

<b>APPLICATION NO.</b>	<a href="#">P23/S2494/FUL</a>
<b>APPLICATION TYPE</b>	FULL APPLICATION
<b>REGISTERED</b>	21.7.2023
<b>PARISH</b>	BECKLEY
<b>WARD MEMBER(S)</b>	Tim Bearder
<b>APPLICANT</b>	Messrs Eadle
<b>SITE</b>	Redways Farm, New Inn Road, Beckley, OX3 9SS
<b>PROPOSAL</b>	Demolition of existing workshop and construction of new building for B8 storage purposes with associated works (amended plans received 27 September to reduce size and location of building).
<b>OFFICER</b>	Andy Heron

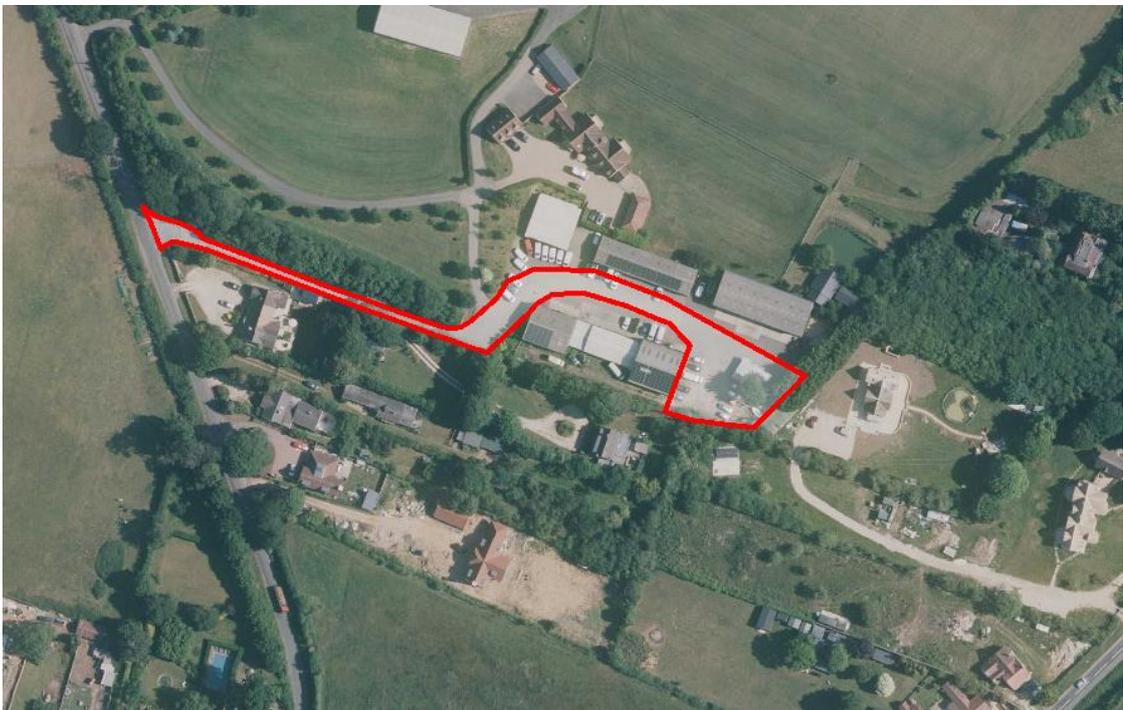
**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This report sets out the officer’s recommendation that planning permission should be granted having regard to the material planning considerations and the development plan.
- 1.2 This application is referred to planning committee following an objection received from Beckley Parish Council. The parish council have raised concerns that the replacement barn is materially larger than the existing barn and would represent inappropriate development in the Green Belt. A map extract identifying the site is **attached** at Appendix 1.
- 1.3 The site has a 0.1 hectare area and consists of a former farm yard in which small storage units operate. The site is located within the Green Belt and open countryside to the south of Beckley. It is accessed to the west via a private gated track. Redways House is situated to the north-west, whilst several neighbouring properties are also located to the south and east.

