

Committee Report

Item No: 2

Reference: 1541/17
Case Officer: Lynda Bacon

Description of Development: Erection of office campus comprising 14no. office units within three buildings, complete with access and 103 car parking spaces.

Location: Land to The South of Claydon Court Old Ipswich Road, Claydon IP6 0BZ

Parish: Claydon Parish Council

Ward: Claydon & Barham

Ward Member/s: Cllr James Caston & Cllr John Whitehead

Site Area: 0.90 hectares

Conservation Area: No

Listed Building: No

Received: 13/04/17

Expiry Date: 14/07/17

Application Type: FUL – Full Planning Application

Development Type: Smallscale Major Offices

Environmental Impact Assessment: Environmental Assessment Not Required

Applicant: Mr Roberts, EL Construction Limited

Agent: Mr Robert Pomery, Pomery Planning Consultants Ltd

DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED FOR CONSIDERATION

List of applications supporting documents and reports

- Planning Application Form;
- Planning Statement prepared by Pomery Planning Consultants;
- Plans and other drawings relevant to the planning application prepared by Patrick Allen & Associates Architects including;
 - 3746-07A Plots 1-5
 - 3746-08B Plots 6-10
 - 3746-04G Plots 11-14
 - 3746-06E Overall Block Plan
 - 3746-10A Site Location Plan
- Visibility Splays and Access Sketch (reference IT1794/SK/01)

- Sustainability Statement by Patrick Allen & Associates Architects;
- Flood Risk Assessment by Evans Rivers and Coastal Ltd;
- Ecology Report by Robson Ecology Ltd;
- Transport Note by Intermodal Transportation;
- Footpath map (author unknown)
- Drainage Strategy by Rodgers Leask;
- Infiltration Test by Paddock Geo Engineering

The application, plans and documents submitted by the Applicant can be viewed online AT [BLANK] via the following link <https://planning.baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=ZZZW45CMPM870>.

Alternatively a copy is available to view at the Mid Suffolk and Babergh District Council Offices.

PART ONE – REASON FOR REFERENCE TO COMMITTEE

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

- It is an application for a major development

PART TWO – APPLICATION BACKGROUND

History

2. There is no planning history relevant to the application site.

All Policies Identified As Relevant

3. The local and national policies relevant to the application site are listed below and form part of the consideration of your officers. Detailed assessment of specific policies in relation to the recommendation and specific issues highlighted in this case will be carried out within the assessment:

Summary of Policies

NPPF - National Planning Policy Framework

CSFR-FC1	Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
CSFR-FC1.1	Mid Suffolk Approach to Delivering Sustainable Development
CSFR-FC3	Supply of Employment Land
CS2	Development in the Countryside and Countryside Villages
CS3	Climate Change
CS5	Mid Suffolk's Environment
E9	Location of new businesses
GP1	Design and layout of development

T9	Parking Standards
T10	Highway Considerations in Development

Details of Previous Committee / Resolutions

4. None

Details of member site visit

5. None

Details of any Pre Application Advice

6. None

PART THREE – ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATION

Summary of Consultations

7. The responses below relate to the initial consultation carried out on the proposal;

Claydon & Whitton Parish Council – objects to this application because it is an over-development of the site and outside the parish boundary.

If approved this site must remain offices only with no light industrial and the working hours should be restricted to 7am – 7pm weekdays and no weekend working.

We would like to see the hedgerow maintained.

BMSDC Arboricultural Officer – no significant trees affected by this proposal. However, the site does benefit from well-established boundary hedgerows and vegetation which will help soften and integrate any development within the local area. For this reason I would recommend its protection via condition if you are minded to recommend approval of the application.

BMSDC Economic Development Officer – no objection. The proposed development will provide small scale office accommodation in the Ipswich fringe area, which will support planned residential growth nearby. It also aids the sustainability of Claydon and is, in effect an extension of the adjacent employment site – Claydon Court. In scale and design it is similar to Claydon Court and also Hill View Business Park further along Old Norwich Road. There is a growth demand for this type of office accommodation and I, therefore, support the application.

