

2.5 REFERENCE NO - 16/508208/FULL			
APPLICATION PROPOSAL New Aluminium framed warehouse			
ADDRESS Antolin Interiors Spade Lane Upchurch Kent ME9 7TT			
RECOMMENDATION – Grant subject to conditions, and the comments of the Economic Development Officer			
SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION/REASONS FOR REFUSAL The development would result in a modest addition to the existing industrial premises, with little impact on the surrounding rural and landscape character and appearance of the area. It would provide a facility to meet the business needs of the applicant. The impact of the development on the amenities of neighbouring properties has been considered and found to be acceptable. The proposal would represent sustainable development and would accord with the NPPF and the Local Development plans (adopted and emerging)			
REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE The officer recommendation is contrary to that of Hartlip Parish Council			
WARD Hartlip, Newington And Upchurch	PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL Upchurch / Hartlip	APPLICANT Antolin AGENT ARV Design Limited	
DECISION DUE DATE 09/03/17	PUBLICITY EXPIRY DATE 08/02/17	OFFICER SITE VISIT DATE 17/01/17	
RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY (including appeals and relevant history on adjoining sites):			
App No	Proposal	Decision	Date
SW/11/0672	Application to extend the time limit for the implementation of the planning permission granted under SW/06/1345 - removal of condition 6 (VI) of SW/89/1248 (restriction use) and change of use to allow the Spade Lane Depot (including existing and unbuilt phase) to be used for general class B1C (light industrial), B2 (general industrial) or B8 (storage or distribution uses)	Granted	18/05/12
SW/07/0096	Variation of legal agreement to allow site to be used for B1c, B2 or B8 uses	Refused – allowed on appeal	01/08/07
SW/06/1345	Removal of condition 6 of SW/89/1248 and change of use to allow the entire building to be used for B1c, B2 or B8 purposes	Refused – allowed on appeal	02/08/07
SW/01/0876	Change of use of part of premises from storage and distribution purposes to industrial use, with additional car parking	Granted	16/05/02
SW/00/0986	Removal of condition 6 of SW/89/1248 to allow	Granted	05/03/01

	for the storage and distribution of non-agricultural related products and items	(temporary)	
SW/97/0441	Approval of reserved matters for phase 2 & 3 cold stores	Granted	14/07/97
SW/93/0936	Amendment to existing permission to extend one building and re-order phasing of development	Granted	14/01/94
SW/91/0720	Approval of reserved matters pursuant to SW/89/1248	Granted	24/12/91
SW/89/1248	Outline permission for fruit packing station and cold stores (with ancillary facilities including offices and weighbridge) together with irrigation reservoir.	Granted	03/09/90
<i>Condition 6 of the permission stated - The use of the site and buildings hereby permitted shall be restricted to the following activities: (a) the grading storage packaging and distribution of agricultural produce, (b) purposes ancillary thereto, (c) agricultural purposes</i>			

MAIN REPORT

1.0 DESCRIPTION OF SITE

- 1.01 The site consists of a large modern building, originally built as a cold store, packing and distribution centre. The building is some 29,195 sqm in floor area, and in excess of 13 metres in height. The building measures approximately 195 metres in length and 155 metres in width.
- 1.02 Antolin Interiors occupy the north half of the building, over an area of around 13,470sqm. The remainder of the building is occupied by IPL – a fresh produce distributor.
- 1.03 A lorry circulation route runs around the perimeter of the building, with two large car parks and a landscaped bund to the north. Land to the east of the building is used as an open storage area by Antolin Interiors.
- 1.04 The site is located on the junction of Spade Lane and the A2 London Road. It lies outside of any defined settlement boundary and falls to be considered as within the countryside. The land to the east of the site is in active agricultural use, and slopes upwards towards Mill Lane to the east beyond a belt of landscaping on the perimeter of the site.
- 1.05 Land to the south of the site is occupied by a small business park. The closest residential properties are New Oast Cottages to the south west of the Oast business park, although the proposed development would be obscured from these properties by existing buildings at Oast Park and by the main cold store building itself. The closest properties with a potential line of sight to the proposed warehouse building would be those on Dane Lane (approx. 460m distance), Mill Lane (approx. 600m distance) and on the north side of the A2 (approx. 260m distance)