**PROPOSAL**

- 1.4 Planning permission is sought for the demolition of an existing workshop and buildings towards the eastern boundary of the site and the construction of a replacement building for B8 storage purposes. The replacement building will be situated 4 metres to the west of the workshop proposed to be demolished. The proposed building will have a 140 square metre footprint which is larger than the buildings proposed to be demolished which have a 115 square metre footprint. The replacement building will be attached to the east of a larger barn and measure 12.6 metres by 11.5 metres with a maximum height of 4.8 metres to the monopitch roof.
- 1.5 The building is proposed to be finished with composite panel sheeting and will have two large storage doors on the north elevation. Four rooflights are proposed to allow light into the building.

- 1.6 Access will remain as existing. 2 additional car parking spaces are proposed which will be situated approximately 18 metres to the north-east of the proposed building.
- 1.7 Amended plans were received in response to officer and parish concerns. The amended plans have relocated the proposed building to be situated away from the eastern boundary and allow the building to appear like an extension of the larger barn to the west. The amendments have substantially reduced the size of the proposed building. The footprint has reduced by 377 square metres. The height has also reduced with a reduction in volume from 2,225 cubic metres to 612 cubic metres, more than a 70% reduction. A monopitch roof is also now proposed to reduce the scale and mass of the building.
- 1.8 An aerial photograph showing the surrounding area is shown below.



- 1.9 Copies of the plans accompanying the application are **attached** as Appendix 2 to this report. All the plans, supporting information and representations can be viewed on the council's website [www.southoxon.gov.uk](http://www.southoxon.gov.uk) under the planning application reference number.

**2.0 SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

- 2.1 The comments below represent the comments on the scheme. Full details of the representations can be viewed on the Council's website [www.southoxon.gov.uk](http://www.southoxon.gov.uk) under the planning reference number.

Beckley Parish Council	<b>Object.</b> The building would represent inappropriate development in the Green Belt as it is materially larger than the existing barn. Furthermore, the development would create an overbearing impact which would create a loss in light to neighbouring occupants.
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Letters of representation	No letters of representation received.
Ecology	<b>No objection</b> , subject to a biodiversity mitigation condition.
Environmental Protection	<b>No objection</b> , subject to a contaminated land phased risk assessment condition, a remediation condition and an unsuspected contaminated land condition to ensure contamination is identified and adequately addressed.

### 3.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 3 previous applications of relevance.

[P23/S1288/FUL](#) - Approved (01/06/2023)

Retrospective change of use of building for storage purposes (Use Class B8) and/or repair and maintenance of motor vehicles.

[P22/S4397/FUL](#) - Approved (30/05/2023)

Alterations and additions to existing two storey dwellinghouse (detached) to form new entrance door and porch, internal separation dividing the unit into two retained under single ownership by a Section 106 Agreement for residential use of the family. (as amended by plans received 23 January 2023).

[P22/S4626/FUL](#) - Approved (13/02/2023)

S73A - RETROSPECTIVE use of the building and associated land for the sale of vehicles.

### 4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

4.1 The application has been considered under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. The proposed development is not EIA development.

### 5.0 POLICY & GUIDANCE

5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that the determination of any planning application must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The statutory Development Plan comprises;

- The Local Plan 2035
- Adopted neighbourhood plans

5.2 The South Oxfordshire Local Plan (SOLP) 2035 policies which are relevant to the proposed development consist of:

- DES1 - Delivering High Quality Development
- DES2 - Enhancing Local Character
- DES6 - Residential Amenity
- DES7 - Efficient Use of Resources
- DES8 - Promoting Sustainable Design
- DES10 - Carbon Reduction
- EMP2 - Range, Size and Mix of Employment premises
- ENV1 - Landscape and Countryside

ENV2 - Biodiversity - Designated sites, Priority Habitats and Species  
ENV3 - Biodiversity  
ENV11 - Pollution - Impact from existing and/ or Previous Land uses on new Development and the Natural Environment (Potential receptors of Pollution)  
ENV12 - Pollution - Impact of Development on Human Health, the Natural Environment and/or Local Amenity (Potential Sources of Pollution)  
INF1 - Infrastructure Provision  
STRAT1 - The Overall Strategy  
STRAT6 - Green Belt  
TRANS5 - Consideration of Development Proposals

### **5.3 Neighbourhood Plan**

Beckley and Stowood Parish Council is working on a neighbourhood plan which has been submitted to South Oxfordshire District Council.

