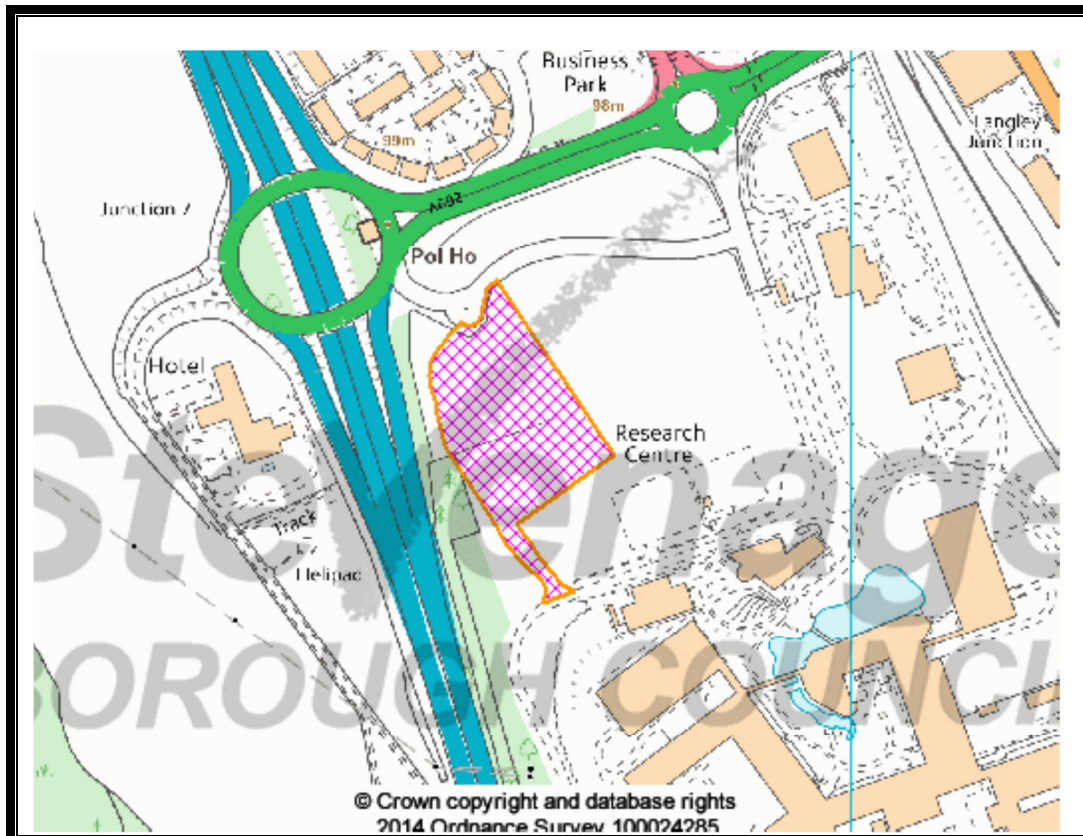


Meeting: Planning and Development Committee **Agenda Item:** 4
Date: 18 August 2015
Author: Rebecca Elliott 01438 242836
Lead Officer: Paul Pinkney 01438 242257
Contact Officer: Rebecca Elliott 01438 242836

Application No: 15/00323/FPM
Location: GlaxoSmithKline, Gunnels Wood Road, Stevenage
Proposal: Construction of a 7,287sqm research and manufacturing building (Use Class B1), car parking, hard and soft landscaping and associated works.
Drawing Nos.: 7271_08_10 Rev A Site location plan; 7271_08_11 Rev A Block Plan; 7271_08_01 Rev D Ground Floor GA Layout; 7271_08_02 Rev D Interstitial Ceiling and Mezzanine Level; 7271_08_03 Rev D Level 1 Production; 7271_08_04 Rev D Interstitial Ceiling – Admin Roof; 7271_08_05 Rev E Roof Plan; 7271_08_06 Rev G Section AA; 7271_08_07 Rev G Section BB; 7271_08_08 Rev F Elevations; 7271_08_09 Rev B External Visual; 7271_55_07 Site Logistic Plan; 7271_55_01 Rev I Hard Landscaping Plan; 7271_55_02 Rev F Soft Landscaping Plan
Applicant: Cell Therapy Catapult
Date Valid: 8 June 2015
Recommendation: GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION



1. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 1.1 The application site forms part of the GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) development, which is located on the western edge of Stevenage, close to junction 7 of the A1(M) which runs along the western boundary of the site. To the west of this, separated by the A1(M), is Knebworth House and Country Park and the Novotel Hotel. Directly to the north is Broadhall Way, which links Gunnels Wood Road to the A1(M). To the north of this is the former BAe site which has been redeveloped by Arlington Developments into a business park. To the south is Old Knebworth Lane, beyond which is Knebworth Golf Course. To the east the site abuts the east coast main railway line. The GSK site covers approximately 39 hectares in area. The site can be seen as three sections, the southern section developed in the 1990's, the north eastern section which incorporates the gatehouse, visitor facilities and the computer centre and the north west section which is presently vacant, and includes the application site.
- 1.2 The site is accessed by an entrance off Broadhall Way (A602) which links into a roundabout serving Gunnels Wood Road and the A1(M) to the west and a recently opened access taken from the southbound A1(M) slip road. However, the site can only be exited via the roundabout on Broadhall Way/Gunnels Wood Road. There are a series of internal roads linking the various buildings. The site contains a number of buildings that range in height from single storey to four storeys and are used for research and office purposes. The existing buildings are set in extensive landscaped grounds with two multi storey car parks at the site and various surface car parks serving the facilities.
- 1.3 The area the subject of this application measures approximately 0.4 hectares in area and is located within the north western part of the site, and more immediately in the north western side of this vacant area. The land is sited to the north west of the new catalyst buildings, to the east of the adjoining A1(M) and to the south of the new vehicular access road off Broadhall Way. The area of land comprises an open grassed field and to the west an area of bunding and gravel vehicular access from the southern internal service road.

2. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1 Outline permission was granted under ref 2/0276/87 in April 1988 for the development of buildings for pharmaceutical research and development.
- 2.2 Outline planning permission was granted under ref 2/0033/91 in April 1991 for a masterplan for the erection of buildings for pharmaceutical research and development.
- 2.3 Reserved matters approval was granted under ref 2/1161/RM in August 1991 for a central research support facility, biology node administration building, microbiology plant, east and west multi storey car parks, gatehouse, central plant, pedestrian link bridges, solvent store and landscaping. All of these buildings have been constructed.
- 2.4 Reserved matters approval was granted under ref 2/0017/91RM in May 1991 for erection of a computer centre.
- 2.5 Permission granted under ref 2/0318/93/FP in December 1993 for the erection of a staff sports centre comprising sports hall, fitness room, squash courts, swimming pool and ancillary facilities for use in conjunction with the main research centre.
- 2.6 There have been a number of other permissions at the site relating to modest ancillary outbuildings.

- 2.7 Following the grant of permission for the main research and development complex, permission was obtained for a bridge crossing the A1(M) and a land option was secured with Knebworth House on the western side of the motorway to enable its subsequent construction. This permission lapsed in December 2000 and the land option subsequently expired.
- 2.8 Outline planning permission was granted under ref 05/00621/OP in April 2009 for development of 60,000 square metres (gross) office floorspace (B1) including improvements to means of access and the creation of an additional 1200 car parking spaces following demolition of existing buildings.
- 2.9 Planning permission was granted under ref 09/00314/FPM on 1 March 2010 for Variation of condition 7 relating to details of highway works and condition 15 relating to surface water drainage associated with the highway works in respect of planning permission 05/00621/OP granted on 7 April 2009.
- 2.10 Planning permission was granted on 17 December 2010 under ref 10/00343/FPM for erection of 2no, three storey research and development buildings, new and replacement car parking, associated hard and soft landscape and underground attenuation tank and other works.
- 2.11 Outline planning permission was granted in August 2011 under ref 11/00337/OPM for replacement office buildings and car parking.