BMSDC Environmental Protection ‘Other Issues’ – In respect of ‘other’ environment health issues no adverse comments and no objection to the proposed development. Recommend a condition restricting the construction phase to standard working hours due to the close proximity of other residential premises.

BMSDC Sustainability Officer – The sustainability statement submitted with this application has been reviewed. An amendment is requested in order that a recommendation can be provided. Some high level statements have been made which require detail especially as this is a full application. A key objective of the scheme has therefore been to encourage energy efficiency in all aspects of the development,

including design & procurement, construction and use. This requires more detail even when the rest of the document is taken into consideration.

Highways England – No objection. Highways Act Section 175B is not relevant to this application.

Natural England – Natural England's comments in relation to this application are provided in the following sections.

Statutory nature conservation sites – no objection

Green Infrastructure - the proposed development is within an area that Natural England considers could benefit from enhanced green infrastructure (GI) provision.

Protected Species – we have not assessed this application and associated documents for impact on protected species.

SCC Fire & Rescue – Plans inspected by the Water Officer who has made comments on the access and fire fighting facilities and water supplies. Consultation should be made with the Water Authorities to determine flow rates in all cases.

SCC Fire & Rescue Water Officer – If the Planning Authority is minded to grant approval, the Fire Authority will request that adequate provision is made for fire hydrants, by the imposition of a suitable planning condition at the planning application stage.

SCC Flood & Water Engineer – Recommend approval of this application subject to conditions:

- Application
- Location plan
- Block plan
- Floor Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy Ref: 1792/RE/03-17/01
- Detailed Drainage Strategy Ref: P17-272 100
- Infiltration Test Results Ref P17-043inf

We propose the following condition in relation to surface water drainage for this application.

1. The strategy for the disposal of surface water and the Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) (dated March 2017, ref: 1792/RE/03-17/01) shall be implemented as approved in writing by the local planning authority. The strategy shall thereafter be managed and maintained in accordance with the approved strategy.

Reason: To ensure that the principles of sustainable drainage are incorporated into this proposal, to ensure that the proposed development can be adequately drained.

2. The 3rd building hereby permitted shall not be occupied until details of all Sustainable Urban Drainage System components and piped networks have been submitted, in an approved form, to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority for inclusion on the Lead Local Flood Authority's Flood Risk Asset Register.

Reason: To ensure all flood risk assets and their owners are recorded onto the LLFA's statutory flood risk asset register as per s21 of the Flood and Water Management Act.

3. No development shall commence until details of a Construction Surface Water Management Plan (CSWMP) detailing how surface water and storm water will be managed on the site during construction (including demolition and site clearance operations) is submitted to and agreed in

writing by the local planning authority. The CSWMP shall be implemented and thereafter managed and maintained in accordance with the approved plan for the duration of construction. The approved CSWMP and shall include:

- a. Method statements, scaled and dimensioned plans and drawings detailing surface water management proposals to include:-
 - i. Temporary drainage systems
 - ii. Measures for management pollution / water quality and protecting controlled waters and watercourses
 - iii. Measures for managing any on or offsite flood risk associated with construction

Reason: To ensure the development does not cause increased flood risk, or pollution of watercourses in line with the River Basin Management Plan.

Local Highway Authority – Fourth Response 31st January 2018 -

Drawing Number 3746-06 Revision E appears to have been submitted in isolation but it does not match the Intermodal Transportation Drawing previously submitted. For example the frontage footway to Old Ipswich Road is not shown.

I suggest that Drawing No. IT1794/SK/01 is revised to include the footway adjustments with the existing Maple tree removed and that Drawing No. 3746-06/E is revised to indicate the current proposals. Without updates and matching drawings there are obvious discrepancies which add confusion.

Local Highway Authority – Third Response 4th January 2018, following receipt of the additional highway details for this application.

The access drawing indicates that the Maple tree adjacent to the access is to remain in place. As I have mentioned previously I am concerned that the tree will obstruct access visibility being so close to the access.

Additionally, I don't think that this tree will survive with the access as proposed as it will be right next to the new junction kerbing. The excavation work to build the access will damage the roots and there will be safety issues too for vehicles turning in and out. It will be vulnerable to damage by vehicles as the trunk will be very close to the edge of the road. The canopy would need to be raised to achieve sufficient clearance for vehicles.

