage/ancillary building and erection of new single storey office building.	<b>DECISION:</b> GTD 17.10.2014
<b>REF:</b> 2614/12	Erection of new 2.4 high security fencing.	<b>DECISION:</b> WDN 02.10.2012
<b>REF:</b> 1982/09	PREAPP ENQ REDEVELOPMENT OF SITE TO ENABLE RELOCATION OF BUSINESS. POS RES DEVT INC AFFORDABLE HOUSING ?	<b>DECISION:</b> REC
<b>REF:</b> 0329/87	Replacement of existing mill building for continued production of corn products and animal feeds.	<b>DECISION:</b> GTD 08.06.1987
<b>REF:</b> 0206/80/OL	Erection of a telephone exchange and layout of new vehicular access.	<b>DECISION:</b> GTD 07.11.1980
<b>REF:</b> 1255/99/	STATIONING OF PORTACABIN FOR USE AS OFFICE ACCOMMODATION FOR A TEMPORARY PERIOD OF 3 YEARS.	<b>DECISION:</b> GTD 21.01.2000
<b>REF:</b> 0360/98/	CONVERT AND EXTEND EXISTING HOUSE FOR USE AS OFFICES,	<b>DECISION:</b> GTD 03.06.1998

# EXTEND WAREHOUSE AND PROVIDE STRUCTURE OVER EXISTING AREA.

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## **PART THREE – ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATION**

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### **1. The Site and Surroundings**

- 1.1. The site for this proposal currently forms part of the premises of Roger Skinner Ltd, manufacturers of pet-food products, located on Queen Street Stradbroke. It is an irregularly shaped, level site with a given area of 1.49 hectares. Currently the site comprises hardstanding area, parking and manoeuvring spaces associated with the industrial use, together with an area of field immediately adjacent to the north and west, shown as being under the ownership or control of the applicant company.
- 1.2. The factory premises themselves currently comprise a number of buildings occupying an essentially linear site, with boundaries to Queen Street (east) and Mill Lane (south). The majority of buildings are large single volume structures that appear to be steel frame construction, with metal cladding and brick exteriors. However, towards the eastern end of the site, adjacent to the Queen Street/Mill Lane junction, are buildings of domestic scale and appearance, albeit being utilised for commercial purposes. The surrounding land uses comprise mainly residential to the north-east, east and south-east of the site, whereas the land to the north, west and south is predominantly in agricultural use.
- 1.3. The factory premises are a long established land use within the village, located to the north of the centre of Stradbroke – which is defined as a Key Service Centre within the current development plan.

### **2. The Proposal**

- 2.1. The proposal for consideration by Members is a full planning application for the erection of an extension to the existing factory building on the site, in order to provide additional space for packing and storage.
- 2.2. The submitted plans show an extension having an overall external area (footprint) of 2858 square metres. A loading bay with canopy over would also be provided. The extension has a ridge height of approximately 10.5 metres (scaled from the submitted drawings), a length of 84 metres and a width of 34 metres. The building would be constructed using metal sheeting to match the majority of the existing buildings on the site.
- 2.3. In addition to the proposed extension, the submitted drawings show the provision of a new concrete paving area to the front (south) of the building, and a new gravelled area to the rear. New 2.3m high fencing would enclose the extended site, linking with existing boundary provision. Lastly the plan shows the provision of a 1.0m deep attenuation basin being provided, located to the north east of the proposed extension.

