

**PLANNING  
COMMITTEE**

**15<sup>th</sup> September 2021**

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**Planning Application 21/00973/FUL**

**Warehouse extension**

**17 Howard Road, Redditch, Worcestershire, B98 7SH, ,**

**Applicant: Mr Steve Bennett  
Ward: Greenlands Ward**

**(see additional papers for site plan)**

The case officer of this application is Charlotte Wood, Planning Officer (DM), who can be contacted on Tel: 01527 64252 Ext 3412 Email: Charlotte.Wood@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk for more information.

**Site Description**

The application site is located on the south side of Howard Road, within the Park Farm Industrial Estate, which lies approximately 3km south east of Redditch Town Centre. The site is bound by Howard Road to the north, Studley Road to the west (a section of which is a bus and cycle route) and industrial units to the south and east. The site is 'L' shaped, and currently there are parking areas to the north and south sides of the industrial building, with vehicular accesses off the north, west and east boundaries of the site. The site falls within a Primarily Employment Area and the existing floor area of the warehouse totals 3,941sqm. There is a New Town Tree Preservation Order which covers the site.

**Background**

The premises has recently been taken over by Gemporia Limited, an online jewellery company. Supporting information provided with the application explains that the company are rapidly expanding and have outgrown their existing premises in Redditch. It is also stated that the company employ a large number of Redditch residents. A total of 48 full time staff and 22 part time staff will be based at the site.

**Proposal Description**

The proposal is for an extension to the existing warehouse, which would comprise of a total floor area of 1,591 sqm and would provide additional storage space for stock. The footprint of the extension would form an inverted 'L' shape and would attach to the existing south elevation of the building. The extension would cover an area of hardstanding to the rear of the factory and also a portion of the southern car parking area. An area of hardstanding, however, would be retained close to the western access of the site, which would provide space for lorries to enter and turn within the site. The existing parking area to the front of the factory, accessed from the northern boundary has recently been re-marked, showing 44 spaces. The rear parking area, which will be accessed from the eastern side of the site is also proposed to re-marked and would provide a further 38 spaces. A total of 82 spaces, including 2 disabled spaces would be provided altogether.

**Relevant Policies :**

**Borough of Redditch Local Plan No. 4**

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Policy 1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development  
Policy 5: Effective and Efficient use of Land  
Policy 16: Natural Environment  
Policy 17: Flood Risk Management  
Policy 18: Sustainable water Management  
Policy 19: Sustainable travel and Accessibility  
Policy 20: Transport Requirements for New Development  
Policy 23: Employment Land Provision  
Policy 24: Development within Primarily Employment Areas  
Policy 39: Built Environment  
Policy 40: High Quality Design and Safer Communities

## **Others**

NPPF National Planning Policy Framework (2021)  
NPPG National Planning Practice Guidance  
Redditch High Quality Design SPD

## **Relevant Planning History**

2010/256/FUL	New fence at front of property. Weighbridge and Portacabin at Crossgates Road entrance. Replacement gates at Studley Road entrance.	Approved	30.11.2010
2008/392/FUL	Alterations and extensions to building	Approved	16.02.2009
1993/494/FUL	Extension To Factory	Approved	14.03.1994
1992/503/FUL	Covered Storage Area Off Existing Service Yard	Approved	19.01.1993

## **Consultations**

### **North Worcestershire Water Management**

No objections have been raised to the proposal subject to conditions.

The site is located within flood zone 1 and although there is no significant risk of fluvial flooding, there may be some risk of surface water flooding. Whilst drainage details have not been provided with the application, it is acceptable for this information to be provided by condition.

### **WRS - Contaminated Land**

No ground contamination issues are anticipated with the development proposal and therefore no adverse comments are raised.

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## **Highways Redditch**

No objections subject to conditions and contributions.

The site is located in an employment estate in a sustainable location. The site benefits from three existing vehicular access points with good visibility and is in walking distance to bus stops. Adequate parking has been shown on the proposed site layout plan to serve the whole site based on floor area. A tracking circle for a lorry entering and leaving the site in a forward gear has been provided. Based on the floor area of the proposal, IDP contributions amounting to £17,860.41 are required. Conditions relating to the provision of electric vehicle charging points, accessible parking, cycle parking and the laying out of parking and turning facilities are also recommended.

## **Arboricultural Officer**

A Tree Preservation Order covers this site, which is TPO Redditch New Town No. 25 1965. There are two mature Oak trees and one Ash tree on the north side of the boundary shared with the factory Sertec where the new parking bays are proposed. No objections are raised to the loss of the Ash tree and a number of smaller trees but the mature Oak trees should be retained.

Following amendments to the parking layout which would retain the Oak trees, no objections are raised to the proposal subject to a condition for the use of a No Dig Method of construction around the RPA's of the Oak trees.

## **WRS - Noise**

The application site is located on an established industrial estate and the proposal does not include any external plant or equipment. No objections are therefore raised to the application in terms of any noise or nuisance issues.

