

Appendix 1: Consultee Comments

- 1.1 Conservation Officer – Objection
- 1.2 Hertfordshire Ecology- Initial Objection overcome, no objection.
- 1.3 Hertfordshire Council Highways – No objection.
- 1.4 National Highways – No objection.
- 1.5 National Amenity Society – No response received.
- 1.6 Herts County Council Footpath Section – No response received.
- 1.7 National Grid – No response received.

Conservation Officer – Objection

HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION ADVICE

Dear Sir / Madam,

RE: Woodoaks Farm Denham Way Maple Cross Rickmansworth Hertfordshire

Listed Building Consent: Part demolition of The Black Barn and construction of front/side extension including solar panels; alterations to doors and materials; alteration of front access path; creation of drop off zone and parking area; creation of outdoor area; change of from agriculture to a mixed community uses including indoor sport and recreation, provision of education, public hall, exhibition hall and as a public meeting place (Use Classes E(d), F.1(a), F.1(e), F.2(b))

The barn about 100 metres north of Woodoaks Farmhouse is Grade II listed (list entry: 1100878) and is timber framed and of sixteenth-century origin. Set perpendicular and attached to the listed barn are two open-sided cart lodges that are present on the nineteenth century maps, although it appears that the western one was removed and replaced in the twentieth century. The barn has been well-preserved and retains its original character. The setting of the listed building also makes an important contribution to its significance.

Historic England's guidance '*The Setting of Heritage Assets*' includes a non-exhaustive list of attributes of setting that may elucidate its contribution to an asset's significance. Of those attributes, the following are considered relevant to the listed barn, other assets (including buildings and structures), green space, openness, functional relationships, relatively limited degree of change over time, landscape character, land use, as well views to the asset from the surrounding farmland and conversely from the asset looking out across the landscape.

The proposal follows previous pre-application under reference 24/1113/PREAPP. Various changes have been made including reduction of the footprint and inclusion of the open-sided cart lodge on the western side. Pre-application recommended an extension that is simple in form and appearance with a linear arrangement that would be less visually prominent and the use of brick, timber cladding and clay tiles, which would respond well to the historic farm buildings

The change of use was considered acceptable as a temporary measure in previous applications and in heritage terms there is no objection to this being a permanent situation.

Front/Side Extension

There would be no objection to the removal of the attached concrete structure as it is of limited architectural interest.

However, there are concerns in relation to the extension. It is noted that the footprint of the proposal is similar to the existing structure to be demolished. However, the existing is relatively narrow with a dual-pitched roof, is relatively unobtrusive and is clearly ancillary to the main barn.

The proposed mono-pitched roofs, combined with the width of the proposal would be incongruous with the existing on-site structures and compared to the existing concrete structure would not appear ancillary to the listed barn. The submission states that a mono-pitched roof would be more harmful

on this scale of building. However, the currently proposed roof is not appropriate and this difficulty in finding an appropriate solution may indicate that this scale of building is excessive in principle.

There would be a large extent of glazing, and this is of a particular concern on the southern elevation where the upper section is almost fully glazed, which would exacerbate the degree of prominence and lack of subordination. The solar panels and the extent of glazing on the other elevations is also excessive and not supported, which includes the rooflight to the cart shed.

Several mitigation measures have been mentioned. This includes recessing the rear elevation window by 1.3m and painting it in a dark shade. This would not overcome the impact of this amount of glazing. The use of timber screening to the western elevation windows would not mitigate their impact, particularly as the wall will be finished in render so the screens would still clearly represent openings.

The use of corrugated cement for the roof, while it is comparable to existing modern materials on site is not a material that would enhance the listed building and would not be supported.

However, these comments on mitigation are only minor points and the main area of concern is the scale and design of the proposal. The scale and design of the proposal would compete with the Black Barn and diminish its degree of significance, causing less than substantial harm. This is particularly the case due to the very open character of the site; the extension would be visually prominent from the surrounding landscape. Overall, the existing structures surrounding the listed building are ancillary and utilitarian in character, preserving the historic context and character of the site but the proposed extension would fail to respond appropriately.

The east section shows the currently open fronted western cart shed enclosed with two solid timber sections and glazing and doors added. While the proposal would retain the bay structure, the openings are also not in proportion and slimmer windows should be used.

The works would also include new openings through the historic wall of the cart shed, which would harm the historic fabric. The submission states that this harm would be outweighed by the positive impacts of the proposal. This is not accepted in purely heritage terms although the Planning Officer assessment should consider wider public benefits.

The landscaping currently does not provide a high degree of screening and new landscaping would not mitigate the visual impacts or the impacts to the listed barn. In addition, the proposed new landscaped gravel and surfacing spreads relatively far from the western side of the building and is likely to be prominent in views from the west and is relatively formal and non-agricultural in character. This should be contained within the courtyard or to the rear of any new building to avoid an overly formal appearance.

The proposal would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Listed Black Barn, contrary to Sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act. In relation to the National Planning Policy Framework as per para 212 the level of harm is 'less than substantial' and great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. As per NPPF para 215 this should be weighed against any public benefits of the proposal.

David Buckley MA MRTPI IHBC

Historic Environment Team (on behalf of Three Rivers District Council)

Note: This letter is advisory and should only be considered as the opinion formed by specialist staff in relation to this particular matter

HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION ADVICE

Dear Sir / Madam,

RE: Woodoaks Farm Denham Way Maple Cross Rickmansworth Hertfordshire

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The barn about 100 metres north of Woodoaks Farmhouse is Grade II listed (list entry: 1100878) and is timber framed and of sixteenth-century origin. Set perpendicular and attached to the listed barn are two open-sided cart lodges that are present on the nineteenth century maps, although it appears that the western one was removed and replaced in the twentieth century. The barn has been well-preserved and retains its original character. The setting of the listed building also makes an important contribution to its significance.