- 2.4 The following extracts, taken from the applicant's Design and Access Statement, are included below for Members' information:

*'...At present, Skinner's outsource the collection and distribution of all dog food products via a third-party distribution company, DHL, from the Stradbroke facility. In order to maintain and improve the quality of the key logistics and deliveries profile, Skinner's have the opportunity to bring the distribution operation in house to Stradbroke when the existing third-party contract finishes in the coming months. Therefore, the proposal seeks to build and operate an additional and dedicated modern warehouse facility as an extension to and on wholly owned land at the main mill complex. The new warehouse will enable Skinner's to store and distribute 100% of their dry food products within a purpose-built dedicated storage facility...The new facility will enhance the number of staff job numbers through the creation of approximately 10-15 new positions at Stradbroke...The extension will provide a warehousing facility only and will not house any plant or machinery associated with the production process...The building is not required to be heated internally and an appropriate lighting scheme will be installed to maximise energy efficiency. Full staff facilities are provided within the existing factory building which are considered of sufficient capacity to cater for new employees anticipated as a result of the business expansion...'*

### **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.'* In this regard, the relevant development plan documents consist of the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan Part 1 (2023) and the Stradbroke Neighbourhood Plan (2019).
- 3.2 A key material consideration is the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021. Paragraph 7 of the NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At paragraph 8, this is defined as meaning that there are three overarching objectives which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways: economic, social, and environmental. The NPPF goes on to state, however, that they are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged (para. 9). The NPPF also identifies, at paragraphs 81 – 85, the role that planning plays in helping to build a strong competitive economy. Specifically it is noted that support be given to securing a prosperous rural economy and that *'...Planning...decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may need to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements...'*
- 3.3 In regard to the Stradbroke Neighbourhood Plan, policies that are considered to be of particular reference in relation to this development proposal are STRAD1, STRAD2, and STRAD13.
- 3.4 Firstly, in consideration of the requirements of policy STRAD1, which is concerned with development strategy and principles, these *inter alia* identify that *'...Development will be*



*permitted in the countryside for the retention of existing and appropriate provision of new commercial premises, where it meets the requirements of Policy STRAD13...*' The application site for the proposal is located outside of the settlement boundary, albeit that the majority of the factory premises sits inside. It is evident that STRAD1 may be permissive of the development proposed (and would also therefore comply with policy SP03 of the JLP in that regard) subject to assessment against STRAD13.

- 3.5 STRAD2 requires new development to achieve good quality design. This includes *'...responding to and integrating with...the existing built environment...'* The policy also requires that *'...Development which abuts open countryside must not create a hard edge...'* Clearly in the case of an extension to an existing factory, the functionality of the building and its relationship to the remainder of the site would be a key consideration for the applicant. The character of the site is clearly commercial in nature, and the proposal reflects this. That said, in the context of its immediate surroundings, it is considered that the proposed extension would not appear visually incongruous. In addition, the development proposed would extend the curtilage of the factory westwards from its current position, into land that is currently owned by the applicant but is undeveloped. In order to address the interface between the extended curtilage and the surrounding land, it is noted that the scheme does show the provision of a landscaped bund feature which, it is felt, would assist in softening the appearance of the site, particularly when viewed from the PROW network to the west. In this regard, it is considered that the identified requirements of STRAD2 have been satisfactorily addressed.
- 3.6 In regard to policy STRAD13, this relates to employment provision. The policy requires that proposals to expand existing commercial premises will be permitted subject to four criteria. These may be summarised as impacts on the wider countryside, impact on the amenity of neighbours, sufficient off street parking and resultant HGV traffic. In the round, it is considered that the development proposal performs acceptably in this regard. Firstly, the impacts in the wider countryside, while evident, can be made acceptable in the view of officers, by way of the design of the proposed extension, the arrangement of external treatments for materials and the provision of landscaping. Secondly the site is an established commercial development with neighbouring, predominantly residential development in the vicinity. In consideration of impacts arising, the proposed building is to be utilised for storage and packing purposes which in themselves are not considered to be overly disruptive activities. In relation to parking provision this is not identified as an issue, bearing in mind that on-site parking is currently provided for employees and the submission presented to Committee includes a plan showing additional provision in accordance with adopted standards. Lastly, information contained in the application submission advises that HGV visits to the site would enable distribution activities to be better managed and an increase in vehicle movements is not anticipated.
- 3.7 In the consideration of this planning application, key policies in the JLP relevant to the principle of development are identified as SP03, SP05 and LP09. Policy SP05, which is primarily concerned with designated employment sites and delivery of new sites, amongst other issues states that *'...other land used for employment purposes shall be protected for ongoing employment use, unless such use is convincingly demonstrated to be unviable...'* In the case of this application, the use is a long established and locally-important employer. SP05 is not of itself permissive of new development outside of the catchment of strategic

