

## **Item No. 11**

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| <b>APPLICATION NUMBER</b>                | <b>CB/15/01454/MW</b>  |
| <b>LOCATION</b>                          | <b>Mount Pleasant Golf Course, Station Road, Lower Stondon, Henlow, SG16 6JL</b>   |
| <b>PROPOSAL</b>                          | <b>9 hole extension to existing golf course through the importation of inert waste, incorporating landscaping works and water harvesting system.</b> |
| <b>PARISH</b>                            | <b>Stondon</b>   |
| <b>WARD</b>                              | <b>Arlesey</b>   |
| <b>WARD COUNCILLORS</b>                  | <b>Cllrs Dalgarno, Shelvey &amp; Wenham</b>  |
| <b>CASE OFFICER</b>                      | <b>Natalie Chillcott</b>   |
| <b>DATE REGISTERED</b>                   | <b>23 April 2015</b>   |
| <b>EXPIRY DATE</b>                       | <b>23 July 2015</b>  |
| <b>APPLICANT</b>                         | <b>Oakland Golf and Leisure Ltd</b>  |
| <b>AGENT</b>                             | <b>Edward Landor Associates</b>  |
| <b>REASON FOR COMMITTEE TO DETERMINE</b> | <b>Call in from Ward Member: Cllr Wenham on grounds of: impact on residents, highway network, road safety, noise and dust pollution.</b>             |
| <b>RECOMMENDED DECISION</b>              | <b>Waste Application - Recommended for Approval</b>  |

### **Summary of Recommendation**

The proposed development offers long term environmental, social and economic improvements to the area and a range of habitats including wild flower grassland, woodland, hedgerows and wetlands. This is supported by MWLP(2005) policies GE13 and GE10 and MWLP:SSP policy MWSP1. It will not pose a risk of flooding elsewhere (MWLP policy GE19) and provided measures are taken to record heritage assets found on site, the development is acceptable on grounds of archaeology (MWLP policy GE14).

Whilst the HGVs which will bring approximately 300,000 cubic metres of inert soils to the site over a 2 year period will cause some disruption to local residents and the development will lead to a loss of agricultural land, the anticipated disturbance will be reduced to an acceptable level. In light of the comments received by the Highways officer, and the Public Protection officer, the development is considered acceptable on grounds of highway safety and public amenity (MWLP policies GE23 and GE18).

### **Site Location:**

The 17ha application site is located on agricultural fields, in the village of Lower Stondon, 3.5km south of Shefford and 5km north of Hitchin. The existing 9 hole course abuts the southwestern boundary of the application area. Approximately 0.7ha of the application site extends into the existing course.

Station road (C146) separates the site from residential properties to the west, while a new housing development (the Bovis development) places residential properties against the northern boundary. Residential properties are also situated adjacent to a 165m stretch of the site's southern boundary. A caravan park is situated along the

site's eastern boundary, and will be separated from the site by a row of new allotments.

Stondon Lower school is situated approximately 350 metres south of the application site, on Hillside Road while a small playground lies 80 metres to the south of the site.

Access to the strategic highway network is gained via Station road which joins the Strategic Highway network- the A600, 600m east of the proposed site entrance.

### **The Application:**

The application proposes to construct a nine hole extension to the existing 9 hole Mount Pleasant Golf Course through the importation of approximately 300,000 cubic metres of inert soils. The applicant predicts that an average of 76 deliveries of soils to the site would be made per day and proposes to operate Monday - Friday 07:00 - 19:00 and Saturday 07:00 - 13:00. The construction phase is anticipated to last two years and would be split into three phases, moving in an east to west direction across the site.

A new, 115m tarmaced temporary access road onto Station Road would be constructed to allow deliveries of the inert waste to be made and would lead from Station Road to a contractors fenced compound where a portacabin administration office, wheel cleaning facilities and staff parking would be positioned.

Topsoil would be stored along the southern boundary and along a short stretch of the northern boundary, near the temporary access while the construction works are carried out.

The importation of waste and topographical remodelling would result in an average ground lift of 1.88m. Twenty-six trees would be removed to enable the temporary access to be built, a new line of play to be created on the existing course and to enable a new tee to be constructed. Whilst twenty-six trees would be lost, 8,000 new trees would be planted in addition to the new shrubs, marginal plants, grassland, wild flowers and wetland zones which would accompany the new fairways and tees. Six new irrigation storage ponds would also be constructed to collect water and to be used for irrigation purposes.

### **RELEVANT POLICIES:**

#### **National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)**

Paragraph 14 - Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development

Paragraph 28 - Supporting a prosperous rural economy

Section 11 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Section 12 (paragraphs 135 and 139) - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

#### **Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Strategic Sites and Policies (Jan 2014)**

MWSP1 Presumption in favour of sustainable development

MWSP2 Climate Change

MWSP3 The determination of planning applications

## Minerals and Waste Adopted Plan Saved Policies

GE1 Matters to be addressed in planning applications  
GE6 Protection of Best and most Versatile agricultural land.  
GE9 Landscape Protection and Landscaping.  
GE10 Protection/Enhancement of trees and woodland.  
GE14 Archaeology  
GE17 Pollution control  
GE18 Disturbance  
GE19 Flooding  
GE20 Water Resources  
GE23 Transport: Suitability of local road network  
GE26 Restoration  
GE27 Aftercare

## Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (November 2009)

