

4.2- SE/15/02019/FUL Date expired 26 August 2015

PROPOSAL: Proposed workshop roof alterations and store extension.

LOCATION: Dunbrik Depot, 2 Main Road, Sundridge TN14 6EP

WARD(S): Brasted, Chevening and Sundridge

ITEM FOR DECISION

This application is referred to Development Control Committee as it is an internal application relating to a site under the ownership of Sevenoaks District Council.

RECOMMENDATION: That planning permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions:-

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

In pursuance of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: amended plan 1039-004-03 date stamped received 30.7.15 and 1039-004-04.

For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used on the existing building in accordance with amended drawing number 1039-004-03 date stamped received 30.07.15.

To ensure that the appearance of the development is in harmony with the existing character of the building as supported by Policy EN1 of the Sevenoaks Allocations and Development Management Plan..

Note to Applicant

In accordance with paragraphs 186 and 187 of the NPPF Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals. SDC works with applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner, by;

- Offering a duty officer service to provide initial planning advice,
- Providing a pre-application advice service,
- When appropriate, updating applicants/agents of any small scale issues that may arise in the processing of their application,
- Where possible and appropriate suggesting solutions to secure a successful outcome,
- Allowing applicants to keep up to date with their application and viewing all consultees comments on line

(www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/environment/planning/planning_services_online/654.asp),

- By providing a regular forum for planning agents,
- Working in line with the NPPF to encourage developments that improve the improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area,
- Providing easy on line access to planning policies and guidance, and
- Encouraging them to seek professional advice whenever appropriate.

In this instance the applicant/agent:

- 1) Was updated on the progress of the planning application.
- 2) The application was considered by the Planning Committee where the applicant/agent had the opportunity to speak to the committee and promote the application.

Description of Proposal

- 1 The application seeks planning permission for:
 - Alterations and extensions to the main roof of the existing workshop,
 - Demolition and replacement of the store to the south west elevation with an extended store; and
 - The replacement of the flat roof to the single storey addition to the south west with a lean to roof.

Description of Site

- 2 The site is the depot to the present Waste Transfer facility, located on the north side of the A25 just west of the built up area of Sevenoaks. The site is within the Green Belt and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 3 The building the subject of the application is a workshop used for servicing vehicles associated with the waste transfer facility. The workshop is located adjacent to the southern most boundary. This boundary adjoins the rear boundary of residential properties fronting Main Road, Sundridge. There is an access walkway to the rear of the building. Adjoining the access and separating the site from the residential properties beyond is a galvanised steel fence. Between this fence and the rear fences of neighbouring dwellings is a landscaping strip comprising evergreen trees which at present far exceed the height of the building.

Constraints

- 4 Green Belt
- 5 Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

Policies

Allocations and Development Management Plan (ADMP) policies:

- 6 Policies - EN1, EN2, EN5, GB8, T1 and T2

Sevenoaks Core Strategy policies:

7 Policies - SP1 and LO8

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Planning History

8 There is a lengthy planning history relating to the site, the following are relevant to this application:

SW/5/65/78 Garage with staff rest room, wc and offices. GRANT 12/07/1965

85/01660/HIST Demolition of existing compressor housing and oil tank.
Extension to workshop building to house compressors oil tank and provide store.
GRANT 10/01/1986

86/01969/HIST Erection of a single storey extension to provide office accommodation. GRANT 07/01/1987

93/00030/HIST Single storey pitched roof extension and improvements to the mess room. GRANT 11/06/1993

Consultations

Parish Council

9 Sundridge with Ide Hill Parish Council *supports the application, but believes in consideration of the neighbouring residential properties, conditions should be imposed maintaining current operating levels in respect of working hours, working and vehicle numbers and movements. (Officer Note: refer to 'Other Matters')*

Representations

10 No representations have been received.

Chief Planning Officer's Appraisal

Principal Issues

11 The principal issues to consider in the determination of this application concern:

- The principle of the development in the Green Belt, including whether the proposal would be appropriate development in the Green Belt and the effect of the proposal on the openness of the Green Belt;
- If it is inappropriate development, whether the harm by reason of inappropriateness, is clearly outweighed by other considerations, so as to amount to the very special circumstances necessary to justify the development;
- Impact on the character and appearance of the area and the AONB;
- Impact on residential amenity; and
- Highways.

