

LOCATION:	Plot 3 Land West Of, Bullhousen Farm, Bisley Green, Bisley, Woking, Surrey, ,
PROPOSAL:	Alterations to existing barn to include solar panels and windows, vehicular access with associated hardstanding and parking area, patio area and internal works to provide ancillary accommodation for workers in association with the farm. Installation of an underground sewage treatment plant.
TYPE:	Full Planning Application
APPLICANT:	Mr Ewan Vosloo
OFFICER:	Melissa Turney

This application would normally be determined under the Council's Scheme of Delegation but it is being reported to the Planning Applications Committee on the request of Councillor Noble due to concerns that the proposal is out of keeping and is over development of the site.

RECOMMENDATION: GRANT, subject to conditions and a legal agreement

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 The application relates to alterations to an existing building granted prior approval under ref: 21/0108/GPE in connection with an agricultural/forestry use of the land to grow Christmas trees on the wider site. The proposal would involve the creation of ancillary office and storage use and would provide welfare facilities for staff. It also includes the provision of hardstanding and a patio area for the staff working on the farm.
- 1.2 The proposed development would be in connection with ancillary uses associated with the established forestry use and would not result in inappropriate development within the Green Belt and would not result in harm to the openness of the Green Belt and would result in the diversification of the rural economy supported by policy DM1.
- 1.3 The proposed development would not result in harm to the character of the area or the setting of neighbouring listed building and would not result in harm to neighbouring residential amenity. It would not result in increased traffic generation and would be acceptable in terms of its impact on the highway and public rights of way and would not result in harm to the biodiversity of the site.
- 1.4 The proposal is therefore recommended for approval subject to the recommended conditions.

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The application site relates to a Christmas tree farm located to the west of Bullhousen Farm and sited within the Green Belt. Bisley Tree Ltd have purchased approximately 13 acres of land. However, this application solely relates to 1.9 ha of land where the barn is sited.

- 2.2 The wider site is open agricultural/forestry land accessed via a track which runs from Shaftesbury Road, across Bisley Common and through Bullhousen Farm. The nearest residential properties are Bullhousen Farm, Heatherleigh and Furze Farm.
- 2.3 The application site is enclosed by hedges. The barn located on the site and subject of this application, was granted a prior approval under application reference 21/0108/GPE in connection with the forestry use of the site.

3.0 RELEVANT HISTORY

- 3.1 21/0108/GPE Application to determine if prior approval is required under Part 6, Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) for the erection of a barn for machinery storage. Prior approval required and approved.

4.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1 Full planning permission is sought for alterations to the existing barn to include solar panels and windows, vehicular access with associated hardstanding and parking area, a patio area and internal works to provide ancillary accommodation for workers in association with the farm. The installation of an underground sewage treatment plant is also proposed.
- 4.2 The proposal would involve the installation of solar panels on the eastern roof slope to provide power to the office and welfare room. Patio doors are proposed on the eastern elevation to the north end of the building and the provision of a small patio area of approximately 36m² would be provided adjacent to the barn on this northeastern corner. An access track is proposed to run from the gated access to the southeast corner of the site around the western side of the existing barn to a turning head and 5 parking spaces to the north of the barn.
- 4.3 The works proposed internally would include the provision of a staff room with a kitchenette and shower changing area and WC at ground floor level and with an office and store at a mezzanine level.
- 4.4 The site currently has a lawful use for the growing of Christmas trees which would fall under an agricultural/forestry use. The proposal is to provide welfare accommodation for the staff employed on the site. Currently the site supports 4 full time staff who manage the business and maintain the crop of trees. The office space is required for 2 of these staff for administrative purposes associated with the business. This includes typical functions such as stock taking, accepting deliveries to the site, and managing deliveries of trees to customers off site, human resource functions, marketing and other backroom functions. The staff managing the crop would be irrigating potted and planted trees, mowing of grass and fertilizing the crop as well as trimming the trees to maintain the Christmas tree shape. During October – December the staff numbers will increase to 12 for the purpose of prepping trees, trees measured and tagged and trees sorted for distribution. The applicant has confirmed that the site would only be for the growing, storage and packing of Christmas trees, and no retail element would be carried out on the site.
- 4.5 The following documents have been submitted in support of this application. Relevant extracts from these documents will be referred to in section 7 of this report: Design and Access statement and additional Design and Access Statement.