Historic England's guidance '*The Setting of Heritage Assets*' includes a non-exhaustive list of attributes of setting that may elucidate its contribution to an asset's significance. Of those attributes, the following are considered relevant to the listed barn, other assets (including buildings and structures), green space, openness, functional relationships, relatively limited degree of change over time, landscape character, land use, as well views to the asset from the surrounding farmland and conversely from the asset looking out across the landscape.

The proposal follows previous pre-application under reference 24/1113/PREAPP. Various changes have been made including reduction of the footprint and inclusion of the open-sided cart lodge on the western side. Pre-application recommended an extension that is simple in form and appearance with a linear arrangement that would be less visually prominent and the use of brick, timber cladding and clay tiles, which would respond well to the historic farm buildings

The change of use was considered acceptable as a temporary measure in previous applications and in heritage terms there is no objection to this being a permanent situation.

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However, there are concerns in relation to the extension. It is noted that the footprint of the proposal is similar to the existing structure to be demolished. However, the existing is relatively narrow with a dual-pitched roof, is relatively unobtrusive and is clearly ancillary to the main barn.

The proposed mono-pitched roofs, combined with the width of the proposal would be incongruous with the existing on-site structures and compared to the existing concrete structure would not appear ancillary to the listed barn. The submission states that a mono-pitched roof would be more harmful

on this scale of building. However, the currently proposed roof is not appropriate and this difficulty in finding an appropriate solution may indicate that this scale of building is excessive in principle.

There would be a large extent of glazing, and this is of a particular concern on the southern elevation where the upper section is almost fully glazed, which would exacerbate the degree of prominence and lack of subordination. The solar panels and the extent of glazing on the other elevations is also excessive and not supported, which includes the rooflight to the cart shed.

Several mitigation measures have been mentioned. This includes recessing the rear elevation window by 1.3m and painting it in a dark shade. This would not overcome the impact of this amount of glazing. The use of timber screening to the western elevation windows would not mitigate their impact, particularly as the wall will be finished in render so the screens would still clearly represent openings.

The use of corrugated cement for the roof, while it is comparable to existing modern materials on site is not a material that would enhance the listed building and would not be supported.

However, these comments on mitigation are only minor points and the main area of concern is the scale and design of the proposal. **The scale and design of the proposal would compete with the Black Barn and diminish the ability to appreciate its architectural interest and its scale as a large historic agricultural building causing less than substantial harm in the lower half of the scale.** This is particularly the case due to the very open character of the site; the extension would be visually prominent from the surrounding landscape. Overall, the existing structures surrounding the listed building are ancillary and utilitarian in character, preserving the historic context and character of the site but the proposed extension would fail to respond appropriately.

The east section shows the currently open fronted western cart shed enclosed with two solid timber sections and glazing and doors added. While the proposal would retain the bay structure, the openings are also not in proportion and slimmer windows should be used.

The works would also include new openings through the historic wall of the cart shed, which would harm the historic fabric. The submission states that this harm would be outweighed by the positive impacts of the proposal. This is not accepted in purely heritage terms although the Planning Officer assessment should consider wider public benefits.

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The proposal would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Listed Black Barn, contrary to Sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act. In relation to the National Planning Policy Framework as per para 212 the level of harm is 'less than substantial' and great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. As per NPPF para 215 this should be weighed against any public benefits of the proposal.

David Buckley MA MRTPI IHBC
Historic Environment Team (on behalf of Three Rivers District Council)

Note: This letter is advisory and should only be considered as the opinion formed by specialist staff in relation to this particular matter

Hertfordshire Ecology-

Initial Objection overcome, no objection.

**Clara Loveland
Three Rivers District Council
Three Rivers House
Northway Rickmansworth
Herts WD3 1RL**

**Hertfordshire LEADS
Hertfordshire County Council**

**Farnham House
Six Hills Way
Stevenage, SG1 2ST
www.hertfordshire.gov.uk**

Contact: Sophie Batchelor
Tel: 01992 588 483
Email: ecology@hertfordshire.gov.uk
Date: 24 February 2025

Dear Clara,

Application: Demolition of the concrete shed and part demolition of the cart shed adjoining The Black Barn and construction of front/side extension including solar panels; alterations to doors and materials; alteration of front access path and courtyard; creation of drop off zone and parking area; creation of outdoor area; change of use from agriculture to a mixed commercial use and community uses including indoor sport and recreation, provision of education, public hall, exhibition hall and as a public meeting place (Use Classes E(d), F.1(a), F.1(e), F.2(b))

Address: Woodoaks Farm Denham Way Maple Cross Rickmansworth Hertfordshire WD3 9XQ

Application No: [25/0154/FUL](#)

ECOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Thank you for consulting this office on the above application.

Overall Recommendation

- ☒ Further information required before application can be determined.

Summary of Advice

- Further dusk emergence surveys for bats are required **prior to determination**.
- This application is automatically subject to the general Biodiversity Net Gain Plan **Condition**.
- An **HMMP** should be submitted to the LPA as a **Condition** of any subsequent approval.
- An **Informative** for a precautionary approach to works should be added to any subsequent permission granted.

Supporting Documents

I have made use of the following documents in providing this advice:

- Ecological Assessment by GS Ecology Ltd. (10 January 2025).
- Biodiversity Net Gain Calculation by GS Ecology Ltd. (10 January 2025).
- Statutory Biodiversity Metric (10 January 2025).