In practical terms, I can't see the tree surviving. Is retention of the tree a necessity here? If so I think the applicant will need to reconsider the access if the tree is to survive.

Local Highway Authority – Second Response 29th August 2017. Notice is hereby given that the County Council as Highway Authority make the following comments:

I refer to the recently submitted Transport Note dated July 2017. Unfortunately, this document appears to have been submitted in haste as the two highway 'issues' are still subject to confirmation from further searches. The conclusions reached are therefore based on assumed information still requiring clarification from other parties.

Drawing Number IT1794/TN/02, referenced in the document, also does not seem to be included.

At 5.3 the applicant advises that the proposed access visibility splays are subject to a highway boundary search which is yet to be completed.

At 5.6 the applicant advises that he is awaiting the results of a detailed search in respect of the route of the Public Right of Way and the need for a footpath diversion.

The Conclusions at 6.4 therefore, state that the scheme is acceptable but is dependent on the results of the above searches.

In highway terms I confirm the following:

- (1) The access visibility splays still need to be confirmed as being available as suggested. It will not be acceptable to retain the maple tree within the visibility splay at the new access. The tree is too close to the access and the impact on the visibility splay is too great this close to the access. Either the tree will need to be removed or the point of access will need to be adjusted so that the appropriate visibility splays can be achieved.
- (2) All the drawings submitted with the application include the stiles which allow the public footpath to cross the boundary fencing on the eastern and western application boundaries. If a straight line is drawn between both stiles it demonstrates that the public footpath is obstructed by proposed buildings. A footpath diversion will therefore be required. Hopefully the applicant's further investigations will clarify this aspect.

Further work is required here to reach an acceptable position and this is acknowledged within the Transport Note.

Local Highway Authority – First Response 1st June 2017, from pre-application consultants the Highways Authority has no objections in principle to this development. However, the submitted scheme does not take account of the comments previously raised (1st March 2017) and is therefore not considered acceptable as currently proposed.

To be acceptable the following will need to be addressed:

1. The access onto Old Ipswich Road will need to have visibility splays at a 4.5 metre setback and 90 metres in each direction with hedgerows removed as appropriate.
2. A 1.8 metre wide footway should be provided at least along the site frontage from the access heading into the village (north). This footway should also extend into the site so that pedestrians are able to safely access each office unit.
3. Although in the Planning Statement, at 2.1, the applicant states that the scheme does not interfere with the existing Public Footpath this in fact incorrect. The route of the footpath is obstructed by at least Units 3, 4 and 5 associated car parking spaces. It will therefore be necessary to divert the footpath or adjust the site layout so that the footpath is not obstructed.

SCC Rights of Way and Access – Claydon Public Footpath No. 1 (FP1) is recorded through the proposed development area with a minimum width of 1.5m.

From the plans as submitted, we are unable to determine whether FP1 will be affected by the office buildings, ideally the footpath should be plotted on the layout. Should the buildings obstruct the footpath, then a diversion of the route will be required.

Suffolk Wildlife Trust – We have read the ecological survey report (Robson Ecology, Mar 2017) and we note the findings of the consultant. The consultant has recommended that further surveys for reptiles are required in order to determine whether this group is present on site and therefore whether further assessment and mitigation is required. All species of native reptile are protected by law and therefore, in accordance with ODPM Circular 06/2005, such surveys must be undertaken prior to the determination of this application.

Notwithstanding the above, we request that the recommendations made within the report are implemented in full, via a condition of planning consent, should permission be granted.