CS11 Rural Economy and Tourism  
CS13 Climate Change  
CS15 Heritage  
CS16 Landscape and Woodland

## Planning History

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| CB/14/00921/SCN  | Screening opinion: Construction of additional nine hole golf course, incorporating a water harvesting scheme for irrigation, significant woodland planting and enhanced biodiversity. (Decision made 28th March 2014) |
| CB/11/04202/FULL | Extension, remodelling and enhancement of existing golf course practice area. Application withdrawn 4 <sup>th</sup> July 2012.  |
| CB/11/01066/SCO  | EIA- Screening/Scoping Opinion: Proposed remodelling of Driving Range and Practice Area. (Decision made 16th May 2011)  |

## Consultee responses

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Environment Agency                                  | No objection  |
| Bedfordshire and River Ivel Internal Drainage Board | No objection subject to a suitably worded condition to provide a 7m stand-off for access.   |
| Civil Aviation Authority                            | No comments received.   |
| MOD   | No comments received.   |
| Historic England                                    | <u>No objection</u><br>We can confirm that the development area does not contain any known designated heritage assets. We are however aware that the site has a high potential for non-designated heritage assets and historic structures that relate to the defence of Britain in WWII. We would also recommend that this application is determined in line with paragraphs 135 and 139 of the National Planning and Policy Framework. |
| Natural England                                     | Natural England wished to make no comment on the application.   |

CBC Public Protection

No objection to the application subject to the recommended conditions dealing with noise and dust being applied to any granted permission.

CBC Senior Engineer

No objection

The Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) submitted with the application addresses many of the concerns raised by the Council and by local residents and I therefore have no objection to the application in principle.

CBC Highways Officer

However, it is not clear from the drawings submitted with the application that all the design proposals within the FRA have been implemented and I would recommend my suggested condition be attached to any approval.

No objection- subject to a number of conditions being imposed.

Fundamentally the principle of conversion from a 9 hole golf course to an 18 hole course does not raise significant highway issues post construction.

However, the principle issue with this proposal is the HGV traffic associated with importation of material to enable the construction of the additional holes at the existing golf course. The transport statement does confirm the routing suggested during the pre application discussions. From the A1 junction 10 keeping to the principal highway A507 until the Airman PH junction then south along the A600 before turning onto Station Road at the Bird in Hand roundabout thereby minimising impact on residential properties and avoiding the Lower School.

The number of daily HGV movements predicted can be adequately accommodated and would not cause issues in terms of capacity on the highway network even during highway network peak hours.

With regard to the on-site arrangements I am content that the details of the access route, compound and wheel wash facilities shown on the submitted plan reference 1136.05 are satisfactory and as such there is no need for specific conditions covering these issues.

CBC Archaeology  
Officer

No objection - subject to the recommended conditions being imposed.

CBC Ecology Officer

No objection

I have no concerns over potential impacts to biodiversity. Works to the site will result in a net gain to biodiversity with significant habitat creation in the form of wild flower grassland, woodland, hedgerows and wetlands. I would like to see a management plan provided as a condition to show how these habitats will be created and maintained in a favourable condition. It is also noted that the Pill Box is to be retained within a buffer which is welcomed as this could offer potential nesting/roosting opportunities to birds or bats.

The Ecological appraisal notes that further surveys for

bats are required, this is primarily to inform future management of the existing mature trees on site. As such I am happy for this to be conditioned.

CBC Landscape Officer The proposals are generally acceptable and will enhance landscape and habitat.  
Detailed comments made on plant spacing and species mix.

CBC Trees and Landscape Officer No objection.

### **Other representations:**

Stondon Parish Council Stondon Parish Council does not object to the above application in principal and is keen to support the expansion of the Golf Course. However we do have the following concerns which we would appreciate being taken into consideration:

A defined travel plan for the delivery schedule.

a) what happens if the road leading to the compound is full?

b) where will the lorries be held in case a)

Frequency - great concern over the impact of the times of delivery and that they will clash with parents and children on the school run along the pavement. Can this period be avoided? i.e between 8.30? and 9.15?

Options on management of lorries . Who do we contact if there are problems?

Action/Liaison officer/group who in the developers team as well as the golf club do we contact?

Footpath from Persimmon Estate to new Bovis development to allow people to by pass Bedford Road.

Times - 7am to 7pm - Lorries will be travelling down Station Road at 6.30am to get to feeder road for deliveries?

Neighbours

The Council received 85 representations of which 71 were in support of the application, 12 against (including 10 from residents living on Station Road) and 2 neutral comments.

### **Reasons for support**

#### Environmental and wildlife benefits

- The extension would enhance the environment, providing a range of habitats for wildlife, and will expand the corridors for wildlife in the vicinity.
- It will help to balance the environmental impacts of intensive farming.
- It would enhance the beauty of the area.
- It would help Lower Stondon to retain a degree of

ruralness.

### Community benefits

- It would add much required green space for residents to enjoy.
- Social amenity for golfers.
- Regular lorry movements may help to slow down the traffic on Station road.
- Green lung for the community.
- Improved golf course would benefit local residents and golfers as the golf club facilities are open to all to use.
  - It would be a great improvement to the amenity value of the Stondon area and Henlow area.
- The self sufficiently in water usage is commendable.
- The development will attract visitors to the village who spend money in local businesses.
- The development would create additional local jobs.
- The nearest well run and maintained 18 hole course is 30 minutes drive away. The development would keep money associated with golfing in the local community.
- It would protect land from possible future development, such as housing and in the long term will generate few traffic movements than other types of development.
- High quality application. All parties have been consulted and catered for.
- Good for the community.