5.0 CONSULTATION RESPONSES

- 5.1 The following external consultees were consulted and their comments are summarised in the table below:

External Consultation	Comments Received
County Highways Authority (CHA)	<p>No objection subject to a condition securing cycle parking.</p> <p>(See Annex A for a copy of their response).</p>
SCC Countryside Access	Following the submission of additional information their objection was withdrawn.
Surrey Wildlife Trust	Consider would be beneficial for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, however the LPA could request a Construction Environmental Management Plan and ecological enhancements
Thames Water	No comment.
Bisley Parish Council	<p>Objections are raised regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Access and highways safety:</i> Lack of information on frequency, size and timings of vehicles visiting the site. Concerns over the access road to the site. Lack of information on ownership of the access track as this is under private ownership by another party. [Officer comments: The traffic impacts in relation to the use of the land are not material and have been established. However, the applicant has confirmed that the trees will be taken off site, by a 4x4 with trailer and not sold on the site. County Highways has raised no objection to the proposal and as such it is considered that the proposal would be acceptable in terms of the traffic impact]. • <i>Privacy:</i> vehicle accessing the site need to pass within feet of Bullhousen Farmhouse and Serenity House. [Officer comments: This is an existing farm track and the proposal does not alter this situation.] • <i>Nature conservation:</i> The application form states no protected species or habitat are adjacent. Considers this is incorrect. [Officer comments: It is noted that the site is in close proximity to the existing trees however these are not harmed as part of the proposal.] • <i>Vehicle parking:</i> Application states no parking; however, they are included in both the site plan and overall

description of the proposal. [Officer comments: question 10 of the application forms states there will be 4 parking spaces, however it is noted that 5 spaces are proposed.]

- *Trees:* Mature trees are nearby, a Tree Survey should be submitted. [Officer comments: Arboricultural Officer has raised no objection subject to conditions]
- *Waste & recycling/impact on infrastructure and community services:* The plan requests a sewage treatment system; however, it states that other waste will be collected in bins located in the barn and then transferred to a waste collection point adjacent to the entrance of the site just off Shaftesbury Road. There is no waste collection point at the entrance to Shaftesbury Road. This is a blind spot and therefore, on the grounds of safety, an inappropriate place for bins.
- *Noise and fumes:* Increase noise and have an impact on neighbours [Officer comments: Environmental Services have reviewed the application and raised no objection]
- *Timings:* No reference if the Christmas tree farm is open to the public [Officer comments: The site is not open to public and Christmas trees are sold off site]
- *Hazardous substances:* No signs warning people of hazardous substances on the public footpath. If the site grows so does the risk. [Officer comments: This is not a material planning consideration]
- *Commercial processes and machinery:* Application states that no commercial activities or machine storage will be carried out. The initial planning application granted for this site under 21/0108/GPE was for the storage of machinery. Bisley Trees is a commercial organisation, confirmed by the design statement attached to the application. [Officer comments: The applicant has confirmed that the use is existing and the proposal seeks ancillary works to the existing forestry use on the site.]