transport corridors but that policy must be viewed in the context of policy SP03 which restricts new development in the countryside – an exception to that restriction is where development would otherwise comply with the policies of the neighbourhood plan in force. As above, the application accords with the Stradbroke NP; thus, development is acceptable in this case having regard to the recently adopted JLP.

- 3.12 In consideration of policy LP09 this is aimed at supporting a prosperous economy and is a criteria-based policy which identifies various points that proposals for employment use would be expected to comply with, including landscape sensitivity, amenity impact, effect on heritage assets, highway impacts etc. Again, in the view of officers this proposal to extend existing factory premises performs well against the policy's requirements.
- 3.13 In summary, the proposal seeks to develop an established business in Stradbroke. The adopted development plan policies identified above are of direct relevance in terms of principle, and officers consider that there is no conflict with those policies. The policies of the development plan support the principle of development, as do the policies of the NPPF (paragraphs 7, 8, 81 – 85) when considered as a whole.

#### **4. Nearby Services and Connections Assessment Of Proposal**

- 4.1. As Members will be aware, the JLP (Part 1) will utilise the previous development plan allocations. Therefore, Stradbroke's Key Service Centre definition remains extant until such time as Part 2 of the JLP is adopted.
- 4.2 Key Service Centres are defined as *'Villages capable of providing local services and facilities to a dispersed rural population as described in the Regional Spatial Strategy. The type and scale of development proposed must target the identified needs of the village in question and its surrounding communities.'* In this regard, it is noted that Stradbroke benefits from local service provision including shops, schools, community centre, swimming pool and fitness centre etc.
- 4.2 In terms of access to public transport, the nearest bus stops to the application site are located in Queen Street. That said, the bus services locally are limited. The nearest railway station is at Diss, which is approximately 10 miles distant from the village. In regard to the above, it is a fair assessment that the residents of Stradbroke are more reliant on private motor vehicles to access services in the wider area.

#### **5. Site Access, Parking And Highway Safety Considerations**

- 5.1. The NPPF identifies at paragraph 110 that in assessing specific applications for development it should be ensured that, inter alia, significant impacts on the transport network and highway safety can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree. Paragraph 111 recognises that development *'...should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe...'*
- 5.2 Leading on from this, policy STRAD8 of the adopted Neighbourhood Plan is concerned with highway access and pedestrian movement. A key aim of the policy is to improve the flow of traffic and pedestrian safety. The policy also identifies Walkway Routes in the

village, and criteria in the policy advise on how development will be expected to address this issue. In regard to the consideration of this application, a key requirement is that *'...Where practical, development in the vicinity of identified Walkway Routes will be expected to...not have an unacceptable impact on the Walkway Routes, in particular through the creation of significant additional traffic movements where this would have a detrimental impact on the safety of flow of pedestrian access...'* In regard to this point, the Design and Access Statement advises as follows:

*'...As discussed earlier, the new warehouse provision will allow the business to operate a more efficient storage and distribution regime 'on-site'. Currently the collection and distribution of all dog food products is undertaken by a third party off site, which can result in some partial loads leaving site in an inefficient program of vehicle movements.*

*Therefore, even with an increase in productivity, the new warehouse facility would provide an opportunity to carefully manage the distribution operation and would not cause an increase in vehicle movements...'*