2.0 PROPOSAL

- 2.01 This application seeks permission for the erection of a warehouse building on the south east side of the site. The building would measure 35 metres in length 30 metres in depth, and 8.5 metres in height. The building would be bolted onto an existing hardstanding with no foundation works required. The walls would be clad in composite steel panels and the roof in UPVC sheeting. The colour is shown as “off-white” although the applicant has confirmed that this is negotiable.
- 2.02 The building is required in connection with the operation at Antolin Interiors. This business manufactures interior parts for the car industry, and the Hartlip facility provides middle to high-end components for Jaguar, Landrover and Bentley. The main building is used for the manufacturing process with little room for storage. Currently, deliveries of components and raw materials are taken in at the site, and those materials not immediately required are taken from the site to a warehouse in Snodland for storage, before being brought back to the site when needed.
- 2.03 The business is also now required by clients to store components under cover that would previously have been stored in the open. The proposed warehouse building would provide a facility to store these products under cover as well as eliminating the need to use warehousing in Snodland. The applicant states that this would result in a reduction of approximately 15 HGV movements per week that currently shuttle between the site and the Snodland warehouse.
- 2.04 The business operates for 24 hours a day, typically over a 5 day week (from 6am on a Monday to 3am on a Saturday). Although there is less activity at night, access to and from the warehouse building would be required during these hours. It employs 430 staff in total.

3.0 SUMMARY INFORMATION

	Existing Building	Proposed Warehouse
Site Area (ha)	Approx 10 Ha	Approx 10 Ha
Approximate Ridge Height (m)	13m	8.5m
Approximate Eaves Height (m)	10m	6m
Approximate Depth (m)	155m	30m
Approximate Width (m)	195m	35m
No. of Storeys	1	
Net Floor Area	29,195	1,050
Parking Spaces	Approx 360	
No. of Residential Units	N/A	
No. of Affordable Units	N/A	

4.0 PLANNING CONSTRAINTS

SSSI Impact Risk zone
 Groundwater source protection zone
 An overhead power cable cuts through the site
 Potential Archaeological Importance

5.0 POLICY AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – the NPPF was published in 2012 and is a material consideration in planning decisions. The following paragraphs are most relevant:

Para 7 (the three dimensions to sustainable development – economic, social, and environmental), Para 14 (the presumption in favour of sustainable development), Para 17 (core planning principles), Paras 18-21 (building a strong competitive economy), Paras 29-32 (promoting sustainable transport), Para 216 – weight to be given to emerging policies.

Development Plan:

The adopted Swale Borough Local Plan – Policies SP1 (sustainable development), SP2 (environment), SP3 (economy), SP5 (rural communities), TG1 (Thames Gateway planning area), SH1 (settlement hierarchy), E1 (general development criteria), E6 (the countryside), E9 (protecting the quality and character of the landscape), B1 (supporting and retaining existing employment land and businesses), RC1 (helping to revitalise the rural economy), T1 (safe access to new development), T3 (vehicle parking)

The Emerging Swale Borough Local Plan (Proposed Main Modifications June 2016) - ST1 (sustainable development), ST3 (Swale settlement strategy), CP1 (building a strong competitive economy), CP4 (requiring good design), CP7 (conserving / enhancing the natural environment), DM3 (the rural economy), DM6 (managing transport demand and impact), DM14 (general development criteria), DM19 (sustainable design / construction), DM21 (water, flooding and drainage), DM24 (conserving / enhancing valued landscapes)

This plan is at an advanced stage and as such weight can be given to the policies contained within it as part of the decision-making process.

6.0 LOCAL REPRESENTATIONS

The application has been advertised in the local paper and by way of a site notice.

4 letters of objection have been received

- The site causes noise pollution
- The site causes light pollution
- Lorries connected to the site park in the local area which is dangerous / inconsiderate
- Litter / rubbish is left by lorry drivers
- Lack of lorry parking within the site causes overspill parking in the local area
- Traffic congestion, impact of traffic passing on a narrow road
- The factory has recently begun to exceed specified noise limits
- Fork lift trucks should be fitted with alternative reversing alarms to those that “beep”

A representation has been submitted by Cllr Wright, raising the following issues –

- Noise pollution especially at night
- Lorry parking takes place on the A2, with associated rubbish
- Lack of landscaping / landscaping would be further eroded by the development
- The site is not a good neighbour
- The design of the building would not be in keeping with the rural landscape