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site is visible from public footpath <p>Size of the development rather excessive [Officer comments: The proposed works are considered to be necessary and ancillary to the existing use on the site]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The application form states no new or altered access is required however the current way from the entrance of the plot to the barn is just a field [Officer comments: There is an existing access way to the site which is not altered. The proposal seeks permission for the laying of hardstanding] • Timings there are no proposed opening times on the application, the request for overnight use of the premises is not permitted • The proposal states there is no gain, loss or change to the non-residential floorspace, this is contradicted by the application itself.
West End Parish Council	<p>Objection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access route is a narrow track in the green belt and is unsuitable to sustain intensification of use with increased risk to pedestrians • Track not suitable for HGVs [Officer comments: The applicant has confirmed that HGVs will not be used for taking Christmas Trees off site] • Tree line track roots at risk of being damaged by heavy vehicles [Officer comments: This is an existing situation and the Arboricultural Officer states the trees are not formally protected but are of a significant size and age. It should be noted though that access through this section has been ongoing and continuous for years due to agricultural activity. If this is unlikely to change then the use of the track would remain generally the same with only a minor uplift for the business use] • The level of commercial infrastructure is inappropriate in the Green Belt. It has not been demonstrated that the needs could not be serviced from offsite business offices. [Officer comments: The proposal is considered ancillary to

	<p>the existing use and the applicant has provided information for the need for the office on the site]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workers welfare infrastructure should not be permanent nature <p>Condition needs to be considered to ensure no residential or overnight occupation on site.</p>
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5.2 The following internal consultees were consulted and their comments are summarised in the table below:

Internal Consultation	Comments Received
Arboricultural Officer	No objection subject to condition.
Urban Design and Heritage Consultant	No objection or requirements to make.
Environmental Services	No objection raised or requirements to make.

6.0 REPRESENTATION

6.1 A total of 15 individual letters of notification were sent out on 4th September and 8th September 2023. A site notice was displayed on the 13th September 2023 and a press notice published on 14th July 2023. To date 26 comments letters of representation have been received from 19 people/addresses.

6.2 The table below summarises the material planning reasons for objection:

Material Reason for Objection	Officer Response
<u>Principle of Development</u>	
The site is within the Green Belt	The building has already been erected under permitted development rights and is for a use which is appropriate within the Green Belt. The proposed alterations to the building would not result in an increase in its footprint, overall height or massing and as such would not result in harm to the openness of the Green Belt. The proposed hardstanding and patio area would also not harm openness. Further the proposed hardstanding would be hardcore gravel in nature which is considered to be less harsh in the landscape.

<u>Land Use</u>	
The growing and selling of Christmas trees is commercial.	The applicant has confirmed that there would be no retail selling of Christmas trees from the site and as such the proposal is not a commercial retail use.
Conflict with the Local Plan	There is no conflict as explained in section 7 of this report.
The justification for the increased floorspace is inadequate.	The applicant has confirmed that the additional mezzanine floor is required for the administration of the farm and business, providing back room functions which are considered to be ancillary functions to the established forestry use.
<u>Character and Design</u>	
Previously a dairy farm a move to forestry based agriculture is out of keeping with the traditional Surrey Heath landscape	The use of the land has been established and does not form development for the purposes of S55(2)(e) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
Overdevelopment	The proposed alterations would not increase the size of the building. The proposed hardstanding is required to provide car parking for the staff and would not constitute overdevelopment of the site.
Development too high.	The proposed alterations would not increase the size of the existing lawful building.
Urbanisation of the site.	Due to the small scale of the proposal it would not result in the urbanisation of the site and is suitable for the authorised use and the rural location.
<u>Heritage</u>	
Impact on the Grade II listed farmhouse due to impact through wear and tear of heavy traffic passing in close proximity.	The alterations and hardstanding would not have a significant impact on the setting of the Listed Building. The traffic associated with the use has already been established and would not result in further wear and tear to the listed building. The Council's Heritage Consultant has raised no objection to the proposal.
<u>Amenity</u>	
Traffic associated with the use would impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties.	The traffic associated with the use is already established and as such it is considered this proposal would not result in further harm to the amenity of the neighbouring residential occupiers.