Representations

8. Two representations have been received making the following comments (summarised);
- The application site falls outside of the settlement inset boundary for Claydon as stated in the Mid Suffolk Local Plan of 1998
 - The provision of an entrance as the sole access for a site with parking for 103 vehicles directly opposite our property seems likely to generate more than a significant impact on our amenity as a result of the traffic movements this implies.
 - Proposal approved it is important that the hedges and trees are retained as this is part of the screen for our properties from the noise generated by the A14.
 - Some vegetation has already been removed as part of the site preparation process (after the aerial photo shown in para 5.3 of the planning statement).
 - Bee and pyramidal orchids are present on the site.
 - There are badgers in the area which presumably use the site as they are regularly seen in our garden.
 - Approval should restrict development to office use only, i.e. no light industrial use permitted, and restricted to normal working hours (say 8am to 6pm) excluding weekend use.
 - Estimate the distance between our front door and the nearest proposed building to be no more than 30m, not the 45m stated at para 5.3.
 - Strongly object to this application as this is Claydon's green belt and do not feel the need for more offices this is not an industrial site.
 - Old Ipswich Road is classes as a dead end road, apart from access for buses, at present the road is used during the day for people who park up and get a lift or car share to work/meetings etc making this an already busy road in peak times.
 - Difficult for residents to sometimes get out into the flow of traffic at the end of the road, this being busy with current office staff leaving work as well as 'others' who park up in the morning.
 - More offices this will only increase the issues of getting out at the end of the road onto Ipswich Road.
 - This route is a main bus route into Ipswich and they struggle with all of the parked up cars.
 - Already experienced noise increase since the trees/hedgerows have been cut down on this land near the A14. Concerns about experiencing more noise increase at peak times with cars and people, along with weekly tests etc.
 - Vehicles approach the 30 mph speed limit from either direction going well over 30 mph with the increase in car numbers this will only get worse and will lead to an accident.

The Site and Surroundings

9. The application site measures approximately 0.84 hectares and is located to the south of the settlement of Claydon, sandwiched between the A14 Trunk Road and Old Ipswich Road.
10. The site is undeveloped scrubland, it is generally flat and has established hedgerows on all boundaries, which contain a number of trees. Access to the site is presently marked by a gate, which is positioned centrally on the site's boundary with Old Ipswich Road.
11. To the north of the site is Claydon Court, former agricultural buildings which were converted many years ago to office accommodation. On the opposite side of Ipswich Road are run of residential properties and to the south is a further parcel of land abutting the A14.

12. The land is not within Flood Zones 2 or 3 and it is not within a conservation area. There are no heritage assets in the immediate vicinity, the nearest listed building being located some distance to the north on the opposite side of Old Ipswich Road.
13. Public Right of Way FP1a (c) dissects the site roughly half way, from the access to the western boundary, where the route crosses the four lanes of the A14. As the route is particularly dangerous, given it crosses the dual carriageway, it is seldom used and an alternative route is recommended to walkers known as FP1(alt) (c), which crosses the A14 at the bridge at nearby Junction 52. The scheme proposed does not interfere with the route of the footpath, so no diversion route is considered necessary.

The Proposal

14. The application proposals consist of three single storey buildings, which together provide 14 individual office units (totalling 1566 sqm).
15. The buildings are laid out with gable ends close to Old Ipswich Road and are provided with a parking court of some 103 spaces, which significantly exceeds the required standards. The site is accessed from a single access point to the centre of the site frontage and the proposal includes provision for bin storage and cycle parking in separate buildings on the site.
16. Each building is of similar appearance and are to be finished in dark coloured weatherboard cladding with dark metal roofing. Each office unit provides floorspace of approximately 108 square meters (gross internal) and each is provided with a W.C. and a small kitchen counter.

Main Considerations

17. The following are identified as the main considerations in assessing this application.

The Principle Of Development

18. Policy CS1 of the Core Strategy identifies Claydon as a Key Service Centre which has a good range of services and capacity to accept some growth. The site lies immediately adjacent to the settlement boundary of Claydon, which incorporates Claydon Court to the north and the residential properties opposite the site. In light of this, whilst the site is in the countryside for the purposes of planning policy, it is well related to the settlement.
19. Policy CS2 restricts development outside of defined settlements and recognises new build employment generating proposals where there is a strategic, environmental or operational justification as a form of development that can be justified in a countryside location.
20. Saved Policy E9 of the Local Plan makes provision new business development for B1 uses, both within and outside of settlement boundaries, provided those proposals meet a particular set of criteria. Core Strategy Focussed Review policy FC3 provides that;

“Provision will be made for development that aims to deliver at least 8,000 additional jobs in the district by 2026 and an indicative 11,100 jobs by 2031. These targets include jobs in all Use-Classes”.
21. The NPPF is clear that the Government remains committed to securing growth in the UK economy, and this commitment is expressed in the relevant paragraphs 18 – 21. It is considered that the principles expressed in the NPPF would strongly support the delivery of additional employment floorspace within this location, particularly where there is a known demand.

