

LOCATION: MYTCHETT PLACE, MYTCHETT PLACE ROAD, MYTCHETT, CAMBERLEY, GU16 6DQ

PROPOSAL: Erection of a part 3 storey, part 4 storey extension and the erection of two detached buildings for use as Test Garage and Prototype Facility. (Additional information rec'd 27/06/2014).

TYPE: Full Planning Application

APPLICANT: Kamkorp Investments Ltd

OFFICER: Paul Sherman

RECOMMENDATION: Defer and Delegate for legal agreement then GRANT subject to conditions

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 The full application proposes the erection of a part three-storey, part four-storey extension to Mytchett Place and the erection of two detached buildings to be used as a 'Prototype Facility' and a 'Test Garage' following the demolition and removal of some existing temporary buildings. The application also includes the formalisation of the existing car parking layout which would increase the designated car parking spaces from 62 to 94 spaces.
- 1.2 The development proposed would normally be considered to be inappropriate in this countryside location, however, the unique circumstances and the benefits associated with the proposal are such that this harm is clearly outweighed. The development would not have a harmful impact on the character of the area or residential amenity and would deliver a suitable level of off street car parking. Subject to a legal agreement to secure a contribution towards mitigating the impact of the development on the highway network and towards the cost of monitoring the travel plan the development is considered to be acceptable.

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The application site is located on the east side of Mytchett Place Road and extends to some 4ha. The site is currently in use for research and development, falling within Use Class B1b, and is the UK headquarters for Frazer-Nash Research Ltd. The site includes a number of buildings and structures associated with the use. The principal building is known as Mytchett Place which is a Locally Listed building, centrally located within the site. In addition to this building there is a collection of permanent and temporary buildings in the north east corner which include workshops and testing equipment and a small guard house located close to the access.
- 2.2 The site is bounded to the north by open countryside while to the east residential properties on Barnsley Close and Keogh Close with Keogh Barracks located a short distance to the south of the site. The western boundary is marked by Mytchett Place Road which gives access to the site. Parking is provided in a somewhat ad-hoc manner to the front of the principal building with approximately 62 spaces to serve the current use.

3.0 RELEVANT HISTORY

- 3.1 There have been a number of planning applications relating to this commercial use of this site however none are directly relevant to the consideration of this application.

4.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1 The full application proposes the erection of a part three-storey, part four-storey extension to Mytchett Place and the erection of two detached building to be used as a 'Prototype Facility' and a 'Test Garage' following the demolition and removal of some existing temporary buildings. The application also includes the formalisation of the existing car parking layout which would increase the designated car parking spaces from 62 to 94 spaces.
- 4.2 The extension would extend to the rear of Mytchett Place and would also infill some of the existing open areas between the main house and the adjoining workshop building. The extension would have a height of approximately 14.5m when measured adjacent to the existing building but the height would increase as the land levels fall to the rear of the site. The extension would be largely glass and would be viewed as a somewhat detached structure from the Mytchett Place with only a glazed link joining it to the principal building. This building would provide addition accommodation for electronic laboratories as well as associated office space.
- 4.3 The proposed Prototype Facility and a Test Garage would be located either side of the existing coach house workshop building. Each would have a height of approximately 8.5m and would have a more functional appearance and would be finished in metal cladding.

5.0 CONSULTATION RESPONSES

- 5.1 County Highway Authority No objection to development subject to conditions and a contribution towards the cost of monitoring and developing the Travel Plan.
- 5.2 Surrey Wildlife Trust No comments received at the time of the preparation of this report. Any comments subsequently received will be reported in the update document.