- 5.3 This is an important consideration bearing in mind the requirements of policy STRAD8 and the fact that a Neighbourhood Plan Proposals Map shows a Walkway Route along part of Mill Lane, which also currently serves as an access route to the factory premises. The proposal would not increase vehicle movement, and therefore there would not be a worsening of the existing situation.
- 5.4 Adopted JLP policy LP29 inter alia requires safe access to development sites. In this regard, the proposed development will utilise the existing access arrangements to the site, and as noted, there is not intended to be an increase in vehicle movements. It is noted that the Highway Authority does not raise an objection to the principle of the development – subject to conditions.
- 5.5 In relation to parking provision, it is considered that the requirements of the Council's adopted standards would be met in full on the site. The development would be required to provide 18no. car parking spaces; this increase is noted by the Highway Authority (to be secured as part of a recommended condition) and the agent has provided a plan showing this provision, together with the identified EV charging points and cycle parking provision also identified within the Highway Authority's consultation response.

## **6. Layout and Design**

- 6.1 Relevant policies of the adopted Neighbourhood Plan (STRAD13) and the JLP (LP09) identify the sensitivity of setting as consideration for new commercial development proposals. In the case of this proposal, the elements of development consist of the proposed extension to the existing building group, associated hardstanding areas and a proposed attenuation basin to serve the proposed SuDS system for the development.
- 6.2 In terms of the proposed extension, the form and general appearance follows that of the existing larger buildings, which is considered to be a sensible response; respecting the existing context of the immediate surroundings. Although significant, the overall size of the proposed extension is not considered to be excessive in its surroundings. The extension's ridge height is lower than the adjacent building to which it would be joined.

- 6.3 In addition, the overall visual bulk of the building would, it is felt, be lessened by the introduction of differing coloured bands of metal sheeting material; this change being agreed with the applicant as an amendment following the initial submission of the application. In addition, revision to the design of the canopy feature to the southern elevation was also secured – the current proposal showing a pitched roof as opposed to the monopitched roof originally proposed.
- 6.4 As regards the proposed hardstanding areas these are clearly a functional requirement, given the nature of the development. However, they are large and would have a visual impact. It is the view of officers that, in the overall context of the site's appearance, the hardstandings would not appear visually incongruous. In addition, the fact that these features would be at ground level, their overall impact on wider visual amenity would be sufficiently limited; lessened by the use of landscaping etc.
- 6.5 In considering the proposed SuDS feature, this is acknowledged to be a key element of the system but it will have a visual impact, particularly for the occupiers of the nearest dwellings located to the east of this proposed feature. Bearing this in mind, it is considered that the creation of a landscaped feature incorporating the attenuation basin would be an appropriate solution. It is acknowledged that the proposed landscaping would take time to establish, but as a new feature in the landscape, in this location, it is not considered to be harmful. Indeed, it is noted that the proposed attenuation basin would be located adjacent to an existing feature serving the site.
- 6.6 Following on from the policies identified above, general principles for the design of development proposals is contained within policy LP24. This policy identifies that all new development must be of high quality design, with a clear vision as to the positive contribution the development will make to its context. In this regard, the policy amongst other matters identifies that proposals must respond to and safeguard the existing character/context, create character and interest, and be for designed health, amenity, well-being and safety.
- 6.7 Bearing in mind the identified requirements of the policy, it is considered that the design of the proposed extension would be in keeping with the development existing on site, in terms of design and layout. The primary aim of the building is to improve the functionality of the business on the site. Nevertheless it is considered that it would not be visually harmful in the context of its surroundings. In addition its overall impact in the wider area would be reduced by the use of banded material finishes and the introduction of additional landscaping. The proposed development would, it is acknowledged, have limited visual interest in itself but this reflects the established commercial use of the site which sets the character of its immediate surroundings. In terms of health, amenity, well-being and safety, it is not considered that the proposal gives rise to concerns in this regard. Members will note the proposal does not give rise to an objection from the Environmental Health Team.
- 6.8 Overall, it is the view of officers that the proposed layout and design of the extension, and proposed associated works, would be appropriate to the site's context and would not result in unacceptable harm to visual amenity.