22. Paragraph 18 of the NPPF states that *“The Government is committed to securing economic growth in order to create jobs and prosperity, building on the country’s inherent strengths, and to meeting the twin challenges of global competition and of a low carbon future”*.
23. At paragraph 19, it identifies that *“the Government is committed to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth. Planning should operate to encourage and not act as an impediment to sustainable growth. Therefore, significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system”*.
24. At paragraph 21, it sets out that *“Investment in business should not be over-burdened by the combined requirements of planning policy expectations. Planning policies should recognise and seek to address potential barriers to investment, including a poor environment or any lack of infrastructure, services or housing. In drawing up Local Plans, local planning authorities should:*
- *set out a clear economic vision and strategy for their area which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth;*
 - *set criteria, or identify strategic sites, for local and inward investment to match the strategy and to meet anticipated needs over the plan period;*
 - *support existing business sectors, taking account of whether they are expanding or contracting and, where possible, identify and plan for new or emerging sectors likely to locate in their area. Policies should be flexible enough to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan and to allow a rapid response to changes in economic circumstances;*
 - *plan positively for the location, promotion and expansion of clusters or networks of knowledge driven, creative or high technology industries;*
 - *identify priority areas for economic regeneration, infrastructure provision and environmental enhancement”*.
25. Given the site’s proximity to the existing settlement, the thrust of development plan policies and the clear aims of the NPPF in encouraging economic growth, it is considered that there is not an in principle objection to the siting of new offices outside the settlement boundary. However, in considering the appropriateness, or otherwise, of this particular location, it is necessary to consider the specific matters which relate to this site and the resultant impacts of this development in light of the requirements of the development plan as a whole. This report will, therefore, now consider those matters.

Design and Layout

26. Saved policy E9 sets out specific criteria for which new B1 uses will need to comply with. General design policy GP1 also provides generic criteria on the layout and design of new development.
27. The proposed buildings are formed of three distinct blocks, are of single-storey scale and are proposed of materials that would provide a cohesive appearance to the development. The design and appearance of the buildings takes it lead from agricultural buildings which the Planning Statement submitted with the application identifies as being *“taken from the character of agricultural buildings commonly found in the Suffolk countryside. Such a design is considered entirely consistent with the character and appearance of the prevailing landscape”*.
28. The layout of the site is formed from a centralised access point serving two spurs at the northern and southern end of the sites. The blocks of offices are set out in to blocks of 5 units and one block of 4 units, the smaller block being located at the northern end adjacent to Claydon Court. Parking is located in the immediate environs of the buildings and in a linear form along the boundary adjacent to the A14. Separation is provided from the A14 through the provision of this parking and through the layout of the internal roadway.

29. Frontage landscaping to Old Ipswich Road is retained wherever possible and there are good, robust, landscaped boundaries to the site which will give a soft edge to the development. In terms of the spatial context of the site, it would 'square off' the pattern of development on Old Ipswich Road and is, therefore, considered to be in scale and context to the surroundings.
30. For these reasons, the proposal is considered to accord with this element of policy E9 and GP1.

Residential Amenity

31. The properties to the opposite side of Old Ipswich Road are set back some distance from the road and are located approximately 45 metres from the office units proposed.
32. Whilst there would inevitably be a change in outlook for these properties resulting from the development, the proposal would not give rise to overlooking, overshadowing or be particularly dominant or imposing, particularly given the separation distances which exist. In this regard, the proposal is not considered to have direct impacts resulting from the physicality of the buildings themselves.
33. The proposals are for offices, which generally do not result in any disturbance to residential uses. The noise environment is heavily influenced in this location by the presence of the A14. The Council's Environmental Protection Officer has not raised concerns as to the amenity impacts of this development, and it is therefore concluded that the proposal would not give rise to a detrimental impact on residential amenity and thereby complies with this element of policy E9.

