DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 16th OCTOBER 2023

Case No: 23/00216/FUL

Proposal: THE CONSTRUCTION OF ELEVEN NEW USE CLASS E

SINGLE STOREY BUSINESS UNITS AND THE ASSOCIATED ACCESS ROAD, PARKING AND

LANDSCAPING.

Location: LAND NORTH OF 11 LATHAM ROAD HUNTINGDON

Applicant: MR MARTIN COULSON

Grid Ref: 523499 274269

Date of Registration: 13th February 2023

Parish: HUNTINGDON

RECOMMENDATION – REFUSE

This application is referred to the Development Management Committee (DMC) in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation as the Officer recommendation of refusal is contrary to the Parish Council recommendation of approval.

1. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION

- 1.1 The site forms a triangular 0.67 hectare parcel of land at the far northern end of the Stukeley Meadows Industrial Estate. The site is bounded by the A141 to the west, the ECML railway cutting and woodland to the east, and a footpath/cycle way/bridleway (ref 133/21) connecting Great Stukeley with Huntingdon to the south. The site has previously been used for overflow car parking for Meridian Audio Ltd, located directly to the south.
- 1.2 The wider site to the south forms part of an Established Employment Area of Stukeley Meadows Industrial Estate within Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 and is also adjacent to the Great Stukeley Railway Cutting (Site of Special Scientific Interest). The site is located within Flood Zone 1 on the Environment Agency's Flood Map for Planning and Huntingdonshire's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment 2017.
- 1.3 This application seeks planning permission for the erection of 11 single storey Use Class E units and associated internal access road, 45 parking spaces and landscaping works on land north of 11 Latham Road, Huntingdon.

- 1.4 The application has been accompanied by the following:
 - Planning Statement
 - Transport Statement
 - Framework Travel Plan
 - Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement
 - Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
 - Calculation of Biodiversity Net Gain using Defra Metric 3.1

2. NATIONAL GUIDANCE

- 2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (5th September 2023) (NPPF 2023) sets out the three objectives economic, social and environmental of the planning system to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The NPPF 2021 at paragraph 10 provides as follows: 'So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11).'
- 2.2 The NPPF 2023 sets out the Government's planning policies for (amongst other things):
 - delivering a sufficient supply of homes;
 - building a strong, competitive economy;
 - achieving well-designed, beautiful and safe places;
 - conserving and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment
- 2.3 Planning Practice Guidance and the National Design Guide 2021 are also relevant and material considerations.
- 2.4 For full details visit the government website: National Guidance

3. PLANNING POLICIES

- 3.1 Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 (Adopted 15th May 2019):
 - LP1: Amount of Development
 - LP2: Strategy for Development
 - LP4: Contributing to Infrastructure Delivery
 - LP5: Flood Risk
 - LP6: Waste Water Management
 - LP7: Spatial Planning Areas
 - LP11: Design Context
 - LP12: Design Implementation
 - LP14: Amenity
 - LP15: Surface Water
 - LP16: Sustainable Travel
 - LP17: Parking Provision and Vehicle Movement
 - LP18: Established Employment Areas
 - LP30: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
 - LP31: Trees, Woodland, Hedges and Hedgerows

Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2026 (Adopted September 2019):

- Policy E1 Opportunities for Employment
- Policy E2 Business Investment
- Policy NE2 Open Space and Green Infrastructure
- Policy NE3 Setting of Huntingdon
- Policy BE1 Design and Landscaping
- Policy BE2 Local Distinctiveness and Aesthetics
- Policy TT1 Sustainable Transport

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) and Guidance:

- Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD (2017)
- Developer Contributions SPD (2011)
- Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape SPD (2022)
- Huntingdonshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2017)
- Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD (2017)
- LDF Developer Contributions SPD (2011)
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2021)

For full details visit the government website: Local Policies

4. PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 21/00222/FUL – Construction of new access to overflow car park – Approved

5. CONSULTATIONS

- 5.1 Huntingdon Town Council Recommend Approval this is already a pre-existing industrial area and the proposed development is providing additional business units. Parking has been allocated in the development.
- 5.2 Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire No objections to the proposed development. However, request an updated Biodiversity Net Gain report to reflect comments.
 - A Defra Biodiversity Metric has subsequently been submitted and although a number of changes are suggested these do not materially affect the amount of net gain predicted which is still around 8%. The application therefore accords with current HDC adopted planning policies on biodiversity and can be approved, though I would prefer for an updated BNG report to be submitted to reflect my comments above.
- 5.3 Cambridgeshire County Council's Highway Authority No objections to the proposed development. The access to the site, from the adjacent site (Meridian Autos) and across the public right of way, was approved under application 21/00222/FUL.

