

<b>APPLICATION NO.</b>	<a href="#">P16/V1231/FUL</a>
<b>APPLICATION TYPE</b>	FULL APPLICATION
<b>REGISTERED</b>	18.5.2016
<b>PARISH</b>	SUTTON COURTENAY
<b>WARD MEMBER(S)</b>	Janet Shelley Reg Waite Gervase Duffield
<b>APPLICANT</b>	CLowes Developments (UK) Ltd
<b>SITE</b>	Land at the former Didcot A Power Station Purchase Road Didcot, OX11
<b>PROPOSAL</b>	Erection of a building for storage and distribution (B8) with access parking, landscaping and surface water attenuation.
<b>AMENDMENTS</b>	None
<b>GRID REFERENCE</b>	450527/191594
<b>OFFICER</b>	Stuart Walker

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**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This application seeks permission for the erection of a building for Storage and Distribution (B8) use at the former Didcot A Power Station. The application represents the first phase of the comprehensive redevelopment of the wider Didcot A site (P15/V1808/O refers) and comes to committee as it is a large scale major application.
- 1.2 The application site is approximately 5.86 hectares in area and comprises part of the former power station site which was previously used for open storage of coal. The site is located on the western part of the former Didcot A station site with Didcot B power station (still operational) located to the north. The site is accessed from the west with a road connection to Milton Road to the south. A site location plan is **attached** at appendix 1.

**2.0 PROPOSAL**

- 2.1 The proposed development is for a B8 Storage and Distribution use warehouse with ancillary offices. The warehouse has a total gross internal area of 20,116m<sup>2</sup> (21,526ft<sup>2</sup>) whilst the offices total 2,247m<sup>2</sup> (24,186ft<sup>2</sup>) arranged over three floors.
- 2.2 The main warehouse is designed as a steel portal frame which contains 3 no. portals. Each of the portals is designed with barrel vault curved roofs, with 2 no. valleys being formed. The offices are designed with a central main curved roof section in the middle and feature sections at either end of the offices. The main warehouse portal frame is to have a haunch height of 20m which gives a total height to ridge of 24.5m from FFL. The feature corners to the offices have a total ridge height of 16.7m above FFL. The external materials to the building are a high quality metal cladding, with a mixture of built up cladding and composite cladding panels and large areas of glazing.
- 2.3 Access to the site is via an existing road accessed from Milton Road, with a new road then being formed to provide access into the site. There are a total of 300 no. car parking spaces proposed which include 6 no. disabled spaces. The number of spaces is an operational requirement of the new occupier and accounts for shift changeovers. The siting of the building is such that the car parking areas are located at the north side of the building and are to be integrated with significant landscaping, to break up the visual impact of parked cars. The service yard is located to the west of the building and

will be largely screened from view. Cycle storage will be provided within the main car park area to the north. Extracts of the drawings are **attached** at appendix 2.

3.0 **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

3.1 Below is a summary of the responses received to the application from statutory consultation carried out by the Council. A full copy of all the comments made can be viewed online at [www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk](http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk).

Sutton Courtenay Parish Council	No objection, but request traffic to the site uses the A34 and A4130 not through the village.
Didcot Town Council	No objection.
Neighbours	No responses have been received.
Oxfordshire County Council	No objection subject to conditions and S106 contributions towards transport infrastructure to mitigate the impact of the proposal as set out below.  Transport <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No objection, subject to condition on construction traffic management</li> <li>• £594,308 towards Science Bridge</li> <li>• £2,040 towards Travel Plan monitoring</li> </ul> Archaeology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No objection.</li> </ul> Economy and Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No objection.</li> </ul>
Highways England	No objection, subject to conditions.
Environment Agency	No response received.
Thames Water	No objection subject to conditions to address foul water and water supply capacity.
Drainage Engineer	No objection.
Natural England	No comments to make on this application.
Economic Development	Support.
Health & Housing – Protection Team (Noise)	No objection.
Health & Housing – Air Quality	No objection.
Health & Housing – Contaminated Land	No objection, subject to condition.
Urban Design Officer	No objection.
Landscape Architect	No objection.

Forestry Team	No objection.
Countryside Officer	No objection, subject to condition on bio-diversity enhancement.
Waste Management	No objection.
HSE	No objection.