### **Reasons for objection and concerns raised.**

#### HGV movements

- 2 years of frequent lorry movements along Station Road is not acceptable. Already have 2 years of traffic for the building of houses further down station road.
- The anticipated volume of HGV traffic associated with the development jeopardises the safety of other uses of Station road, such as school children walking to school and people, many of whom are elderly or disabled who need to walk across Station road to reach the doctors and the pharmacy.
- Station road is already a dangerous road due to a lack of visibility, speeding traffic and parked cars on the road.
- Wear on the road.
- Vibrations from the traffic may damage old properties on Station Road, specifically to their drainage pipes.
- The planning department should advise if further houses should ever be allowed to be built on this agricultural land.
- A 12 hour day is a long time to have lorries

- constantly arriving and departing.
- An alternative, non-evasive route should be used to access the site, for instance access could be gained via the edge of the existing golf course via Bedford road or via the footpath from Bedford road before the greyhound track up to the end of the houses by the side of the field with a traffic light system used to direct lorries across the road.
- Lorries should enter station road from the western end to minimise the number of households affected.
- The development may lead to mud on the road and stones flying off and damaging parked cars. A sweeper will not adequately clean the road.
- No traffic calming measures have been installed.

### **Other concerns raised**

- Bird strike risk  
The proposed ponds may attract large birds. The course is directly under the final approach of Runway 02 and under the flight path of aircraft departing from Runway 20. Aircraft are likely to be between 200- 700ft when flying over the golf course- the height at which most bird strikes occur. A thorough risk assessment of bird strike should be undertaken and expertise from AAIB/CAA or RAF Centre of Aviation Medicine sought.
- Drainage  
Previous drainage problems and maintenance issues associated with the golf course led to flooding of properties on Station road. Measures to rectify the drainage problems should be taken.
- Potential noise impact for local residents as the village is flat and noise travels considerable distances. The noise from reversing beepers may disturb residents.
- Cumulative impact with other development on the lives of local residents
- Dust and pollution will disturb and affect local residents.
- The field should remain as agricultural land.
- Existing flora and fauna will be lost
- Iron Age remains have been found underneath the field. There is the risk that the development may damage the historic remains.
- Trees and shrubs should not over shadow existing properties. The height and future maintenance of the proposed hedging and trees should not be taller than 3 metres along the Station road boundary.
- 7:00am is too early, 8:00am is more acceptable. Working until 7:00pm is too late.

## Determining Issues

The main considerations of the application are;

1. Principle of the development
2. Highways
3. Disturbance
4. Drainage
5. Bird strike
6. Landscape and trees
7. Restoration
8. Loss of agricultural land
9. Archaeology

## Considerations

### 1 Principles of the development

1.1 MWLP:SSP policy MWSP1 "The Determination of planning applications" requires minerals and waste applications to be determined within regard to the Saved policies contained in the MWLP(2005) as well as the policies contained in the MWLP:SSP (2014). MWLP(2005) policy GE1 "Matters to be addressed in planning applications" lists some of the factors the LPA is required to consider when validating and considering an application and is used to ensure sufficient information is provided to adequately assess the application.

1.2 The NPPF (paragraph 14) and MWLP:SSP policy MWSP1 "Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development" requires the Local Planning Authority to take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

1.3 It is accepted that an 18 hole course is more desirable than a 9 hole course. This is recognised by many of the local residents who commented on the application. It is therefore likely that should planning permission be granted, the economic potential of the facility will improve, ensuring greater job security for existing staff while additional staff would be employed during the construction phase of the development. This is supported by the NPPF (paraphraph 28) Core Strategy (2009) policy CS11: "Rural Economy and Tourism" which supports proposals for tourist and leisure developments in settlements or in the countryside.

1.4 In addition to economic and social benefits of the development for the local area, the proposal will also offer environmental improvements to the site- through the planting of new hedgerows, wild flowers, grasslands and over 8,000 trees.

1.5 The development involves the importation of approximately 300,000 cubic metres of inert waste which will be transported via HGVs. These HGVs will inevitably lead to the release of greenhouse gasses. However, it is considered that the extensive planting of trees, will, to some degree, offset the carbon footprint of the HGV movements and as such is in conformity with MWSP2 "Climate Change".

1.6 It is likely that the long term environmental, social and economic benefits resulting from the development will outweigh the short/medium term environmental and social cost associated with the development and as such is considered to be, on balance, in conformity with policy MWSP1 "Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development".



## 2. Highways

2.1 MWLP (2005) policy GE23 "Transport: suitability of local road network" requires the WPA to only grant planning permission for waste developments where the material is capable of being transported to and from the site via the strategic highway network. The policy requires the LPA to take into account the suitability of access routes to and from the strategic highway network.

2.2 A number of local residents, the parish council and Stondon Lower School suggested that the proposed number of HGVs associated with the development may pose a significant risk for pedestrians, including children and parents travelling to/from the school, as well as elderly and/or disabled people walking along and crossing Station road.