The access to the Meridian Autos site from the public highway is adequate for the intensification of use. The Transport Statement states that the increase in trips would be 24 in the AM peak and 25 in the PM peak. This is an insignificant increase in the number of vehicles that would be exiting Latham Road onto the A141 Spittals Way roundabout. Therefore, no significant adverse effect upon the Public Highway should result from this proposal should it gain benefit of Planning Permission.

- 5.4 Cambridgeshire County Council's Lead Local Flood Authority Object to the proposed development due to incorrect drainage calculations and sewage undertaker consent is required.
- 5.5 Cadent Gas Holding objection on the proposal whilst the engineering team reviewed the available information.

Officer Note: No further comments received from Cadent Gas following their holding objection. A gas main runs north to south through the eastern part of the site. The gas utility requires a three metre exclusion zone on either side of the pipe which is is shown on the proposed site plan. Officers have sought further comments from Cadent Gas and these remain outstanding.

- 5.6 Health and Safety Executive HSE does not advise, on safety grounds, against the granting of planning permission in this case.
- 5.7 Huntingdonshire District Council's Urban Design Team Object to the proposed development. The current application as a result of the layout and quantum of development is considered to create a poor quality cramped form of overdevelopment that fails to accord with Local Plan Policy LP11, LP12 (parts a, b, c), LP17 and the place making principles set out in Chapter 3 of the HDC Design Guide.
- 5.8 Cambridgeshire County Council's Public Rights of Way No response received to date.

Officer note: Officers have sought comments and these remain outstanding.

6. REPRESENTATIONS

6.1 No third party representations were received during the course of the application.

7. ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 The main issues to consider in the determination of this application are:
 - Principle of development
 - Design and Visual Amenity
 - Residential amenity

- Highway safety
- Flood risk
- Biodiversity and Trees

Principle of development

- 7.2 The site is located within the built-up area of the Huntingdon Spatial Planning Area as defined by the adopted Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 and therefore, Policy LP7 (Spatial Planning Area) is relevant. It should be noted that the site is located outside of the Established Employment Area boundary (Policy LP18) of Stukeley Meadows Industrial Estate.
- 7.3 This application seeks approval for the erection of 11 Use Class E business units and associated works. Policy LP7 of the adopted Local Plan states that a proposal for business development will be supported where it is appropriately located within a built-up area of an identified Spatial Planning Area settlement. Given the site is located within a built-up area of Huntingdon, the proposal is considered to be acceptable in regard to Policy LP7.
- 7.4 Furthermore, Policy E1 of the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan states that proposals for economic development throughout Huntingdon will be favourable considered subject to compliance with other relevant planning policies.
- 7.5 As previously mentioned, the site is not located within the Established Employment Area (EEA) of Stukeley Meadows Industrial Estate, however it is located directly adjacent and has been used as overflow car parking for an existing building that is located within the EEA. Whilst Policy LP18 is not relevant to the proposal, it is considered that the proposed development would be compatible with and complement the surrounding employment uses.
- 7.6 As such, the principle of development is considered to be acceptable in accordance with Policies LP2 and LP7 of the Local Plan and Policy E1 of the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan, subject to all other planning matters being addressed.

Design and Visual Amenity

7.7 Policy LP11 of the Local Plan states that a proposal will be supported where it is demonstrated that it responds positively to its context. Policy LP12 states that new development will be expected to be well designed and that a proposal will be

supported where it can be demonstrated that it contributes positively to the area's character and identity and successfully integrates with adjoining buildings and landscape. This is also reflected in the policies NE3, BE1 and BE2 of the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan, guidance within the Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD and Section 12 of the NPPF 2023.