Green Belt

- 12 At a National level, the NPPF sets out the criteria against which applications for development in the Green Belt shall be assessed. The NPPF states that inappropriate development, by definition, is development that is harmful to the Green Belt. Paragraph 79 of the document states that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.
- 13 Openness is not reliant upon degree of visibility but upon an absence of built development. Openness can be diminished by the cumulative “footprint” of discreetly sited incremental additions to existing individual buildings as much as it can by conspicuous swathes of new development.
- 14 The advice in the NPPF states that there is a general presumption against inappropriate development within the Green Belt and that such development should not be approved except in very special circumstances.
- 15 The NPPF indicates that it is for applicants to demonstrate why permission should be granted and that very special circumstances to justify inappropriate development will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.
- 16 Paragraph 89 of the NPPF, states that a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings in the Green Belt as inappropriate. Exceptions to this include *‘the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building’*.
- 17 At a local level policy GB8 of the ADMP sets out the criteria against which applications to extend non residential buildings will be assessed. The policy states *‘that proposals to extend an existing non-residential building within the Green Belt which would meet the following criteria will be permitted: a) the existing building is lawful and permanent in nature; and b) the design and volume of the proposed extension, taking into consideration the cumulative impact of any previous extensions, would be proportional and subservient to the ‘original’ building and would not materially harm the openness of the Green Belt through excessive scale, bulk or visual intrusion’*.
- 18 The building currently has a double pitched roof which runs horizontally from east to west. Each pitch is angled at 20 degrees. The overall height of the building to ridge is approximately 5.5 metre.
- 19 Firstly, with regards to the main roof of the building, the application proposes to alter the central valley by raising it approximately 0.8 metres. By doing so the proposal introduces an expanse of flat roof running the width of the building. The application also proposes to alter the angle of northern most roof slope to the front elevation so that the pitch of the roof would be altered to 5 degrees and the height to the eaves of the front of the building would increase from approximately 3.6 metres to 4.5 metres. Despite the increased heights the alterations remain the same as the overall maximum ridge height.

- 20 It is also proposed to demolish the existing store room (which adjoins the garage and plant room) and replace it with a store room measuring 6.1 x 3.2 metres. The flat roof which currently exists above these facilities will be replaced with a lean to roof. Consequently, the height of the roof to this area will increase from approximately 2.6 metres to 3.5 metres remaining single storey.
- 21 In conclusion the alterations to the roofs of the building and the new extension to provide an enlarged store room would not increase the height of the building overall nor would they increase its overall width and depth.
- 22 The existing building was originally granted planning permission in 1965 and is therefore lawful. The building is permanent in nature.
- 23 In determining whether the alterations detailed above are appropriate, it is necessary to also consider the increase in the volume of the building to demonstrate whether the proposal complies with local plan policy GB8.
- 24 The information available suggests that the 'original' volume is approximately 3513 cubic metres. The building has been previously extended by approximately 342.07 cubic metres in volume representing a 9.74 % increase over and above the original building.
- 25 The proposed extensions and alterations increase the volume by a further 154.32 cubic metres approximately. Together with existing extensions and alterations this represents a 14.13 % increase in the original volume.
- 26 Figure 1 below, is provided in order to clarify, the current position in terms of the volume of the building in its current form, and in its proposed form.
- 27 Although not required by policy GB8, figure 2 provides the same details in respect of floor area as a useful tool for further assessment.