2.3 The submitted travel plan shows all HGVs should access the site via the A600, before joining Station road for 600m, and turning left into the site. It also shows that all HGVs should turn right out of the site. This means HGVs should not travel through the village of Lower Stondon and will not pass the Stondon Lower School. The CBC highways officer agrees that the proposed route will adequately reduce the risk and disruption for the users of Station road. The email from the agent dated 10th June 2015 confirms that the applicant would be prepared to employ a road marshal for a temporary period to monitor school run periods and to improve safety.

2.4 The Headteacher for Stondon Lower School noted that peak times for children and parents walking along Station Road are: 08:15 - 09:15 and 15:15 - 16:15. Stondon Parish suggested that lorries should be required to avoid peak times to minimise the dangers associated with the development. The CBC Highways officer considered that the suggestion would result in the time period to carry out the development being extended (which would prolong any disruption caused). The officer also considered that the suggestion may cause HGVs to wait elsewhere on the network, which would then travel to the site in convoy. The Highways officer considered that this would be more problematical than allowing a steady stream throughout the day. In light of the comments made by the Parish Council, the Headteacher, local residents and the CBC Highways officer, a condition which restricts the number of HGVs movements during peak times to 14 per hour is considered reasonable.

2.5 All drivers will be made aware that HGVs will not be accepted onto the site (which includes the internal haul road) until 7:00am. It is unlikely that it would take HGVs more than 5 minutes to reach the site from the A600. This means lorries should not be travelling down Station road at 6:30am. A condition will be imposed to enable the Local Planning Authority (LPA) to remotely monitor the site entrance. Therefore a condition which prevents HGVs from entering the site before 7:00 will be monitored effectively. Should any complaints be received which indicate HGVs have arrived before 7:00am the LPA would be able to check the CCTV footage and take appropriate action.

2.6 The Parish were also concerned that the road leading to the compound may become full and wanted to know who should be contacted if there are problems. The road leading to the compound measures 115m, as such the road has the capacity to hold a upto to 6 lorries at any one time and for this reason it unlikely to become full. The applicant advises that a site notice board will include contact details for the Site Manager and Managing Director which will enable members of the public to contact the appropriate individual(s), should an issue arise.

2.7 A number of residents suggested that the HGVs associated with the development may cause damage to Station Road. However, as noted by the CBC Highways officer, any damage to the public highway resulting from the proposed development will be made good to the satisfaction of the Local Highway Authority at the expense of the applicant.

2.8 On the basis that the CBC Highways Officer raised no objection (subject to appropriately worded conditions being imposed), the proposal is considered to be acceptable in terms of highway safety and as such conforms with MWLP(2005) policy GE23.

### **3. Disturbance**

3.1 The MWLP (2005) policy GE18 "Disturbance" requires any anticipated disturbance resulting from the proposed development to be reduced as far as practicable and to only be permitted where the potential for disturbance is outweighed by other planning benefits. Potential sources of disturbance from this proposal include: noise, vibration, dust and mud on the road.

#### Noise

3.2 The construction noise impact assessment submitted with the application recognises that the anticipated traffic deliveries to and from the site as well as on site operations will generate noise. For this reason the applicant undertook a noise assessment from four key locations around the site. The report that accompanied the assessment suggests that an acoustic barrier could be constructed to block the line of sight between construction equipment and residential properties and this would limit noise levels from the site to  $L_{Aeq,1hour} 55Db$ . On this basis the CBC Public Protection officer raised no objection to the proposal, subject to a number of conditions being imposed.

3.3 A local resident felt that disruption could be reduced if the daily hours of operation were reduced (the resident considered 7:00am was too early to start, while 19:00 considered too late to finish per day). However, the Public Protection officer considered the proposed hours of operation were acceptable from a public amenity perspective. In addition, should the daily hours of operation be reduced, the time period needed to complete the development would need to be extended. This would result in an extension of disruption to local residents.

#### Mud, dust and vibrations

3.4 A number of local residents were concerned that the development may lead to mud and dust on the road which may pose a danger to other road users and respiratory problems for local residents. The applicant proposes to install a jet wash and wheel bath and to use a road sweeper on the access road to minimise the amount of mud reaching the highway and to ensure any mud that does reach the highway is removed as quickly as possible. The use of these facilities, in addition to the 115m haulage road will ensure that disturbance should not be caused by reason of mud on the road. The sheeting of lorries will further ensure that dust should not cause any disturbance for local residents.

3.5 A number of residents were concerned that vibrations may cause damage to residential properties close to the site, however, this view was not supported by the Public Protection Officer or the Senior Engineer and is therefore considered unlikely. In light of the comments made by the CBC specialists and the various mitigation measures proposed, the development adequately conforms with MWLP(2005) policy GE18 "Disturbance".

## **4. Drainage**

4.1 MWLP(2005) policy 19 "Flooding" seeks to prevent development which may result in flooding. The risk of flooding can increase if the capacity of the floodplain is reduced or the flow of flood water is impeded. A local resident noted that properties on Station road had been flooded in the past due to maintenance issues with the existing drainage system. The Senior Engineer is aware of the problems experienced in the past. However, the Senior Engineer notes that the Flood Risk Assessment submitted with the application addresses many of the concerns raised by the Council and local residents and as such made no objection to the application. The Senior Engineer suggested a condition be added to the planning permission which requires the submission of a detailed surface water drainage scheme. The CBC Engineer advised that the scheme should include the design proposals contained within the Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and any effects on the local land drainage system. Since these comments have been made the applicant has submitted a Water Harvesting Plan showing the proposed drainage system. As recognised in the FRA the development will not have any effects on the local land drainage system. It will result in no net loss of the floodplain, it will not impede water flows and will not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere and there will be no discharge from ponds 5 and 6 into the existing ditch.