- 7.8 The proposed site layout comprises two blocks orientated E-W and backing onto the northern and southern site boundaries. Block A would contain 7 units and Block B would contain 4 units. Both buildings would be constructed of a lean-to design with an eaves height of approximately 6 metres, a ridge height of 7.7 metres and would be constructed using facing brickwork, composite metal cladding and PV panels on a composite metal roof. Block A would measure 63.4m by 18.7m and Block B would measure a total length of 46.4m and a total depth of 18.8m a total Gross Internal Area (GIA) of 1,785sqm, together with the small landlord's building adjacent to Block B.
- 7.9 The larger Block A (accommodating Units 1-7) is arranged parallel with the southern site boundary and is setback 4.5 metres from the public right of way behind an access path and groups tree planting and landscaping. Block of (accommodating Units 8-11 and the Landlord's building) is positioned to the northern end of the site and is shaped to accommodate the existing trees adjacent to the northwest site boundary and the high-pressure gas pipeline and access along the eastern boundary. A parking court containing 40 spaces is proposed between the two buildings with a further 5 spaces proposed to the north of Block B.
- 7.10 Block A would have a 63.4 metre long south facing elevation which is largely blank except for the high-level windows (noting that no mezzanine/first floor level is proposed on the submitted floor plans). The building is setback just 4.5 metres from the footpath/cycle way/bridleway and HDC's Urban Design Officer considers that the four semi-circular areas of ecological planting and tree planting in front of the south elevation would do little to break up the massing of the south elevation. There is also concern that this would result in poor surveillance and supervision over the footpath and that the length of this elevation would appear visually prominent and incongruous from the pathway.
- 7.11 The arrangement of the two blocks, with 18.7 metre separation between the buildings and 7.7 metre ridge heights would impact

the open appearance of the site. The proposed blocks are inward facing, and the front elevations would be concealed from the approach road reducing the legibility of individual units. The Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD states that 'Big box' uses (office, industrial, retail, warehouse or cinema multiplexes) in urban areas should provide for active frontages overlooking public spaces and routes. The side gable elevations are entirely blank facing the access road and as such fail to 'turn the corner' and overlook the approach into the site. The proposed site layout would fail to accord with the above and would therefore be contrary to the Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD in this regard. While the Local Planning Authority recognise that the introduction of south elevation windows on Block A would create security concerns, it is noted that active frontages could be achieved with a revised site layout.

- 7.12 The proposed development would utilise existing tree planting and landscaping along the boundaries of the site and would include the provision of two trees at the east end of the parking area. Apart from this, there would be limited soft landscaping within the site itself resulting in a landscape that is dominated by buildings and hard surfacing in particular the proposed parking area, which includes long unbroken rows of 18 and 22 parking spaces. The Urban Design Officer has objected to the proposal on this basis, as the proposal would be contrary to the Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD which requires "generous areas of soft landscaping and tree planting both within the car park and around its external edge... to enhance the appearance of the car park".
- 7.13 It should be noted that the Local Planning Authority does not have any objections to the finishing materials palette for the proposed units or the use of PV panels.
- 7.14 Overall, by virtue of the design, layout and separation distances of the two blocks, along with the dominance of car parking and hardstanding with limited soft landscaping, the proposal is considered to represent a cramped form of development that is of poor design and would result in visual harm to the site and would be uncharacteristic of the surrounding area. As such, the proposal is deemed to be contrary to Policies BE1 and BE2 of the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan, Policies LP11 and LP12 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036, the Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Residential amenity

- 7.15 Policy LP14 of the Local Plan to 2036 states a proposal will be supported where a high standard of amenity is provided for all users and occupiers of the proposed development and maintained for users and occupiers of neighbouring land and buildings.
- 7.16 Given the location of the site with no residential properties in close proximity, the proposal is considered to be acceptable with regard to its impact on residential amenity. Furthermore, it is not considered that the proposal would adversely impact the occupants and/or users of the adjacent employment use. The proposal accords with Policy LP14 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 in this regard.