3. THE CURRENT APPLICATION

- 3.1 As way of background to this application, as set out above, outline planning permission was granted under ref 05/00621/OP in April 2009 for the development of 60,000 sqm of B1 floorspace, including improvements to means of access and associated car parking (1,200 car parking spaces) on the north west part of the GSK site, formerly occupied by Warren Springs. A subsequent application to vary certain highway conditions imposed as part of the above permission was granted in March 2010 under ref 09/00314/FPM. The reason for this was to enable the extensive highway works necessary as part of this redevelopment to be undertaken in two phases and linked to the floor space to be provided, also in two phases. In essence, this allowed for the interim highway works (improvements to the access to the site from junction 7 of the A1(M) and minor improvements to the roundabout on the A602 Broadhall Way) to be completed prior to the occupation of more than 18,600 sqm of floorspace. Once more than 18,600 sqm of floorspace is occupied then the final highway works (major alterations and reconfiguration of the roundabout on the A602 Broadhall Way roundabout) would need to be undertaken.
- 3.2 Stevenage Bioscience Catalyst took forward a centralised area of the land following approval of application 10/00343/FPM to provide the incubator and accelerator buildings, an open innovation centre for small start-up businesses to have access to the key facilities and expertise in large pharmaceuticals. Both buildings have been completed, and the incubator is fully operational. Minor internal works are being carried out on the accelerator building to make it ready for the first of the businesses leaving the catalyst to allow further expansion.
- 3.3 Proposals to implement the expansion of the GSK site to the north west are now being taken forward by Cell Therapy Catapult (CTC) to create a research and manufacturing building. CTC was established in 2012 as a centre of excellence in innovation, with the core purpose of building a world-leading cell therapy industry in the UK. Supported by Innovative UK, their aim is to drive the growth of the industry by helping cell therapy organisations across the world translate early stage research into commercially viable and investable therapies. The project is being funded by UK Government following a commitment in March 2014 to provide £55 million to create a world leading manufacturing facility. GlaxoSmithKlein is engaged in joint working on cell therapies and following a rigorous criteria-led selection process, the Stevenage site

was chosen as the most suitable as it met the essential criteria that included excellent UK and international logistics for short life products, available workforce and value for money.

- 3.4 The research and manufacturing building will be used by up to 12 firms simultaneously, but separately, for the manufacture of late phase clinical trial and initial commercial supply of advanced therapeutic medicinal products including cell and gene therapies. The facility would create 150 jobs and would attract investment to the region and the UK. In order to meet the timetable to use the committed funding, if permission is granted work is intended to be completed and the building operational by 2017.
- 3.5 To facilitate the above the current application seeks planning permission for the erection of a research and manufacturing building, consisting of a three storey office building attached to large production warehouse. The submitted plans indicate the building to be located to the south east of the red line plan. The total gross floor area would be 7287 sqm and would comprise of production suites, supporting warehouse accommodation, offices, meeting rooms, toilets and a heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) plant to service the building. The production suites would be contained within the main building and would be provided across the ground floor and a first floor. Between the ground and first floor and above the first floor the building would have two interstitial mechanical floors to provide the HVAC technical equipment needed to support the proposed cell therapy work, to ensure designated cleanliness grades are achieved, minimising cross contamination. The HVAC equipment contained in the interstitial mechanical floors would be controlled by the HVAC utility area located on the western side of the building. The supporting warehouse accommodation is located to the south of the building and would provide in and out access for products and materials. Along the eastern side of the production suites, the building proposes an area called 'The Street' which would provide a long narrow area for both pedestrian and material movements between the production suites. The administration area would be located in the three storey office building attached to the north eastern corner of the building.
- 3.6 It is proposed to construct the main building (HVAC suite, production suites and warehouse) out of a cladding system known as Equitone, having a grey cement appearance, and using a mixture of 'Linear' and 'Tectiva' finishes. The office building would consist of a glazed curtain walling system similar in appearance to the catalyst buildings, with some levels of powder coated aluminium cladding and infilled panels.
- 3.7 As part of the development it is proposed to provide a total of 142 new car parking spaces including 8 disabled spaces in a newly formed area of hardstanding to the north of the site. Service vehicles and deliveries would access the site from the south, with a dedicated service area to the south west and south of the warehouse structure. Provision would be made for 30 secure and sheltered cycle parking spaces and 8 motorcycle spaces. Access to the site will be via the existing security gated entrance, accessed using the new entrance built off the roundabout with junction 7 of the A1(M) and the original entrance off the Broadhall Way roundabout. The new access road would link to the existing GSK site service road network to the south of the site. Vehicular access from the south western corner of the site would lead to a service yard area to the south of the building and to the car park north of the building via a small service road running along the west of the site.
- 3.8 The development would not require the removal of any existing trees or maintained landscaping, the site area being predominantly a grassed field, and would incorporate new hard and soft landscaping proposals. A pedestrian footpath link is provided to the east of the site, linking the CTC development with the main GSK site to the south. The site is currently well screened from the A1(M) to the west by a large bank of mature trees and landscaping.

4. PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS

- 4.1 The application has been publicised by the posting of two site notices, one off the layby and pedestrian footpath to the south of the Arlington Business Park on the northern side of Broadhall Way, and the second at the subway merge to the north east of the GSK site and Broadhall Way roundabout. An advertisement has also been placed in the local paper because of the application being of a major nature. No representations have been received.