4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

4.1 [P15/V1304/O & P15/S1880/O](#) – Resolved to approve

Mixed use redevelopment comprising up to 400 dwellings (C3), 110,000ms of Class B2/B8 units, 25,000m<sup>2</sup> of Class B1 units, 13,000m<sup>2</sup> Class A1 units (includes 1,500m<sup>2</sup> convenience food store), 150 bed Class C1 hotel and 500m<sup>2</sup> of Class A3/A4 pub/restaurant, including link road, related open space, landscaping and drainage infrastructure, together with reservation of land for link road and Science Bridge. Cross boundary application Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire.

[P14/V0385/D](#) - Approved (20/03/2014)

Prior notification for proposed demolition of Didcot A Power Station and all associated buildings and structures.

[P13/V2328/D](#) - Approved (20/11/2013)

Prior notification for demolition of coal handling machinery and associated equipment from the coal offloading and handling yard.

[P11/V2583/SCO](#) – EIA Not required.(09/02/2012)

EIA screening opinion for demolition of Didcot A Power Station

[P09/V2005/HS](#) - Approved (09/06/2010)

Proposed storage (Propane & Hydrazine) and industrial process of these hazardous substances.

5.0 **POLICY & GUIDANCE**

5.1 **Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011**

The development plan for this area comprises the adopted Vale of White Horse local plan 2011. The following local plan policies relevant to this application were ‘saved’ by direction on 1 July 2009.

Policy No.	Policy Title
GS1	Developments in Existing Settlements
GS2	Development in the Countryside
DC1	Design
DC3	Design against crime
DC5	Access
DC6	Landscaping
DC7	Waste Collection and Recycling
DC8	The Provision of Infrastructure and Services
DC9	The Impact of Development on Neighbouring Uses
DC12	Water quality and resources
HE10	Archaeology
NE9	Lowland Vale
NE11	Areas for Landscape Enhancement

5.2 **Emerging Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 – Part 1**

The draft local plan part 1 is not currently adopted policy. Paragraph 216 of the NPPF allows for weight to be given to relevant policies in emerging plans, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise, and only subject to the stage of preparation of the plan, the extent of unresolved objections and the degree of consistency of the relevant emerging policies with the NPPF. At present it is officers' opinion that the emerging Local Plan housing policies carry limited weight for decision making. The relevant policies are as follows:-

Policy No.	Policy Title
Core Policy 1	Presumption in favour of sustainable development
Core Policy 3	Settlement hierarchy
Core Policy 6	Meeting Business and Employment Needs
Core Policy 7	Providing supporting infrastructure and services
Core Policy 15	Spatial strategy for South East Vale sub-area
Core Policy 16	Didcot A Power Station
Core Policy 17	Delivery of strategic highway improvements within the South East Vale sub-area
Core Policy 33	Promoting sustainable transport and accessibility
Core Policy 35	Promoting public transport, cycling and walking
Core Policy 36	Electronic communications
Core Policy 37	Design and local distinctiveness
Core Policy 38	Design strategies for strategic and major development sites
Core Policy 40	Sustainable design and construction
Core Policy 42	Flood risk
Core Policy 43	Natural resources
Core Policy 44	Landscape
Core Policy 45	Green infrastructure
Core Policy 46	Conservation and improvement of biodiversity

5.3 **Supplementary Planning Guidance**

- Vale Design Guide – March 2015
- Flood Maps and Flood Risk – July 2006
- Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan – April 2014

5.4 **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – March 2012**

5.5 **National Planning Practice Guidance 2014 (NPPG)**

5.6 **Neighbourhood Plans**

Paragraph 216 of the NPPF allows for weight to be given to relevant policies in emerging plans, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise, and only subject to the stage of preparation of the plan, the extent of unresolved objections and the degree of consistency of the relevant emerging policies with the NPPF.

5.7 A neighbourhood plan area application for Sutton Courtenay Parish was submitted for consideration on 12 July 2016. Although the neighbourhood plan is developing, it has not been submitted to the Council for Examination. Consequently very limited weight can be given to any policies that may be emerging in the draft neighbourhood plan.

5.8 **Environmental Impact Assessment**

This is not EIA development and a screening opinion has been issued to that effect.