6.0 REPRESENTATION

- 6.1 At the time of preparation of this report there had been 9 objections received which raise the following issues.
- Impact on character of area / views from Barnsley Close (*see para 7.3*)
 - Impact on wildlife / protected species (*see para 7.7*)
 - Loss of property value (*not a planning issue*)
 - Increased noise / disturbance (*see para 7.5*)
 - Not a suitable site for industrial / commercial uses (*see para 7.3*)
 - Increase in traffic / lack of parking (*see para 7.6*)

- Loss of trees (*see para 7.3*)
- Inappropriate development in countryside location (*see para 7.3*)
- Out of character with existing buildings (*see para 7.4*)
- Harm to historic interest of historic building (*see para 7.4*)

7.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATION

7.1 The application site is located within the Countryside beyond the Green Belt as identified by the Proposals Map and as such policies CP1, CP2, CP8, CP12, CP14, DM9, DM11, DM13 and DM17 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012 are relevant to the consideration of this application. The Developer Contributions SPD, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the associated Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) are also material considerations.

7.2 Having regard to the above the main issues to be addressed in determining this application are as follows:

- Whether the development is appropriate in this countryside location;
- The impact of the development on special interest of the Locally Listed building;
- The impact of the development on residential amenity;
- The level of parking and the impact of the development highway safety;
- The impact of the development on biodiversity; and,
- The impact of the development on infrastructure provision.

7.3 Whether the development is appropriate in this countryside location

7.3.1 The Core Strategy recognises that countryside should be protected for its intrinsic qualities and states that development which harms its intrinsic character and beauty, landscape diversity, heritage and wildlife will be considered to be inappropriate. The Core Strategy also seeks to ensure new development, including economic and housing proposals, are directed to urban areas in order to protect areas of countryside.

7.3.2 The application site is currently in use for research and development and is currently home to Frazer-Nash Ltd who specialises in electric vehicles and associated technologies such as energy generation, capture and storage. The application seeks a large extension to the principal building as well as the erection of 2 large free standing buildings all to be used in connection with the existing research and development activities on the site. The proposed development would greatly increase the level of development on this site which would have a detrimental impact on the openness of this part of the countryside and would increase the urbanisation of this site. The development also requires the loss of a large number of trees some of which are of good quality and contribute to the rural character of the countryside. This harm to the countryside should be given weight in the determination of this application.

7.3.3 It is, however, necessary to consider whether there are other material considerations or benefits associated with the scheme which would outweigh this harm. In this instance the occupant of the site, Frazer-Nash Ltd, is an important employment provider in the borough and is a leading innovator and developer of high tech electric and extended range vehicles

and associated technologies such as energy capture, generation and storage. The applicant has advised that Mytchett Place is an ideal location for this type of research and development and that they have no desire to vacate the site which they have occupied since 1997. The growth of the business is such that they require additional accommodation and that if this cannot be provided on this site they would need to consider relocating. They have also advised that the development proposed would enable them to employ a further 30-40 people and this would be of benefit to the local economy through increased employment opportunities and associated benefits such as increased tax revenue.

- 7.3.4 Policy CP8 places significant emphasis on delivering employment opportunities and it should be noted that these opportunities will not always be located within settlements. It is also noted that research and development is a key growth area for the south east economy and these businesses which deliver economic growth should be supported where possible. The National Planning Policy Framework recognises that economic growth is a key part of sustainable development and that the role of the planning system is to encourage its delivery.
- 7.3.5 Having regard to the above it is considered that the opportunity to grow this unique business and the economic benefits which would derive from the proposal would outweigh the harm that would be caused to this part of the countryside. This harm can further be reduced by ensuring that the trees to be removed are replaced by suitable replacement planting which could be directed to the boundaries of the site to screen the development from the surrounding area. Following completion of the development, it is also necessary to ensure that the open areas of the site are managed to ensure that their visual and biodiversity values are enhanced and this would ensure that the site continues to contribute to the intrinsic value of this part of the countryside.
- 7.3.6 Given that the merits of this proposal are deemed to represent an exception in the countryside, it is necessary to consider how the use of the land can be controlled in the future so that the site continues to positively contribute to delivering sustainable economic growth. Paragraph 015 of ID:21a of the Planning Practice Guidance considers whether it is appropriate to limit the benefits of a planning permission to a particular person or group of people. This paragraph states that planning permission runs with the land but that there may be exceptional occasions where granting planning permission for development that would not normally be permitted on the site could be justified on planning grounds because of who would benefit from the permission. However, this paragraph goes on to state that a condition to limit the benefit of the company concerned is inappropriate because its shares can be transferred to other persons without affecting the legal personality of the company.
- 7.3.7 A condition to restrict the permission to Frazer Nash only would therefore be unreasonable. Frazer Nash is also a group of companies (comprising 7 research and development and production organisations) and so a condition restricting the use to one business would conflict with this business model. A restrictive use condition, for example preventing any other Class B (business) as permitted by the Use Classes Order, to occupy the premises would also be unreasonable when the NPPF advocates a flexible approach to business needs to reflect changing economic circumstances. Notwithstanding the applicant's commitment to remain on the site which they have occupied since 1997 (see paragraph 7.3.3) there is no guarantee that this would always be the case. However, even if Frazer Nash did vacate the site then the nature of the buildings proposed by this application and the resultant high quality business space delivered on the site is still likely to attract other similar businesses that would in, all likelihood, equally positively contribute to the local and regional economies. Hence, officers are satisfied that this proposal without further control by restrictive use conditions would remain acceptable. The proposal therefore complies with the objectives of Policy CP8 of the Core Strategy and the NPPF.