5. CONSULTATIONS

5.1 Highways England

- 5.1.1 Raises no objection.

5.2 HCC Highways Authority

- 5.2.1 Raises no objection.

5.3 Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue

- 5.3.1 Comment that both the access and the existing water supplies conform to the relevant part of the building regulations.

5.4 Environment Agency

- 5.4.1 Raises no objection. Comment that the applicant will need to discuss their foul trade effluent discharge with Thames Water as the sewage undertaker.

5.5 Thames Water

- 5.5.1 Raise no objection regarding sewerage infrastructure capacity. Advise that trade effluent consent will be required for any effluent discharge other than domestic discharge. They recommend that petrol/oil interceptors are fitted in all car parking facilities and advise that there are public sewers crossing the site and that their consent is required for any building works over or within 3m of these public sewers.
- 5.5.2 In respect of building works, Thames Water have recommended a condition be imposed requiring the submission and agreement of a piling method statement prior to any impact piling taking place, to prevent and minimise the potential for damage to subsurface sewerage infrastructure.

5.6 SBC Environmental Health

- 5.6.1 Raises no objection subject to the development continuing in accordance with environmental health comments and the Romboll Whitbybird report dated March 2010 as agreed under the discharge of condition approval reference 10/00136/COND and the detailed Ground Investigation and Remediation Reports submitted as part of the current application. The recommendations made in the reports should be followed, or suitable other works which would achieve the same result be used following consultation with environmental health.

5.7 HCC Minerals and Waste

- 5.7.1 Advises that there are no hazardous landfill sites in Hertfordshire and therefore the recommended remediation strategy submitted will require the removal of waste to a suitable site outside of Hertfordshire. The details provided of on-site medical/biohazardous liquid waste

management are comprehensive; however these are controlled by the Environment Agency as the regulatory body.

- 5.7.2 Waste arising during construction will be dealt with in accordance with a Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) which the County Council is keen to ensure the measures of which are implemented, and that this can be suitably dealt with through imposition of conditions. Furthermore, conditions could be imposed regarding the type of soil that is imported, together with the levels of this imported material. The Borough Council may wish to seek assurances that the imported materials are not in themselves contaminated.
- 5.7.3 The Borough Council are encouraged to have regard to the potential for minimising waste generated by development and are urged to pay due regard to the County Council's policies on provision of waste management facilities; waste prevention and reduction; and sustainable design, construction and demolition.

6. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

6.1 Background to the Development Plan

6.1.1 In the determination of planning applications development must be in accordance with the statutory development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. For Stevenage the statutory development plan comprises:

- Hertfordshire Waste Development Framework 2012 and Hertfordshire Waste Site Allocations Development Plan Document (adopted 2012 and 2014)
- Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan 2002 – 2016 (adopted 2007)
- The Stevenage District Plan Second Review 2004.

The former Stevenage Draft Core Strategy and Development Management Policies were withdrawn on 1st February 2012. However, the Site Specific Policies Plan, the Old Town Area Action Plan and the Gunnels Wood Area Action Plan have all been approved locally by the Council's executive as material considerations in the determination of planning applications and continue to be used for Development Management purposes. Additionally, the Council's Interim Planning Policy Statement adopted in April 2012 is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications registered on or after the 18 April 2012.

- 6.1.2 Where a Development Plan Document has been submitted for examination but no representations have been made in respect of relevant policies, then considerable weight may be attached to those policies because of the strong possibility that they will be adopted. The converse may apply if there have been representations which oppose the policy. However, much will depend on the nature of those representations and whether there are representations in support of particular policies.
- 6.1.3 In considering the policy implications of any development proposal the Local Planning Authority will assess each case on its individual merits, however where there may be a conflict between policies in the existing Development Plan and policies in any emerging Development Plan Document, the adopted Development Plan policies currently continue to have greater weight.

6.2 Central Government Advice

6.2.1 In March 2012 the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published and in doing so it replaced many documents including all Planning Policy Guidance Notes and Planning Policy Statements. The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. Annex 1 of the NPPF provides guidance on how existing

local plan policies which have been prepared prior to the publication of the NPPF should be treated. Paragraph 215 of the NPPF applies which states that only due weight should be afforded to the relevant policies in the adopted local plan according to their degree of consistency with it.