The draft plan documents were submitted for independent examination. The Independent Examiner advised that a package of modifications is required to the Plan to ensure that it meets the basic conditions. The district council is now inviting comments on the examiner's preliminary conclusions and draft Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Opinion. This consultation will run from Thursday, 18 January to Thursday, 29 February 2024. The draft NP has limited weight at this stage.

- 5.4 Other material considerations include government guidance, in particular:
- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
  - National Design Guide Planning practice guidance for beautiful, enduring, and successful places (NDDG)
  - South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Joint Design Guide 2022
  - South Oxfordshire District Council Corporate Plan 2020 – 2024

### **5.5 Other Relevant Legislation**

Human Rights Act 1998

The provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 have been taken into account in the processing of the application and the preparation of this report.

Equality Act 2010

In determining this planning application the Council has regard to its equalities obligations including its obligations under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

## **6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

### **6.1 The relevant planning considerations are the following:**

- **Principle of development**
- **Green Belt**
- **Impact on the character and appearance of the rural area**
- **Residential amenity**
- **Access and parking**

- **Biodiversity**
- **Contaminated land**
- **BREEAM**

## 6.2 Principle of development

Policy EMP2 seeks to provide a range of sizes and types of employment premises, including flexible business space to meet current and future requirements. The policy encourages proposals for premises suitable for small and medium sized businesses, including start-up/ incubator businesses (up to 150sqm) and grow-on space (up to 500sqm).

6.3 The proposed building at 140 square metres accords with policy EMP2. The new building will help the business to remain on the site, and therefore grow and improve its facilities. The principle of development is therefore acceptable.

## 6.4 Green Belt

Policy STRAT6 of the SOLP seeks to protect the Green Belt from harmful development. The five purposes of the Green Belt are to:

- check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas;
- prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- preserve the setting and special character of historic towns (such as Oxford);
- assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

6.5 Paragraph 152 of the NPPF states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Paragraph 154 of the NPPF states that certain forms of development are not inappropriate in the Green Belt. Paragraph 154g of the NPPF states that one of these exceptions is the limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development.

6.6 In this instance the development would result in limited infilling, and the partial redevelopment of previously developed land. The site is surrounded by buildings to the north, east, south and west. The former agricultural use of the site has long since passed. The site is now used as a commercial yard for the business and other businesses at Redways Farm.

6.7 Officers had concerns with the original proposed development which was considered to harm the openness of the Green Belt by virtue of the proposed height and footprint of the building. However, the applicant has submitted amended plans which have significantly reduced the size and scale of the proposed building. The storage barn now appears like a sympathetic addition to the side of the former (and larger) barn to the west. The building will only be 25 square metres larger than the footprint of the existing buildings which it is

proposed to replace. Furthermore, the building will be finished with composite panel sheeting to appear like a typical agricultural building. In view of the above, the building is not considered to have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development.

6.8 It is therefore considered that the development is appropriate and accords with paragraph 154g of the NPPF and policy STRAT6 of the SOLP. The development will preserve the openness of the Green Belt and will not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.

**6.9 Impact on the character and appearance of the rural area**

Policy ENV1 of the SOLP seeks to protect South Oxfordshire's landscape, countryside, and rural areas from harmful development. Development will only be permitted where it protects and, where possible enhances, features that contribute to the nature and quality of South Oxfordshire's landscapes.

6.10 The development is small in size and scale and will not have a significant harmful effect on the landscape. Existing landscaping will screen the development from wider views from outside of the site. Wider and longer views into the site will not be harmed. To protect the appearance of the area an external lighting condition is recommended requiring a lighting scheme and plan to be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority prior to the installation of any external lighting. Any such lighting must be directed to a low level.

6.11 In view of the above the development accords with policies ENV1, DES2 and STRAT1 of the SOLP.

**6.12 Residential amenity**

Officers acknowledge the parish council's concerns that the development would have an overbearing impact on neighbouring occupants. However, the proposed replacement building will be situated away from the site boundaries which adjoin neighbouring gardens, unlike the buildings which are proposed for demolition which are situated on the site's eastern boundary.

6.13 The building is purposely set 8.3 metres away from the rear (south) boundary, unlike some of the larger storage barns to the west which are only 5.3 metres away from the site's southern boundary. Furthermore, there are no windows proposed which would directly face neighbouring properties and gardens.