Highway Safety

- 7.17 Policy LP17 of the Local Plan to 2036 seeks to ensure that new development incorporates appropriate space for vehicle movements and adequate parking for vehicles and cycles. Policy LP16 of the Local Plan and Policy TT1 of the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan require proposals to demonstrate how opportunities for the use of sustainable modes of transport are maximised.
- 7.18 The site would be accessed via an existing access point off Latham Road, an unclassified road subject to a 30mph speed limit. This access from the southeast corner was subject to a separate approved application 21/00222/FUL, which included measures designed to assist cyclists on the public footpath/cycleway which crosses the access. The application has been accompanied by a Transport Statement and a Framework Travel Plan.
- 7.19 The Transport Statement states that the increase in trips would be 24 in the AM peak and 25 in the PM peak. Cambridgeshire County Council as the Highway Authority have concluded that this would not represent a significant increase in the number of vehicles that would be exiting Latham Road onto the A141 Spittals Way roundabout. Furthermore, the Highway Authority consider that the access is adequate for the proposed use.
- 7.20 The proposal includes the provision of 45 designated car parking spaces three of which are disabled bays, two EV charging spaces, an area of motorcycle parking and space within each

unit for cycle storage. Whilst the proposed floor plans show secure internal storage for 4 bikes, these are likely to be used by staff members and details of the location and arrangement of visitor cycle parking should be confirmed by way of condition. The proposed parking provision for the development is considered to be adequate and a condition would be imposed on any planning permission to secure its provision as well as ensuring the implementation of the Framework Travel Plan. It is also worth noting that the site is in close proximity to public transport links with a number of public footpaths in the immediate vicinity.

7.21 Therefore, subject to appropriate conditions the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of its impact on highway safety and accords with Policy TT1 of the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan, Policy LP17 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036, the Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD and Section 9 of the NPPF 2023 in this regard.

Flood Risk

- 7.22 Policy LP5 of the Local Plan sets out that a proposal will only be supported where all forms of flood risk have been addressed. Furthermore, Policies LP6 and LP15 set out the Council's approach to waste water and surface water management.
- 7.23 The site is at the lowest risk of flooding according to the Huntingdonshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment 2017 and Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning (Flood Zone 1). However, the site is identified as being at risk of flooding from surface water and ground water flooding. Given the proposal seeks permission for the erection of 11 Use Class E business units which is classified as 'Less Vulnerable' development that is compatible with Flood Zone 1, the sequential and exception tests are not required in this instance. Furthermore, as the site is less than one hectare in size and flood risk vulnerability classification is the same for the former use (car park) and the proposed use (business development), no Flood Risk Assessment is required to be submitted as part of the application. Notwithstanding this, the application has been accompanied by a Drainage Strategy Plan and Storm Calculations to address surface water and foul drainage.
- 7.24 The proposal seeks to connect to the existing main foul and surface water drainage infrastructure that serves the Meridian Audio site to the south. The drainage calculations included within

the Drainage Strategy Plan do not fully model all flood events and use incorrect rainfall data. Calculations for the 1 in 1, 1 in 30 + 35% and 1 in 100-year AEP +40% climate change allowances are required in order to determine whether the system will flood in certain events. Furthermore, an 'in-principle' agreement from the sewer undertaker is required to discharge into their system at an agreed rate. The Local Lead Flood Authority has raised an objection on this basis and therefore the Local Planning Authority is not able to satisfy itself that the proposal would be acceptable with regard to its impact on both flood risk and surface water. The proposal is deemed to be contrary to Policies LP5, LP6 and LP15 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 and Section 14 of the NPPF 2023 in this regard.

Biodiversity and Trees

- 7.25 Paragraph 174 of the NPPF (2023) states planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. Policy LP30 of the Local Plan to 2036 requires proposals to demonstrate that all potential adverse impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity have been investigated and ensure no net loss in biodiversity and provide a net gain where possible, through the planned retention, enhancement and creation of habitats and wildlife features, appropriate to the scale, type, and location of development.
- 7.26 The application has been accompanied by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and a Calculation of Biodiversity Net Gain using Defra Metric 3.1. The site currently comprises an area of hardstanding for off-street car parking, a grassed area and tree planting. The submitted Preliminary Ecological Appraisal concludes the site currently represents lower/negligible biodiversity value and the proposal would result in minor adverse impacts that would be mitigated by measures detailed within the Furthermore, the proposal involves biodiversity enhancement measures that would represent a biodiversity net gain of approximately 8%. Subject to the imposition of conditions to ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the PEA and the 8% net gain is achieved, the proposal accords with Policy LP30 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 and Section 15 of the NPPF 2023.
- 7.27 The application is supported by an Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement. In terms of the tree population on site, along the western and northern boundaries there is an amenity landscape buffer and to the east is an