7.0 CONSULTATIONS

Hartlip Parish Council

7.01 Object to the application on the following grounds –

- Concern raised over consultation process
- The site is overlooked by a number of houses in the village of Hartlip

- The landscaping plan for the site has never been carried out or enforced. The proposed building would further erode the landscape barrier and affects many people in Hartlip
- Disturbance to residents at night through noise
- Off site parking of lorries in a nearby lay-by on the A2 is dangerous and the area is regularly littered and spoiled by waste.
- The application provides no justification for the building and there is no landscape and visual impact assessment to consider the impacts on views from the village of Hartlip.
- Point 3.4 of the planning statement is about machinery to be installed yet point 22 of the application states that none is to be installed.
- Point 3.2 of the planning statement indicates "there would be no impact on the overall appearance to the front" but no consideration has been given to the impact it would have on the properties to the side and rear which is overlooked by residential properties.

Kent County Council Highways and Transportation

- 7.02 In respect to highway matters, it is evident that the floorspace to be occupied by the proposed storage building is currently used as open storage, and not car parking as suggested in the Planning Statement. The application form also confirms that the number of parking spaces on the site will remain the same, so there will be no loss of parking provision as a consequence of this development.
- 7.03 As stated above, the use of the land in question will remain as storage, and it is therefore not expected that the development will lead to an increase in vehicle movements associated with the business as a whole. Furthermore, with an internal floorspace of just 1,050m², this falls below the 4,000m² threshold for when a Transport Assessment would be required for B8 storage use.
- 7.04 Consequently, no objections are raised to the proposals in respect of highway matters (subject to the planning conditions listed)

Swale Footpaths Group

- 7.05 No objection raised

Environmental Health

- 7.06 The use of the warehouse will be 24 hours and there is potential for a noise issue if machinery is operating within this open warehouse. I would recommend a condition to ensure that the warehouse is only used for storage.

KCC Drainage

- 7.07 The development proposal locates a new warehouse of 1,050 m² on an area of existing hardstanding which connects to the existing drainage network. The development location is shown to have potentially a low risk (i.e. less than 300 mm flood depth) of surface water flooding which is assessed to not be a significant hazard but is worth noting to the applicant.
- 7.08 The development proposal is not anticipated to result in any change to the amount of surface water which leaves the site as there is no associated change in impermeable

area; however it is usual that new development does mitigate the effects of climate change.

- 7.09 In this instance given the magnitude of the development proposal, we would recommend that the Council consider requiring inclusion of rainwater harvesting which would offset the climate change allowance and which would also provide for additional benefits in reduction to potable water demands. Overall, we consider this development proposal to have a low risk in relation to surface water and have no further comments.

Environment Agency

- 7.10 No comments received

Southern Water

- 7.11 There is no public foul and surface water sewer in the vicinity of the site. The applicant is advised to examine alternative means of foul and surface water sewage disposal. The Environment Agency should be consulted directly regarding the use of a private wastewater treatment works or septic tank drainage which disposes of effluent to sub-soil irrigation. The owner of the premises will need to empty and maintain the works or septic tank to ensure its long term effectiveness. The Council's Building Control officers/technical staff and the environment agency should be consulted regarding the surface water disposal.

Natural England

- 7.12 Comment that the proposed development lies close to the AONB and that local and national policies together with local landscape expertise should be used to determine the proposals, with a statutory requirement to address impacts on the AONB.
- 7.13 Refer to standing advice and procedures regarding the effects of development on protected species and SSSI's.

Scotia Gas Networks

- 7.14 Advise of the proximity of gas pipes to the application site (these are in fact under the A2 and well away from the proposed development)

Kent Police

- 7.15 Having reviewed the on line plans and documentation, I note that the proposed building will be secured and is within the current site boundary fencing and as such, I have no immediate concerns from a CPTED aspect.
- 7.16 Members should note that the National Grid have been consulted in respect of the proximity of the development to the overhead power line, but that no response has been received.
- 7.17 The comments of the Economic Development Officer are awaited, and I will update Members at the meeting.