Loss of privacy, and too close of neighbouring properties and noise nuisance, loss of residential amenity.	The proposal would retain a separation of over 100 metres to the nearest neighbouring occupiers and as such it is considered that there would be no harm to the amenity of these neighbouring occupiers.
<u>Highways and Parking</u>	
Increase the traffic on Shaftesbury Road and Bullhousen Farm	The traffic impacts in relation to the use of the land are not material and have been established. However, the applicant has confirmed that the trees will be taken off site, by a 4x4 with trailer and not sold on the site. County Highways has raised no objection to the proposal and as such it is considered that the proposal would be acceptable in terms of the traffic impact.
Difficult to get in and out of Wynwood due to increase in traffic	As above.
Increase in traffic and heavy vehicles on the access track would be dangerous for walkers.	As above.
No traffic assessment has been submitted.	The use has of the land has already been established and this is for minor works to support the lawful use.
Inadequate Access	The use of the land is established and the access to the site is already existing and the access is considered adequate. SCC Highways has raised no objection to the proposal.
The access track is a public footpath and increases risk to walkers and residents.	The use of the land is established. SCC Countryside Access team have raised no objection to the proposal.
Inadequate Parking Provision	The car parking provision is sufficient for the number of staff on the site and no objection has been raised by SCC Highways on the proposed parking provision.
The bridge over the stream was not engineered for additional traffic.	The applicant has confirmed that the vehicles access the site would not be LGV or HGV's but cars or 4x4 vehicles with tailers. SCC Highways have raised no objection to the proposal.
The proposal would prevent emergency vehicles from accessing HMP Coldingly.	HMP Coldingly is accessed via Shaftesbury Road. SCC Highways has raised no objection on the traffic impacts of the proposed alterations to the building.

<u>Biodiversity</u>	
There are protected species on site.	Whilst no Preliminary Ecological Appraisal has been provided the location of the hardstanding would be over existing grass land and the building has recently been erected, provides open structure that would not be suitable for bat roost. Further due to the open structure all parts of the roof are visible. As such it is considered unreasonable in this instance to require a PEA and the proposal is unlikely to result in harm to biodiversity or protected species. However, it is considered reasonable to attached conditions for Construction Environmental Management Plan and ecological enhancements.
The use of the land for forestry would adversely impact on biodiversity.	The use of the land is established and does not constitute development.
Impact of traffic on SPA and SSSI.	The use of the land has been established and does not constitute development. As such the proposal would not result in additional traffic over and above the established use and its impact on the SPA and SSSI are considered acceptable.
<u>Other Issues</u>	
Is all the accommodation necessary. Justification for increase floor space is inadequate.	The applicant has confirmed that of the 4 full time staff, two would be dealing with administrative elements of the business within the ancillary office space whilst the other two would be tending the crop. During the harvest season during October to December, 12 staff would be required for harvesting, packing and storage of the crop and would require some welfare and amenity space for breaks during the day. The increase in the internal floorspace is considered acceptable.
Trees at risk of root damage and hedges.	The Council's Arboricultural Officer has raised no objection to the proposal subject to a condition securing ground and tree protection.
If there are no hours of operation how would the applicant sell trees.	There is no retail use proposed and so hours of operation are not applicable..
Information missing from plans and not enough information has been provided with the application.	It is considered that sufficient information has been provided to make a satisfactory decision on the proposed alterations and provision of hard standing.

Waste Collection not in place.	The use of the land is already established. Any waste generated by the proposed ancillary uses would require a commercial collection and would not be significant over and above the existing forestry use.
Collection of waste treatment tank.	The sludge from the waste treatment tank would need removing. The applicant has confirmed this would be carried out once a year and would require a vehicle with a tank. Given the nature of the site they would seek the smallest vehicle to do this.

6.3 The table below summarises the non-material planning reasons for objection:

Non-Material Reason for Objection	Officer Response
No right over access to the site which is privately owned.	This is a civil issue and does not constitute a material planning consideration
The intention is to turn the barn into residential property or industrial site.	The conversion of the barn to residential use or a business or industrial site would require planning permission and is not material to the consideration of this application
Is another site selling Christmas trees required.	The site is in a forestry use and no retail sales of Christmas trees would occur from the site. The trees would be taken off site for sale.
The access track would require improvement for the proposed use.	The use of the land has already been established. The proposal does not seek improvement of the track and it is not material to the consideration of this application.
Fly tipping and Dumping of Soil	Fly tipping is a criminal offence and is covered by environmental protection legislation. This is not a material planning consideration.

