COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL ITEM NO. 18

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 8th FEBRUARY 2017

Ward: Whitley App No.: 162108 App Type: FULL

Address: 452 Basingstoke Road

Proposal: Part retention and refurbishment of the existing Gillette building, erection of a two storey research and development building (Class B1/B8), and erection of a 190 space multi-storey car park, with associated access, surface car parking, servicing, landscaping

and engineering works.

Applicant: Proctor and Gamble Ltd Date valid: 21st November 2016

Major Application: 13 week target decision date: 20th February 2017

Agreed Extension of time: 31st March 2017

Planning Guarantee: 26 week date: 22nd May 2017

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (i) **GRANT** Full Planning Permission, subject to the satisfactory completion of a S.106 legal agreement or (ii) to REFUSE permission should the legal agreement not be completed by 31st March 2017 unless a later date is agreed by the Head of Planning Development & Regulatory Services. The S106 legal agreement to secure:
- a) Employment Skills and Training Plan for Construction: commitment to undertake in accordance with the approved ESP, in liaison with Reading UK CIC; payment of monitoring fee per agreed output as defined in the Plan
- b) Employment Skills and Training Plan for End User: commitment to undertake in accordance with approved ESP, in liaison with Reading UK CIC; payment of monitoring fee per agreed output as defined in the Plan
- b) Transport: a sum towards mitigation measures for the Bennet Road / Basingstoke Road junction

CONDITIONS TO INCLUDE:

- 1. TL1 Full time limit three years
- 2. Approved Drawings
- 3. Details and samples of all materials to be used externally. Prior to commencement.
- 4. Details of hard and soft landscaping scheme to be submitted and approved prior to commencement. Hard surfacing to be designed used SUDS principles. Soft landscaping provision prior to end of first available planting season following first occupation.
- 5. Approved tree protection measures to be implemented prior to the commencement of all works and retained until completion.
- 6. Submission of landscaping maintenance and aftercare details replacement of any failed planting within 5 years.
- 7. (i) The development as built, shall meet a minimum of BREEAM Very Good standard with a minimum score of 62.5 points. (ii) No part of the development shall be occupied until a Post- Construction review demonstrating compliance with a minimum BREEAM Very Good Standard with minimum score of 62.5 points has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- 8. Car park to be constructed prior to occupation of the proposed buildings.

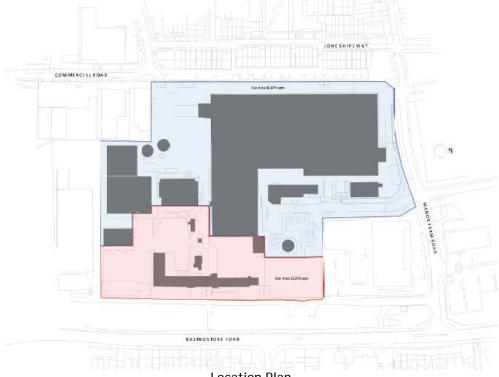
- 9. A plan to be submitted and approved to show the covered bicycle storage spaces and provided and equipped with secure Sheffield cycle stands prior to occupation of the buildings to which they relate.
- 10. Submission and approval of a Travel Plan 3 months post occupation of the buildings.
- 11. Annual review of the Travel Plan to be submitted and approved.
- 12. Altered and new access arrangements to be implemented prior to occupation in accordance with approved plans.
- 13. No development shall take place, including any works of demolition, until a Construction Method Statement has been submitted and approved in writing by the local planning authority to deal with noise, dust and highway matters during construction and demolition phases.
- 14. Noise levels from the proposed development to not exceed those as set out in the RPS 2014 Noise Assessment, as appended to the Design and Access Statement.
- 15. Hours of working construction and demolition phase.
- 16. Assessment of nature and extent of contamination to be submitted and approved
- 17. No development until a detailed contamination remediation scheme has been submitted and approved
- 18. Contamination remediation scheme to be implemented and validation report to be approved prior to construction.
- 19. Reporting of unexpected contamination.
- 20. No development shall take place until a detailed land gas site investigation has been carried out by a competent person to fully and effectively characterise the nature and extent of land gas and its implications.
- 21. No development shall take place until a scheme showing how the development is to be protected against the possibility of land gas has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- 22. The land gas remediation scheme shall be implemented in accordance with the approved timetable of works. A validation report must be submitted to the LPA.
- 23. No development shall take place until the implementation, maintenance and management plan of the sustainable drainage scheme has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.
- 24. No materials or green waste produced as a result of the clearance of the site, demolition works or construction works associated with the development hereby approved shall be burnt on site.

INFORMATIVES TO INCLUDE:

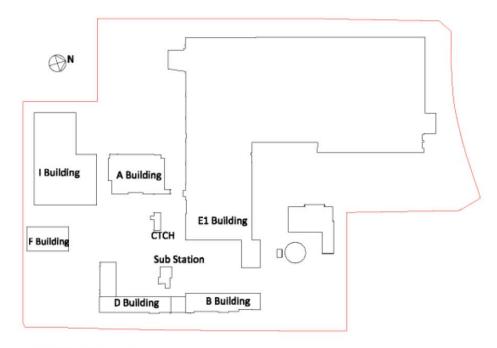
- 1. Terms and conditions.
- 2. Building regulations.
- 3. A section 106 legal agreement relates to this permission.
- 4. Pre-Commencement conditions.
- 5. Access construction.
- 6. Damage to the highway.
- 7. Works affecting the highway.
- 8. Environmental protection information regarding the control of nuisance during construction and demolition.
- 9. The Applicant is advised that the Environment Agency (EA) states that part of this site is regulated under the CoMAH regime, specifically the LPG and methanol storage areas. The EA advise that the Operator should review the possible impacts of the proposed development as part of their Management of Change procedures. In particular, this may include changes to their occupied buildings risk assessment and to their emergency plans.
- 10. For clarity condition 16 is with regard to the requirement for an onsite investigation in addition to the desk based study, the latter already submitted with the application.
- 11. Positive and proactive.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The site is to the south of Reading located on the western side of Basingstoke Rd within a commercial/industrial area, but with the established residential areas of Whitley on the opposite side of the road (to the east), two properties to the north east (nos. 444 and 446 Basingstoke Road) and newer residential development within Kennet Island further west. The application site would be accessed from a small access road, which runs parallel to Basingstoke Road.
- 1.2 The site has a long history dating back to the 1950s and currently comprises a range of low rise B1 and B8 uses as part of Proctor and Gamble's Gillette manufacturing facility. Reading is where personal care ranges are produced and there is also an R&D laboratory responsible for the front-end innovation for new razor products (testing centre). There is also staff facilities housed in a block to the centre of the site, along with a few surface level car parks. There are two existing access points from the roadway which lies parallel to Basingstoke Road, two to the north from Manor Farm Road and one from the rear at Commercial Road. These rear access points include operational access for heavy goods vehicles. The application site currently provides 176 car parking spaces.
- 1.3 The specific proposal site, which covers ca 1.5 ha of the existing site, is formed by the currently vacant three storey frontage Gillette building D (as shown on the block plan below) and the adjoining remainder of the frontage building (B) dating from 1950s, ancillary structure, surface parking and the site of the demolished building C. To the west of the application site are the two storey office building (F), office and research and development buildings (I & A) and factory/ warehousing building (E1).
- 1.4 In front of the building, adjacent to Basingstoke Road, beyond the site area, is a wide grassed amenity strip with trees, which is land owned by Reading Borough Council.
- 1.5 A request for considering the façade for local listing has been received from Councillor Eden. This was received after the submission of the application and is currently being investigated. The consideration of this is referred to within the assessment below (Section 6).
- 1.6 This application is being referred to Planning Application Committee as it falls within the Major category.