existing off-site woodland. There also occasional self-sown trees within the site along the eastern edges. The trees within the application site are not legally protected. The submitted AIA and Method Statement advises that no trees require pruning or removal to facilitate the proposed development and provided recommended tree protection measures are followed, existing trees can be safeguarded during proposed site works. The proposal therefore looks to retain all trees within and adjacent to the site and will therefore have no adverse arboricultural impact. Subject to a condition ensuring development is carried out in accordance with the AIA and Method Statement, the proposal complies with Policy LP31 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036.

Conclusion and Planning Balance

- 7.28 Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 7.29 By virtue of the design, scale and separation distances of the two blocks, the dominance of car parking and hardstanding with limited soft landscaping, the proposal is considered to represent a cramped form of development and of poor design that would result in visual harm to the site and would be uncharacteristic of the surrounding area. Furthermore, the drainage calculations included within the Drainage Strategy Plan do not fully model all flood events, use incorrect rainfall data and the application is not accompanied by an 'in-principle' agreement from the sewer undertaker, the Local Planning Authority is not able to satisfy itself that the proposal would not result in unacceptable flooding impacts. As such, the proposal is deemed to be contrary to Policies BE1 and BE2 of the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan, Policies LP5, LP6, LP11, LP12 and LP15 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036, the Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD and Sections 12 and 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023.
- 7.30 Taking national and local planning policies into account, and having regard for all relevant material considerations, the proposed development is considered to be in conflict with the Development Plan when taken as a whole and is not acceptable. There are no overriding material considerations that indicate that permission should be granted in this instance. Therefore, it is recommended that the application be refused.

8. **RECOMMENDATION – REFUSAL for the following reasons:**

- By virtue of the design, layout and separation distances of the two blocks, along with the dominance of car parking and hardstanding with limited soft landscaping, the proposal is considered to represent a cramped form of development that is of poor design and would result in visual harm to the site and would be uncharacteristic of the surrounding area. As such, the proposal is contrary to Policies BE1 and BE2 of the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan, Policies LP11 and LP12 Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036, the Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023.
- The drainage calculations included within the Drainage Strategy Plan do not fully model all flood events and uses incorrect rainfall data. Furthermore, an 'in-principle' agreement from the sewer undertaker is required to discharge into their system at an agreed rate. As such, the Local Planning Authority is not able to satisfy itself that the proposal would be acceptable with regard to its impact on both flood risk and surface water. Therefore, the proposal is contrary to Policies LP5, LP6 and LP15 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 and Section 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023.

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CONTACT OFFICER: Lucy Pateman (acting on behalf of Jennifer Wallis) lucy.pateman@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

HUNTINGDON TOWN COUNCIL

PLANNING COMMENTS: 10th March 2023

22/00216/FUL

Mr M Couson, Marman Ltd, Bencroft Dassels, Braughting, Herts SG11 2RS

Construction of eleven new use class E single storey business units and the associated access road, parking and landscaping. Lane North of 11 Latham Road Huntingdon

Recommend Approve - this is already a pre-exisiting industrial area and the proposed development is providing additional business units. Parking has been allocated in the development.

23/00234/S73

Mr Goss, High Street Homes Castle Hill House 20 High Street Huntingdon PE29 3TE

Variation of conditions 1 (Development in accordance with plans), 3 (Development in accordance with plans) and 9 (Vis. splays as per site plan) of 22/01576/S73 to improve

boundary site entrance

Land At And Including British Gas Plc Mill Common Huntingdon

Recommend Approve: No objections to proposed change to boundary wall

23/00355/HHFUL

Mr Barry Greer, 50 Sapley Park, Huntingdon. PE29 1PT

Proposed detached ancillary residential accommodation.