8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS AND PLANS

- 8.01 All papers as submitted under 16/508208

- 8.02 The applicant has submitted a further supporting statement, summarised as follows –
- The company manufactures interior parts / high end components for Jaguar, Landrover and Bentley and employs 430 local people
 - The facility is a shared site with IPL – a fruit processing and packing plant. The majority of vehicle movements associated with the site relate to this business.
 - The warehouse is required to meet current business needs which require goods to be stored under cover
 - The site of the warehouse is used for open storage to a height of 6 metres
 - Lack of storage on site means that the company currently uses an off-site warehouse in Snodland and has to shuttle between sites
 - The litter and inconsiderate HGV parking noted by residents is not related to this company
 - Issues regarding FLT beepers is being dealt with through purchasing of a new fleet with light warnings.
 - The visual appearance of the site would be improved through removal of open storage.

9.0 APPRAISAL

Background

- 9.01 This site has a long and detailed recent planning history which is listed at the start of this report. In summary, outline permission granted in 1990 allowed the erection of a fruit packing station and cold stores at Spade Lane, as part of a proposal to relocate the facility as it then existed from Horsham Lane. A section 52 Agreement (which was later changed to become Section 106 Agreements) limited the use to grading, storage, packaging and distribution of agricultural produce, ancillary purposes or agriculture. Various reserved matters applications were submitted and approved subsequently which allowed the erection of the buildings in three phases, and phase 1 and 2 are those seen on site today. The reserved matters also showed an additional building fronting the A2 which was never built (phase 3) but which could still be implemented.
- 9.02 Permission was granted in 2002 for the change of use of part of the site to allow Intier Automotives (now known as Antolin Interiors) to operate an industrial use in approximately half of the building. The remaining half of the building is occupied by IPL – a fresh produce distributor.
- 9.03 Planning permission was then granted on appeal (Ref SW/06/1345) to change the use of the entire site to allow it to be used for a number of uses rather than for those specified in the original outline approval, and to, in effect, remove the condition imposed on the 2002 permission which limited the use of half of the main building to Intier Automotives (now Antolin Interiors). This allowed the whole site to be used for any light industrial or general industrial purpose, or for the storage and distribution of any goods from any part of the site. The Planning Permission subsequently granted by the Council in 2012 (under ref SW/11/0672) extended the time limit for the implementation of SW/06/01345, and this permission may be commenced up to the 19th January 2019. This permission also maintained the original restriction for use of the unimplemented phase 3 development to grading, storage, packaging and distribution of agricultural produce, ancillary purposes or agriculture

Principle of Development

- 9.04 Policy B1 of the adopted local plan supports proposals to expand existing businesses on site or onto adjoining land, subject to consideration of impacts such as landscape

and biodiversity. Policy ST3 of the emerging plan sets out a settlement strategy for the Borough and the supporting text to this states that only development that is essential to the social, economic or environmental well being, as set out in local and national planning policies, will be permitted in the countryside where consistent with the primary objective of protecting or enhancing the countryside. Policy CP1 of the emerging plan seeks to build a strong, competitive economy, and sets out that unanticipated needs may be accommodated through the extension of an existing employment site, and where sites are well related to primary road networks (such as the A2).

- 9.05 In this instance, the site is located within the countryside, but consists of previously developed land being within the built apron of the existing operating industrial premises. The proposal seeks further space to support the existing business operation on the site. In my opinion, the above policies could lend support to the proposal, provided that it can be demonstrated that such growth would be sustainable and would not cause unacceptable harm to the countryside and landscape. Such impacts are considered in greater detail below

Visual / Landscape Impact

- 9.06 The proposed building would be sited within the developed confines of the industrial premises, and would replace an existing area of open storage on a large hardsurfaced apron adjacent to the eastern boundary of the site. The proposed warehouse would, in isolation, be a large structure at 1,050 sqm in floor area and up to 8.5 metres in height. However, it would be sited adjacent to the existing cold store building, which is of significantly greater size at 29,000 sqm floor area and 13 metres in height – and would represent a very small increase to the existing premises.
- 9.07 The proposed building would be totally screened from the west by the existing cold store building. The existing site is visible from the south and east across the adjacent farmland, from viewpoints on Dane Lane, Mill Lane, and from public footpaths. However such views are at distances of some 460-600 metres, and are in part screened or obscured by existing landscaping, although there are some points where uninterrupted views at distance of the building can be gained. The proposed warehouse building would be a very modest addition to the extent of built form on the site and would be significantly smaller in scale and height. In such views from the south and east, I consider that the visual impact of the proposed warehouse would be very low, when seen against the context and/or backdrop of the significantly larger main building, and would make very little difference to the appearance and visual impact of the site.
- 9.08 In addition to this, Members will note that the site of the proposed warehouse is used for open storage, and that such storage does extend to some 6 metres in height, which is not dissimilar to the scale of the building proposed.
- 9.09 In landscape terms, the site falls within the Newington Fruit Belt under the Swale Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal SPD (2011). The appraisal notes that the presence of large commercial buildings within the A2 corridor detract from the quality of the landscape, and it is evident that the existing building does create a alien feature in the landscape. The site is landscaped on the eastern boundary with tree planting both inside the boundary of the site and beyond it. The proposals do not seek to remove any existing trees, and it is noted that the building would not require any foundation works and would be sited on the existing hardsurfaced apron of the site. There is no real scope for further landscaping in the vicinity of the proposed warehouse building. However given my opinion that the building would have very little visual impact on views of the site or across the landscape, and that the development would