Landscape Impact/Arboriculture

34. Whilst the site boundaries consist of well established mature landscaping, the site is bordered to the west and east by the A14 and Old Ipswich Road respectively. To the north is the existing office complex known as Claydon Court which also has soft edges to the road frontages.
35. The proposal would retain an element of open green space at the southern end of the site and would retain a significant element of the roadside hedge to help screen the proposal and retain the rural feel of this part of Old Ipswich Road. The development would be contained such that it would not materially detract from the wider landscape, being seen predominantly in the context of existing development.
36. The Council's Arboricultural Officer has identified that no significant trees are affected by this proposal. However, the Arboricultural Officer recognises that the site does benefit from well-established boundary hedgerows and vegetation which will help soften and integrate any development within the local area, and thereby recommends their protection via a condition if planning permission is granted.

Highway Safety, Parking and Accessibility

37. Paragraph 32 of the NPPF requires that all developments that generate significant amounts of traffic movement should be supported by a Transport Statement or Transport Assessment. It provides that plans and decisions should take account of whether:
 - the opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up depending on the nature and location of the site, to reduce the need for major transport infrastructure;
 - safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people; and

- improvements can be undertaken within the transport network that cost effectively limit the significant impacts of the development. Development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.

38. Policy T10 of the Mid Suffolk District Local Plan requires vehicular access into and out of the site to be safe and an assessment made as to whether the existing local roads can suitably accommodate the impact of the proposal, whether adequate parking and turning spaces exist within the site and that the needs of pedestrians and cyclists have been met. This policy is considered to carry significant weight in the determination of this application as it complies with paragraph 32 of the NPPF which requires all schemes to provide safe access for all.
39. During the course of the application, the LHA have expressed concerns over two fundamental issues relating to the layout of the site, the first being visibility from the access point and the second being the route of the public footpath which runs through the site.
40. In respect of the access point, the applicant has amended the scheme to confirm that the maple tree which sits to the immediate north of the proposed access will be removed. Whilst this is unfortunate, the Council's Arboricultural Officer has raised no concern as to the loss of trees/hedging proposed on this site due to their limited amenity value. As such, whilst the most recent LHA response has indicated that two submitted plans require revision so that they both show the full extent of the works to be carried out, it appears that they are now satisfied with the access. They have previously indicated that they have no objection in principle to this development subject to resolution of the removal of the tree from the scheme.
41. The supporting statement submitted with the application identified that the public footpath would be unaffected by the proposal. This has been demonstrated to be incorrect and the proposal now demonstrates a revised routing for the footpath through the site. This will need to be the subject of a formal diversion in due course. Whilst this matter will require resolution through a separate process than this application, it is considered that the rerouting of the footpath would be acceptable in planning terms with regards to the safety of users of the path. In any event, it is understood that this path is little used and walkers regularly use an alternative crossing nearby.
42. Old Ipswich is a long, straight, road where the visibility from the site would be good in both directions. It is on a bus route with bus stops in close proximity to the site and also lies on a formalised and well used cycle route which runs from Ipswich through to Claydon. The proposal makes provision for cycle storage on site and thereby facilitates access by means other than the car. In this regard, and given the proximity to the settlement of Claydon, occupants would have the option to walk into the village also if they so wish.
43. Parking provision is set well above the parking standards, and a total of 103 parking spaces are proposed. This is considered to ensure that there would be no dispersal of parking by occupants or visitors outside of marked bays or onto the road.
44. In this regard, and for all of the reasons given above, the proposal is considered to provide safe access for vehicles and pedestrians, to provide adequate levels of car parking and cycle storage and be located in an accessible location where there would be good access to facilities and services and opportunities to travel by means other than the car.
45. The proposal is, therefore, considered to comply with paragraph 32 of the NPPF and saved policy T10.

Services and Infrastructure

46. Policy H9 requires that services and infrastructure are satisfactory to meet the needs of the proposed development.
47. A topographical survey of the area reveals that there is water supply, man holes, overhead power, telecoms and fire hydrants in Old Ipswich Road. Therefore, key services appear to be available to support the proposed development and, as such, this element of policy H9 is complied with.