7.4 The impact of the development on special interest of the Locally Listed building

- 7.4.1 The principal building on the site, known as Mytchett Place is Locally Listed. This recognises that while the building may not be of sufficient quality for statutory listing the history or architecture of the building is locally significant. Mytchett Place is a two-storey mansion house which is built from stone and retains its wooden frame windows. While it has been extended extensively the appreciation of a larger grand mansion house is still evident and is especially attractive when viewed from the grounds to the front. It also has local historical significance as Rudolf Hess was held here for two years from 1941 to 1942.
- 7.4.2 The Test and Prototype buildings would be located some distance from the main building and would have little impact on the character or the setting of the Locally Listed Building. The main consideration is therefore the impact of the extension which would extend from the rear of the existing garage building and would be joined to Mytchett Place by a glassed link. This extension would be a very significant addition when viewed from the rear and would be as tall as the existing building and the height would be emphasised by the change in land levels. However, the extension would read as a modern extension and the ability to understand Mytchett Place as a large mansion would not be lost when viewed from the rear. Furthermore, when viewed from the front, the development would be largely screened by the existing buildings and this important view will not be significantly altered. These views are also supported by the Council's Historic Buildings Advisor who has raised no objection to the development.
- 7.4.3 Having regard to the above it is not considered that the development would harm the significance of this Locally Listed building and therefore the proposal would comply with the objectives of Policy DM17 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012.

7.5 The impact of the development on residential amenity

- 7.5.1 The site is bounded to the west by a group of residential properties located on Barnsley Close and Keogh Close with the closest of these to the application site being those 1-4, 7 and 11 Barnsley Close. The proposed laboratory extension would run parallel to Barnsley Close, however, this part of the development would be between 25 and 50 metres from these properties and would be significantly screened from these properties by the landscaping on the boundaries of the application site. While glimpses of the extension may be visible from these properties the development would not appear overbearing or unneighbourly and would not materially impact on the amenities the occupants of these properties currently enjoy.
- 7.5.2 The closest property to the proposed prototype building would be No.7 Barnsley Close which would be approximately 18 metres north west of the side elevation of this property. It is again noted that this building would be significantly screened from this dwelling by the landscaping within the site which is to be retained. Again, while glimpses of this building may be possible through the trees it would not appear overbearing or neighbourly. The test facility building is set significantly further into the site and would not be visible from residential properties and none of the building would give rise to a significant loss of privacy to any of the adjoining properties.
- 7.5.3 The development is likely to increase the intensity of the activity on the site, however, it is noted that the existing and proposed use of the site is for B1b which is a use which is normally capable of being operated in a residential area without harm to amenity. Furthermore, the applicant has submitted a noise survey which states the operations on site would not be likely generate complaints by existing residents.

Any noise complaints arising could be addressed by existing Environmental Health controls and as such should not be a reason to withhold planning permission.

7.5.4 Having regard to the above it is concluded that the development would not have an adverse impact on the residential amenities enjoyed by the occupants of the surrounding properties and therefore would comply with the relevant objectives of Policy DM9 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012.