Comments

We have no objections to this proposal, however further information is required prior to determination.

Bats

The Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) within the Ecological Assessment listed above found the black barn to have a **high potential** for supporting roosting bats. I therefore advise that the recommended further presence/absence surveys are undertaken, and the results, including any appropriate mitigation, submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval. In line with The Bat Conservation Trust Good Practice Guidelines (4th Edition, 2023), this will require **three dusk emergence surveys** to be carried out when bats are active in the summer months between May and August, or September if the weather remains warm.

Presence/absence surveys cannot be carried out or completed by condition, as bats are classified as European Protected Species and thus sufficient information is required to be submitted to the LPA **prior to determination**, in order to enable it to consider the impact of the proposal on bats and discharge its legal obligations under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).

Consequently, without the results of these surveys and any appropriate recommendations provided as necessary, this application should not be determined on the basis of insufficient information.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

In England, BNG is mandatory under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021). Under the statutory framework for biodiversity net gain, which came into effect on 12th February 2024, every grant of planning permission, subject to some exceptions, is expected to deliver at least a 10% increase in biodiversity value relative to the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat.

Given that this application was received and validated after the 12th of February 2024, mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is therefore expected as a planning requirement. A BNG assessment, including habitat condition sheets, has been submitted to the LPA and is accompanied by a statutory biodiversity metric, in line with planning requirements.

It has been demonstrated that an uplift in biodiversity units above the mandatory 10% for area-based habitat units (34.77%) can be achieved with on-site habitat creation. This is sufficient to enable determination of this application with regard to BNG, **once the required bat survey reports have been provided to the LPA.**

This application is automatically subject to a General Biodiversity Gain Condition, which requires the delivery of a Biodiversity Gain Plan. It is recommended that the plan provided is in line with the DEFRA Biodiversity Gain Plan template. This condition should be kept separate to the list of conditions imposed in the written notice if the LPA are minded to subsequently grant permission. This requires the following:

- A Biodiversity Gain Plan must be submitted to and approved by the planning authority before any development can begin.

The claims for BNG for this site would be considered as 'significant' net gain. **In this instance, the LPA are advised to secure this significant net gain for the respective habitat units via legal agreement, whether through an S106 agreement or conservation on covenant.**

Given that BNG for this site will be considered 'significant', it will be advised to be secured via legal agreement if the LPA were minded to subsequently grant permission **following the provision of further bat survey reports.** In this circumstance, a condition of approval (one to be imposed on the written notice with any permission granted) should be added as **an additional BNG Condition for a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP).** This shall demonstrate how the habitat enhancement and creation, and subsequent target habitat conditions on-site will be created, enhanced, and monitored over 30 years following the completion of the capital works required to create them. It is recommended that the HMMP should be in line with the HMMP template produced by DEFRA. Considerations should also be given within any legal agreement to secure resources to allow adequate monitoring over the 30-year period.

Precautionary Approach to Works

The Ecological Assessment listed above details suitable habitat on-site with the potential to support mammals, reptiles and breeding birds. In order to avoid an offence being committed, I advise a precautionary approach to the works is taken and recommend the following **informative** is added to any subsequent permission granted:

"To avoid the killing or injuring of wildlife during development, best practice should keep any areas of grass as short as possible and any longer, ruderal vegetation should be cleared by hand. To avoid creating refugia that may be utilised by wildlife, materials should be carefully stored on-site on raised pallets and away from the boundary habitats. Any trenches on site should be covered at night or have ramps to ensure that any animals that enter can safely escape, and this is particularly important if excavations fill with water. Any open pipework with an outside diameter greater than 120mm must be covered at the end of each working day to prevent animals entering / becoming trapped.

In order to protect breeding birds, their nests, eggs and young, demolition or vegetation clearance should only be carried out during the period October to February inclusive. If this is not possible then a pre-development (i.e. no greater than 48 hours before clearance begins) search of the area should be made by a suitably experienced ecologist. If active nests are found, then works must be delayed until the birds have left the nest or professional ecological advice taken on how best to proceed.”

I trust these comments are of assistance,

Kind regards,

Sophie Batchelor
Assistant Ecology Advisor, Hertfordshire LEADS

Hertfordshire LEADS provides Landscape, Ecology, Archaeology, Design and Sustainability support to planning departments in Hertfordshire.

**Clara Loveland
Three Rivers District Council
Three Rivers House
Northway Rickmansworth
Herts WD3 1RL**

**Hertfordshire LEADS
Hertfordshire County Council**

**Farnham House
Six Hills Way
Stevenage, SG1 2ST
www.hertfordshire.gov.uk**

Contact: Sophie Batchelor
Tel: 01992 588 483
Email: ecology@hertfordshire.gov.uk
Date: 11 April 2025

Dear Clara,

Application: Demolition of the concrete shed and part demolition of the cart shed adjoining The Black Barn and construction of front/side extension including solar panels; alterations to doors and materials; alteration of front access path and courtyard; creation of drop off zone and parking area; creation of outdoor area; change of use from agriculture to a mixed commercial use and community uses including indoor sport and recreation, provision of education, public hall, exhibition hall and as a public meeting place (Use Classes E(d), F.1(a), F.1(e), F.2(b))

Address: Woodoaks Farm Denham Way Maple Cross Rickmansworth Hertfordshire WD3 9XQ

Application No: [25/0154/FUL](#)

ECOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Thank you for re-consulting this office on the above application.

Overall Recommendation

- ☒ Further information required before application can be determined.