4.2 The capacity of the open drain will be increased to more effectively manage the drainage associated with Station Road and will be relocated to the inside of the treeline. Surface water runoff will be contained within the application area and used for irrigation purposes. The proposal prevents discharge to the existing drainage ditches and as such the potential drainage problems that may have been generated from the application site to the east will be alleviated. Neither the IDB nor the Environment Agency raised any objections to the proposal. For the reasons listed above and the fact that only inert waste will be imported onto the site, the risk of flooding and water contamination is considered low and as such is in conformity with MWLP(2005) policies GE17 "Pollution control", GE19 "Flooding" and GE20 "Water resources".

## **5. Bird strike**

5.1 The site falls within the Henlow Airfield Safeguarding Zone (i.e within 13km from the RAF Henlow airfield) where the risk of bird-strike is the greatest as such both the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) were consulted on the application.

5.2 A number of local residents raised concerns that the proposed ponds may encourage large numbers of large birds to gather on the site and this could pose a bird-strike risk for pilots landing or taking off from Henlow airfield. However, no comments were received from the MOD or the CAA to this effect. Nevertheless a condition will be imposed which requires the submission of a bird management plan to ensure the risk of bird-strike is adequately avoided.

## **6. Landscape, trees and ecology**

6.1 MWLP(2005) policy GE9 "Landscape protection and Landscaping" encourages proposals to be sympathetic to local landscape character and to include a landscape scheme, where appropriate.

6.2 The Landscape officer raised no objection to the application but asked for a

landscape management plan to be produced. The officer considers that there is a need to improve planting along some of the site boundaries to ensure further landscape enhancement and integration with the existing and the proposed development is achieved. The Landscape officer therefore asked for various improvements to be made to the landscape scheme by way of condition. Since this time a revised Landscape plan, which incorporates the Landscape Officer's comments has been produced and submitted to the LPA.

6.3 MWLP(2005) policy GE10 "Protection/enhancement of trees and woodland" seeks to retain and where appropriate increase overall tree and hedgerow cover. Whilst, the proposal involves the removal of twenty-six existing trees, 8,000 new trees will be planted. The CBC Trees and Landscape raised no objections to the proposal, though asked for a final layer of quality topsoil to be used to ensure planting succeeds and to replace Ash which is unobtainable, with Scots Pine.

6.4 The CBC Ecologist considers that the proposed development will lead to a net gain to biodiversity, but has requested that a management plan be included to show how the habitats will be created and maintained. The Ecologist supported the buffer around the Pill Box which could be a nesting/roosting opportunity for birds or bats. The Ecologist has requested that condition be imposed which requires the submission of a bat survey.

6.5 Based on the comments received by the Landscape Officer, Ecologist, the Trees and Landscape Officer and the fact Natural England had no comments to make on the application, the proposal is considered to result in a net benefit for wildlife and landscape (subject to a number of conditions being imposed). For these reasons the proposal is considered to be in conformity with MWLP(2005) policy GE9 "Landscape protection and Landscaping" and GE10 "Protection/enhancement of trees and woodland".

## **7. Restoration**

7.1 MWLP(2005) policy GE26 "Restoration" requires non-permanent waste facilities to be restored within a reasonable timescale and to include high quality restoration. The proposal will lead to considerable improvements to the long term public amenity of the area and will lead to significant habitat creation. The applicant anticipates that the development will require two years to complete the construction phase. Two years is considered to be a reasonable timescale. For these reasons the development accords with policy GE26 "Restoration".

## **8. Loss of agricultural land**

8.1 MWLP(2005) policy GE6 "Protection of Best and Most Versatile agricultural land" and NPPF paragraph 112 discourage the use of Best and Most Versatile agricultural land. Policy GE6 requires the applicant to demonstrate that no known suitable sites of lesser agricultural value are available and that the loss of such land is reduced as far as practicable and outweighed by other planning benefits.

8.2 The applicant commissioned an independent assessment of the agricultural land quality of the site. The assessment found that most of the site was classified as subgrade 3a (66.7%) and subgrade 3b and whilst a number of fields exist to the south of the existing site they are not owned by the Oakland Golf and Leisure and therefore outside of the applicant's control. The applicant also notes that there are design benefits to siting the extension to the north of the site, which could not be

achieved by positioning the extension in an alternative location.

8.3 On the basis that the application site is the only feasible location for the extension, no comments have been made by Natural England, and the loss of agricultural land is outweighed by other planning benefits, the development accords with Policy GE6 "Protection of Best and Most Versatile agricultural land".

## **9. Archaeology**

9.1 MWLP(2005) policy GE14 and the NPPF seeks to preserve sites of major archaeological importance and their settings. The CBC archaeologist notes that the site lies within an archaeological landscape and there is an area of cropmarks and a Second World War pillbox within the site. The CBC Archaeologist broadly supports the results of the Heritage Statement which includes the results of a geophysical survey, and agrees that a Scheme of Archaeological Resource Management (SARM) would be an appropriate method of mitigating the impact of the development on the archaeological resource.