- 6.2.2 Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The NPPF is itself a material consideration. Given that the advice that the weight to be given to relevant policies in the local plan will depend on their degree of consistency with the NPPF, it will be necessary in the determination of this application to assess the consistency of the relevant local plan policies with the NPPF. The NPPF applies a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 6.2.3 In addition to the NPPF advice in the National Planning Practice Guidance (March 2014) also needs to be taken into account. It states that, where the development plan is absent, silent or the relevant policies are out of date, paragraph 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires the application to be determined in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development unless otherwise specified.

6.3 Adopted District Plan

TW1 Sustainable Development
TW8 Environmental Safeguards
TW9 Quality of Design
E2 Employment Areas
E3 Employment Sites
E4 Acceptable uses in employment areas
T6 Design Standards
T15 Car Parking Strategy
EN9 Archaeology and Development
EN13 Trees in New Developments
EN27 Noise Pollution
EN38 Energy Conservation and Supply

6.4 Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents

Gunnels Wood Road Employment Area 2006
Stevenage Design Guide 2009
Parking Provision Supplementary Planning Document 2012

6.5 Interim Planning Policy Statement for Stevenage (April 2012)

IP01 Sustainable Development Principles

7 APPRAISAL

- 7.1 The main issues for consideration in the determination of this application are its acceptability in land use policy terms; the effect on the appearance of the area; the impact on neighbouring amenities; the effect of the proposals on the highway network and the adequacy of the proposed parking provision.

7.2 Land Use Policy Issues

7.2.1 The application site is within the designated Gunnels Wood Employment Area, and forms a site allocated for employment purposes under Policy E3 of the adopted local plan. Added to this, policy E4 of the adopted District Plan encourages a range of employment uses within the B1, B2 and B8 use classes. On this basis, the proposal for research and development purposes within the use class B1 is in accordance with the land use policies in the local plan and is considered acceptable. Furthermore, the proposal follows the agreement in principle to develop the north western area of the GSK site for such uses, following the approval of the outline planning permission in 2009.

7.3 Effect upon the Visual Amenities of the Area

7.3.1 The application proposes the erection of a research and manufacturing building with ancillary office building, warehousing and HVAC compound. The building is of a rectangular design, comprising a large warehouse and a three storey office building projecting off the north western corner, the height ranging from approximately 15m to 10m respectively. The building would have a contemporary design finish with a flat roof, upon which there would be plant equipment in connection with the large amount of HVAC equipment required for the building use. The building is to be sited within an existing open area of grassed field, some 110m from the nearest catalyst buildings to the south. Due to the size and location of the building it will be highly prominent within the GSK site. Whilst the building would be well screened from the A1(M) given the substantial planting along the western boundary, the development will be visible from Broadhall Way and the office buildings within the Arlington Business Park to the north.

7.3.2 Notwithstanding the prominence of the building within this area of the site, the contemporary design and proposed materials are of a high standard and complement the existing buildings and innovative design associated with GSK. Samples of materials have been provided. The Equitone cladding system proposed for the elevations of the main building shows the raw untreated texture of fibre cement board, having a crisp appearance, similar to natural stone. The quality of this material is high and the use of predominantly flat panels (Technica) interspersed with 'Linear' panels, which are textured with a series of horizontal groves, are considered a good mix, adding texture and detail to the large building.

7.3.3 The office building would consist of a glazed curtain walling system similar in appearance to the catalyst buildings. The glazed panels would be separated alternately with powder coated aluminium infill panels, and would cover the north end and eastern side elevations of the office building. The southern end elevation and western side elevation visible beyond the main building would be finished in a powder coated aluminium cladding, colour RAL 5012 Grey. A sample has been provided and is considered acceptable. Tall narrow areas of glazing are interspersed on the northern and eastern elevations of the main building, with a lesser number and size panels included on the southern and western elevations to provide some levels of natural light. The glazed panels are positioned below the 'Linear' cladding of the main building, continuing the linear appearance and creating visual breaks in the main cladding material.

7.3.4 It is considered that the buildings are of a high quality of design using contemporary and sustainable materials which would complement and enhance the existing buildings at the site. The introduction of hard and soft landscaping to augment the building would add to the quality of the development. The landscaping plans provided show an acceptable level of planting around the edge of the site to include a variety of maintained grass, ornamental planting and wildflower planted areas. Proposals for a number of trees around the perimeter of the car park and the service area of the building would provide an additional level of height within the landscaping. The site does not currently have any trees or maintained landscaping which would be affected by the development. The soft landscaping proposed is considered to provide sufficient screening around the development, and in conjunction with the high quality of design and materials proposed, the development would not harm the visual amenities of the site or its immediate locality.