Summary of Advice

- Further dusk emergence surveys for bats are required **prior to determination**.
- This application is automatically subject to the general Biodiversity Net Gain Plan **Condition**.
- An **LEMP** should be submitted to the LPA as a **Condition** of any subsequent approval.
- An **Informative** for a precautionary approach to works should be added to any subsequent permission granted.

Supporting Documents

I have made use of the following documents in providing this advice:

- Ecological Assessment by GS Ecology Ltd. (10 January 2025).
- Biodiversity Gain Plan by Natural Asset Partners (24 March 2025).
- Statutory Biodiversity Metric (24 March 2025).

Comments

We were previously consulted on this application on the 6th February 2025. Since then, the red line boundary has been updated and thus amendments have been made to the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) proposals. Our previous comments regarding non-BNG ecological matters still stand.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

In England, BNG is mandatory under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021). Under the statutory framework for biodiversity net gain, which came into effect on 12th February 2024, every grant of planning permission, subject to some exceptions, is expected to deliver at least a 10% increase in biodiversity value relative to the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat.

Given that this application was received and validated after the 12th of February 2024, mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is therefore expected as a planning requirement. A BNG assessment, including habitat condition sheets, has been submitted to the LPA and is accompanied by a statutory biodiversity metric, in line with planning requirements.

It has been demonstrated that an uplift in biodiversity units above the mandatory 10% for area-based habitat units (12.12%) can be achieved with on-site habitat creation. This is sufficient to enable determination of this application with regard to BNG, **once the required bat survey reports have been provided to the LPA.**

This application is automatically subject to a General Biodiversity Gain Condition, which requires the delivery of a Biodiversity Gain Plan. It is recommended that the plan provided is in line with the DEFRA Biodiversity Gain Plan template. This condition should be kept separate to the list of conditions imposed in the written notice if the LPA are minded to subsequently grant permission. This requires the following:

- A Biodiversity Gain Plan must be submitted to and approved by the planning authority before any development can begin.

The BNG for this site is considered to be non-significant net gain. Given that it has now been demonstrated that the required biodiversity uplift can be achieved, if the LPA were minded to subsequently grant permission following the provision of further bat survey reports, a **condition of approval** (one to be imposed on the written notice with any permission granted) should be added as an additional BNG condition for a **Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP)**. This shall demonstrate how the habitat enhancement and creation, and subsequent target habitat conditions on-

site will be created, enhanced, and monitored following the completion of the capital works required to create them.

I trust these comments are of assistance,

Kind regards,

Sophie Batchelor
Assistant Ecology Advisor, Hertfordshire LEADS

Hertfordshire LEADS provides Landscape, Ecology, Archaeology, Design and Sustainability support to planning departments in Hertfordshire.

**Clara Loveland
Three Rivers District Council
Three Rivers House
Northway Rickmansworth
Herts WD3 1RL**

**Hertfordshire LEADS
Hertfordshire County Council**

**Farnham House
Six Hills Way
Stevenage, SG1 2ST
www.hertfordshire.gov.uk**

Contact: Sophie Batchelor
Tel: 01992 588 483
Email: ecology@hertfordshire.gov.uk
Date: 7 May 2025

Dear Clara,

Application: Demolition of the concrete shed and part demolition of the cart shed adjoining The Black Barn and construction of front/side extension including solar panels; alterations to doors and materials; alteration of front access path and courtyard; creation of drop off zone and parking area; creation of outdoor area; change of use from agriculture to a mixed commercial use and community uses including indoor sport and recreation, provision of education, public hall, exhibition hall and as a public meeting place (Use Classes E(d), F.1(a), F.1(e), F.2(b))

Address: Woodoaks Farm Denham Way Maple Cross Rickmansworth Hertfordshire WD3 9XQ

Application No: [25/0154/FUL](#)

ECOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Thank you for re-consulting this office on the above application.

Overall Recommendation

- ☒ Application can be determined with no ecological objections (with any Informatives/Conditions listed below).

Summary of Advice

- This application is automatically subject to the general Biodiversity Net Gain Plan **Condition**.
- An **LEMP** should be submitted to the LPA as a **Condition** of any subsequent approval.
- An **Informative** for a precautionary approach to works should be added to any subsequent permission granted.

Comments

We previously responded to this application on the 11th April 2025, advising that the results of further surveys for bats should be submitted to the LPA prior to determination should the above proposals cause disturbance to The Black Barn. This is because bats are European Protected Species (EPS), protected from disturbance under European and National legislation.

We have since received confirmation that the above works will not impact The Black Barn through disturbance, and we therefore advise that the application can be determined accordingly, with the following **informative**:

“If bats or evidence of them are discovered during the course of works, work must stop immediately, and advice sought on how to proceed lawfully from an appropriately qualified and experienced Ecologist or Natural England to avoid an offence being committed.”

Our previous advice regarding Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) still stands.

I trust these comments are of assistance,

Kind regards,

Sophie Batchelor
Assistant Ecology Advisor, Hertfordshire LEADS

Hertfordshire LEADS provides Landscape, Ecology, Archaeology, Design and Sustainability support to planning departments in Hertfordshire.