Location Plan



SITE BLOCK PLAN

Existing Block Plan

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- The proposal is to enable the relocation of Proctor and Gamble's (P&Gs) Greater 2.1 London Innovation Centre from Egham to allow consolidation of activities. In summary the proposals include:
 - Demolition of the three storey 1970s return wing (south-western) of the existing frontage building (of Building D)
 - Demolition of ground floor security building, external store, sub-station and switch room.

- The development of a new two storey building comprising remodelled and new offices, laboratories, glazed atrium to form a link between the old and new buildings and a rear Shelter (warehouse). This would be research and development office and laboratory accommodation, and associated warehousing within B1a, B1b and B8 uses totalling 6,995sqm (GIA)
- Refurbishment of the southern half of the existing frontage building (D) (i.e. to the south of the clock tower) and the façade of the northern half of the retained frontage building (B) to bring them up to modern standards for thermal insulation and services provision.
- New car parking to the south of the frontage building, in a multi-storey car park (total of 190 spaces over 8 half floors - four storeys - 4,744sqm GEA), partially replacing existing surface level parking; Surface parking on the vacant land to the north/ west of the building - 159 spaces
- Total car parking spaces within the application site = 384 (proposal would involve the relocation of the existing surface level car parking).
- Formation of a new northern vehicular access to the site.
- Ancillary plant and engineering works including switch room, generator and transformer buildings.
- Associated servicing, hard and soft landscaping works.
- Retention of trees and landscaping in front of Block D and in front of Block A.
- 2.2 The number of staff would increase from current ca 200 to a maximum of 500 (this compares to the former fully occupied Gillette site advised by the Applicant as a maximum of ca 2000).
- 2.3 The following plans and supporting documents were submitted:

Received 8th November 2016:

- Existing Site Location Plan Drawing no: 5504-1001
- Existing Topographical Site Survey Drawing no: 5504-1010
- Existing Ground Floor Plan Drawing no: 5504-1020
- Existing First Floor Plan Drawing no: 5504-1030
- Existing Second Floor Plan Drawing no: 5504-1040
- Existing Roof Plan Drawing no: 5504-1050
- Existing Front/ Left Elevations & Sections AA Drawing no: 5504-1060
- Existing Rear Elevations & Sections BB Drawing no: 5504-1070
- Proposed Site Location Plan Drawing no: 5504-2000
- Proposed Site Block Plan Drawing no: 5504-2010
- Proposed Demolition Plan Drawing no: 5504-2015
- Proposed Ground Floor Plan Drawing no: 5504-2020
- Proposed First Floor Plan Drawing no: 5504-2030
- Proposed Second Floor Plan Drawing no: 5504-2040
- Proposed Roof Plan Drawing no: 5504-2050
- Proposed Security & Site Access Plan Drawing no: 5504-2070
- Proposed Contractors Compound/Site Access Plan Drawing no: 5504-2080
- Proposed Car Park Layout Drawing no: 5504-2090
- Landscape Plan Sheet 1 of 2 Drawing no: 5504-2095
- Landscape Plan Sheet 2 of 2 Drawing no: 5504-2096
- Proposed Elevations Sheet 1 of 3 Drawing no: 5504-3000
- Proposed Elevations Sheet 2 of 3 Drawing no: 5504-3010
- Proposed Elevations Sheet 3 of 3 Drawing no: 5504-3020
- Proposed Substation and Electrical Distribution Elevations Drawing no: 5504-3030

- Proposed External Lighting Layout Drawing no:5504-E2100
- Proposed External Lighting ISO Lux Plots Drawing no: 5504-E2110
- Tree Protection Plan Drawing no: 16216-BT2

Other documentation and studies:

- Air Quality Assessment, prepared by Arup
- Arboricultural Assessment & Method Statement, prepared by Barrell Tree Consultancy
- Architectural Visualisations
- Contaminated Land Desk Study, prepare by Arup
- Design and Access Statement, prepared by DHP (UK) LLP
- Energy Strategy, prepared by Arup
- Flood Risk Assessment, prepared by ARK Environmental Consultancy Ltd
- Planning Statement, prepared by Arup
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, prepared by Arup
- Sustainability Statement, prepared by Arup
- Transport Assessment, prepared by Arup

3. PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 There has been a long history on this site dating from the 1950s. The following lists the most relevant recent applications (further detail is set out in Table 1 of the submitted Planning Statement):
 - 97/00317/FUL Refurbishment of existing warehouse and production area in phases and associated external works including temporary building - Approved subject to legal agreement 15/10/97
 - 98/01107/FUL Construction of new UKRDL research facilities and refurbishment of building 454 with modifications to associated external works and car parking arrangements - Approved subject to legal agreement 28/9/99
 - 01/01340/FUL Construction of 2 storey test facility, demolition of building 460, with modifications to associated external works and car parking arrangements Approved 6/3/02
 - 04/00730/FUL Single storey extension to the west wing of existing building B -Approved 6/8/04
 - 10/00058/FUL Demolition of store building and erection of water tank, fire screen wall and associated pump house - Approved 24/3/10
 - 11/00881/FUL Single storey extension and covered walkway -Approved 3/8/11
 - 131096 Single storey extension to reception area to create more internal space Approved 5/12/13
 - 140313 Demolition of Building C, 452 Basingstoke Road Prior approval granted 13/6/14
 - 161128/PREAPP Development of a research and development office and laboratory accommodation (Class B1) and associated warehousing (B8), demolition and alterations to existing building, and new car parking and associated hard and soft landscaping works. Observations sent 11/8/16
 - 161685/SCR EIA Screening Opinion response that the development proposed is not development likely to have significant effects on the environment and that no Environmental Statement would be required to accompany the application Opinion sent 30/9/16

4. CONSULTATIONS

(i) Statutory

Environment Agency

4.1 No objections to the proposal, but recommended an informative regarding the areas regulated under the CoMAH regime [adjacent to the application site].

HSE

4.2 The Planning Officer used the HSE's online Planning Advice Web App and the advice for the proposed scheme was "Do Not Advise Against, consequently, HSE does not advise, on safety grounds, against the granting of planning permission in this case."

(ii) Non-Statutory

Environmental Protection & Nuisance

- 4.3 The Environmental Protection officer stated that Reading has declared a significant area of the Borough as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) for the exceedance of both the hourly and annual mean objectives for nitrogen dioxide. In addition to this recent epidemiologic studies have shown that there is no safe level for the exposure to particulate matter PM10. The proposed large scale development has the potential for significant traffic generation located adjacent to an air quality management area and has the potential to increase emissions. An assessment and/or mitigation measures should be provided as part of the application. The developers have submitted an assessment and have concluded that the development will have a negligible impact, therefore no condition is required.
- 4.4 The Officer has also provided comments regarding contamination land and land gas as follows: Where development is proposed, the developer is responsible for ensuring that it is safe and suitable for use for the intended purpose or can be made so by remedial action.
- 4.5 The development lies on the site of an historic engineering works and next to manor Farm Landfill which has the potential to have caused contaminated land.
- 4.6 Ideally a 'phase 1' desk study should be submitted with applications for developments on sites with potential contamination to give an indication as to the likely risks and to determine whether further investigation is necessary. They have submitted a contaminated land desk study, however, this identifies potential pollutant pathways so a site investigation is required. Recommended conditions are required to ensure that future occupants are not put at undue risk from contamination.
- 4.7 A number of contamination related conditions are recommended as included in the recommendations section above.
- 4.8 The Officer also refers to the fact that the proposed development is within 250m of a former landfill the below and therefore land gas conditions are also recommended, as set out in the recommendations section above.
- 4.9 The Officer also recommended conditions on the control of noise and dust (a construction method statement to be submitted), hours of working and no bonfires on site. These are included above.

Natural Environment - Trees and Ecology

4.10 The Natural Environment Officer's comments were as follows: "The applicant has submitted a belt and braces report supporting the loss of 17 of the 19 trees surveyed within the site. In addition the report details a method statement required for the protection and retention of two small apple trees on site. These two trees offer very little to the amenity of Basingstoke Road and have little

potential for future growth. Realistically given the pressures of the development site, these small trees would not be a significant constraint on development and I think it unrealistic to make any great effort and expense to retain the trees.

- 4.11 My colleague Sarah Hanson in her pre-application comments for this site stressed the importance for new planting as part of any redevelopment of the site. The proposed planting of eight new trees would not suffice to mitigate the removal of 17 (maybe 19) of the trees on site. We would look to achieve a minimum replanting scheme of 1:1 for the trees removed but ideally more. This can include planting in the new car park areas to the north of the site and in the verge where appropriate running adjacent to the eastern boundary with Basingstoke Road. New planting in this urban environment will require specially engineered planting pits to ensure the successful establishment of the trees in this area and prevent damage to areas of hard standing from tree root growth.
- 4.12 If planning permission is granted we will require conditions:
 - Pre-commencement submission and approval of landscaping details to include tree and shrub planting, tree planting pits, post planting maintenance plan etc. (standard condition). An acceptable scheme of landscaping will include a minimum of 1:1 replacement tree planting for the felled trees within the site particularly on the frontage with Basingstoke Road. New trees could also be included in the new parking area to the north of the site.
 - Approved tree protection measures to be implemented prior to the commencement of all works on site and retained until completion.
 - Soft landscaping to be implemented in the first planting season etc. (standard condition).
 - Replacement planting for anything that dies within 5 years of planting.
- 4.13 The Ecology comments are awaited and will be reported in an update.

Office for Nuclear Regulation

4.14 The scale and location of the proposed development is such that ONR do not advise against this application unless the emergency planners at West Berkshire Council which is responsible for the preparation of the Burghfield off-site emergency plan required by the Radiation Emergency Preparedness and Public Information Regulations (REPPIR) 2001 state that, in their opinion, the proposed development cannot be accommodated within their off-site emergency planning arrangements.

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS)

4.15 The Officer states that a SuDs report has been submitted to accompany the application and this has identified that attenuation tanks accommodating 106m³ will be provided to reduce surface water run-off. The discharge rate has not been fully specified but it has been stated as being the greenfield run off rate which has been deemed acceptable. I therefore have no objections to the SuDs proposal subject to conditions.

Thames Water

4.16 Please be advised that we will not be pursuing an agreement to build within 3 metres of a public sewer/ 1m of a lateral drain for 162108 452 Basingstoke Road RG2 0QE. Although the site itself does not have mapped sewers; This Gillette site we believe to be privately drained. If this is incorrect and the site owner does encounter a public sewer or lateral drain within 3 metres of their building work they must ensure that they comply with the specifications in our Appendix. They must also contact Thames Water so that we can update the public sewer record and pursue an agreement.