Fig 1: Volume

	Volume of Extension (m³)	Total Extended Volume (m³)	Cumulative % Increase above original building
Original building	3513		
Extensions granted under 85/01660/HIST	105.8	3618.8	3.01%
Extensions granted under 86/01969/HIST	89.97	3708.77	5.57%
Extensions granted under 93/00030/HIST	146.3	3855.07	9.74%

Fig 2: Floor area

	Floor area (m²)	Total Floor area (m²)	Cumulative % Increase above original building
Original building	657		
Extensions granted under 85/01660/HIST	43.86	700.86	6.68%
Extensions granted under 86/01969/HIST	30.5	731.36	11.32%
Extensions granted under 93/00030/HIST	53.2	784.56	19.55%

- 28 Overall, although there will be some increase in the volume and the footprint of the building as a result of the proposal this increase would be modest and proportionate as demonstrated in the tables above.

Effect on the openness of the Green Belt

- 29 Policy L08 of the Council’s Core Strategy applies and states that the extent of the Green Belt will be maintained. The policy also states that the countryside will be conserved and the distinctive features that contribute to the special character of its landscape and its biodiversity will be protected and enhanced where possible. Development should cause no adverse impact on the character of the countryside or the openness of the Green Belt.
- 30 The proposed alterations would not extend beyond the current width, depth and height of the building. As such, the building would not encroach any further into the site. Although cumulatively the extensions to the building would, by reason of creating additional built form, cause a further reduction in the openness of the Green Belt; their relatively modest size and form in comparison to the original building are such that the cumulative impact on openness is acceptable. In my view the extensions and alterations would not be excessive in terms of scale, bulk or visual intrusion; they are relatively modest, proportional to the building and remain subservient.
- 31 I therefore consider that there would be no material harm to the openness and purposes of the Green Belt and that the development is appropriate in compliance with the aforementioned National and Local Plan policies.

Very Special Circumstances

- 32 In my view and for the reasons set out in the preceding paragraphs, I consider that the application represents appropriate development in the Green Belt and therefore no very special circumstances are required.

Effect on the character and appearance of the area and AONB:

- 33 The NPPF states that the Government ‘attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is

indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people.’ (para. 56)

- 34 Policy SP1 of the Core Strategy states that all new development should be designed to a high quality and should respond to the distinctive local character of the area in which it is situated. Policy EN1 of the ADMP states that the form of proposed development should be compatible in terms of scale, height, density and site coverage with other buildings in the locality. Policy L08 of the Council’s Core Strategy also applies and states that the extent of the Green Belt will be maintained. The policy also states that the countryside will be conserved and the distinctive features that contribute to the special character of its landscape and its biodiversity will be protected and enhanced where possible. Development should cause no adverse impact on the character of the countryside.
- 35 The site is located within the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 states that the Local Planning Authority should conserve and enhance Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Policy EN5 of the ADMP is relevant and states that proposals will be permitted where the form, scale, materials and design would conserve and enhance the character of the landscape.
- 36 The extensions are of a modest form and scale in comparison to the existing building. The building is adjacent to other utilitarian buildings within the same complex. The proposed extension to the building would not extend beyond the buildings existing parameters, the alterations to roofs would not exceed the overall height of the building and the materials to be used to extend and alter the building would match the existing. The replacement of the existing flat roof to the south west with a lean to roof offers an opportunity to enhance the appearance of this section of the building and therefore the AONB. The building does not lie in an open or isolated position and the proposals comprise acceptable development within the context of Dunbrik Depot and are appropriate for this environment. Furthermore, the development is screened from outside of the site by other existing buildings and by evergreen landscaping to the boundaries which currently exceeds the height of the existing building. The proposal would allow for the indoors servicing of vehicles, reducing the impact of this element on the area, enabling the conservation and enhancement of the AONB.
- 37 Consequently the proposals are considered to conserve and enhance the character and appearance of the AONB and would be in compliance with relevant policy and guidance.