**Hertfordshire Council Highways –
No objection.**



Mark Youngman
Development Management Group Manager
Hertfordshire County Council
Postal Point CHN115
Farnham House
Six Hills Way
Stevenage
SG1 2ST

Response to Planning application from Hertfordshire County Council (T and CP GDP Order 2015)

Director of Planning

Three Rivers District Council
Three Rivers House
Northway
Rickmansworth
Hertfordshire
WD3 1RL

District ref: 25/0154/FUL
HCC ref: TR/23836/2025
HCC received: 28 March 2025
Area manager: Alan Story
Case officer: Alan Story

Location

Woodoaks Farm Denham Way Maple Cross Rickmansworth WD3 9XQ

Application type

Full Application

Proposal

AMENDED PROPOSAL

Part demolition of The Black Barn and construction of front/side extension including solar panels; alterations to doors and materials; alteration of front access path; creation of drop off zone and parking area; creation of outdoor area; change of from agriculture to a mixed community uses including indoor sport and recreation, provision of education, public hall, exhibition hall and as a public meeting place (Use Classes E(d), F.1(a), F.1(e), F.2(b))

Recommendation

Notice is given under article 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 that Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority does not wish to restrict the grant of permission subject to the following conditions:

Conditions

Prior to the first use hereby permitted the vehicular access improvements, as indicated on drawing Link Engineering LM3049 – Proposed Access Arrangements (rev P0) , shall be completed and thereafter retained in accordance with details/specifications to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority.

Reason: To ensure construction of a satisfactory access and in the interests of highway safety, traffic movement and amenity in accordance with Policy 5 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).

*delete as appropriate

Informatives

AN) Obstruction of highway: It is an offence under section 137 of the Highways Act 1980 for any person, without lawful authority or excuse, in any way to wilfully obstruct the free passage along a highway or public right of way. If this development is likely to result in the public highway or public right of way network becoming routinely blocked (fully or partly) the applicant must contact the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements before construction works commence. Further information is available via the County Council website at: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/business-licences/business-licences.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

AN) Extent of Highway: Information on obtaining the extent of public highway around the site can be obtained from the HCC website: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/changes-to-your-road/extent-of-highways.aspx

AN) Debris and deposits on the highway: It is an offence under section 148 of the Highways Act 1980 to deposit compost, dung or other material for dressing land, or any rubbish on a made up carriageway, or any or other debris on a highway to the interruption of any highway user. Section 149 of the same Act gives the Highway Authority powers to remove such material at the expense of the party responsible. Therefore, best practical means shall be taken at all times to ensure that all vehicles leaving the site during construction of the development and use thereafter are in a condition such as not to emit dust or deposit mud, slurry or other debris on the highway. Further information is available by telephoning 0300 1234047.

AN) Large events: For those large events occurring under permitted development rights i.e. facilitated through uplift of (temporary) car parking and beyond levels accepted within this application, the applicant are directed to liaise with the areas Safety Advisory Group. The aim of the Safety Advisory Group is to look at any events happening in the Three Rivers area, and provide advice and guidance to enable those responsible for organising events to run them safely and successfully. This may include requirements for Traffic Management to facilitate the large numbers of potential vehicles attending. The Watford and Three Rivers Safety Advisory Group (SAG) is made up of a cross-section of agencies, particularly Watford Borough Council and Three Rivers District Council, Hertfordshire Constabulary, Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service, East of England Ambulance Service and Hertfordshire Highways. Details in respect of Safety Advisory Group may be found here: <https://www.threerivers.gov.uk/services/community-and-living/watford-three-rivers-safety-advisory-group>

Comments:

The County Council, as Local Highway Authority (LHA) can confirm engagement with the applicant (Woodoaks Farm) and are aware of the wider aspirations for development of this site.

Woodoaks Farm (referred to as the farm hereafter) is accessed from Denham Way via an access served by a vehicle crossover, in proximity to Sibson Way. Denham Way, at this location is the

A412, a principle 'A' Class road within the road hierarchy, presently single lane in each direction, subject to a 40mph speed restriction.

The Highway Authority would observe that committed development locally, includes application ref.21/0573/FUL for the development Site at Maple Lodge, Maple Lodge Close, Maple Cross, Hertfordshire, representing Comprehensive redevelopment to provide 2 no. warehouse Class E(giii)/B2/B8 units comprising a total of 16,115 sqm including 1,882 sqm ancillary E(gi) office space, access, landscaping and associated works. Such decision was issued by by PINS (Planning Inspectorate) ref.APP/P1940/W/21/3289305 following non-determination by TRDC. Such consent includes off-site highway works affecting Denham Way in the direct proximity of the access to the farm, with works now progressing on-site. Such works change the form of Denham Way to two lanes in each direction (retaining speed limit at 40mph) and signalling the junction to Maple Cross Close, and through evolution of the consented scheme has required imposition of a right hand turn ban from Maple Cross to the south, into Sibson Way. The design has also removed the activity of right hand turns (from the north) into the farm site on the basis of safety grounds.

The Highway Authority recognises that the farm has utilised a ghost right hand turn lane (albeit provided for vehicles turning into Sibson Way) given that there has, historically, been very low levels of traffic using this turn lane, and for vehicles into the site crossing one lane of traffic only. In addition to the Warehouse development (16,115m²) in proximity, there is also committed development in respect of the erection of a four storey building with plant room above for use as a hotel containing 207 bedrooms, function/meeting rooms, restaurant, health club, administrative and service areas. Alterations to access onto (A412) Denham Way and provision of 373 car parking spaces in four/three storey car park and surface level and landscaping under planning consent 07/1401/FUL. Whilst such consent is 18 years old, the HA is required to recognise that the consent is begun, and held open, as recognised by the Certificate of Lawfulness of Proposed Development issued confirming confirm that as a result of planning permission reference 07/1401/FUL dated 19 March 2008 having been validly and lawfully implemented, the land at Witney Place Denham Way Maple Cross can continue to be lawfully developed to completion under that planning permission being TRDC planning reference 18/1424/CLPD.

Offsite S278 highway works being delivered to enable 21/0573/FUL are designed to also accommodate this committed development traffic.