## **7. Landscape Impact, Trees, Ecology, Biodiversity And Protected Species**

- 7.1. Conservation and enhancement of the natural environment is a fundamental theme of the NPPF and one reflected in JLP policy LP16, which is concerned with biodiversity and geodiversity and policy LP17 that relates to landscape.
- 7.2 In the case of landscape impact the identified policy base requires that development proposals should integrate and have sensitivity with the existing landscape. In this regard, the application submission is accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. In summary, the Assessment identifies that the greatest degree of visual impact arising from the proposal would be experienced from the adjacent public right of way that follows Mill Lane, to the south of the site. However, in the context of the character of the site as it is, this impact would not be excessively discordant. The impact of the proposal in the wider landscape would be limited, and this impact can be lessened by existing and proposed vegetation.
- 7.3 The retained landscape consultants have commented on the proposals and while elements of the Assessment are queried, overall there is no objection raised to the proposals subject to the imposition of conditions requiring the submission of soft and hard landscaping schemes, a landscape management plan and provision of advanced planting. In regard to this, although some proposed landscape features are shown outside of the red-line application plan, it is possible to add conditions to secure their provision, on the basis that the land on which they would be located is owned by the applicant company.
- 7.4 In relation to ecological impacts, the submission includes a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal which concludes that the proposal is not predicted to give rise to adverse impacts. With the exception of a hedgerow located on the southern boundary, there are no Priority Habitats present on the site. The Appraisal recommends that the western boundary of the site be planted with a species-rich native hedge. In addition a 6 metre wide tree and shrub belt should be provided in the north eastern corner of the site.
- 7.5 The retained ecology consultants have confirmed that no objection is raised to the proposal, subject to conditions requiring the recommendations in the Appraisal being carried out, the approval of a Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy and also the approval of a Wildlife Sensitive Lighting Design Scheme.

## **8. Land Contamination, Flood Risk, Drainage and Waste**

- 8.1 The NPPF at paragraph 183 identifies, inter alia, that planning decisions should ensure that a site is suitable for its proposed use. In addition, paragraph 184 makes clear that where a site is affected by contamination, responsibility for securing a safe development rests with the developer and/or landowner. In addition, JLP policy LP15 amongst other things requires that '*... Where necessary, development will include measures to remediate land affected by contamination...*'
- 8.2 In regards to land contamination issues, available mapping does not show the site as being potentially contaminated land. Obviously the site is currently utilised for industrial purposes and therefore would be liable to relevant controls in this regard, under separate Environmental Health legislation. In this regard, it is noted that the Land Contamination

officer has no objection to the proposal, requiring that the local planning authority is contacted in the event that unexpected ground conditions being encountered during construction. It is also noted that the responsibility for the safe development of the site lies with the developer.

- 8.3 Following on from this, criteria-based policy STRAD5 of the Neighbourhood Plan identifies that flood risk from surface water flows should be managed using SuDS.
- 8.4 As part of the JLP, policy LP27, reflective of the NPPF, is an extensive policy describing the criteria that proposals for new development shall meet in regard to flood risk and vulnerability. In addition, policy LP26 is concerned with the issue of water resources and infrastructure.
- 8.5 In regard to flood risk, the site for the proposed development, and the remainder of the factory site, lies in flood zone 1 and is therefore not subject to unusual flood events from pluvial (river) sources. In addition, available mapping shows that the site is outside of an area that is identified as affected by surface water flooding.
- 8.6 In consideration of policy LP26, it is pertinent to note that Stradbroke is located within the Hartismere Water Resource Zone, as defined by Essex and Suffolk Water (ESW), where it has been confirmed ESW is currently unable to agree to new requests for water where it would be used for non-domestic purposes. In this regard, the proposal would not introduce a new demand for water on site.
- 8.7 In consideration of drainage, the provision of SuDS to manage surface water flows is a requirement of adopted Neighbourhood Plan STRAD5. JLP policy LP27 reiterates the Council's approach in this regard, and similarly requires SuDS to be incorporated into new development.
- 8.8 Bearing this in mind, the application submission includes a Surface Water Drainage Strategy. The system proposed for the site includes the provision of a new attenuation feature, served by a filter drain that would run along the western extent of the yard, to intercept the water from the yard and convey it to the basin. The attenuated water would then drain, at a controlled rate, to the existing ditch system. Members will note that the Lead Local Flood Authority has considered the surface water drainage proposals, and has no objection to the development subject to the imposition of conditions requiring the submitted strategy to be implemented, followed by the submission of a post-completion verification report.
- 8.9 In terms of foul water disposal, it is noted that Anglian Water has no objection, advising that the Eye-Hoxne Recycling Centre has available capacity for the proposed development. A condition and informatives are recommended for inclusion on a grant of planning permission.