Ecology

48. In assessing this application due regard has been given to the provisions of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act, 2006, in so far as it is applicable to the proposal and the provisions of Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations, 2010 in relation to protected species.
49. The site has been the subject of a Phase One Habitat Assessment, which reveals that there are no indications of protected species or rare habitats within the site. The assessment recommends that any construction undertaken, should employ precautionary methods detailed in the assessment to avoid any contact with nesting birds, bats or nocturnal animals.

Drainage and Flood Risk

50. The application has been supplemented with a Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy, Detailed Drainage Strategy and Infiltration Test Results which have been the subject of consultation with the Flood and Water Team at Suffolk County Council.
51. The details have been found to be acceptable and suitable drainage can, therefore, be achieved on the site. Conditions are recommended should planning permission be granted, to ensure that the drainage scheme is secured and maintained.
52. The site does not lie in an area that is within the designated Flood Zones 2 or 3 and, therefore, the proposal does not give rise to Flood Risk issues.

Crime and Disorder

53. Consideration has been given to the provisions of Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act, 1998, in the assessment of this application but the proposal does not raise any significant issues.

Details Of Financial Benefits / Implications (S155 Housing and Planning Act 2016)

55. Granting this development will result in the following financial benefits:
 - Business Rates
 - CIL

These are not material to the planning decision.

PART FOUR – CONCLUSION

Planning Balance

56. This application brings about a number of issues which require careful attention in reaching a decision upon this proposal. What follows, therefore, is a balancing of those issues in light of the assessment carried out within the preceding paragraphs of this report.
57. In accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The consideration is, therefore, whether the development accords with the development plan and, if not, whether there are material considerations that would indicate a decision should be taken contrary to the development plan.
58. The site lies outside the settlement boundary where the principles of policy CS2 apply. This policy sets out that new business proposals can be acceptable in countryside locations subject to a need being established. Whilst the need for these units has not been clearly identified, and it can therefore be said that there is some conflict with the very principle of this development which CS2 seeks to address, the Council's Economic Development Officer has identified that there is a growth demand for this type of office and it is, therefore, considered that the failure to demonstrate a need for the development within the application submission would not weigh heavily against the development. As such, on balance, the principle of this development is in accordance with the aims of policy CS2 and can be supported.
59. The proposal has been considered against the provisions of the development plan in terms of the design and layout of the scheme, the impacts on highways, residential amenity, the landscape and arboriculture, drainage and flood risk, ecology and the availability of services and infrastructure. The development has been found to be acceptable in each of these regards, and it is therefore considered that there are no specific policies which would weigh against the development.
60. Furthermore, the site is considered to be in a sustainable and accessible location where opportunities exist for the use of alternative methods of transport to the car. It would provide a well contained and logical development in an existing built up area immediately adjacent to the settlement boundary of a Key Service Centre. The provision of employment, and the associated economic benefits which result weigh in favour of the development and support the thrust of both the NPPF and the development plan in terms of supporting a prosperous economy and generating jobs.
61. As such, the proposal is considered to be sustainable development, in accordance with the three dimensions of sustainable development set out in the NPPF, and a recommendation of approval is therefore made.

Statement Required By Article 35 Of The Town And Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2015.

62. When determining planning applications The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 requires Local Planning Authorities to explain how, in dealing with the application they have worked with the applicant to resolve any problems or issues arising. In this instance the applicant has worked to address problems and has sought to resolve these wherever possible.

RECOMMENDATION

That authority be delegated to the Corporate Manager - Growth and Sustainable Planning to grant planning permission, subject to the following conditions;

- 1) Standard Time Limit Condition.
- 2) Approved Plans
- 3) Sustainability
- 4) Surface water drainage and construction surface water management plan (all as requested by SCC Flood and Water team)
- 5) Ecological mitigation and enhancement measures, as per chapter 5 of Ecology Survey
- 6) Lighting design to be submitted
- 7) Details of fire hydrants
- 8) Retention of boundary hedgerows in accordance with site layout plan
- 9) Details of Materials
- 10) Details of screen walls and fences
- 11) Construction Management Plan (Inc. construction hours, constructor parking, dust control and prohibition of burning)
- 12) Landscaping
- 13) Foul Water Strategy
- 14) As required by LHA (including visibility splays and access layout in accordance with plan IT1794/SK/01)