6.14 Neighbouring properties are sufficiently distanced away and are unlikely to suffer from a loss of light, or privacy. The development will not result in significant adverse impacts on the amenity of neighbouring uses and is therefore considered to comply with policy DES6 of the SOLP.

**6.15 Access and parking**

Policy TRANS5 of the SOLP requires development to provide safe and convenient access for all users to the highway.

- 6.16 The access is intended to remain as existing whilst vehicle numbers associated with the business are expected to be low. It is therefore considered that the proposed development complies with policy TRANS5 of the SOLP.

**6.17 Biodiversity**

Policy ENV2 of the SOLP seeks to avoid adverse impacts on ecological receptors (protected species, priority habitats, designated sites, etc.). Where adverse impacts are predicted, development must meet the tests outlined under the policy. The application has been reviewed by the council's ecology officer. The ecology officer has confirmed that impacts on protected species are unlikely.

- 6.18 Policy ENV3 of the SOLP supports development that will conserve, restore, and enhance biodiversity. It requires all development to provide a net gain in biodiversity where possible. As a minimum, there should be no net loss of biodiversity.

- 6.19 The council's ecology officer has recommended a condition requiring mitigation measures to be submitted prior to commencement of development. The suggested condition is sought to protect onsite fauna, adjacent habitats and the neighbouring conservation target area.

- 6.20 In view of the above the development is not considered to harm local wildlife or create a net loss in biodiversity and is therefore in compliance with policies ENV2 and ENV3 of the SOLP, and paragraphs 180 and 186 of the NPPF.

**6.21 Contaminated land**

The site was previously used for agriculture and the council's contaminated land officer has advised that the site formed part of the former New Inn Road landfill. The contaminated land officer has no objection, subject to contaminated land conditions to ensure the safety of the development and environment.

**6.22 BREEAM**

Policy DES10 of SOLP requires proposals for non-residential development to meet the BREEAM excellent standard unless viability or other factors weigh in the balance. The applicants have been advised by BREEAM assessors that the building will not be able to achieve a BREEAM rating. The applicants have submitted a statement to explain that the building is sought only as a storage building and will not have people routinely working within it. When people are working in it the large roller shutter doors will be open. Accordingly, the building requires no heating. The building would have no insulation and is effectively a covered storage yard. Given the characteristics and use of the building it is your

officers view that the economic benefits of supporting a rural business weigh against the need to meet the requirements of policy DES10 in this case.

**6.23 Conditions**

Paragraph 55 of the NPPF is clear that local planning authorities should consider whether otherwise unacceptable development could be made acceptable through the use of conditions. The NPPF goes on to state at paragraph 56 that conditions should only be imposed where they are necessary; relevant to planning and to the development to be permitted, enforceable, precise and reasonable in all other respects.

6.24 A condition is necessary relating to the plans approved, in order to ensure the satisfactory appearance of the completed development. Time frame conditions will also be attached to secure the proper planning of the area in accordance with development plan policies. A material compliance condition will also be required to ensure the development is constructed in the materials specified on the approved plans. All other conditions have been discussed in the relevant sections of the committee report.

6.25 For your reference the full wording of the conditions are contained within appendix 3.

**6.26 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)**

The development is not CIL liable.

**7.0 CONCLUSION**

7.1 The application has been assessed against relevant policies in the development plan, the NPPF, PPG, the adopted SPD's and all other material planning considerations.

7.2 The proposal is acceptable on the basis that the development would represent appropriate development in the Green Belt and will not unduly harm the character and appearance of the surrounding rural area, or neighbouring amenity.

7.3 The application will provide an economic and social role as it will enable the existing business to continue to operate from the site and help improve its facilities.

7.4 There are no technical concerns with this application, subject to the recommended conditions. Overall, in the planning balance, the benefits of the development outweigh any potential harm. As such, the application is recommended for approval.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

**To grant Planning Permission subject to the following conditions**

**1 : Commencement 3 years - Full Planning Permission**

**2 : Approved plans**

**3 : Contaminated land**

**4 : Biodiversity Mitigation**

**5 : Remediation strategy**

**6 : Unsuspected contamination**

**7 : Materials**

**8 : External lighting**

**Informatives**

**9 : Contaminated land - informative**

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