5.9 **Other Relevant Legislation**

- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act) 1990

- Community & Infrastructure Levy Legislation
- Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010
- Localism Act

**5.10 Human Rights Act 1998**

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

**5.11 Equalities Act 2010**

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

**6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

6.1 The relevant planning considerations in the determination of this application are:

1. Principle of the development
2. Use of land
3. Design
4. Amenity
5. Visual Impact and landscaping
6. Flood risk and surface / foul drainage
7. Traffic and highway Safety
8. Ecology and Biodiversity
9. Archaeology
10. Developer contributions

**6.2 The Principle of Development**

Section 38(6) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicated otherwise. Section 70 (2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 provides that the Local Planning Authority shall have regard to the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations.

6.3 The development plan currently comprises the saved policies of the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011. Other material planning considerations include the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) the emerging Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031: Part 1 Strategic Sites and Policies and its supporting evidence.

6.3 The adopted Local Plan have some relevant saved policies (listed in section 5) that are partly or fully consistent with the NPPF. The emerging Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031: Part 1 has been to examination and the Inspector has issued his interim findings, but as modifications are required, the plan carries limited weight. Consequently, in assessing this proposal, greater weight therefore should be applied to the more up to date NPPF, supported by the PPG.

6.4 At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan making and decision taking. For decision taking this means (unless material considerations indicate otherwise) approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay, and where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date, granting permission unless: any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the

policies in the Framework taken as a whole; or specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted (NPPF, paragraph 14 refers).

- 6.5 The NPPF states that the Government is committed to securing economic growth in order to create jobs and prosperity, and ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth. Planning authorities are expected to meet the development needs of business and support an economy fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Therefore significant weight should be placed on the need to support such growth through the planning system.
- 6.7 Whilst the site is not specifically allocated within either the adopted Vale or South Oxfordshire Local Plan, it is proposed for allocation under Core Policy 16 of the emerging Vale Local Plan 2031, Part 1. This policy supports a mixed use development of B1/B2/B8, retail and residential uses on the site. Given the emerging Vale Local Plan 2031 has now been through Examination in Public stage, and the Inspector's interim findings confirm the provision for meeting business and employment needs is soundly based, Core Policy 16 carries greater weight, and the principle of Class B8 use development is considered acceptable on an existing brownfield site on the edge of Didcot Town.
- 6.8 **Use of Land**  
This is a former industrial site which is suitable for redevelopment and accords with aspirations to recycle brownfield land for beneficial use. The site is considered suitable for a mix of employment uses and housing provision as set out in the emerging Vale Local Plan 2031, Part 1. The NPPF encourages the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value (paragraph 17). The re-use of the site therefore weighs significantly in favour of the application.
- 6.9 **Design**  
The NPPF provides that planning decisions should address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment (paragraph 60). It gives considerable weight to good design and acknowledges it is a key component of sustainable development. A number of local plan policies seek to ensure high quality developments (Vale Policies DC1 and DC6) and the adopted design guide aims to raise the standard of design across the district.
- 6.10 The proposed design of the building (detailed in section 2) is considered to be high quality and will positively enhance the existing site. The application proposal conforms to the illustrative masterplan that accompanies the outline application and will result in a high quality scheme as required by the NPPF.
- 6.11 **Amenity**  
In terms of neighbouring amenity impacts, the site is surrounded largely by industrial uses, road and rail network and therefore no neighbour residential amenity impacts arise.
- 6.12 **Visual Impact and landscaping**  
The NPPF seeks to enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes (paragraph 109). The site lies within the designated Lowland Vale (Policy NE9) and within an Area for Landscape Enhancement (Policy NE11) in the Vale Local Plan 2011.
- 6.13 The character of the area is a large scale industrial complex and in terms of visual impact, the scale and mass of the warehouse building up to 25m in height is acceptable

in this location. The landscaping of the site will generally consist of hard landscaping to the service yard & car parking areas. In addition to the hard landscaping on the site there will be a significant amount of soft landscaping running around the site, in particular down the main road which runs to the east of the building and links the car parking area to the main access point onto the site. The landscaping of the site will also include sustainable urban drainage features.

6.14 The landscape officer has reviewed the proposal and raises no objection, subject to the proposed landscaping being implemented. The visual impact of the proposal will therefore be acceptable and considered to comply with the relevant adopted policies in this regard.