Transport

- 4.17 The Transport officer stated that the site is located in South Reading outside of the Town Centre Area but is located within close proximity to frequent premier bus routes to and from the Town Centre Area.
- 4.18 During the pre-application discussions it was agreed that a Transport Assessment (TA) should accompany any planning application. My comments on this are as follows:

Trip Rates

- 4.19 The Trip Rate Information Computer System (TRICS) has been used to calculate the proposed trip generation and I am happy with this approach.
- 4.20 The site has been assessed as being an office for the whole site as this would constitute a worst case scenario and in principle has been deemed acceptable.
- 4.21 The applicant has utilized the 85th Percentile instead of the average over all the selected sites, the TRICS Good Practice Guide does not suggest this as a suitable assessment when less than 20 sites have been selected. Only 10 sites have been selected by the applicant and therefore this could result in a skewed trip rate.
- 4.22 I have reviewed the TRICS database and I do not believe that site SC-02-A-16 is comparable to the application site in terms of parking provision and should therefore be removed, leaving just 9 sites. Given the TRICS Good Practice Guide the trip rate data should be assessed utilizing the average trip rate over the remaining 9 sites which equates to the below data:

Table 1: RBC Trip Rate Data

	AM Peak Hour (08:00-09:00)			PM Peak Hour (17:00-18:00)		
	In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total
Vehicles	59	5	64	3	48	51

- 4.23 These trips rates would be comparable to the application site and would be accepted especially as they are representative of all office trips that would be a worst case scenario.
- 4.24 The trip rate data supplied within the Transport Assessment can be seen in the table below:

Table 2: Applicant Trip Rate Data

	AM Peak Hour (08:00-09:00)			PM Peak Hour (17:00-18:00)		
	In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total
Vehicles	108	0	108	11	76	87

- 4.25 As can be seen the 85th percentile results in a higher result and there is the anomaly that no vehicles exit the site in the AM Peak which would not be a comparable assessment.
- 4.26 Given that the proposed trip rates are in excess of those I am happy with in principle I am happy that the development has been satisfactorily assessed.

Junction Assessments

4.27 As agreed with the applicant at the pre-application meeting on 13th June 2016, traffic surveys were requested for the following junctions:

- B3031 Basingstoke Road/Bennet Road;
- Service road/Bennet Road;
- B3031 Basingstoke Road/Hartland Road/Acre Road;
- B3031 Basingstoke Road/Whitley Wood Lane/Imperial Way;
- · Commercial Road/Bennet Road; and
- B3031 Basingstoke Road/Manor Farm Road.
- 4.28 Manual classified turning counts with queue lengths were carried out at the above junctions and this has fed into the junction assessments. These assessments have identified that the junctions are currently within capacity but the B3031 Basingstoke Road/Bennet Road Junction is close to capacity.
- 4.29 Future years have been assessed included 2018 and 2026, this would comply with assessment criteria. The assessment of future years identifies that all of the junctions still remain operating within capacity apart from the B3031 Basingstoke Road/Bennet Road signalized Junction. This junction exceeds capacity in 2018 and 2026 without development, therefore the proposed development worsens this situation. The tables at Appendix E highlight that extensive queues and delays would be generated following development on each of the arms of the junction. However, as can be seen above the trip rate data used by the applicant is in excess of that the Highway Authority would be happy with therefore there is some scope to reduce the impact on the junction.
- 4.30 At present it is likely that some form of mitigation to reduce this impact would be required, however any reduced impact as a result of the updated trip rates in Table 1 above could remove or reduce any mitigation measure required by the developer.
- 4.31 The above will therefore need to be addressed.

Access

- 4.32 Access to the site is currently gained from a two-way service road originating from Bennet Road, approximately 230m to the south, which runs parallel with the B3031 Basingstoke Road. The egress point is located 70m south of the access point along the same service road.
- 4.33 Access to and egress from the visitors' car park has different arrangements, with visitors entering and exiting via at the same point.
- 4.34 The new access arrangements include the provision of the retained existing access / egress for the southern car park and a new in / out arrangement for the northern car park. The existing access point for the northern car park will require modifying and the proposed design is acceptable. A completely new access is also required to provide the exit from this parking area.
- 4.35 During the pre-application discussions it was agreed that access to a small number of parking spaces could be provided north of the bollards, located on the service road, however the submitted plan (drawing 2096 P0) illustrates the access located north of the bollards is the exit for a parking area that accommodates 159 car parking spaces. This is an unacceptable amount of parking to be accessed from this point and could result in staff rat running through the site and the adjacent residential areas via Manor Farm Road. A revised access and parking layout is therefore required illustrating a reduced parking number that could be served from the northern access point. This could be achieved by segregating a number of the parking spaces.

- 4.36 The access located to the north of Block B will require alteration to reduce its width. Given my points above the access should be a minimum of 4.1m in width so that it can accommodate two-way movement.
- 4.37 An additional access point is retained for servicing the site and this is deemed acceptable.

Parking

- 4.38 The application site currently provides a total of 311 car parking spaces, of which 280 are for staff and 31 for visitors. This includes seven accessible (disabled) parking spaces for staff and one accessible (disabled) parking space for visitors.
- 4.39 The applicants undertook a parking survey of its on-site facilities in March 2016. On the day of the survey, out of the 260 employees working at the Reading site, 231 were present and the maximum occupancy of the car park was 183.
- 4.40 Although 280 existing spaces are reserved for employees, the maximum occupancy rate of the car park is 79.2% (183 parked vehicles / 231 staff on site), with a minimum of 97 extra spaces not used and available at all times for employees.
- 4.41 The proposal includes the relocation of the 250 employees from Egham to the Reading site, applying the same staff attendance rate of 88.9%, it is predicted that, on average, $88.9\% \times 250 = 222$ relocated staff would be on site on any given day.
- 4.42 Given the existing car mode share of 79.2%, the applicants have predicted that the 222 relocated staff present on site on any given day would require a maximum of 176 car parking spaces. The car mode share of 79.2% indicates that not all existing staff drive to the site and therefore reflects that parts of the existing staff make use of other modes of transport to commute. It is likely that the new, relocated staff would follow the same travel patterns as the existing employees based in Reading.
- 4.43 I would be happy to utilise both sets of survey data results mentioned above to calculate a parking provision for the site but these would need to be included within the application documents.
- 4.44 The car mode share calculated from the survey data is also in line with the 2011 Census data for Area E33039773 which records a mode share of 73.4% that includes the P&G wider site and some adjacent businesses.
- 4.45 By utilising the survey data the total required provision for the whole Reading site post-relocation would therefore amount to 183 + 176 = 359 spaces. The current number of visitor car parking spaces would also be re-provided, i.e. 31 spaces, bringing the total number of required parking spaces to 390.
- 4.46 However, the applicants have undertaken an additional assessment given the above calculation is solely based on a staff attendance rate derived from a one-day survey. Attendance may vary and may as well increase depending on circumstances. Assuming a worst-case situation where all future staff would be present on site, i.e. 510 employees, and still applying a car mode share of 79.2%, it is expected that 510 × 79.2% = 404 car parking spaces would be required. Taking account of visitor parking, a total of 435 spaces would be needed to accommodate future demand. Again this figure would be acceptable subject to the receipt of the survey data.