Development proposals involve the repurposing of structure known as Black Barn, along with some new-build extensions, for use as an Education and Community Hub. It is understood that the Black Barn is a Grade 2 listed building, presently open to the elements. Proposals refurbish and improve this, enabling use for community activities as well as (as described) a small number of private hire events.

Development proposals represent a total of 412m² of usable floor space.

The planning application submitted is supported by a Transport Statement (TS), prepared on behalf of the Soil Association by Helix Transport Consultants and dated January 2025.

The Highway Authority recognises that Woodoaks Farm estate accommodates a working farm, as well as a small number of local businesses. These include ;

- Creative Juices Brewing Company, to which the LHA were a consultee to the planning application ref.18/2489/FUL, relating to Units 10 And 11 of Woodoaks Farm and being the change of use for an existing disused agricultural building on the farm (a dairy parlour), into a craft micro brewery (Use Class B2 - General Industrial) with ancillary tap room and retail unit. The LHA's comments and recommendations dated 1 February 2019 refer;

- The Tea Shack – a family-run business selling teas, coffee cakes, etc., for on-site consumption. Such permission was established, part retrospectively, under permission Part Retrospective: Temporary Permission (3 years) for the retention of an existing commercial enterprise at Woodoaks Farm (The Tea Shack) together with associated operational development and outside seating to serve The Tea Shack and Creative Juices. The Highway Authority would observe it was not a consultee to this application, but recognise that temporary consent only was issued (expiring 12 April 2027), and understood to enable future applications in respect of full permission, including establishing traffic and transport impacts to be prepared;
- A further use on the site is described as - Garden Rose Flower Farm – understood as a business that sends out buckets full of flowers grown on the site. It is not known the permission status for such use / activity.

The LHA is acceptant that the application is presented on the basis of normal activity for the barn. It remains known and understood that under permitted development the farm can utilise land within the farm for parking to facilitate larger events. This is dealt with separately (below). For the purpose of the Highway Authority's acceptance of the scheme, the provisions and predictions of the Transport Statement are considered acceptable.

The Transport Statement presents trip generation for the community use. Such trip generation has regard to TRICS. The LHA is acceptant of this approach. The assessment suggests a Community Centre would generate circa 66 two-way trips per day (for 412m² of use). The expected peak hour for the use would be 09:00 – 10:00 inbound and 12:00 – 13:00 outbound. Within the weekday morning peak (08:00 to 09:00), the use is expected to generate 2 inbound trips and 2 outbound, and in the evening peak (17:00 to 18:00) similar levels of vehicle movements.

This shall be imperceptible within local flows on the A412.

The Transport Statement has also provided details of traffic counts undertaken for the farm access between 2nd and 9th December 2024 (a period considered neutral). It is shown that the site generates 4 arrivals and 3 departures in the AM peak, and 5 arrivals and 3 departures in the PM peak. Such levels of traffic are accepted as associated with the operation of the farm, and recognition (above) of the other uses upon the site, including the community use.

The LHA has, within the design considerations for the adjacent highway improvement works linked to application 21/0573/FUL, accepted a low volume of traffic from the farm access within the committed signalised junction arrangement taking place within the junction without separate signal control on the Farm access. Visibility from the access is acceptable. The LHA acceptance of such volumes considered the traffic as defined within the application for the microbrewery (18/2489/FUL) inclusive of approximately 3 large vehicles per week, plus staff and visitors, and the day-to-day use by the farm. The LHA is required to observe that subsequent permissions (temporary) on the farm site have not included the LHA as consultee until this application.

The application considered herewith, on the above acceptance that trips (peak hour) being 4 two-way vehicle movements in each hour, would remain acceptable within the above arrangement.

Total daily vehicle rates would be in the region of 47 two-way trips, dispersed across hours of proposed use, and remain consistent with this decision.

Car parking

A total of 7 associated car parking spaces are proposed, of which 2 will be designated for disabled drivers. Such level of provision is shown, through parking accumulation, as appropriate against the commonly expected uses of the site.

The LHA observe that the application has provided vehicle data for use of the access within the Transport Statement, dates of between 2nd December 2024 and 9th December 2024 are provided.

The ATC data, when considered as the basis for parking accumulation, does identify that for dates including 4th December and 7/8 December, the attendance by vehicles far exceeds the parking capacity provided on the site.

Recognition is given that under permitted development parts of the site may (on a temporary basis) be used for car parking, upto 28 days per annum. The LHA recognise that this is beyond the limits of the application, however, it remains (and has previously been expressed) that it is these occurrences that shall lead to significantly greater levels of traffic than may be considered under this application. It is understood that the use of the barn for large private hire events is not anticipated as common, but would provide valuable financial income to the farm.

The LHA recommend strongly to the LPA that monitoring of activities held on the site be conducted in order to ensure that the 28 days limit not be exceeded.

It is the LHA's conclusion that those dates presented within the TS shall have occurred under the permitted development activities understood to exist.

It is further understood that within the development and growth aspirations of the Farm opportunities (and subsequent applications) for more permanent additional car parking are anticipated. The views of the LHA contained herein shall not represent the basis for recommendations to any such applications. The potential for significantly greater levels of traffic may require more mitigation at the access.

For those large events occurring under permitted development rights i.e. Facilitated through uplift of (temporary) car parking, the Farm are directed to liaise with the areas Safety Advisory Group. The aim of the Safety Advisory Group is to look at any events happening in the Three Rivers area, and provide advice and guidance to enable those responsible for organising events to run them safely and successfully. This may include requirements for Traffic Management to facilitate the large numbers of potential vehicles attending.

The Watford and Three Rivers Safety Advisory Group (SAG) is made up of a cross-section of agencies, particularly Watford Borough Council and Three Rivers District Council, Hertfordshire Constabulary, Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service, East of England Ambulance Service and Hertfordshire Highways.