7.6 The level of parking and the impact of the development highway safety

7.6.1 The application site is accessed from Mytchett Place Road however the application includes no alteration to the site access or the highway. The access has good visibility in both directions and the County Highway Authority has raised no objection to the proposed development on highway safety policy or capacity grounds.

7.6.2 The site currently includes 62 marked car parking spaces and parking would appear to take place in other areas in a somewhat ad-hoc fashion. The development proposes the reorganisation of the car parking layout which will increase the number of designated spaces to 94 to serve the expanded use on the site which is likely to employ in the region of 127 employees. The applicant has also submitted draft Travel Plan which will seek to encourage environmentally friendly and sustainable travel choices and to reduce the number of car trips made by staff to and from the site. This would include measures such as promoting car sharing, providing information about public transport, promoting the benefits of walking and cycling, and providing a sustainable travel notice board. The County Highway Authority have considered the Travel Plan and advises that subject to continued monitoring and development the Travel Plan should reduce the demand for car parking such the number of spaces provided would be sufficient to meet the demand generated. The County has therefore also requested a contribution towards the cost monitoring and developing the Travel Plan and this could be secure through a unilateral undertaking.

7.6.3 Having regard to all of the above it is considered that subject to conditions and the implementation of a Travel Plan the level of parking would be acceptable and the development would not impact on highway safety. As such the development is considered to meet the objectives of Policy DM11 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012 and the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework.

7.7 The impact of the development on biodiversity

7.7.1 The application site includes large areas of grassland and woodland and therefore has potential to support protected species. The applicant has commissioned an Ecological Appraisal which has assessed the site for protected flora and fauna. This appraisal did not identify any protected flora or fauna but does recommend that further inspections of the mature trees should be undertaken before felling and also recommends biodiversity enhancement measures which could be undertaken. It is considered that subject to conditions to ensure the development is undertaken in accordance with the conclusions of this report then no objection should be raised to the proposal on these grounds.

7.8 The impact of the development on infrastructure provision

7.8.1 The Council adopted the Developer Contributions SPD in October 2011 and financial contributions are now required for any development providing new dwellings or commercial floorspace; levels of contributions have been drawn from work carried out by the Surrey Collaboration Project and the amount payable will be dependent on the scale of the development and its location.

In this instance it is considered to seek contributions to highway works but given the proposal includes a staff gym and is remote from the closest library it is not considered reasonable to seek contributions to indoor sports or library provision.

7.8.2 Based on the increase of floor space of 4,255m² a contribution of £84,655.45 would be required and would this would ensure that the off-site highway impacts of the development could be mitigated. It is therefore considered that subject to the completion of a unilateral undertaking to secure this contribution the impact of the development on the highway network would be mitigated and no objection should be raised to the proposal on these grounds.

8.0 ARTICLE 2(3) DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (AMENDMENT) ORDER 2012 WORKING IN A POSITIVE/PROACTIVE MANNER

8.1 In assessing this application, officers have worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner consistent with the requirements of paragraphs 186-187 of the NPPF. This included:

- a) Provided or made available pre application advice to seek to resolve problems before the application was submitted and to foster the delivery of sustainable development.
- b) Provided feedback through the validation process including information on the website, to correct identified problems to ensure that the application was correct and could be registered.

9.0 CONCLUSION

9.1 The development proposed would normally be considered to be inappropriate in this countryside location, however, the unique circumstances and the economic benefits associated with the proposal are such that this harm is clearly outweighed. The development would not have a harmful impact on the character of the area or residential amenity and would deliver a suitable level of off street car parking. Subject to a legal agreement to secure a contribution towards mitigating the impact of the development on the highway network and towards the cost of monitoring the travel plan the development is considered to be acceptable.