6.15 **Flood Risk and Surface/Foul Drainage**

The NPPF provides that development should not increase flood risk elsewhere and should be appropriately flood resilient and resistant (paragraph 103). It states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by, amongst other things, preventing both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution (Paragraph 109).

6.16 The site is located within flood zone 1 and is considered large enough to deal with surface water without causing surface water runoff to the public highway or onto neighbouring properties. The drainage will include SUDS and can be controlled through planning condition to safeguard the environment and the proposal from the risk of flooding and ground water contamination. The proposal is therefore acceptable in respect of flood risk and drainage.

6.17 Thames Water consider that there is insufficient capacity for the existing waste water and fresh water supply infrastructure to meet the demands of the proposal and request a Grampian condition to deal with these issues. The onus is on the developer to negotiate with Thames Water to resolve the capacity issues to meet the requirement of the conditions to be imposed on this issue. In planning terms, the proposal is acceptable subject to resolution of the foul and fresh water infrastructure to increase capacity.

6.18 **Traffic, Parking and Highway Safety**

Adopted local plan policy DC5 requires safe access for developments and that the road network can accommodate the traffic arising from the development safely. The NPPF (Paragraph 32) requires decision making to take account of whether:-

- the opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up depending on the nature and location of the site, to reduce the need for major transport infrastructure;
- safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people; and
- improvements can be undertaken within the transport network that cost effectively limits the significant impacts of the development.

Paragraph 32 goes on to state: *“Development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.”*

6.19 The application is supported by a transport assessment. The site will be accessed directly off the existing access road via Milton Road which is acceptable. In terms of traffic generation, it is considered the proposal will have no adverse impact on the wider road network. Both Highways England and the county highways team raise no objection in respect of traffic generation.

6.20 The proposed car and cycle parking facilities (as detailed in section 2) are acceptable and the county highways team raises no objection to the level proposed. Overall, the proposal will have no material impact on highway safety or the local public highway network. The proposal therefore complies with policy DC5.

6.21 **Ecology and Biodiversity**

The Countryside Officer has considered the ecological impact of the proposal in the context of the NPPF (paragraphs 117 & 118), and confirms there are no significant ecological constraints associated with the proposal and raises no objection. However, the re-development does provide opportunities to achieve significant bio-diversity enhancement by providing green corridors and links within and across the wider Didcot A site, and a condition is suggested to seek such enhancements. Subject to this, the proposal is considered to accord with the NPPF.

6.22 **Archaeology**

Policy HE10 of the adopted Local Plan states that development will not be permitted if it would cause damage to the site or setting of nationally important archaeological remains, whether scheduled or not.

6.23 The County Archaeologist has considered the proposal and states that the application area has been extensively disturbed and truncated by previous developments. As such there are no archaeological constraints to this application.

6.24 **Developer contributions**

The NPPF advises that planning obligations should only be sought where they meet all of the following tests (paragraph 204):

- i) Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- ii) Directly related to the development; and
- iii) Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

Policy DC8 of the Vale Local Plan provides that development will only be permitted where the necessary physical infrastructure and service requirements to support the development can be secured.

6.25 The County Council have identified that the development will increase pressure upon existing community infrastructure. Therefore contributions have been requested towards transport improvements (see section 5). These are considered to be fair and reasonable and the applicant has agreed to enter into a S106 agreement to secure these.

7.0 **CONCLUSION**

7.1 The principle of new commercial development is supported by the provisions of the emerging Local Plan and the NPPF. The proposal is not considered to be harmful to the character of the area, highway safety, or to flood risk. Subject to the recommended conditions and S106 agreement, the application accords with local and national planning policy and should be approved.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

8.1 **Grant Planning Permission subject to completion of a S106 agreement and the following conditions:**

- 1 : Time limit.**
- 2 : Approved plans.**
- 3 : Materials in accordance with application.**
- 4 : Access, parking and turning in accordance with plans.**
- 5 : Construction environmental management plan.**



- 6 : Landscaping scheme in accordance with plans.**
- 7 : Drainage details.**
- 8 : Grampian condition for off site works.**
- 9 : Contamination.**
- 10 : Bio-diversity enhancements.**

Contact Officer Details

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