50 Sapley Park Huntingdon PE29 1PT

Recommend Approve: No objections

23/00351/TREE

Mr & Mrs J Georgious, 17 Tawny Crescent, Hartford PE29 1LG

Field Maple TPO 25/87 - Fell as tree is unsafe 17 Tawny Crescent Hartford Huntingdon PE29 1LG

Recommend Approve. Members do not wish to see trees removed, but note this work is required due to a safety issue. Members would like to see additional trees planted to replace the felled tree.

HUNTINGDON TOWN COUNCIL

PLANNING COMMENTS: 10th March 2023

23/00386/HHFUL

Jenny Garcia, 33 Owl Way, Huntingdon PE29 1YZ

Rear single-storey extension, 33 Owl Way, Hartford. Huntingdone PE29 1YZ

Recommend Approve. No objections All new materials match exisitng materials

Development Management Committee

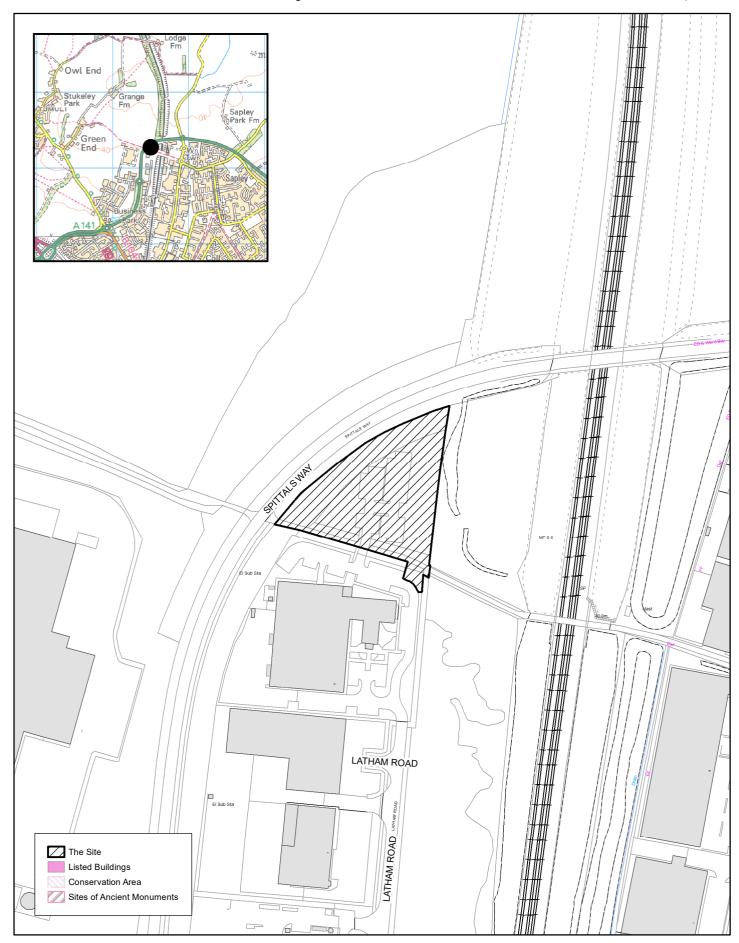


Application Ref:23/00216/FUL

Location: Huntingdon

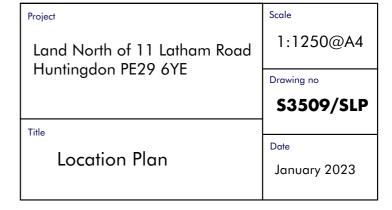


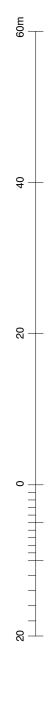
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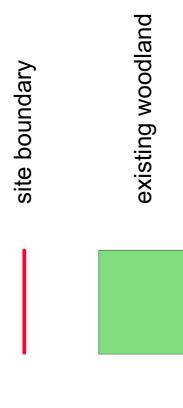








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3m gas main exclusion zone

line of 324mm diam. gas main

bank architects	83 De Beαυνοir Road London N1 4EL T +44 (0)7958 023536 architecture@southbankarchitects.co.uk	Marman Ltd	Land North of 11 Latham Road Huntingdon PE29 6YE	Plan	Scale	1.500 @ A1	Drawn by Checked	GB
s the state of the				Existing Block Plan	Drawing no	S3509/001	Date	November 2022