9.2 The archaeologist raised no objection to the proposal, provided the applicant takes appropriate measures to record, advance understanding of and where possible protect any heritage assets found, which can be achieved by attaching the archaeologists suggested condition. On this basis the development accords with MWLP(2005) policy GE14 "Archaeology" and NPPF Section 12 "Conserving and enhancing the historic environment".

### **1. Human Rights issues**

The proposal raises no Human Rights issues.

### **2. Equality issues**

The proposal raises no Equality issues.

## **10. Conclusion**

10.1 The proposed development offers significant environmental improvements to the area and a range of habitats including wild flower grassland, woodland, hedgerows and wetlands which is supported by MWLP(2005) policies GE13 "Species and Habitat Protection and Enhancement" and GE10 "Protection/enhancement of trees and woodland".

10.2 The proposal will not pose a risk of flooding and as such conforms with MWLP(2005) policy GE19 "Flooding". Provided measures are taken to record heritage assets found on site the development is acceptable on grounds of archaeology (MWLP2005 policy GE14 Archaeology). The proposal also offers long term economic and social benefits for the local community which is supported by MWLP:SSP 1 "Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development".

10.3 It is recognised that the many HGVs which will access and leave the site will cause some disruption to local residents and the development will lead to a loss of agricultural land. However, anticipated disturbance will be reduced as far as practicable and will be reduced to an acceptable level through the use of a transport management plan, the submission of a noise scheme and by taking adequate measures to prevent mud from reaching Station Road. In light of the comments received by the Highways officer, and the Public Protection officer, the development is considered acceptable on grounds of highway safety and public amenity.

## Recommendation

That Planning Permission be approved subject to the following:

### RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS / REASONS

- 1 Planning permission shall extend to the area edged with a thick black line on the attached plan no CB/15/0145/MW-1. The development shall be carried out in accordance with planning application validated on 23rd April 2015, Transport Statement received on 15th May 2015, Phasing Plan no. 1136.08, Water Harvesting Plan no. 1136.07, email dated 10th June 2015 and Landscape Plan no. 1136.03 Rev A dated 26th June 2015. REASON: To define the permission.
- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be begun no later than 3 years from the date of this permission. Written notification of the date of commencement shall be sent to the Local Planning Authority within 7 days of such commencement.  
REASON: To comply with section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act.
- 3 The importation of waste shall cease within 2 years from the date of implementation.  
REASON: To define the permission, to minimise disturbance for local residents and to ensure the timely restoration of the site. MWLP(2005) policies GE18 Disturbance and GE26 Restoration.
- 4 All contouring and landscaping works shall be completed within 3 years of commencement of the development.  
REASON: To ensure the timely restoration of the site. MWLP(2005) policy GE27 Aftercare.
- 5 Vehicle access to the site shall only be by way of the new, temporary access onto Station Road as shown on plans titled "Temporary Construction Access" and "Contractors Works Plan"  
REASON: in the interest of highway safety. MWLP(2005) Policy GE23.
- 6 No operations shall take place except in accordance with the phasing shown on Phasing Plan no. 1136.08 which accompanies the planning application. Entry into phase 3 shall be subject to written agreement from the Local Planning Authority which shall be dependent on a topographical survey being carried out and submitted to the Local Planning Authority. The surveys should demonstrate that each phase has been shaped in accordance with the contours shown on Grading Plan no. 1136.02.  
REASON: To provide for a satisfactory restoration of the site. MWLP(2005) Policy GE26.
- 7 No Heavy Goods Vehicles\* shall deliver waste material to the site unless and until a scheme that addresses the potential conflict of movements of HGVs and golfers using the existing golf course during operations has been submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, the approved scheme shall be carried out in full.  
REASON: In the interest of health and safety (MWLP Policy GE 23).

\*All vehicles over 7.5 tonnes gross vehicle weight.

8 **No development shall take place until a written scheme for an archaeological trial trench evaluation of the whole site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be implemented in full and a report that complies with the agreed parameters in the approved written scheme has been submitted to the Local Planning Authority.**  
**REASON:** In accordance with paragraph 141 of the NPPF, to ensure that the importance of the heritage assets with archaeological interest is fully understood and to allow for an appropriate scheme of archaeological mitigation to be devised.  
**REASON FOR PRECOMMENCEMENT CONDITION:** To ensure heritage assets are not inadvertently destroyed when the development commences.

9 **No development shall take place until a written scheme of heritage asset resource management which uses the results of the trial trench evaluation referred to in condition 8 as its basis; has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme of heritage asset resource management must contain the following information:**

- A method statement for the investigation of any archaeological remains present at the site that cannot be preserved *in situ*;
- A method statement for the preservation *in situ* of any archaeological and historical remains present that can be protected within the development;
- An outline strategy for post-excavation assessment, analysis and publication;
- A timetable for each stage of the archaeological works

**The approved scheme shall be implemented in full.**

**REASON:** a.) In accordance with paragraph 141 of the NPPF; to record and advance the understanding of the significance of the heritage assets with archaeological interest which will be unavoidably affected as a consequence of the development and to make the record of this work publicly available.

b.) In accordance with Policy GE 14 of the Bedfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan; to ensure that provision is made for an appropriate level of investigation and recording in advance of the destruction of those archaeological sites which do not merit permanent preservation and to secure the long term management of archaeological remains which can be preserved *in situ* within the development site.

**REASON FOR PRECOMMENCEMENT CONDITION:** To ensure heritage assets are not inadvertently destroyed when the development commences.