## **9. Heritage Issues**

- 9.1. The protection of heritage assets from inappropriate forms of development is an established tenet of planning control. Section 66(1) of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990

requires local authorities to afford special attention to the desirability of preserving listed buildings, including through development within their settings. The NPPF at paragraphs 194 – 198 describes how development proposals affecting heritage assets should be considered. In addition, paragraph 199 makes clear that *‘...When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation...’* The NPPF also identifies at paragraph 202 that *‘Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal...’*

- 9.2 Policy STRAD11 of the SNP relates to the historic environment and design, and identifies the need for all types of development proposals to contribute towards the local distinctiveness of the Stradbroke Neighbourhood Plan Area. A specific criterion of the policy requires that proposals should *‘...Ensure that the significance of designated heritage assets and their settings is preserved and where possible, enhanced...’*
- 9.3 JLP policy LP19 relates to the historic environment and requires that proposals that potentially affect heritage assets will have to be supported by a heritage statement. While not immediately adjacent, there are heritage assets in the wider vicinity of the application site, including listed buildings and Stradbroke conservation area.
- 9.4 The application submission includes a Heritage Impact Statement and the conclusion of this document is that given the location of the site in relation to the conservation area and closest listed buildings, the proposed development would not have a direct impact, and in accordance with the requirements of the NPPF a balanced judgement will be required. It is considered that the impacts would be *‘...broadly neutral...’* Having considered the submitted statement, and in the light of amended plans that altered the design of the proposed extension, the Heritage Team has concluded as follows:

*‘...In conclusion, the revised extension is considered to cause no harm to the settings of the surrounding heritage assets. Therefore the works now meet the requirements of the NPPF and Local Plan Policy HB01.’*

*Officer comment: this response was received before the formal adoption of the JLP, noting the policy reference.*

## **10. Impact On Residential Amenity**

- 10.1. The consideration of residential amenity impacts is a key planning consideration. JLP policy LP24 – relating to residential amenity – requires that, amongst other things, development proposals shall *‘...Protect the health and amenity of occupiers and surrounding uses by avoiding development that is overlooking, overbearing, results in a loss of daylight, and/or unacceptable levels of light pollution, noise, vibration, odour, emissions and dust, including any other amenity issues...’*
- 10.2 Members will note that the current use of the site is long-established. In addition, it is noted that there are no conditional controls that affect hours of operation. Therefore, the use could be carried out on a 24 hour basis, throughout the year. Clearly the existing use will give

rise to various impacts, arising from the activities that take place on the site as part of the authorised, established use.

- 10.3 Following receipt of the application, and in consideration of another current application near this site, for the erection of new residential development to the south of Mill Lane, the issue of noise impacts has been considered further. The applicant has submitted a noise assessment, and this has been considered by the Council's Environmental Health Officer, and also the retained noise consultant advising officers in relation to the proposed residential development proposal to the south of Mill Lane.
- 10.4 In this regard, the Environmental Health Officer has confirmed that the proposed development would be acceptable in terms of impacts on local amenity. Conditions are recommended for inclusion on a grant of planning permission, that would include the agreement of a Construction Management Plan, limits on hours of construction and also operation, control over noise emitted from any fixed plant and equipment, noise attenuated reversing alarms and the luminance of external lighting.
- 10.5 It is important to note that the historically-established use of the site at present is not subject to hours of operation restrictions. That said, the current submission does include proposed hours of operation. It is considered justifiable to impose a conditional control in the case of this application; such a condition would meet the tests in the NPPG, in the view of your officers. The restriction would reflect those hours advised in the submitted application form.