- 4.47 Irrespective of the above the development proposals provide for a provision of 541 spaces. This figure breaks down into 510 spaces, one space per future member of staff, and an additional 31 spaces, re-provided for visitors (as per the existing situation). P&G has indicated that, on regular occasions, all staff are gathered on site and this provision would help ensure demand can be met at all times.
- 4.48 This proposed provision has been compared with RBC's car parking standards. The Councils maximum car parking standards would require a provision of an additional 191 spaces resulting in a total provision of 502 spaces.
- 4.49 The applicants have however proposed an uplift of 230 spaces (bringing the total number of spaces to 230 + 311 = 541) this is in excess of the Councils maximum car parking standards. This level of parking has been to address RBC's concerns about any potential, albeit infrequent, overspill on local streets, in the event of all 510 staff being on site at the same time.
- 4.50 As stated above I would be happy to review the survey data with the aim of utilizing it to formulate the parking numbers. Given that the assessment of the B3031 Basingstoke Road / Bennet Road junction identifies that it exceeds capacity following development a reduction of 151 parking spaces is likely to have a positive impact on the assessment of the junction.
- 4.51 At Point 4.5 of the TA it states that little on-street parking is available in the vicinity of the site. All roads have double-yellow lines (including Bennet Road and the service road), thus deterring parking, however extensive on street parking is available within the residential areas of South Reading located on the east of the B3031 Basingstoke Road. It is therefore important that the parking levels proposed are sufficient to ensure that overspill parking does not occur but I am happy that the level of parking proposed would be sufficient.
- 4.52 I do however have a query given that the proposed car parking layout plan (drawing number 5504 2090 P/0) states a provision of 380 car parking spaces. This does not tie up with any of the car parking provisions detailed above and therefore a revised drawing should be provided illustrating the full provision of parking.
- 4.53 I would stress that although drawing number 5504 2090 P/O states 380 parking spaces the drawing itself actually illustrates 384 parking spaces. This should be reviewed and the correct number of spaces illustrated.
- 4.54 The car parking spaces illustrated are to the correct dimensions and provide suitable manoeuvrability.
- 4.55 Application of the Councils cycle parking standards would result in the cycle parking provision of 44 cycle parking spaces and this has been deemed acceptable. It is stated that these will be provided within a secure and covered store but none of the submitted plans illustrate the location of any of this cycle parking. Given the size of the site I am happy that this can be dealt with by way of a condition.

Servicing

4.56 The proposals provide for one loading bay in the service yard area. While this is below the maximum standards however this has been agreed given that a vehicle swept path analysis has been undertaken to show servicing vehicles could manoeuvre and dwell within the site without blocking back onto the public highway.

- 4.57 An overview travel plan has been submitted and is acceptable. A full travel plan will be required but I am happy for this to be dealt with by way of a condition.
- 4.58 Please ask the applicant to address the above points by way of amended plans / information prior to determining the application.

S106

4.59 It is likely that a \$106 requirement will be required towards mitigation measures for the Bennet Road / Basingstoke Road junction but until the assessments of the junctions have been reviewed I am unable to determine what level of contribution would be required.

(iii) Public Consultation

4.60 The following addresses were consulted and no responses have been received: 397-463 (odd) Basingstoke Road; 444-448A (even) Basingstoke Road; White, James & Son Engineering Co Ltd, Commercial Road; Andy Truc Ltd, Commercial Road; Parceline Ltd, Commercial Road; 2 Callington Road.

5. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

- 5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'.
- 5.2 The following national and local planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

National Planning Policy Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Reading Borough Local Development Framework Core Strategy Document (2008, altered 2015).

CS1: Sustainable Construction and Design

CS2: Waste Minimisation

CS3: Social Inclusion and Diversity

CS4: Accessibility and Intensity of Development

CS5: Inclusive Access

CS7: Design and the Public Realm

CS9: Infrastructure, Services, Resources and Amenities

CS10: Location of Employment Development

CS13: Impact of Employment Development

CS16: Affordable Housing

CS20: Implementation of Reading Transport Strategy

CS22: Transport Assessments

CS23: Sustainable Travel

CS24: Car / Cycle parking

CS34: Pollution and Water Resources

CS36: Biodiversity and Geology

CS38: Trees, Hedges and Woodland

Reading Borough Local Development Framework: Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012, altered 2015)

SD1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

DM1: Adaptation to Climate Change

DM2: Decentralised Energy DM3: Infrastructure Planning DM4: Safeguarding Amenity

DM12: Access, Traffic and Highway-related Matters

DM18: Tree Planting DM19: Air Quality

DM20: Hazardous Installations SA12: Core Employment Areas

Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents

Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011) Revised Sustainable Design and Construction (2011) Employment, Skills and Training (2013) Planning Obligations Under \$106, April 2015 Affordable Housing (2013)

6. APPRAISAL

(i) Principle of Development

6.1 The development for B1 and B8 uses is acceptable in principle in this location as it is within a Core Employment Area under Policy SA12, within the Council's Sites and Detailed Policies Document, subject to meeting other policy requirements and other material considerations.