7.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATION

7.1 This application is considered against advice contained with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) where there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Regard will be given to Policies CP1, CP2, DM1, DM9, DM11 of the adopted Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Document 2012 (CSDMP). In addition, regard will be given to the adopted Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) including National Planning Policy Framework.

7.2 The main issues to be considered with this application are:

- Need and principle of the development
- Impact on the Green Belt
- Impact on the character and appearance of the area
- Residential amenity
- Highway impacts
- Drainage and flood risk
- Biodiversity
- Trees
- Infrastructure
- Other matters

7.3 Need and principle of the development

- 7.3.1 The application site has a lawful use for agriculture and forestry. The growing of Christmas trees on the land falls under a forestry use and is not development under S55(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and therefore is a lawful use of the site. The existing barn on the site, which was constructed under the prior approval application set out in section 3 of this report, is also lawful. The site started growing Christmas trees at the end of 2022 and planted 10,000 trees. The applicant has confirmed that the future plan is to plant 5000 to 7000 trees every year. The barn is used for storage of vehicles and equipment associated with this use as well as materials needed for the processing and potting of the seedlings. Currently the site is not running at full capacity.
- 7.3.2 The internal alterations to the building are considered to be ancillary to the scale of work on the site, once it is running at full capacity. The Design and Access statement sets out the use of site which is outlined in section 4 of this report. The office space is required on-site to control the deliveries in and out of the site, stock control and other functions associated with the forestry business and is required on site. This is similar to other business uses where office space is provided within warehousing to control these functions. Given the need for this function it is therefore not unreasonable to consider that welfare elements of the proposal are required. Therefore, due to the ancillary nature of these changes and that they would be internal to the building they would not, by themselves, constitute development and are considered to be acceptable.
- 7.3.3 The proposal would include the provision of a parking area and access track to the barn from the existing access track which links the Bullhousen Farm to Shaftesbury Road. These engineering operations would provide safe and suitable access to the farm and barn which would prevent the grassed area from becoming muddy and unusable for parking for the staff. The site also proposes a patio area for staff members which provides a designated rest area away from the farming activity. The use of the site is established, and it is reasonably necessary to provide parking spaces for the staff. These engineering operations would be considered necessary for the efficient operation and management of a site where there is a requirement for staff access and welfare for staff members.
- 7.3.4 Due to the size of the wider site, it is considered that these facilities are reasonably required for the workers on the site. As the internal works are considered ancillary to the forestry use on the site the internal works do not constitute a change of use or require planning permission. However, the external works to the building to facilitate these internal works, and the vehicular access with associated hardstanding and parking area do require permission.
- 7.3.5 Policy DM1 of the CSDMP (The Rural Economy) supports the adaptation of existing buildings for economic purposes provided that the existing building is structurally sound and capable of conversion, and provided that any ancillary development does not conflict with countryside and Green Belt objectives. The principle of the development is therefore accepted, subject to the assessment below.