Details in respect of Safety Advisory Group may be found here:

<https://www.threerivers.gov.uk/services/community-and-living/watford-three-rivers-safety-advisory-group>

Whilst the LHA recognise that activities occurring through the use of permitted development rights enjoyed by the Farm are beyond the scope of the application hereby considered, an informative is requested be attached to any decision made by the LPA in order to direct the Farm to the importance of working with the LHA, the police and other Authorities in ensuring traffic management for larger events is implemented to minimise affects in respect of safety and capacity.

The LHA is encouraged that the Farm is working collaboratively with the LHA and LPA on their wider aspirations. The LHA provide a pre-application service that the Farm may wish to avail themselves of. Details may be found here:

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/development-management/highways-development-management.aspx>

The LHA shall welcome discussions on wider access strategies for the site to accommodate traffic associated with the events planned (and potential for the future).

Access

The site provides a vehicle route from its' access onto Denham Way in vicinity of Sibsons Way with a variable width. The TS describes that this provides a surfaced road flanked by soft verges. The width of the surfaced track varies between around 3.0 and 4.5m. The soft verges are typically 1.0 – 1.5m wide. The overall corridor between the fences can accommodate a width of 4.5m, identifying that vehicles may occasionally need to use the soft verges to accommodate another vehicle approaching in the opposite direction.

The LHA recognise that the route is private, but would identify that widths beneath 4m do not enable ease of passing of two-way traffic. Recognising the principle function of Denham Way, the LHA would not support proposals that result in potential conflict at the interface with the public highway.

There is a recognition that the community function offered includes invitations to schools, involving coach parties.

As a consequence, and further minded of the adjacent works to Denham Way (Above), the LHA supports widening of the access onto Denham Way. The physical works to the vehicle crossover (widening) are agreed as being delivered under the S278 for the adjacent (warehouse) application, however for turning the access is anticipated to be widened. The LHA expect that the red line boundary, and access plans, are being revised for inclusion within this current application.

Regard is given to plans Link Engineering LM3049 – Proposed Access Arrangements (rev P0) which identifies an area to be laid with grasscrete with a loading suitable for HGVs that has been agreed as accommodating swept path for large vehicles attending the site. Such improvements also enable additional space at the interface with Denham Way for the pass and repass of all vehicles, reducing the likelihood of conflict causing issues to the junction.

The LHA further have had regard to plan BB01 which reflects the change to red line boundary necessitated by the proposals.

The LHA fully support, and consider, such access works as necessary.

It is recognised that the proposals shall result in a small loss of biodiversity at the existing site entrance (one tree specimen with basal growth) however are advised by the Farm itself that recent activity has seen up to 1000 tree's planted across the site, and – in the view of the LHA – would offset this loss of biodiversity. The applicant has provided the LHA with sight of Biodiversity Net Gain document (Natural Asset Partners (March 2025)) and BNG metric spreadsheet that appears to support such a view.

It is recognised that the access improvements represent development within the green belt, but the LHA strongly encourage the LPA to look upon such improvements favorably, recognising special circumstances as discussed in meetings, and facilitating continued access for all vehicles anticipated

to attend the site. The LPA are encouraged to recognise that the use of grasscrete shall further minimise the visual impact and harm arising.

Such improvements to the access have been the subject of discussion with the LHA, with input from the LPA, and participation of the adjacent local development. It is recognised that the Transport Statement does not provide details of the access improvements, such amendments identified post submission. The latest amendments respond positively to enabling the views of the TS in ensuring that an access to serve the site and its' activities (as at now) are not restricted unduly.

By notification 28/3/2024 it is understood that such details have been accepted and validated by the Local Planning Authority. This response therefore is presented on such basis.

Visibility from the access, presently, and within the proposed junction works being established at this location, remains appropriate. Adequate intervisibility exists within the junction, for the small number of movements associated with the proposal as presented, for the access to operate within the existing phasing of the signals without requirement for consideration of control on the Farm arm.

Sustainability

The Transport Statement provides an accurate assessment of the sustainability credentials of the site.

Local bus stops within 400m of the site are served by services 320, 322, 951, R1, R2 and W1. Service 322, particularly, offers a minimum of 1 service per hour.

The aforementioned highway works locally relocate local bus stops, but ensure that stops are to the LHAs current specification, such relocation has been accepted as not impacting on visibility in this area to an unacceptable level.

Footways link the site with Maple Cross village centre, and highway works are providing improved pedestrian crossings for Denham Way within the context of the identified works.

The LHA are required also to recognise that, as a rural location, the NPPF at Para.110 and more directly at Para.89 that local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. It states that, In these circumstances, it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable.

The farm also benefits from links to the Rights of Way network, being served by routes Rickmansworth Bridleway 010 and Rickmansworth Bridleway 062. BW062 utilises the southern farm access over which the Farm is understood to have a right of usage, but as reflected within the present application traffic associated with the development is directed to the northern access direct to Denham Way.

Proposals are not deemed to affect the Rights of Way network.

This southern access, serving (predominantly) Woodoaks Farm Cottage, and carrying Rickmansworth Bridleway 010 provides a more appropriate pedestrian route into the farm site, linking more closely to the village itself, and therefore ensures that the likelihood of pedestrians co-existing within the main farm access route to (discussed above) is significantly reduced.

The site is considered accessible to non-car modes. The application includes provision for secure cycle parking which is welcomed by the LHA.

References within the TS at para 5.4.3 are deemed erroneous, and included by mistake (referring as they do to a Gloucester site).