10.0 RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 1:

To Defer and Delegate, subject to the completion of a suitable planning obligation to secure the following:

- a financial contribution of £4,600 towards the cost of monitoring and developing the Travel Plan
- a financial contribution of £84,655.45 to mitigate the impact of the development on local infrastructure, in accordance with the Developer Contributions SPD

the Executive Head of Regulatory to be authorised to GRANT the application 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. No development shall take place until details and samples of the external materials to be used shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Materials to be agreed will include any proposed cladding, brick, tile, guttering, fenestration or other external materials. Once approved, the development shall be carried out using only the agreed materials.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenities of the area and to accord with Policy DM9 of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012.

3. The development hereby approved shall be undertaken in accordance with the submitted Arboricultural Method Statement Ref: SPH/AS/AMS-01/20.05 and dated 20th May 2014. There shall be no variation from these details unless first agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

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

4.
 1. No development shall take place until full details of both hard and soft landscaping works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and these works shall be carried out as approved, and implemented prior to first occupation. The submitted details should also include an indication of all level alterations, hard surfaces, walls, fences, access features, the existing trees and hedges to be retained, together with the new planting to be carried out and shall build upon the aims and objectives of the supplied **BS5837:2012 – Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction** Arboricultural Method Statement [AMS].
 2. All hard and soft landscaping works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. All plant material shall conform to **BS3936 Part 1: Nursery stock specification for trees and shrubs**. The planting shall be carried out after completion of the building programme and prior to first occupation. Any trees or plants, which within a period of five years of commencement of any works in pursuance of the development die, are removed, or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced as soon as practicable with others of similar size and species, following consultation and written agreement with the Local Planning Authority, unless written consent to any variation is given.

3. A landscape management plan including maintenance schedules for all landscape areas shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before first occupation of the development or any phase of the development, whichever is the sooner, for its permitted use. The schedule shall include details of the arrangements for its implementation. The landscape areas shall be managed and maintained thereafter in accordance with the agreed landscape management plan for a minimum period of 5 years.

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. The development hereby approved shall be undertaken in accordance with the submitted Ecological Appraisal dated March 2014. There shall be no variation from the approved details unless previously agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the protection of protected species in accordance with Policy CP14 of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

6. Prior to the commencement of development a Biodiversity Enhancement Scheme shall be submitted to and approved to the Local Planning Authority which should seek to increase the potential of the site to support a range of wildlife. Once approved the development shall be implemented in accordance with the submitted details and there shall be no variations unless first agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the protection of protected species in accordance with Policy CP14 of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

7. Before the first and each subsequent occupation of the premises the subject of the application a Travel Plan, in accordance with the aims and objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework and the associated Planning Practice Guidance, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This shall be implemented in accordance with the details submitted and thereafter retained and/or developed to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: The condition above is required in recognition of the NPPF and to accord with Policies CP11 and DM11 of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012.

8. No new development shall be occupied until space has been laid out within the site in accordance with approved plans for 94 cars to be parked. The parking and turning areas shall be used and retained exclusively for its designated use unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: The condition above is required in order that the development should not prejudice highway safety nor cause inconvenience to other highway users and to accord with Policies CP11 and DM11 of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012 and thereby reduce the reliance on the private car and meet the prime objective of the National Planning Policy Framework.

9. The proposed development shall be built in accordance with the following approved plans: 6056 P001 (C), P002 (D), P003, P004, P005, P006, P007, P008, P009, P010, P011, (A) P012 (A), C-1001 (O) and 1002 (O), unless the prior written approval has been obtained from the Local Planning Authority.

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

Informative(s)

1. Decision Notice to be kept DS1
2. Building Regs consent req'd DF5

Recommendation 2:

In the event that a satisfactory planning obligation has not been completed by the 18th of August 2014, the Executive Head of Regulatory be authorised to REFUSE the application for the following reasons:

1. In the absence of a completed legal agreement under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the applicant has failed to comply with Policy CP12 of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012 in relation to the provision of infrastructure contributions towards transport in accordance with the requirements of Surrey Heath Borough Councils Developer Contributions SPD.
2. In the absence of a completed legal agreement under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to secure a contribution to monitor and develop the Travel Plan the development would not encourage sustainable travel choices and would lead to a demand for car parking on site which would outstrip the car parking provision available. Accordingly the development would conflict with the objectives of Policy DM11 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012.