(ii) <u>Design, Appearance & Scale</u>

- 6.2 Councillor Eden has submitted a request that the façade of the frontage building (Referred to by P&G as buildings B and D) be considered for local listing, and this was received during the course of this application period. This is currently being investigated; however this application assessment does include consideration of the proposal with regard to building D (part to the south of the clock tower) and B facades, in the context of the local listing request.
- 6.3 Building D is believed to have been constructed in 1950s and along with the clock tower and building B, forms a distinctive, largely original and identifiable part of the site, well known within the local area. The side return extension, at the southern end, is believed to have been constructed in the 1970s. submitted proposal includes the retention and refurbishment of the façade of Building D and its overall refurbishment, and the façade, of Building B. For the façade it is proposed to replace the windows with new windows that would match the style and appearance. However, it should be noted that the original windows are likely to have been crittal windows, but those currently in situ are a replacement of the original ones, believed to be aluminium. Two areas of roof plant are proposed at each end of Building D, set back from the front (eastern) building edges by 1.2 m at a total height of 2m, with perforated roof cladding system to screen the roof plant. This was originally proposed as a dark grey finish, and following comments from the Planning Officer regarding overall impact on the appearance of the original frontage buildings this will be amended to a light grey. Officers have asked the Applicant to also consider siting this roof plant further back. Any amendments will be reported in an update.

- 6.4 Building D has been vacant for many years and this scheme would involve an extensive refurbishment and renovation programme to enable new office space and meeting rooms to be provided. The proposed fabric improvements, to bring the building up to modern required standards, include the following: replacement of windows with powder coated aluminium same style and appearance as existing; upgrading of the roof to improve thermal properties. The existing security single storey building located between the two wings and the infill areas to the right hand entrance would be demolished, with an existing column, set back from the front elevation, and the existing under croft opened up, with new steel gates to match existing. This access is proposed to be used for the collection and delivery of materials to the new shelter building. An amended drawing is due to be submitted to provide a clearer image of this proposal. A request has been made by officers that the gates match the existing ones in this location. These matters will be reported in an update. To the far end of building B a new access to a proposed surface level car park is proposed.
- 6.5 The new buildings comprise the following:
- 6.6 Atrium This would connect the existing frontage building to the proposed new buildings. This is proposed to be the same height as Building D, and would follow the same building line as the southern end of it. It would be constructed with a modern structural glazing system and include roof lights. It is proposed with a relatively simple design, which is considered to provide an 'understated' and open look transition building between the old and the new, as well as providing a functional space.
- 6.7 New laboratory and offices - This would be to the west of the Atrium (behind) and would maintain the height of the existing building, but would project This projection, being set well back in the site is not further forward. considered to detrimentally detract from the dominant form of Buildings D and B. The building would have brickwork at ground floor to tie in with the original buildings. The building would have an external façade of a grey cladding system, contemporary in design, which would provide a contrast in materials to Buildings D and B, appropriate within the commercial setting and the other buildings on site and surrounding area, but would reflect the horizontal emphasis of the existing buildings. The roof plant includes stainless steel exhaust extract chimneys, largely screened with a 2.5m high blue perforated cladding system, to help reduce noise from the equipment. The plant is set in from the roof edge to reduce the overall height when viewed from ground level. Although the proposed chimneys would project above the main level of the existing buildings D and B, as they are located so far back in the site they would be relatively unobtrusive as structures and would not detrimentally detract from the original buildings.
- 6.8 Circulation space This would be a feature brick faced structure to reflect materials used in the existing buildings. Although slightly higher than them it would not be visible when viewed from the front (east), as it would be no higher than the roof plant of the section of building in front of it (the new lab and offices).
- 6.9 The Shelter This would contain general storage, waste management office facilities and climate chambers for product development. This is proposed to be clad in composite wall panelling system in powder blue to match the existing cladding to the rear of the existing buildings. The roof plant would be enclosed by profiled cladding 2.5m high. An enclosed delivery bay is included to the north side of the building accessible via an external ramp located off the existing through road.

- 6.10 Multi-storey car park The proposed materials would be a steel frame with polyester powder coated mesh infill panels. These horizontal panels would reflect the lines of the brickwork of the existing buildings. The main body of the car park building would be at the same height as the existing buildings. Two taller brick faced towers are proposed, for the lift/ stair cores and the easternmost one would depict architectural elements present in the existing buildings D & B.
- 6.11 The site has very little room for expansion and adaptations and it is considered that the proposal has responded well to the existing site constraints and ongoing operational requirements. Each area of the overall new building has its own form and massing, which breaks up elevations and provides visual interest, using a limited, but acceptable palette of materials.
- 6.12 In general terms the new buildings would have a horizontal emphasis, considered to reflect and successfully complement the existing frontage buildings. The overall scale of the proposed buildings is considered acceptable within the context of the site and neighbouring commercial buildings. Any higher elements are set well back and are limited.
- 6.13 Use of alternative and complementary materials to the elevations of the proposed buildings is considered an acceptable approach and provides a contrast which is evident in other nearby building and suitable for a commercial setting. It would provide some colour and visual interest, without detrimentally affecting the overall character of the frontage building or the wider area.
- 6.14 The proposal is considered to accord with policy CS7 of the adopted Core Strategy.

(iii) Residential Amenity

- 6.15 The closest properties to the application site are about 70m away and are on the opposite side of Basingstoke Road. 444 and 446 Basingstoke Road, to the northeast of the site are some 190m from the nearest part of the proposal area. The area is characterised by a range of vehicular activity within this mixed residential/ commercial setting, as well as the presence of street lights and significant lighting at the commercial premises.
- 6.16 The DAS identifies that the site currently operates on a near 24hr, 7 days a week basis, with the majority of noise produced by HGV movements from the dispatch end of the main building travelling along the site boundary with housing within Kennet Island to the west. It also states that there are a number of existing fixed noise sources along that western elevation e.g. chillers, flue extracts, boiler room, transformers etc.
- 6.17 In 2008, 2011 and 2014 noise impact assessment reports were prepared by RPS for P&G. The latest (2014) is appended to the DAS. No new assessment of the proposed externally mounted plant has been undertaken alongside this planning submission, but the DAS states that it is P&G's intention that none of the new plant would exceed the levels, determined in the report, to the surrounding areas. All new externally mounted plant will be contained within acoustically treated enclosures. A condition is included requiring the noise levels from the development to not exceed the levels set out in the 2014 Noise Assessment.
- 6.18 The use of the front for deliveries and access to a multi-storey car park would generate additional traffic movements to the east of the building including delivery vehicles, potentially in the early hours when the background traffic

levels on Basingstoke Road and other roads would be expected to be much lighter. It is recommended therefore that a restriction is placed on the hours of use for deliveries of the front entrance (opened up as part of this proposal). This is being considered by the Applicant and will be reported in an update.