7.4 Impact upon Neighbouring Amenities

- 7.4.1 The site lies within a part of the Gunnels Wood Employment area where there are a number of different uses and building types. The development is separated from other sites, in particular the Arlington development (former BAe site) to the north by Broadhall Way, the railway line to the east and Knebworth Lane to the south. The area to be developed forms land to the north west of the GSK site, currently open grassland. The nearest buildings within the GSK site are the catalyst buildings to the south, and located externally from the site, the offices to the north within the Arlington complex and the Novotel Hotel located to the west on the western side of the A1(M). The hotel is sufficiently distant from the proposed building, separated by the A1(M) such that it would not be affected by the proposed development. The offices located within the Arlington complex would be located at least 135m from the proposed building. Due to the size and height of the proposed building, it will be largely visible from these offices. However, it is not considered the proposal would adversely affect the operation or working environment of these adjoining premises.

7.5 Impact on Highway Network

- 7.5.1 The previous application approved in April 2009 and the variation of condition application granted in March 2010 were supported by a transport assessment (TA) and detailed plans identifying alterations to junction 7 of the A1(M) and the reconstruction of the Gunnels Wood Road/Broadhall Way roundabout. These were the subject of lengthy consideration and amendment involving Hertfordshire highways, the Highways Agency and the applicant's transport consultant. The resultant highway works which were agreed as part of those applications are:-

The A1(M) roundabout to be signalised (partially required in any event, as part of the proposals for the west of Stevenage).

A new access into the GSK site to be provided directly off the A1(M) roundabout.

At the GSK junction the proposed signalised layout has been simplified by excluding the west to south right turn from Broadhall Way into the main GSK entrance. All that traffic will enter the GSK site directly from the A1(M) roundabout.

An additional westbound lane has been added to Broadhall Way between the GSK junction and the A1(M) roundabout.

An 'escape route' is to be provided within the GSK site, connecting the new entrance from the A1(M) roundabout to the present main exit from GSK. This will cater for any drivers who use the new exit from the A1(M) roundabout by mistake. It will also cater for visitors arriving at GSK from the motorway who need to pass through the main security gate.

- 7.5.2 In dealing with the previous applications and to assess the impact of the development on the highway network to cater for the new floorspace to be created, the TA used survey data from the existing operation at the GSK site and then this was used for traffic modelling to predict the increase which would occur following the development. As a result, the highway proposals were considered acceptable in-principle subject to detail design approval by both Hertfordshire County Council and The Highways Agency and subject to the imposition of a number of conditions and the construction being proposed to be carried out in the following two stages:

Interim (Stage 1): Signalisation of the A1(M) roundabout, together with the new direct entrance from the A1(M) roundabout into GSK. In addition, minor works would be carried out within the highway boundary at the GSK junction, to improve the left turn from GSK towards the west.

Final (Stage 2): Completion of the works at the GSK roundabout

- 7.5.3 The 'Interim' highway works have been completed and in accordance with the respective S106 agreement signed as part of the previous applications, the 'Final' stage of highway works will not be implemented unless the gross external floor areas (GEA) for proposed buildings exceeds 18,600sqm of development. The accumulation of the GEA of the catalyst buildings, which formed part of the floor area allowance stated above, along with the GEA of the proposed building at 7287sqm would not trigger the 18,600sqm figure for full highway works to be completed, at a total of 18,037 sqm.
- 7.5.4 To support this application a Transport Statement (TS) has been submitted, which has been subject to consultation with Highways England (formerly the Highways Agency) and Hertfordshire County Council as the local highways authority. Trip generation, vehicle movement and local road network improvements were all fully assessed and agreed under the outline planning permission. The additional vehicle movements of expanding the GSK site and their impact on the surrounding road network were also assessed at the outline stage, and the 'Interim' highway works necessary as part of the outline permission completed as approved.
- 7.5.5 The local highways authority considers that the existing highway network is capable of accommodating the new traffic generated by the proposed development. The TS suggests that no further traffic data is required in support of this application. The trip rates associated with the approved outline permission appropriately considered the level of development being created, and further to the catalyst development the total GEA and parking threshold has not been triggered in respect of further highway works being required. HCC are satisfied that the future traffic generated from the new development would not alter significantly from the data submitted at the outline submission stage. The proposal would not therefore have a significant impact on the local highway network.
- 7.5.6 Accordingly, Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority is raising no objections to the application. Furthermore, no objection has been raised by Highways England in respect of the proposed developments impact on the A1(M) trunk road.