10 **Written notification of the date of completion of the archaeological fieldwork shall be sent to the Local Planning Authority within seven days of such completion. The golf course shall not be brought into use until the archaeological Post Excavation Assessment and Updated Project Design has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The archaeological Post Excavation Assessment and Updated Project Design shall follow the parameters in the approved outline strategy for post-excavation assessment, analysis and publication.**

REASON: In accordance with paragraph 141 of the NPPF; to make the record of archaeological work publicly available.

- 11 The archaeological post excavation analysis (as specified in the approved Updated Project Design); the preparation of the site archive for deposition, with a store approved by the Local Planning Authority; the completion of the archive report and the submission of the publication report will be undertaken within two years of the approval of the Updated Project Design.  
REASON: In accordance with paragraph 141 of the NPPF; to make the record of archaeological work publicly available.
- 12 The golf course shall not be brought into use until a long term management plan for the preservation *in situ* of any archaeological and historical remains that can be protected within the development site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.  
REASON: In accordance with Policy GE 14 of the Minerals and Waste Local Plan; to secure the long term management of archaeological remains which can be preserved *in situ* within the development site
- 13 All topsoil and subsoils shall be permanently retained within the site and shall not be stripped, stored or replaced except in accordance with the details contained in the "Soil Management Strategy" no. 10328(1) and the Contractors Works Plan drawing no. 1136.05.  
Soils will be stripped and stored separately from imported soils to protect their quality.  
REASON: To define the permission. To protect the structure of the soils. MWLP(2005) Policy GE6.
- 14 No soils shall be stripped or moved on site unless they are in a reasonably dry and friable condition.  
REASON: to protect the structure of the soils. MWLP(2005) Policy GE6.
- 15 Except as set out in (a) and (b) below, no operations authorised or required under this permission shall be carried out except between the following times:  
07:00 – 19:00 hours Monday to Fridays  
07:00 – 13:00 hours Saturday  
And no operations shall be carried out on Sundays, Bank or Public Holidays.  
  
(a) Site operatives may be permitted to enter the site between 06:30 and 07:00 hours Monday to Saturday to disable security measures at the site.  
(b) For temporary operations involving the stripping of soils, construction and removal of bunds, and final restoration in any areas where noise levels are likely to exceed 55Db(A) 1 hr, free field at sensitive receptors, operations shall not commence before 08:00 hours.  
REASON: To protect the amenities of neighbouring properties. MWLP(2005) Policy GE18.
- 16 **No development shall take place until a detailed design of the surface water drainage scheme, which shall include the design proposals contained within the submitted FRA and any effects on the local land drainage system have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter no part of the development shall be occupied or brought into use until the approved drainage scheme has been implemented.**  
**REASON: To ensure that adequate surface water drainage is provided and that existing and future land drainage needs are protected.**  
**REASON FOR PRECOMMENCEMENT CONDITION: Surface water**



**drainage details must be provided before the development commences to prevent the risk of Flooding (MWLP Policy GE19).**

- 17 HGV\* movements into/out of the site shall be limited to a maximum in any one day of 162 (pro rata for part days), with no more than a maximum of 14 movements per hour during the peaks of 08:15am to 09:15 and 15:15 to 16:15pm Monday - Friday.  
REASON: In the interest of highway safety. MWLP(2005) GE23.  
\*All vehicles over 7.5 tonnes gross vehicle weight.
- 18 A record of daily lorry movements shall be maintained at all times and shall be available for inspection on request by the Local Planning Authority, and a summary shall be forwarded to the Local Planning Authority, every 3 months.  
REASON: To allow the monitoring of condition 11. MWLP(2005) GE23.
- 19 **No development authorised by this permission shall take place unless and until CCTV has been installed which monitors the entrance to the site in accordance with a scheme to be submitted to an approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include details of:**  
– The columns and cameras used,  
– The area covered,  
– The capability for remote access viewing.  
The CCTV shall thereafter be implemented in accordance with the agreed scheme.  
REASON: To allow the monitoring of condition 15. MWLP(2005) GE23 and GE18.  
REASON FOR PRECOMMENCEMENT CONDITION: To enable the effective monitoring of conditions 15 and GE18.
- 20 **No development shall take place until a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The CTMP shall include proposals for construction traffic routes, the scheduling and timing of movements to avoid stacking or waiting on the public highway, any traffic control, signage within the highway inclusive of temporary warning signs, the management of the junction with Station Road. The CTMP shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details for the duration of the construction period.**  
REASON: In order to minimise danger, obstruction and inconvenience to users of the highway and the site. MWLP(2005) Policy GE23  
REASON FOR PRECOMMENCEMENT CONDITION: In the interest of highway safety. MWLP(2005) Policy GE23.
- 21 **No development shall take place until full engineering details of the temporary access for construction vehicles shown indicatively on Plan 1136.05 have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority and the access constructed in accordance with the approved detail.**  
REASON: In order to ensure the provision of an access of suitable layout and construction in the interests of highway safety.  
MWLP(2005) Policy GE23  
REASON FOR PRECOMMENCEMENT CONDITION: In the interest of highway safety. MWLP(2005) Policy GE23.