7.4 Impact on the Green Belt

- 7.4.1 Section 13 of the NPPF is relevant. Under paragraph 149 new buildings are regarded as inappropriate in the Green Belt, subject to exceptions. This includes a) buildings for agriculture and forestry. Under paragraph 150 other development is also considered as exceptions to inappropriate development which include the provision of engineering operations which preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.
- 7.4.2 This application does not result in a new building and is for the alteration to an existing lawful building to include rooflights, solar panels and windows. The additions are minor in nature and do not materially alter the height, volume and footprint to the building. It is therefore considered the alterations would not result in harm to the openness of the Green Belt and would not be inappropriate development.
- 7.4.3 It is considered that the provision of the car parking area, access drive and patio, would constitute engineering operations. The totality of this hardstanding would preserve Green Belt openness. This is because relative to the existing situation, visually this hardstanding would not significantly spread development and would have a minor spatial impact. An unmade access drive already exists and has an existing visual impact and this proposal would formalise and improve the surface rather than spreading development. Moreover, this sole access is in close proximity to the existing building and this aids to lessen the perceived impact. The proposal would provide a small area of parking for workers and a suitable turning area for all vehicles. Whilst the patio would spread development to the east, this patio is only 39 m² in area and would only extend out by 4m from the building and so relative to the size of the building would not have a discernible impact upon openness. This hardstanding would also not conflict with the purposes of including land within the green Belt because it would be in connection with an appropriate use in the Green Belt.
- 7.4.4 The proposed wastewater treatment plant would take grey water and foul water from the kitchen, showers and toilet. This would be located underground and as such would have no impact on the openness of the Green Belt both from a visual and spatial aspect and would be needed in connection with the ancillary uses associated with the established forestry use. As such it is considered to be an exception to inappropriate development under Paragraph 150 of the NPPF.
- 7.4.5 In summary, the proposal is required for the forestry use and would not represent inappropriate or harmful development within the Green Belt. It would comply with the section 13 of the NPPF and Policy DM1 of the CSDMP.

7.5 Impact on the character and appearance of the area and heritage assets

- 7.5.1 Policy DM9 of the CSDMP promotes high quality design and requires development to respect and enhance the character of the area Policy DM17 seeks to conserve and enhance heritage assets and their setting.
- 7.5.2 The existing building is utilitarian in its design and has an agricultural character. The proposal would include new ribbon windows and clear cladding roof lights are proposed in relation to the new 1st floor office. The application also seeks permission to install roof and wall mounted solar panels to provide electrical power for the facilities. The proposed alterations to the building would not increase the scale or massing of the building, with the windows and roof lights, being flush with the elevations of the building. The number of the proposed solar panels is yet to be determined, however they would be located on the roof slope and would not project significantly from the plan of the roof. It is considered that the final details of the solar panels and their design could be reasonably secured by condition. Due to the isolated location the proposed alterations would not result in a significant change to the character or appearance of the building or surrounding area.

7.5.3 It is noted that concerns have been raised that the proposal would result in harm to the Grade II Listed Building, Bullhousen Farm, due to the additional vehicular movements. The Council's Heritage Officer has reviewed the application and raised no objection to the impact on this building. The site has surrounding suitable vegetation to provide a softer integration in the surrounding landscape. The proposal is therefore considered to preserve the appearance of the surrounding area and would not result in harm to the setting of the listed building.

7.5.4 As such, the proposed development would comply with policies DM9 and DM17 of the CSDMP.

7.6 Impact on residential amenity

7.6.1 Policy DM9 of the CSDMP 2012 states that development should respect the amenities of the adjoining properties.

7.6.2 The existing barn is located on a large plot. Given the distance of over 150m is retained to the neighbouring properties (Bullhousen Farmhouse and Serenity House), and the proposal would not add additional bulk and mass to the building, it is considered that the proposed development would not appear dominant or obtrusive when viewed from nearby neighbouring properties. Furthermore the proposal would not result in loss of light to neighbours.

7.6.3 The neighbours (Bullhousen Farmhouse and Serenity House) are currently adjacent to the agricultural holding which is an existing situation. The Environmental Health Officer has reviewed the application and originally raised concerns due to the level of activity being carried out on site in terms of the noise generation. However, following a clarification statement from the applicant, Environmental Health have removed the objection as it would be unreasonable to attach conditions to this existing lawful use. The ancillary works proposed with this submission would not result in adverse harm above the existing situation and would not generate additional noise harm.