7.6 Car Parking

- 7.6.1 In assessing car parking, the proposal identifies a total of 142 new car parking spaces to be provided, including 8 disabled spaces. Based on the Council's adopted car parking standards of 1 space per 35 sqm in respect of research and development floor area, a total of 209 spaces would be required for the new development. However, the site lies outside the town centre area and, therefore falls within parking zone 4 as defined in the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance relating to car parking. In this location the standards allow for a threshold of between 75-100% of the maximum. Applying the lower percentage, the development would require the provision of 153 spaces to serve the proposed development.
- 7.6.2 Whilst the required car parking is below the maximum standard (less 11 spaces), it has to be borne that the site is in a relatively sustainable location, being well served by public transport and close to the footpath and cycleway network. Furthermore, GSK operate a shuttle bus service for staff and visitors every working day to and from the train station 4 times per day between 7.00 and 9.00, and 16.30 and 18.30 hours. Given this situation, and the existence of parking restrictions on Gunnels Wood Road and Broadhall Way, which control on-street parking in the vicinity of the application site, it is considered that the level of parking proposed to serve the development is acceptable.
- 7.6.3 In terms of cycle parking, the scheme identifies a total of 30 covered cycle parking spaces, 10 short term and 20 long term spaces. The application proposes 150 staff and a GIA of 7125 sqm. The Council's standards for cycle parking would require a total of 15 short term spaces (1 space per 500 sqm of GFA) and 15 long term spaces (1 space per 10 full time staff). The provision of 30 cycle spaces would meet the Council's requirement. The scheme also identifies a provision of 8 motorcycle spaces.

7.7 Other Considerations

7.7.1 Waste Management

7.7.1.1 Hertfordshire County Council as the local minerals and waste authority have assessed the application and are raising no objection although they have specified that a Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) be provided and implemented in accordance with agreed details, to deal with waste arising from construction of the development. A SWMP could be dealt with through the imposition of a suitably worded condition.

7.7.1.2 The application has been accompanied with details of the management of medical/biohazardous liquid waste on site. The information provided is considered comprehensive and would be regulated by the Environment Agency (EA) as the regulatory body. The EA have raised no objection on inspection of the details submitted.

7.7.2 Ground Contamination

7.7.2.1 The application is supported by a detailed Ground Investigation Report which highlights the presence of several spoil heaps, including building rubble, an area of hardstanding, contaminated soils, heavy metals, asbestos, areas of made ground with contamination, and extensive fly tipped waste. The recommended remediation strategy for this is the removal of made ground prior to development with disposal to landfill sites. The Council's Environmental Health Officers have assessed the application and are raising no objections subject to the development being carried out in accordance with the prescribed details in the Ground Investigation and Remediation Reports submitted with the application and the details previously approved under reference 10/00136/COND in respect of application 09/00314/FPM.

7.7.3 Flood Risk

7.7.3.1 In accordance with the normal requirements of the Environment Agency, the applicant has submitted a flood risk assessment in conjunction with their application. The Environment Agency, who have considered this document, have not raised any objections to the proposals. Similarly, Thames Water has assessed the proposals and is raising no objection to the application.

8 CONCLUSIONS

8.1 The proposed development complies with the Council's land use policies and would not harm either the appearance of this area or the operating conditions of adjoining firms. It would not adversely affect the operation of the local highway network and the level of car parking available to serve the new premises is considered acceptable. Accordingly, it is recommended that planning permission be granted.

9 RECOMMENDATION

9.1 Planning permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions:-

1 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in general accordance with the following approved plans: 7271_08_10 Rev A Site location plan; 7271_08_11 Rev A Block Plan; 7271_08_01 Rev D Ground Floor GA Layout; 7271_08_02 Rev D Interstitial Ceiling and Mezzanine Level; 7271_08_03 Rev D Level 1 Production; 7271_08_04 Rev D Interstitial Ceiling – Admin Roof; 7271_08_05 Rev E Roof Plan; 7271_08_06 Rev G Section AA; 7271_08_07 Rev G Section BB; 7271_08_08 Rev F Elevations; 7271_08_09 Rev B External

Visual; 7271_55_07 Site Logistic Plan; 7271_55_01 Rev I Hard Landscaping Plan; 7271_55_02 Rev F Soft Landscaping Plan.

REASON: - For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

REASON: - To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

- 3 The development hereby approved shall be constructed of the external materials as submitted and as listed on drawing no: 7271_08_08 Rev F Elevations, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON:- In the interests of visual amenity and to ensure a high standard of finish in accordance with policy TW9 of the Stevenage District Plan Second Review 1991-2011.