take place within the confines of the existing site on land already developed as a hardstanding and open storage area, I consider that it would be very difficult to substantiate a case that the development would materially worsen the existing visual impact of the site within the landscape.

- 9.10 The AONB boundary (defined by the M2) lies approximately 1 mile to the south of the site. At this distance, I do not consider that any views of the proposed development, against the context of the existing building, would be harmful to the setting of the AONB.
- 9.11 Policies E9 of the adopted plan and DM24 of the emerging plan seek to ensure that the quality, character and amenity of landscapes are protected and where possible enhanced. The emerging policy states that for non-designated landscapes permission will be granted subject to the minimisation and mitigation of adverse landscape impacts and, where significant impacts remain, that the social and economic benefits of the proposal significantly and demonstrably outweigh the harm to landscape character. In this instance, I consider the landscape impact of the proposal to be low for the reasons specified above, and that the quality, character and amenity of the landscape would not be materially harmed by the proposal.

Residential Amenity

- 9.12 The site is, as noted above, generally well away from neighbouring properties. The closest properties to the site are New Oast Cottages to the south of the site. The proposed warehouse would be sited around 260 metres from these properties, and views would be screened by the existing building as well as buildings at the Oast business park. The warehouse would be sited a similar distance from Orchard House to the north of the A2, but would be screened at least in part by landscaping and the raised bund within the application site. As specified earlier in the report, the warehouse building would be sited around 460 metres from Dane Lane to the south and 600m from Mill Lane to the east. There are dwellings on both roads that have a line of sight to the existing building on site and the proposed warehouse. At such distance, I do not consider any views of the warehouse from surrounding properties could be considered to be harmful to amenity or outlook.
- 9.13 A number of objectors have raised concern over existing noise and light pollution arising from the existing site. Both businesses operate over a 24 hour period and there would be a degree of noise related to this. The proposed warehouse would not contain any machinery and would be used solely for storage purposes and on this basis the Council's Environmental Health manager raises no objection on noise grounds. A planning condition can be used to ensure that the building is only used for storage to prevent any noise-generating activities taking place within it.
- 9.14 There would be some external activity as goods would be transferred between the main building and the warehouse. The Environmental Health Manager has not raised any objection to noise arising from forklifts operating between the two buildings. The applicant has also stated that they are replacing their fleet of forklift trucks and the new vehicles would use light beams as a warning system which would reduce the need for reversing beepers.
- 9.15 The site is necessarily lit by floodlighting columns within the grounds, as well as lighting on the main building. There is no suggestion that the side or rear elevations of the new warehouse building would require any additional lighting – and the entrance into the building would face into the site – meaning that any lighting on the main entrance would face away from the direction of any neighbours. In my opinion, the proposal

would not be likely to cause any additional light pollution. However, as a precaution detail of any external lighting of the building can be controlled by a suitable planning condition.

- 9.16 Policies E1 of the adopted local plan and DM14 of the emerging plan seek to ensure that developments cause no significant harm to amenity. I acknowledge that the existing premises (including the fruit packing business) causes some issues for existing residents in terms of noise, pollution and disturbance, however this would appear to relate more to the fruit packing business (which generates far more vehicular activity). I do not consider that the proposed warehouse would be likely to cause any additional or unacceptable light or noise pollution impacts, and I do not consider that the proposal would be in conflict with the above policies.