- 22 **No development shall take place unless and until a sign, the design and content of which has been approved by the Local Planning Authority, has been erected at the entrance instructing all drivers of heavy goods vehicles to turn right out of the site. The sign shall be maintained for the duration of the use of access for the purposes hereby permitted and removed thereafter.**  
**REASON: To ensure that HGVs do not travel through the village of Lower Stondon in the interest of highway safety. MWLP(2005) Policy GE23.**  
**REASON FOR PRECOMMENCEMENT CONDITION: In the interest of highway safety. MWLP(2005) policy GE23.**
- 23 Within two months of the completion of the development hereby approved the construction access onto Station Road shall be removed and the highway reinstated to include raised kerbs, footway and verge.  
REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and in order to minimise danger, obstruction and inconvenience to users of the highway and the site.  
MWLP(2005) Policy GE23
- 24 No materials other than inert waste shall be imported and deposited on the site.  
REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and to prevent pollution MWLP Policy GE17.
- 25 No vehicles shall move around the site at a speed in excess of 15mph.  
REASON: To minimise any nuisance to nearby residents by reason of dust.  
MWLP(2005) Policy GE18.
- 26 No floodlighting shall be erected on site unless and until a scheme for floodlighting has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and thereafter shall be implemented in full accordance with the approved scheme.  
REASON: To minimise disturbance to residential properties. Policy GE18 of MWLP 2005.
- 27 No tonal reversing alarms shall be used on the site.  
REASON: To protect the amenities of the surrounding area. MWLP 2005 Policy GE18.
- 28 Except for temporary operations, the free field Equivalent Continuous Noise Level LAeq, 1hr, due to operations in the site, shall not exceed 55dB LAeq 1hr, when measured at the boundary of any residential dwelling. For temporary operations such as site preparation, soil and overburden stripping, screening, bund formation and removal and final restoration the free field noise level due to work at the nearest point to each dwelling shall not exceed 70dB LAeq 1hr, when measured at the boundary of any residential dwelling. Temporary operations shall not exceed a total of eight weeks in a calendar year.  
REASON: to minimise any nuisance to nearby residents by reason of noise.  
MWLP(2005) Policy GE18.
- 29 **Prior to the commencement of the permission a scheme of noise monitoring and mitigation shall be submitted and approved by the local planning authority. All operations shall take place on site in accordance with the details that have been approved.**  
**REASON: to enable compliance with prescribed noise levels for on-site operations to adequately monitored and assessed in the event of**

**complaints about noise being received. MWLP(2005) Policy GE18.  
REASON FOR PRECOMMENCEMENT CONDITION: To ensure works  
(which could generate noise) do not commence until a noise and  
mitigation scheme is submitted and approved.**

- 30 No landscaping, planting or fencing shall be undertaken within 7m of any Internal Drainage Board's watercourses without prior consent.  
REASON: To protect water resources. MWLP(2005) Policy GE20.
- 31 Landscaping shall be carried out in accordance with Landscape Plan no. 1136.03 Rev A dated 26th June 2015.  
REASON: To ensure a satisfactory restoration of the site (MWLP policies GE9 and GE26).
- 32 No landscaping works shall commence until a bird management scheme has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.  
REASON: In the interest of public safety and to reduce the risk of bird strike.
- 33 No felling or removal of limbs from mature trees shall take place unless a survey for roosting bats has first been undertaken by a licensed bat ecologist, and should these species be found to be present an appropriate compensation/mitigation strategy shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority before any such works commence.  
REASON: To protect the legally protected species. MWLP(2005) Policy GE13.
- 34 Throughout the period of landfilling and restoration operations, a copy of this planning permission including all documents, plans and details of pre-development schemes shall be displayed on the site during working hours in a location which is readily accessible to any person undertaking the development.  
REASON: In the interest of public amenity. MWLP(2005) Policy GE18.

### **Notes to Applicant**

1. The applicant is advised that no works associated with the construction of the vehicular access should be carried out within the confines of the public highway without prior consent, in writing, of the Central Bedfordshire Council and that in order to comply with Conditions of this permission it will be necessary for the developer of the site to enter into an agreement with Central Bedfordshire Council as Highway Authority under Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980 to ensure the satisfactory completion of the access and associated road improvements. Further details can be obtained from the Development Control Group, Development Management Division, Central Bedfordshire Council, Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford SG17 5TQ.
2. The applicant is advised that photographs of the existing highway that is to be used for access and delivery of materials will be required by the Local Highway Authority. Any subsequent damage to the public highway resulting from the works as shown by the photographs, including damage caused by delivery vehicles to the works, will be made good to the satisfaction of the Local Highway Authority and at the expense of the applicant. Attention is drawn to Section 59 of the Highways Act 1980 in this respect.

3. Any removal of trees, scrub or hedgerow should take place outside the bird breeding season of March to August inclusive. Should any such vegetation have to be removed during, or close to this period it should first be thoroughly assessed by a suitably experienced ecologist as to whether it is in use by nesting birds. Should nests be found, a suitable area of vegetation (no less than a 5m zone around the nest) should be left intact and undisturbed until it is confirmed that any young have fledged before works in that area proceed. This process should be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. REASON: In order not to cause destruction of, or damage to, the nests of wild birds, their eggs and young. This corresponds to the protection afforded to them under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

**Statement required by the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 - Part 5, Article 35**

The Council acted pro-actively through positive engagement with the applicant during the determination process which led to improvements to the scheme. The Council has therefore acted pro-actively to secure a sustainable form of development in line with the requirements of the Framework (paragraphs 186 and 187) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

**DECISION**

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