## **Waste Management**

No comments received

## **Public Consultation Response**

This application was publicised by two sites notices, a press notice and six neighbour notification letters, however no third party representations have been received as a result of this public consultation.

## **Assessment of Proposal**

### **Principle of development**

The application site lies within an area designated as a Primarily Employment Area, as defined in the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.4 (BoRLP 4). The primary aim of Policy 24 of the BoRLP 4 is to safeguard employment land for employment purposes.

Employment purposes include business, general industrial and storage and distribution. As the current proposal seeks to maintain and expand the existing warehouse for storage and distribution purposes, the principle of the proposed extension clearly accords with this policy.

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The proposal is therefore considered acceptable subject to other planning considerations including design and layout, highway matters and impact to trees.

### **Design and layout**

The rear elevation of the existing warehouse is formed of three shallow pitched gables and the proposed warehouse extension would attach to the easternmost gable, creating an inverted 'L' shaped footprint which would extend close to the western boundary of the site and the southern boundary of the site, which is shared with an adjacent industrial unit. The only public views of the extension would arise from the western boundary of the site, along Howard Road. Apart from the vehicular access, the remainder of this boundary is heavily screened with trees and vegetation, which would soften the visual impact of the extension. The section of the extension closest to the vehicular access that would be most prominent would be set back within the site.

With regards to the design of the extension, it would continue the form of the existing warehouse. The ridge height and the shallow pitch roof of the existing building would be replicated on the extension. Proposed materials would consist of brick and metal profile sheeting for elevations and metal profile sheeting for the roof; these materials would match those found on the existing building. New steel roller shutter doors are proposed on the west elevation of the extension and on the east elevation via a ramp. A number of pedestrian doors are also proposed. No changes other than those to facilitate the extension are proposed to the existing warehouse.

Policies 39 and 40 of the BoRLP 4 together require development within the borough to be of a high quality design which would integrate and contribute to the local character of the area. Having regard to the scale, design and proposed finish of the extension, and also in view of the siting and existing screening to the site, officers are satisfied that the proposal would respect the character and appearance of the area, taking into account the industrial context of the site. The proposed development would therefore accord with the relevant design policies of the local plan.

### **Highways, access and parking**

The Highways Officer has provided comments in relation to the proposal and has noted that the application site is located in an industrial estate, within a sustainable location, with good access to public transport. Howard Road itself benefits from footpaths and street lighting, which would encourage employees and visitors to walk to the site.

The Highways Officer has also noted that the site benefits from three existing vehicular access points, which all have good visibility and that a tracking circle to enable lorries to enter and leave the site in a forward gear would be provided near to the access on the west boundary of the site.

Based on the floor areas of the existing factory on the site and the proposed extension, the Highways Officer has confirmed that the 82 parking spaces shown on the proposed layout plan would be adequate. It is noted that 18 of these would be new spaces. Whilst

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the applicant has indicated that some staff would be working part time and therefore the maximum number of staff present on site at any one time would be relatively low, the Highways Officer has pointed out that the site could be sold in the future, and there may be more staff present. However, the Highways Officer has clarified that the required car parking provision has been calculated based on a “worst-case scenario” and in this case is still considered acceptable. Whilst the applicant has indicated within the application form that one additional disabled parking space would be provided, this has not been highlighted on the layout plan. The Highways Officer has therefore recommended a condition for the provision of this as well as conditions for the provision of electric vehicle charging points, cycle storage, and the laying out of the parking and turning facilities on site.

### *Planning Obligation*

In view of the additional 1,591 square metres of floor area that the proposal would provide, the Highway Authority has requested Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) contributions from the applicant amounting to £17,860.41. It has been indicated that these contributions could be used to make the following improvements:

- One new solar bus shelter at Howard Road (east side) and two new solar bus shelters at Frederick Eary House (both sides) - cost £12,860.41
- Labour improvements to include the increase of the hardstanding on the east side stop at Frederick Eary, since at present there is no footpath - cost £1500.
- New pedestrian dropped crossing on the junction of the entrance to the development and the Studley Road - cost £3500

The above contributions and improvements have been identified in accordance with the County Council’s Infrastructure Delivery Plan and the Highways Officer has stated that these improvements would benefit the proposed development due to their close proximity to the site. The applicant has agreed to enter into an obligation for these contributions.

Subject to these contributions and to the highways conditions that have been recommended, the Highways Officer raises no objections to the proposal.

### **Trees**

The new parking layout proposed within the southern parking area of the site would impact a number of existing trees. The Council's Tree Officer has confirmed that the application site is covered by Tree Preservation Order (TPO) Redditch New Town No. 25 1965. The Tree Officer has visited the site and has noted that there are currently two mature Oak trees and one Ash tree on the northern boundary of the southern car park area, which is shared with the factory Sertec. Whilst no objections were raised to the removal of the Ash tree to facilitate the additional parking spaces, the Tree Officer confirmed that he would not wish to see the removal of the mature Oak trees. In view of this, amendments were sought to the parking layout to ensure that the Oak trees were retained. The Tree Officer has raised no other concerns with the proposal, however has recommended that the trees to be retained are afforded protection through the use of a

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No Dig Method of construction around their Root Protection Areas. This recommendation can be secured by planning condition.