Highways / Traffic generation

- 9.17 The proposal seeks to erect a warehouse to store materials and components prior to and upon completion of the manufacturing process that takes place within the main building. As set out in Section 2 of the report, the warehouse would provide covered accommodation for materials that have previously been stored in the open, and would also negate the need to use a warehouse in Snodland for storage, as is current practice. There is no suggestion in the application that the development would lead to a greater output in production from the facility, rather that it would provide convenient on-site storage for products and raw materials that are otherwise stored in the open or off-site.
- 9.18 As a result, there would be no increase in vehicle movements associated with the warehouse building. In fact, the applicant has pointed out that the proposal would remove the need for HGV's to shuttle goods between this site and the Snodland warehouse, which in turn would be likely to reduce the number of HGV movements by around 15 per week.
- 9.19 KCC Highways and Transportation do not raise any objection to the proposal on the basis that the building will be used for storage. Members will also note that a planning condition is proposed to restrict use of the building to storage only, so that it cannot be used for manufacturing purposes.
- 9.20 KCC Highways and Transportation have recommended a number of "standard" conditions relating to construction. Given the size of the site and the location of the proposed warehouse at some distance from the highway, I do not consider it is necessary to control loading / offloading operations carried out by construction vehicles. As the building would be erected on the existing hard surfaced slab, I do not consider it is necessary to include measures to control the deposit of mud or debris on the highway.
- 9.21 Members will note that a number of objectors have raised highways related issues. Notwithstanding that the number of vehicle movements arising from the Antolin Interiors business is likely to reduce as set out above, the applicant has been keen to clarify that the vast majority of HGV movements from the site are related to the fruit packing business that operates from the other half of the building. As a snapshot of vehicle movements from the site, the applicant has set out that 1000 vehicle movements were recorded from the site between the 16th – 23rd January, with 856 vehicles associated with the fruit packing business (IPL) and 144 associated with Antolin Interiors (of this, 85 were HGV's and 59 were light vans). This suggests that only 10% of vehicle movements from the whole site are associated with Antolin.

- 9.22 The applicant has also been keen to point out that the indiscriminate parking of HGV's in the local area, and associated litter and verge damage relate to a company used by IPL, and who have been banned from parking overnight by IPL due to past bad behaviour on the site.
- 9.23 Policy T1 of the adopted plan and DM6 of the emerging plan seek to ensure that development proposals do not have adverse impacts upon the local highway network that cannot be mitigated. In this instance I do not consider that the proposal would lead to any increase in vehicular movements – and it is likely to decrease movements. On this basis, I do not consider that the development would conflict with the above policies.

Other Matters

- 9.24 Members will note that an electricity line crosses the site and that the proposed warehouse building would be sited underneath this line. The applicant has designed the building to accord with National Grid guidelines for building in close proximity to electricity lines. The National Grid was consulted on the application, although no response has been received.
- 9.25 The Kent County Council drainage team has identified that the proposed could provide an alternative scheme for treatment of surface water as part of a sustainable urban drainage scheme. The applicant has confirmed that they are willing to address this, and this can be secured via a planning condition.
- 9.26 Members will note from the background section that the original permission included a further phase of development and this can still be implemented. This phase would be built to the north of the existing building, within the car park area currently allocated to Antolin Interiors. In the event that phase 3 was built, the area of land where the proposed warehouse would be built is shown to accommodate car parking.
- 9.27 Without suitable control, there is a risk that if the warehouse and phase 3 development were both built out, then there would be a shortfall in car parking for the site. To avoid this, the applicant has confirmed that firstly, they would not retain an interest in the site if their current parking facility was removed. Secondly, that the warehouse would be a structure bolted to the ground that could be dismantled in a period of around 7 days. Taking this into account, I consider that a planning condition could be used to ensure that, if phase 3 of the development is commenced, then the warehouse building shall be dismantled and removed from the site.

10.0 CONCLUSION

- 10.01 The site is located within the countryside where impacts relating to rural and landscape character and matters relating to sustainability often preclude many forms of development. However in this instance, the proposal would result in a modest addition in the context of the existing industrial premises, and would be sited within the built apron of the existing premises. In my opinion, the impact on the rural character of the area and the landscape would be limited. The proposal would cater for the business needs of a local employer, providing an on-site storage facility that would negate the current practice of shuttling between the site and a storage unit in Snodland, with a subsequent reduction in associated traffic. The proposal would not lead to any direct increase in traffic movements or employment and would not encourage unsustainable practices or patterns, despite the divorced location of the site from surrounding built settlements. In fact it could be argued that the on-site warehouse facility would make the business more sustainable.