Impact on Amenities

- 38 Paragraph 17 of the NPPF identifies a set of core land use planning principles that should underpin decision making. One of these principles is that planning should always seek to secure a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings. Policy EN2 of the ADMP requires that any development should not have an adverse impact on the amenities of neighbours and also ensures a satisfactory environment for future occupants.
- 39 The development is taking place within the confines of the site, and as already stated on numerous occasions the footprint of the building would not extend beyond its existing parameters neither would the alterations to roofs exceed the overall height of the building. In fact, in my view it would not be possible to view

the alterations to the main roof of the building from neighbouring properties as the valley and front facing roof slope would be obscured by the southern most pitched roof which remains unchanged. At single storey, the alterations to the south west side would also be obscured from view by the neighbours own fencing and landscaping to the boundaries.

- 40 According to the site location plan, a distance of in excess of 70 metres would remain between the building and the rear elevations of neighbouring properties.
- 41 For the reasons set out above, I do not consider that the proposal would have any adverse overbearing impact on neighbouring amenities by reason of form, scale, loss of light or outlook and neither do I consider it would affect neighbours privacy.
- 42 With regards to noise and disturbance, the proposed development would improve the facility and its functions but is not perceived to intensify its use. If anything, the proposed development may be of benefit to local residents as if granted, the alterations would enable all vehicles to be serviced indoors potentially preventing any resulting noise which may occur from servicing vehicles outside and therefore reducing the impact on the amenity of residents.
- 43 In conclusion, I find the application acceptable with regards to impact on neighbouring amenities in accordance with the relevant policies.

Access and Parking Issues

- 44 Policy EN1 of the ADMP requires that proposed development should ensure the satisfactory means of access for vehicles and provides parking facilities in accordance with the relevant standards. Policy T1 of the ADMP requires new developments to mitigate any adverse travel impacts. Policy T2 relates to vehicle parking, including cycle parking and requires provision in accordance with advice from the Highway Authority.
- 45 The application does not seek any alterations to the existing access or parking. The proposed development is unlikely to result in any intensification of the use of the site. For these reasons in my view the proposals would not generate any adverse parking or travel impacts that would be harmful to neighbour amenity or to highway safety.

Other Matters

- 46 In response to the Parish Councils comments, this application relates solely to alterations to this building. It does not propose any alterations to the use that already has planning permission and the way in which the site operates will not change, apart from the ability to service vehicles indoors, if it is approved. As such, it is not considered necessary or reasonable in accordance with National Planning Practice Guidance to apply conditions to maintain current operating levels in respect of working hours, working and vehicle numbers and movements to any grant of this planning permission. Any conditions in this respect will remain applicable in accordance with previous grants of planning permission.

Conclusion

- 47 The application seeks planning permission for alterations and extensions to the main roof of the existing workshop, demolition and replacement of the store to the south west elevation; and the replacement of the flat roof to the single storey addition to the south west with a lean to roof.
- 48 It is my view that the proposal represents appropriate development in the Green Belt.
- 49 The overall design, scale, form and choice of materials are considered to be acceptable in the context of Dunbrik Depot and for the surrounding environment. At present views of the development are unobtainable from outside of the application site. As such I do not consider the proposals would harm the character and appearance of the area or the AONB and would conserve and enhance it.
- 50 The development is taking place within the confines of the site, the footprint of the building would not extend beyond its existing parameters neither would the alterations to roofs exceed the overall height of the building. The distance from neighbouring properties to the building would remain the same and the use of the site is not proposed to intensify as a result of the proposal but would, by allowing for indoor servicing, have a positive impact on the amenity of residents. I therefore find the application to be acceptable in respect of its impact on amenities.
- 51 The proposals would not generate any adverse parking or travel impacts that would be harmful to neighbour amenity or to highway safety.
- 52 It is recommended that this application should be approved as it conforms to the relevant Development Plan policies and there are no other overriding material considerations to suggest otherwise.