7.6.4 The proposal would therefore satisfy the objectives of Policy DM9 of the CSDMP.

7.7 Impact on access, parking and highway safety

7.7.1 Policy DM11 (Traffic Management and Highway Safety) is relevant.

7.7.2 The Council Highways Authority have reviewed the application and undertaken an assessment in terms of the likely net additional traffic generation, access arrangements and parking provision. County acknowledges the concerns raised from residents, particular those with concerns on the access and anticipated increase in traffic that would come with this use of the site. The site is accessed via a narrow single lane private road from Shaftesbury Road, where the visibility is poor. The applicant has confirmed that the vehicle sizes or vehicle movements to and from the site would not increase as a result of the proposal. Further to the confirmation provided that the site is currently used for Christmas tree farm / forestry use, which is the lawful use of the site, and the clarifications provided by the applicant (that staff currently travel to and from the site and that the proposed development will not increase the size or frequency of vehicle movements along the path) County has withdrawn its objection subject to conditions. These conditions are recommended to support sustainable travel.

7.7.3 The sewage tank would need to be emptied once a year and would require a vehicle tanker and could be a 1000- 1100 gallon version which is suitable for all domestic situations. It can operate from 25m from the treatment plant. The typical width of the vehicle would be approximately 2.25m wide. Due to the limited frequency and size of the vehicle no objection is raised on highways safety concerns.

7.7.3 The SCC Countryside Access Team also raised concerns due to the public footpath. However, following clarification that the proposed development will not increase the size or frequency of vehicle movements along the path associated with the existing use and confirmation that this application is limited to the alteration of the building and provision of hard standing rather than any change in use of the land the Countryside Access Team have withdrawn their objection.

7.7.4 In summary given that the proposal would not result in additional traffic or highway impacts over and above the existing situation it would be in accordance with Policy DM11 of the CSDMP.

7.8 Other matters

7.8.1 Surrey Wildlife Trust does not object but advises that an ecological assessment would be beneficial to be submitted. Due to the scale of the works taking place on site this would be considered to be unreasonable requirement as the proposal would result only in the alterations to the building internal and provision of hardstanding. The building would not be suitable for bat roosting due to its age, open structure and the addition of the hard standing would not warrant a preliminary ecological appraisal. However, due to the rural area of the site it is considered reasonable to attached a condition Construction Environmental Management Plan and ecological enhancements.

7.8.2 The Council's Arboricultural Officer has reviewed the application and notes the Parish Council concerns in relation to the adjacent trees. It is noted that the access through this section has been ongoing and continuous for years due to the agricultural activity, therefore it is considered that this unlikely to change and the track would be used in a similar manner. No road surface is proposed along the access track and no objection is raised.

8.0 PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

8.1 Under the Equalities Act 2010 the Council must have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment or victimisation of persons by reason of age, disability, pregnancy, race, religion, sex and sexual orientation. This planning application has been processed and assessed with due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty. The proposal is not considered to conflict with this duty.

9.0 CONCLUSION

9.1 The proposed development would be acceptable in terms of land use and the provision of office accommodation and welfare facilities are considered suitably ancillary to the main forestry use not to constitute development. The proposed alterations to the building and provision of hardstanding would not be inappropriate development within the Green Belt and would be in keeping with the established forestry use and would not result harm to the openness to the Green Belt. The proposal would not result in harm to the character of the area or the setting of neighbouring listed Building and would not result in harm to the amenity of neighbouring residential occupiers. The proposal would not result in an increase in traffic generation and would not result in harm to biodiversity of the site and surrounding area.

9.2 It is therefore recommended that the application is granted planning permission subject to the recommended conditions.

10.0 RECOMMENDATION

GRANT subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun within three years of the date of this permission.

Reason: To prevent an accumulation of unimplemented planning permissions and in accordance with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51(1) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The proposed development shall be built in accordance with the following approved plans:

Location Plan, 2670.P.2002 Rev 0, 2670.P.2003 Rev 0, 2670.P.1001 Rev 0, 2670.P.1002 Rev 0, 2670.P.1004 Rev 0, 2670.P.10000 Rev 0, 2670.P.10001 Rev 0.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interest of proper planning and as advised in ID.17a of the Planning Practice Guidance.

3. No soft or hard landscaping works shall take place until full details of both have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved details shall be carried out as approved and implemented prior to first occupation. The scheme shall include indication of all hard surfaces, walls, fences, access features, the existing trees and hedges to be retained, together with the new planting to be carried out and the details of the measures to be taken to protect existing features during the construction of the development.