10.02 It may be possible to pick out the proposed building from surrounding vantage points. However these would be mid to long range views, seen against the context of the significantly larger existing building. I do not consider this would be materially harmful to visual / landscape amenity or to the outlook of any residential properties in the surrounding area. Nor do I consider that any noise or increased activity arising from the proposal would be of sufficient impact to harm residential or rural amenity.

10.03 Taking the above into account, I consider that the development would meet the business needs of the operator, with little environmental impact, and would represent a sustainable form of development under the NPPF. It would not be in conflict with the development plan policies identified in the sections above.

10.04 As a result, I would recommend that planning permission should be granted.

11.0 RECOMMENDATION – GRANT Subject to the comments of the Economic Development Officer and the following conditions:

CONDITIONS

(1) The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date on which the permission is granted.

Reason: In pursuance of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

(2) Prior to the commencement of development, details in the form of samples of external finishing materials (including colour finish) to be used in the construction of the development hereby approved shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interest of visual amenity.

(3) The building hereby permitted shall only be used for the storage of goods and materials ancillary to any business operating from the main building, and shall not be used for any other purpose.

Reason: To accord with the terms of the application, to ensure that no industrial process is carried out within the building, or any independent occupation of the building without proper consideration through a formal application of any noise or highway related impacts, in the interest of aural amenity and highways safety.

(4) In the event that phase 3 of the site development is implemented (as approved under outline permission SW/89/01248 (subsequently amended by SW/06/1345 and SW/11/0672) and the reserved matters SW/97/0441), the proposed building hereby approved shall be dismantled and removed from the site within 3 months from the date of any such commencement of phase 3.

Reason: To ensure that the delivery of additional parking provision associated with the phase 3 development is not compromised by the building hereby approved, in the interest of highways safety.

(5) Prior to the works commencing on site details of parking for site personnel / operatives / visitors shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority and

thereafter shall be provided and retained throughout the construction of the development. The approved parking shall be provided prior to the commencement of the development.

Reason: To ensure provision of adequate off-street parking for vehicles in the interests of highway safety and to protect the amenities of local residents.

- (6) Before development commences, details of measures to incorporate a sustainable surface water drainage scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Upon approval, the details shall be incorporated into the development as approved.

Reason: In the interest of promoting energy efficiency and sustainable development.

- (7) Before development commences, details of measures to protect existing trees on the north and east boundaries of the site, in accordance with BS5837:2012 – “Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction”, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. All protection measures shall be installed on site prior to any construction and retained until completion of the development. Nothing shall be stored or placed, nor fires lit, within any of the protected areas in accordance with this condition and the ground levels within those areas shall not be altered, nor shall any excavation be made, without the written consent of the Local Planning.

Reason: To protect existing landscaping, in the interests of the visual amenities of the area.

- (8) No floodlighting, security lighting or other external lighting shall be installed or operated at the site, other than in accordance with details that have first been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include:

- A statement of why lighting is required, the proposed frequency of the use and the hours of illumination.
- A site plan showing the area to be lit relative to the surrounding area, indicating parking or access arrangements where appropriate, and highlighting any significant existing or proposed landscape or boundary features.
- Details of the number, location and height of the lighting columns or other fixtures.
- The type, number, mounting height and alignment of the luminaries.
- The beam angles and upwards waste light ratio for each light.
- An isolux diagram showing the predicted illuminance levels at critical locations on the boundary of the site and where the site abuts residential properties.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and the residential amenities of occupiers of nearby dwellings.

Council’s Approach

In accordance with paragraphs 186 and 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the Council takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions. We work with applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner in the processing of their application and by:

Offering pre-application advice.

Where possible, suggesting solutions to secure a successful outcome.

As appropriate, updating applicants/agents of any issues that may arise in the

processing of their application.

In this instance the applicant was found to be acceptable.

NB For full details of all papers submitted with this application please refer to the relevant Public Access pages on the council's website.
The conditions set out in the report may be subject to such reasonable change as is necessary to ensure accuracy and enforceability.