Background Papers

Site and Block Plan

Contact Officer(s): Claire Marchant Extension: 7367

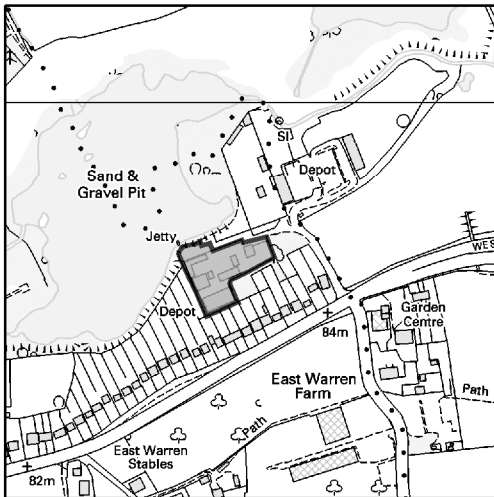
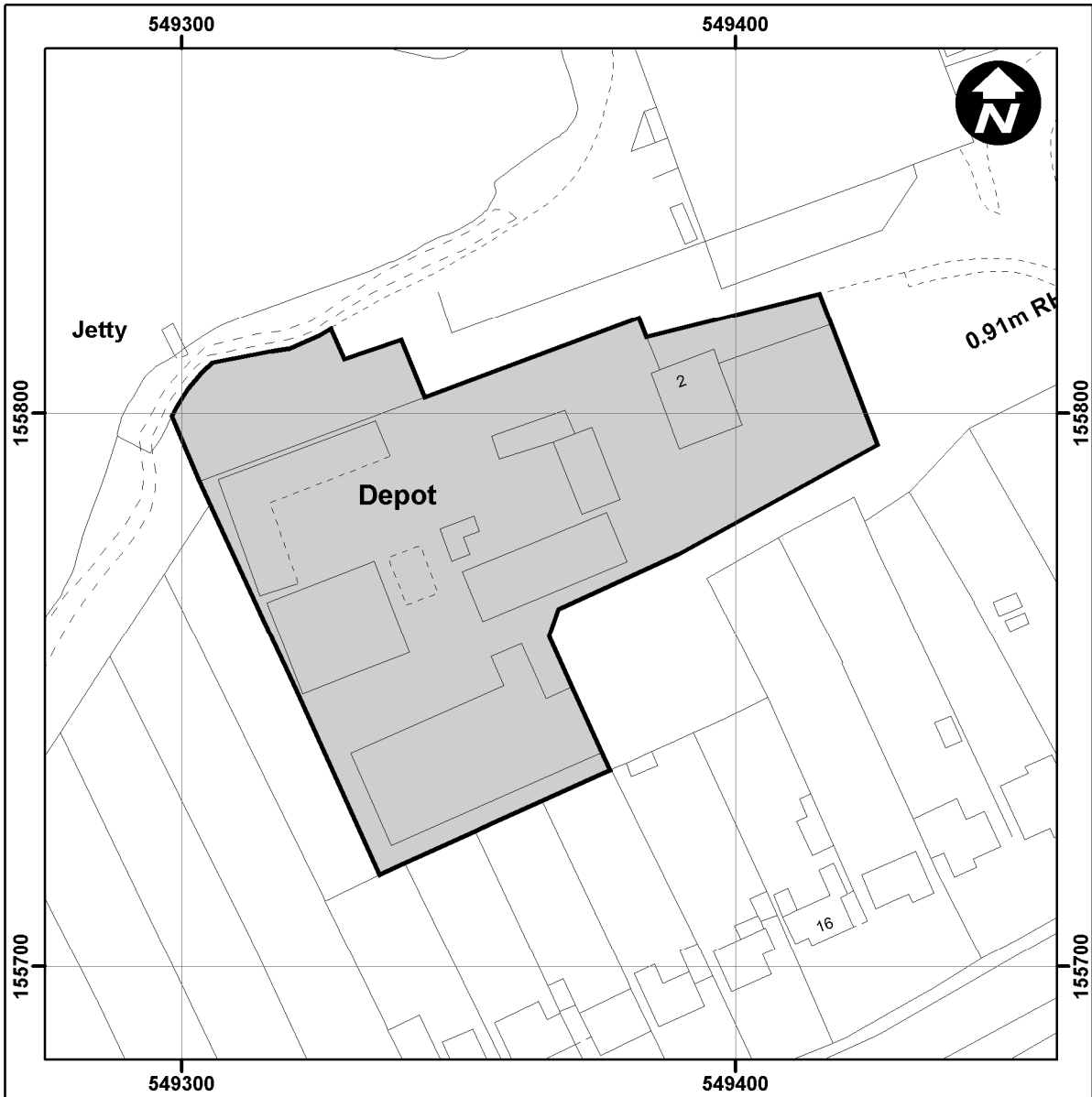
Richard Morris
Chief Planning Officer