- 4 The hard and soft landscaping approved shall be carried out in accordance with the submitted plans, drawing numbers 7271_55_01 Rev I Hard Landscaping Plan and 7271_55_02 Rev F Soft Landscaping Plan, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. All hard surfacing comprised in the details of approved landscaping shall be carried out within three months of the first occupation of the building(s) or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner.

REASON:- To ensure the proper completion of the hard landscaping and in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with policy TW9 of the Stevenage District Plan Second Review 1991-2011.

- 5 All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the first occupation of the building(s) or the completion of the development whichever is the sooner.

REASON:- To ensure the proper completion of the soft landscaping in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with policy TW9 of the Stevenage District Plan Second Review 1991-2011.

- 6 No tree shown on the approved soft landscaping plan 7271_55_02 Rev F, shall be cut down, uprooted or destroyed, nor shall any retained tree be topped or lopped within five years of the completion of development without the written approval of the Local Planning Authority.

REASON:-To ensure the protection of those trees which should be retained in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with policy EN13 of the Stevenage District Plan Second Review 1991-2011.

- 7 Any trees or plants comprised within the scheme of landscaping, which within a period of five years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON:- To ensure the maintenance of the approved landscaping scheme in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with policy TW9 of the Stevenage District Plan Second Review 1991-2011.

- 8 No part of the development shall be occupied until the relevant access, car parking and turning areas have been constructed, surfaced and permanently marked out in accordance

with the approved plan 7271_55_01 Rev I. The car parking and turning areas so provided shall be maintained as a permanent ancillary to the development and shall be used for no other purpose at any time.

REASON:- To ensure that adequate parking is provided at all times in accordance with policy T15 of the Stevenage District Plan Second Review 1991-2011.

- 9 The development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved Ground Investigation Report and Remediation Report dated May 2015 submitted in support of this application and in accordance with the Site Investigation Factual and Interpretative (Ground Contamination) Final Report written by Ramboll Whitbybird dated March 2009 and approved under reference 10/00136/COND in respect of condition 20 of planning permission 09/00314/FPM, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON:- To prevent harm to human health and pollution of the water environment.

- 10 If, following the commencement of the development, contamination not previously identified is found to be present at the site, no further works shall be carried out, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, until the developer has submitted to and obtained written approval from the Local Planning Authority for a remediation strategy detailing how this unsuspected contamination shall be dealt with.

REASON:- To prevent harm to human health and pollution of the water environment.

- 11 No development shall commence until a Code of Construction Practice has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Local Environmental Health Authority. This shall include measures during the construction process to minimise the amount of dust generated, minimise the amount of noise generated, to prevent mud, soil and other materials from the site being deposited on the highway, detailed construction methods and a Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) to detail how waste materials generated as a result of the proposed demolition and/or construction methods shall be disposed of, and detail the level and type of soil to be imported to site as part of the development. The approved Code of Construction Practice shall be implemented in full for the full duration of the construction activity relating to this permission at this site.

REASON:- To prevent harm to human health, to minimise the impact of construction and to maintain the amenity of the local.

- 12 Prior to occupation of the building, details of the proposed enclosures for the gas bottle store, generator compound and refuse store shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON:- In the interests of visual amenity and to ensure a high standard of development in accordance with policy TW9 of the Stevenage District Plan Second Review 1991-2011.

- 13 Prior to commencement of development, the clear site working area for mobile cranes; main contractors accommodation; subcontractors cabins/storage; contractor parking; site storage and laydown area; and hardstanding access with wheel wash shall be provided on site in accordance with drawing no: 7271_55_07 Site Logistic Plan, and shall be removed prior to first occupation of the building, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON:- To ensure that the approved development takes place in a comprehensive manner.

Pro-active Statement

Planning permission has been granted for this proposal. The Council acted pro-actively through positive engagement with the applicant at the pre-application stage and during the determination process which lead to improvements to the scheme. The Council has therefore acted pro-actively in line with the requirements of the Framework (paragraphs 186 and 187).

10 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

1. The application file, forms, plans and supporting documents having the reference number relating to this item.
2. Stevenage District Plan Second Review 1991-2011.
3. Central Government advice contained in the National Planning Policy Framework March 2012 and the National Planning Policy Guidance 2014.
4. Responses to consultations with statutory undertakers and other interested parties referred to in this report.