- 6.19 To the far end of building B it is proposed that the surface level car parking will be accessed from the northern end of the service road. This could raise issues of increased noise and disturbance, however, a concern regarding the level of parking provision to be accessed from this location, has been raised by Transport and a request made for an amended proposal. This is addressed in the Transport section below.
- 6.20 The control of noise and disturbance during construction is briefly referred to in the DAS, but a condition requiring the submission of a CMS is recommended, which includes this.
- 6.21 In order to alleviate light spill from car headlights facing Basingstoke Road the multi-storey car park includes solid infill panels.
- 6.22 Subject to the recommended conditions above the location and scale of the proposed development and its operation, to the front of the site (east) are not considered to raise any significant residential amenity concerns with regard to noise and disturbance nor light pollution, particularly in the context of the site's former capacity up to 2000 employees, and it is therefore considered to accord with Policy DM4.

(iv) <u>Transport and Access</u>

- 6.23 A Transport Assessment including a Travel Plan has been submitted. Transport highlights that the tables at Appendix E of the Assessment show that extensive queues and delays would be generated following development on each of the arms of the junction. As detailed in the Transport comments above the trip rate data used by the applicant is in excess of that the Highway Authority would be happy with, and therefore there is some scope to reduce the impact on the junction.
- 6.24 Some form of mitigation to reduce this impact would be required, likely through a site-related \$106 contribution, however any reduced impact as a result of the updated trip rates could remove or reduce any mitigation measure required by the developer. A potential reduced number of car parking spaces, as referred to below, could also impact positively on the impact assessment. This will need to be addressed and will be reported in an update.
- 6.25 In terms of site access and egress points there are three main vehicular entrances the provision of the retained existing access / egress for the southern car park and a new in / out arrangement for the northern car park. The existing access point for the northern car park will require modifying and the proposed design is acceptable. An amended drawing has been requested and will be reported in an update. A completely new access is also required to provide the exit from this parking area.
- 6.26 Deliveries and collections would be via an opened up entrance between Buildings D and B. Pedestrian, visitor and emergency vehicle access routes would largely remain as the existing situation.
- 6.27 During the pre-application discussions it was agreed that the northern access would be for access to a small number of parking spaces, north of the bollards, located on the service road. The submitted plan illustrates the access serving 159 car parking spaces and Transport considers that this amount of parking is an unacceptable

- amount of parking to be accessed from this point. A revised access and parking layout has been requested. This will be reported in an update report.
- 6.28 In terms of the overall number of car parking spaces Transport suggests that the total to be provided across the site, identified as 541, an uplift of 230 from the existing provision, although in accord with standards, would exceed them. Indeed using the survey data the Applicant has provided to formulate parking numbers, would lead to the requirement for fewer car parking spaces, which would be likely to have a positive impact on the assessment of the junction.
- 6.29 There would be one loading bay, which would not meet the Council's standard, however it has been demonstrated that service vehicles could manoeuvre and dwell within the site without blocking back onto the public highway, and is considered acceptable.
- 6.30 Application of the Councils cycle parking standards would result in the cycle parking provision of 44 cycle parking spaces and this has been deemed acceptable. The submitted information states that these will be provided within a secure and covered store but none of the plans illustrate the location of these. A condition is recommended.
- 6.31 Subject to the conditions and mitigation (potentially through \$106) it is considered that the proposals are acceptable in respect of highway safety, vehicle parking, servicing and accessibility in accordance with Policies CS5, CS20, CS24 and DM12.

(v) Landscaping & Ecology

- 6.32 The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal concluded that buildings and hardstanding dominate the site. It is proposed that trees that would be removed would be replaced, and the Natural Environment officer has recommended a condition requiring 1:1 replacement, which is included above. The Officer was supportive of the proposals which include native landscaping including trees shrubs and ground flora and this would be included within the strip to the front of the development within the site area.
- 6.33 No evidence of roosting bats was found. Ecological enhancements have been incorporated into the proposed development. The Ecologists comments are awaited and will be reported in an update.
- 6.34 The proposals are considered to accord with Policy CS36, CS38 and DM18.

(vi) Environmental Issues and Sustainability

- 6.35 The site is located within the Air Quality Management Area (Policy DM19). An Air Quality Assessment was submitted and the Environmental Protection and Nuisance Officer has confirmed that as this concludes that the development would have a negligible impact no conditions are required in this regard.
- Adjacent to the application site, but within the wider P&G site, there is a Major Hazards Site (Policy DM20). This relates to its status as a lower tier Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) site where flammable gases are stored in relation to Gillette product manufacture and testing. This would remain unaffected by the current proposal. The Health and Safety Executive and the Environment Agency, who together form the statutory body of the COMAH Competent Authority, provide specialist advice to the Borough on matters relating to hazardous sites. Both were consulted and have raised no objection. The Environment provided advice in this regard and an informative is recommended above.