Link to application details:

<http://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=NQTC4ABK0L000>

Link to associated documents:

<http://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=NQTC4ABK0L000>



Site Plan

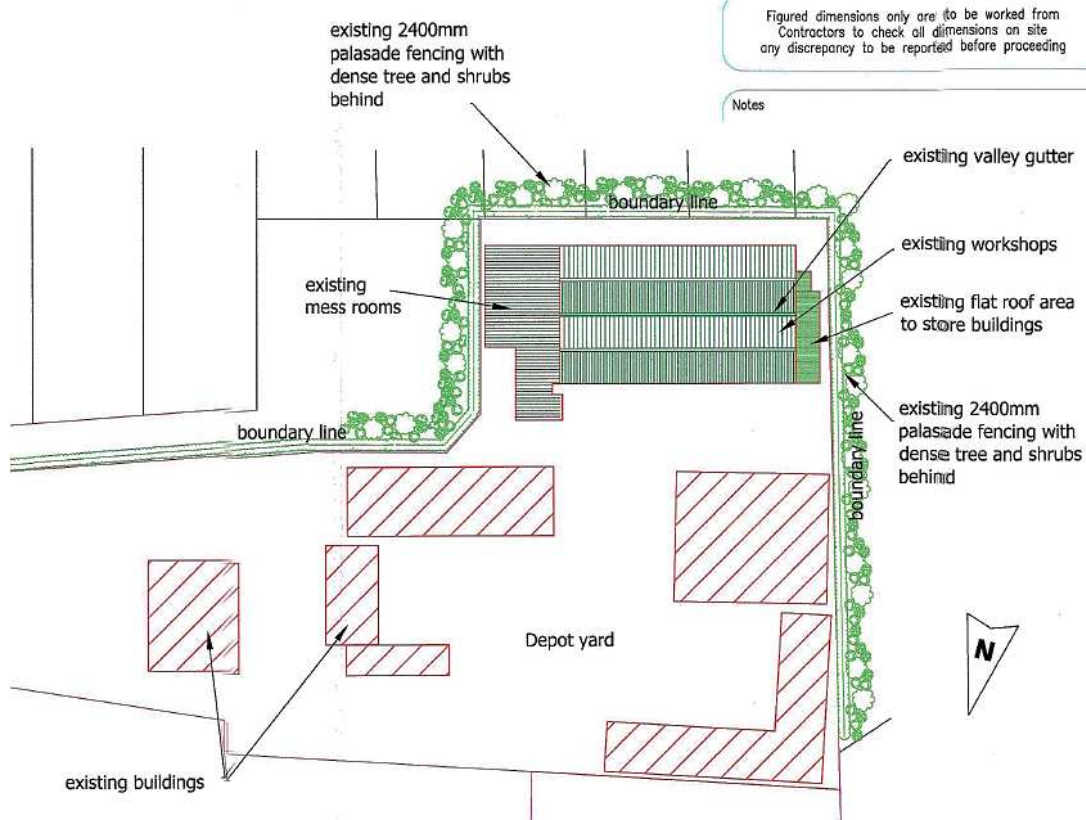
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Date 31/07/2015



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PROPOSED