## **11. Parish Council Comments**

- 11.1 The matters raised by Stradbroke Parish Council have been addressed in the above report. The conditions that are recommended by identified consultees would be attached to a grant of planning permission. Specifically, following further of the proposals by Place Services Ecology, the holding refusal was lifted and no objection raised to the proposals.

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## **PART FOUR – CONCLUSION**

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### **12. Planning Balance and Conclusion**

- 12.1. Relevant policies in the adopted policy base identify the Council's support, in principle, for the growth of businesses in the district. In consideration of this proposal, it is pertinent to note that the use of the site for industrial purposes is a long established one. This proposal seeks to add storage and packing facilities on the site in order, it is understood, to enable the applicant to run the storage and distribution elements of the business more efficiently.
- 12.2 The proposed extension is of significant size, and would require the expansion of the factory premises to the west of its current position, on land under the ownership of the applicant. That said, the layout and design of the proposed development would, it is felt, read as a



logical enlargement, away from the nearest dwellings. The development would undoubtedly impact visual amenity. However, it is felt that this impact maybe successfully managed, thorough a combination of the proposed design of the extension, its visual conformity with existing large commercial buildings on the site, and the introduction of landscape features (and the retention of those existing) to mitigate visual impact.

- 12.3 Notwithstanding the long established nature of the use on the site, it is important to ensure that the amenity of the area is not adversely impacted by the new proposal. In this regard, the applicant has advised that the proposals will not create additional traffic movements above those currently generated by the use. It is noted that the Highway Authority does not object to the proposals. In addition, the potential for unacceptable noise disturbance has been considered in detail and the Environmental Health officer does not consider the proposal to be unacceptable in this regard. The use of conditions as recommended by the relevant consultees would enable appropriate controls were in place.
- 12.4 Overall and in the round, the application is considered to accord with the development plan as a whole, and the policies of the NPPF. The recommendation of Officers is that a conditional planning permission be granted for the development.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**That the Chief Planning Officer be authorised to GRANT planning permission, subject to conditions as summarised below and those as may be deemed necessary by the Chief Planning Officer:**

- Standard time limit.
- Approved Plans (Plans submitted that form this application).
- Use of the approved extension for storage and packing purposes only.
- Development to be undertaken in accordance with the ecological appraisal.
- Approval of a Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy.
- Approval of a Wildlife Sensitive Lighting Design Scheme.
- Approval of soft and hard landscaping schemes.
- Approval of a Landscape Management Plan.
- Development implemented in accordance with the Flood Risk Assessment
- Submission of Drainage Verification Report
- Approval of Construction Surface Water Management Plan
- Approval for on-site foul water drainage works
- Agreement of a Construction Management Plan
- Control over the hours of construction of the development
- No plant and equipment installed on the application site without acoustic specification being previously approved by the LPA.
- Control over hours of activities and operations within the application site.
- Mobile plant to be fitted with noise attenuated reversing alarms.
- Level of illumination of external lighting to be controlled.

- Conditions as may be recommended by Environmental Health Noise/Odour/Light Smoke.
- Loading/Unloading/Manoeuvring/Parking areas and infrastructure to be provided before development brought into use.
- Construction Management Plan to be agreed.
- Provision of EV charging points and cycle parking to be agreed

**(3) And the following informative notes as summarised and those as may be deemed necessary:**

- Proactive working statement
- SCC Highways notes
- Environmental Health Land Contamination
- Rights of way informatives
- Lead Local Flood Authority informatives
- Anglian Water Authority informatives