- 6.37 The Sustainability Statement summarises the targets, which the development seeks to achieve under the headings of management, health and wellbeing, energy transport, water, materials, waste, land use and ecology and innovation (as required under BREEAM assessment).
- 6.38 In terms of responding to Policy DM1 which seeks that proposals incorporate measures to adapt to climate change the design response, set out, is as follows:
 - The orientation of buildings is determined by the existing buildings to be retained, however the existing building and proposed Shelter building would provide physical protection from direct sunlight and prevailing wind to the east and west elevations.
 - The refurbished D Block would have new insulation to the roof and walls to provide thermal performance to meet current standards and windows would be double glazed.
 - New buildings would be constructed to meet current standards to achieve all thermal performance regulations, and the external cladding colour chosen as light grey to reflect solar gain.
- 6.39 Adopted policy CS1 requires larger non-residential developments (i.e. above 1000sqm) as a minimum to achieve a BREEAM score of 62.5%. It is intended that the proposal would achieve a minimum final BREEAM in line with the policy requirements, but the target would be a score of 67.2. A pre-assessment estimator is provided. A condition is recommended requiring a post-construction review to demonstrate that this level has been achieved.
- 6.40 The Sustainable Design and Construction Statement (Section 6 of the DAS) sets out a comprehensive summary of the sustainability measures and identifies for example that the development has been designed as a simple modular steel structural frame that will permit flexibility and adaptability for change in its use, and the main structure is designed to be 100% recyclable. It also sets out sustainable measures during construction such as sourcing local materials where possible and from sustainable sources, reclamation and recycling of materials where salvageable. It also refers to P&Gs policy regarding generating zero landfill.
- 6.41 The submitted Energy Strategy follows the energy hierarchy: Priority 1 Energy Conservation and Energy Efficiency; Priority 2 Exploitation of Low Carbon Technologies and Priority 3- Exploitation of renewables, sustainable sources of energy. In accordance with RBC policy requirements a 20% carbon saving would be achieved by a combination of improved building fabrics and the introduction of renewable energy systems. The reduction in energy consumption and carbon emissions would enable the achievement of 6 out of 10 credits for BREEAM.
- 6.42 With regard to SUDS this is documented in the Flood Risk Assessment and within the DAS. In summary this would include attenuating rainwater by storing in tanks for general release, and discharging rainwater into surface water sewer. The current site has direct, unattenuated run-off to the surface water sewer system, and the proposal would result in a net reduction of surface area which would produce run-off directly discharging into the surface water sewer. The SUDS officer considers the proposals acceptable subject to conditions as included in the recommendations above.
- 6.43 The measures proposed are considered to comply with policies CS1, CS2, SD1, DM1, and DM2 which cover sustainability.
 - (vii) Access

6.44 Policy CS5: Inclusive Access, requires that all developments should be located, sited and designed to be accessible for all potential users including disabled people, so that they can use them safely and easily. The DAS includes an Access Statement, at Section 4 which comprehensively identifies the measures included as part of the proposal to meet the requirements of this policy.

(viii) <u>Infrastructure Provision (Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy</u> (CIL))

6.45 Policies CS9 and DM3 set out the principles for ensuring that developments provide for relevant infrastructure and mitigate their impacts.

Employment, Skills and Training

6.46 Specifically in this case there is a requirement for contributions or a commitment to preparing an Employment Skills Plan (ESP) for employment, skills and training for construction and end user employment, as set out in the Council's SPD. Section 5 of the Planning Statement includes the proposed Heads of Terms. Section 5.1.4 identifies the Applicant's ESP, which has been discussed and agreed in liaison with Reading (UK) CIC (providing the Council's Economic Development role). The commitment to undertake the scheme in accordance with the ESPs and to pay the required monitoring fee, as set out in the SPD are included as recommended S106 obligations above.

Affordable Housing

- 6.47 Policy CS13: Impact of Employment Development is intended to secure mitigation measures in line with the development's impact on the demand for housing (including affordable housing) as well as skills and transport. The Affordable Housing SPD specifically details this as affordable housing contributions will be sought as part of major commercial proposals involving significant *net additional employment* for B1 (a) office development of greater than 2500sqm, and for other B1 uses this will involve higher floorspaces applying relevant employment densities.
- 6.48 Although the overall proposal is for over 2,500sqm, having reviewed the proposed scheme further the net additional employment for B1a, taking into account demolition and excluding stair cores, servicing areas etc, would be much less than 2,500sqm. The remainder of the proposal would be for B1 (b) Research and Development and B8. The Planning Statement identifies that P&G anticipate that approximately 250 jobs will be relocated to the site from Egham, and that the proposals should be viewed in the context of the previous much higher employment numbers on the site; up to 2000. It is not considered that this proposal would generate significant net additional employment and therefore no contributions are sought to affordable housing.

Transport

6.49 As set out in the transport section above it is likely that some form of mitigation will be required to address issues regarding the extensive queues and delays which would be generated by the development, based on the current data and numbers of car parking spaces. A transport obligation is currently included in the recommendation, but further details will be reported in an update.

CIL

6.50 Although the proposed scheme would be CIL liable development, B1 office development in this location attracts a zero CIL charge in the Borough, and therefore there would be no CIL payable for this scheme.

(ix) **Equality**

- 6.51 In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the current application) that the protected groups have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application.
- 6.52 In terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The application site is in a sustainable location and presents an opportunity to maximise and make efficient use of this sustainable site, would bring vacant buildings back into use and would provide for enhanced employment facilities for the ongoing operation of this key employment site in Reading.
- 7.2 The proposals would provide for a sustainable and high quality scheme which would retain the existing frontage building and develop new buildings in a contemporary, but sympathetic design.
- 7.3 Any impacts of the scheme would be mitigated through specific measures and S106 obligations.
- 7.4 As a sustainable development, which accords with the relevant national and local planning policy and other material considerations the application is recommended for approval, subject to the completion of a \$106 legal agreement.

Case Officer: Alison Amoah

APPENDIX 1: APPLICATION DRAWINGS & IMAGES



Proposed Scheme superimposed on aerial view



Visualisation - for illustration purposes only

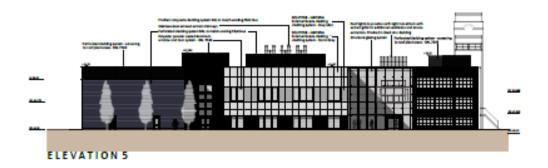
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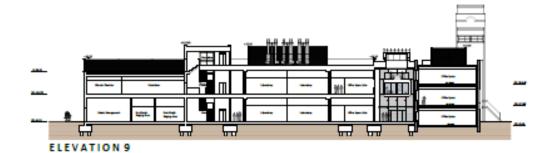
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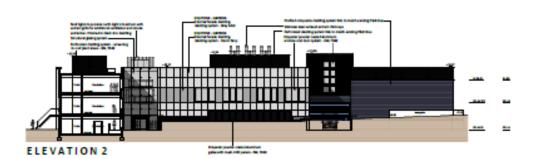
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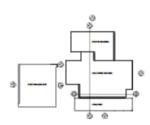
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PLANNING