Any landscaping which, within 5 years of the completion of the landscaping scheme, dies, becomes diseased, is removed, damaged or becomes defective in anyway shall be replaced in kind.

Reason: To preserve and enhance the visual amenities of the locality in accordance with Policy DM9 of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012.

4. Prior to the commencement of the development, final details of the Solar Panel array shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall show the number of panels and their location on the building and include a section to show the final projection from the roof slope. The proposed development shall be constructed in accordance with the approved details and retained thereafter.

Reason: To preserve and enhance the visual amenities of the locality in accordance with Policy DM9 of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012.

5. Prior to the commencement of the development, the final details of the wastewater treatment plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include the make and model of the treatment plant, details of the discharge of cleansed water and the servicing details including the type of vehicle to remove sludge from the plant. The development shall be constructed and operated in accordance with the approved details for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure that the proposal is in accordance with policies DM11 and DM14 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012.

6. Prior to the commencement of the development details of cycle parking in a robust, secure enclosure in shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include the proposed cycle storage, facilities for the charging of e-bikes are to be provided, consisting of a standard three-point plug socket. The development shall be constructed in accordance with the approved details and thereafter retained and maintained to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

The above conditions are required in order that the development promotes sustainable forms of transport in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 and policies CP11 and DM11 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012.

7. The proposed development hereby approved shall not be occupied by more than 4 full time employees, other than during the months of October to December where a total of 12 full time employees associated with the harvesting, packing and delivery of the Christmas trees.

Reason: To ensure that the ancillary use of the site does not intensify to the detriment of the safe and efficient operation of the Public Right of Way and the Public Highway Network in accordance with Policy DM11 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies.

8. The proposed development hereby approved shall not have any retail element to the general public.

Reason: To ensure that the ancillary use of the site does not intensify to the detriment of the safe and efficient operation of the Public Right of Way and the Public Highway Network in accordance with Policy DM11 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies.

9. Prior to the occupation of the development hereby approved, a scheme of ecological enhancements shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority to ensure an overall net gain in biodiversity will be achieved. The scheme will include details of hibernacula such as log piles and provision of artificial roost features, including bird and bat boxes. The development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To preserve and enhance biodiversity in accordance with Policy CP14A of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Document 2012.

10. No development shall commence until a Construction Environmental Management Plan has been submitted, to and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be constructed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To preserve and enhance biodiversity in accordance with Policy CP14A of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Document 2012

Informative(s)

1. This Decision Notice is a legal document and therefore should be kept in a safe place as it may be required if or when selling your home. A replacement copy can be obtained, however, there is a charge for this service.
2. The applicant is advised that this permission is only pursuant to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and is advised to contact Building Control with regard to the necessary consents applicable under the Building Regulations and the effects of legislation under the Building Act 1984.

3. The applicant is expected to ensure the safe operation of all construction traffic to prevent unnecessary disturbance obstruction and inconvenience to other highway users. Care should be taken to ensure that the waiting, parking, loading and unloading of construction vehicles does not hinder the free flow of any carriageway, footway, bridleway, footpath, cycle route, right of way or private driveway or entrance. The developer is also expected to require their contractors to sign up to the "Considerate Constructors Scheme" Code of Practice, (www.ccscheme.org.uk) and to follow this throughout the period of construction within the site, and within adjacent areas such as on the adjoining public highway and other areas of public realm.
4.
 - There are to be no obstructions on the public right of way at any time, this is to include vehicles, plant, scaffolding or the temporary storage of materials and/or chemicals.
 - Any alteration to, or replacement of, the existing boundary with the public right of way, or erection of new fence lines, must be done in consultation with the Countryside Access Officer. Please give at least 3 weeks notice.
 - Contractor's vehicles, plant or deliveries may only access along a right of way if the applicant can prove that they have a vehicular right. Surrey County Councils' Rights of Way Group will expect the applicant to make good any damage caused to the surface of the right of way connected to the development.