## **Drainage**

North Worcestershire Water Management (NWWM) have confirmed that the site falls within flood zone 1 and is not considered at risk for fluvial flooding. However, flood mapping does indicate some risk from surface water flooding. Although correctly designed drainage would mitigate any flood risk from surface water, as minimal drainage details have been provided with the application NWWM have requested a condition for the submission of a surface water drainage scheme is attached to any future permission.

## **Contaminated Land**

Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) have reviewed the proposal and have checked historical records for the site, however as they do not anticipate any ground contamination issues, they have raised no objections to the proposed development.

## **Noise**

As the application site is located on an established industrial estate and is not proposing any external plant or equipment, WRS have also raised no objections to the application on noise or nuisance grounds.

## **Residential amenity**

Given the distance to the nearest residential properties, it is not considered that there would be any detrimental impact to residential amenity. No third party representations have been received from any local residents.

## **Conclusion**

Overall, as the proposed development would maintain and expand an existing employment site within a Primarily Employment Area, would be of an acceptable design that would integrate with the appearance of the area, and would not result in any harm to residential amenity, trees, highway safety or other technical matters, the proposal is considered to accord with the policies in the Local Plan and is deemed acceptable. Subject to the completion of the planning obligation and compliance with the conditions listed below, a favourable recommendation can be made.

**That having regard to the development plan and to all other material considerations, authority be delegated to the Head of Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services to GRANT planning permission subject to:-**

- a) The satisfactory completion of a suitable legal mechanism to provide a financial contribution to Worcestershire County Council for localised improvements**

**and**

- b) Conditions and informatives as summarised below:**

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## **Conditions:**

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

Reason :- In accordance with the requirements of Section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2) The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following plans and drawings:

Existing and Proposed Block Plan and Site Location Plan - drawing no. PL007  
Proposed Floor Plan Sheet 1 of 2 - drawing no. PL003 rev A  
Proposed Floor Plan Sheet 2 of 2 - drawing no. PL004 rev A  
Proposed Elevations - drawing no. drawing no. PL006

Reason: To provide certainty to the extent of the development hereby approved in the interests of proper planning.

- 3) All new external walls and roofs shall be finished in materials to match in colour, form and texture those on the existing building.

Reason:- To ensure that the development is satisfactory in appearance, to safeguard the visual amenities of the area.

- 4) Prior to any engineering or surfacing works commencing on site a scheme for surface water drainage will be submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This scheme should be indicated on a drainage plan and the approved scheme shall be completed prior to the first use of the development hereby approved.

Reason: In order to ensure satisfactory drainage conditions that will not create or exacerbate flood risk on site or within the surrounding local area.

- 5) The Development hereby approved shall not be first used until 2 electric vehicle charging space has been provided in accordance with a specification which shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority, such spaces and power points shall be kept available and maintained for the use of electric vehicles as approved.

Reason: To encourage sustainable travel and healthy communities.

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- 6) The Development hereby approved shall not be brought into use until 1 additional accessible car parking space has been provided on site and thereafter kept available for disabled users.

Reason: To provide safe and suitable parking for all.

- 7) The Development hereby permitted shall not be first occupied until sheltered, safe, secure and accessible cycle parking to comply with Worcestershire County Council's adopted highway design guide has been provided in accordance with details which shall first be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and thereafter the approved cycle parking shall be kept available for the parking of bicycles only.

Reason: To comply with the Council's parking standards.

- 8) The Development hereby approved shall not be occupied until the parking and turning facilities have been provided in their entirety as shown on approved drawings PL003 rev A and rev PL004 A.

Reason: To ensure conformity with submitted details.

- 9) All retained trees within the site should be afforded protection in accordance with BS5837:2012 recommendations throughout any ground or development work on the site.

Reason: To protect the health of retained trees; in the interests of visual amenity.

- 10) Any works within the Root Protection Area of the two Oak trees on site, indicated as 'Tree 1' and 'Tree 2' on approved drawing PL004 rev A, shall be carried out using a No Dig Method of construction.

Reason: to protect the health and condition of the Oak trees.

### **Informative:**

Drainage arrangements shall be provided to ensure that surface water from the driveway and/or vehicular turning area does not discharge onto the public highway. No drainage or effluent from the proposed development shall be allowed to discharge into any highway drain or over any part of the public highway.

### **Procedural matters**

This application is reported to Planning Committee for determination because the application is for major development (more than 1000 sq metres of new commercial/Industrial floorspace), and because the application requires a legal agreement. As such the application falls outside the scheme of delegation to Officers.