The Highway Authority recognise that the community use, in its' described use as per the application, would be for the local community, and consider the site accessible by non-car modes encouraging alternate modes other than the car. This is supported by the limited car parking on site.

The scale of development does not reach the threshold above which a Travel Plan would be a requirement via condition.

Construction

Given the limited scale of development, construction activities are not deemed to be significant and consequently no Construction Management Plan is sought.

Signed

Alan Story

4 April 2025

National Highways – No objection.



National Highways Planning Response (NHPR 25-01) Formal Recommendation to an Application for Planning Permission

From: Michelle Berrington (Head of Planning & Development)
Operations Directorate
South East Region
National Highways
PlanningSE@nationalhighways.co.uk

To: Three Rivers District Council (FAO Clara Loveland)
dconline@threerivers.gov.uk

CC: transportplanning@dft.gov.uk
spatialplanning@nationalhighways.co.uk

Council's Reference: 25/0154/FUL

Location: Woodoaks Farm Denham Way Maple Cross Rickmansworth Hertfordshire WD3 9XQ

Proposal: Demolition of the concrete shed and part demolition of the cart shed adjoining The Black Barn and construction of front/side extension including solar panels; alterations to doors and materials; alteration of front access path and courtyard; creation of drop off zone and parking area; creation of outdoor area; change of use from agriculture to a mixed commercial use and community uses including indoor sport and recreation, provision of education, public hall, exhibition hall and as a public meeting place (Use Classes E(d), F.1(a), F.1(e), F.2(b))

National Highways Ref: NH/25/09892

Referring to the consultation on a planning application dated 6 February 2025 referenced above, in the vicinity of the M25 Junction 17 that form part of the Strategic Road Network, notice is hereby given that National Highways' formal recommendation is that we:

- a) offer no objection (see reasons at Annex A);
- ~~b) recommend that conditions should be attached to any planning permission that may be granted (see Annex A – National Highways recommended Planning Conditions & reasons);~~
- ~~c) recommend that planning permission not be granted for a specified period (see reasons at Annex A);~~

~~d) recommend that the application be refused (see reasons at Annex A)~~

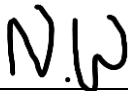
Highways Act 1980 Section 175B is not relevant to this application.¹

This represents National Highways' formal recommendation and is copied to the Department for Transport as per the terms of our Licence.

Should the Local Planning Authority propose not to determine the application in accordance with this recommendation they are required to consult the Secretary of State for Transport, as set out in the [Town and Country Planning \(Development Affecting Trunk Roads\) Direction 2018](#), via transportplanning@dft.gov.uk and may not determine the application until the consultation process is complete.

The Local Planning Authority must also copy any consultation under the 2018 Direction to PlanningSE@nationalhighways.co.uk.

This response and all comments outlined herein are made in respect of planning matters only in National Highways' position as a statutory planning consultee, and does not confer any proprietary rights nor amount to the giving or refusal of consent, assent, approval, or awareness of or by National Highways in or of any other aspects or matters (including, but not limited to, the use of property belonging to National Highways). If anyone wishes for National Highways to consider any aspects which do not relate to planning submissions, they should call our contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Signature: 	Date: 27 February 2025
Name: Nigel Walkden	
Position: Assistant Spatial Planner	
National Highways: Bridge House, 1 Walnut Tree Close, Guildford GU1 4LZ	

¹ Where relevant, further information will be provided within Annex A.

Annex A **National Highways' assessment of the proposed development**

National Highways was appointed by the Secretary of State for Transport as a strategic highway company under the provisions of the Infrastructure Act 2015 and is the highway authority, traffic authority and street authority for the Strategic Road Network (SRN). The SRN is a critical national asset and as such we work to ensure that it operates and is managed in the public interest, both in respect of current activities and needs as well as in providing effective stewardship of its long-term operation and integrity.

National Highways are interested as to whether there would be any adverse safety implications or material increase in queues and delays on the SRN as a result of the proposed development, in this case on the A1/A5135/Rowley Lane junction and M25 J23.

Offer No Objection – Reasons

The proposals comprise the demolition of the concrete shed and part demolition of the cart shed adjoining The Black Barn and construction of front/side extension including solar panels. It involves a change of use from agriculture to a mixed commercial use and community uses including indoor sport and recreation, provision of education, public hall, exhibition hall and as a public meeting place. The site is off Denham Way approximately 1km from M25 Junction 17.

We have examined the trip generation details supplied within the transport statement accompanying the planning application. We are satisfied that the proposals above will not create additional trips to and from the site during peak hours and throughout the day. Therefore, we are content that the development will not materially affect the safety, reliability and/or operation of the strategic road network (the tests set out in DfT Circular 01/2022, and MHCLG NPPF 2023 paragraphs 111-114) in this location and its vicinity.

Standing advice to the local planning authority

The Climate Change Committee's [2022 Report to Parliament](#) notes that for the UK to achieve net zero carbon status by 2050, action is needed to support a modal shift away from car travel. The NPPF supports this position, with paragraphs 77 and 110 prescribing that significant development should offer a genuine choice of transport modes, while paragraphs 109 and 115 advise that appropriate opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport should be taken up as part of a vision-led approach.

Moreover, the carbon reduction hierarchy (avoid-switch-improve) as set out in clause 4.3 of PAS2080:2023 promotes approaches and measures to minimise resource consumption and thereby reduce carbon emissions.

These considerations should be weighed alongside any relevant Local Plan policies to ensure that planning decisions are in line with the necessary transition to net zero carbon.

National Amenity Society – No response received.

Herts County Council Footpath Section – No response received.

National Grid – No response received.