

Planning Committee 29th April 2024

Application No	:	24/01773/FUL Full Application	
Location	:	: Shop Horseshoe Farm Main Road Bicknacre Chelmsford Essex CM3	
		4EX	
Proposal	:	Demolition of existing retail building (Class E use) and erection of	
		new retail building (Class E use) with associated parking,	
		landscaping and other infrastructure	
Applicant	: Mr N Halls		
Agent	:	Mr Michael Ward	
Date Valid	:	20th December 2024	

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Drawings
Appendix 2 Consultations

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. The application is referred at the request of a local ward member so that the effect of the proposal on the area, highways and neighbour living conditions can be considered by the Planning Committee.
- 1.2. The application site is part of Horseshoe Farm, a farmstead of eighteenth century or earlier origins and contains a timber framed building which is likely to be a remaining building of the original farmstead, and an informal car parking area. The building is occupied by the Pet and Country Store. The site is an irregular shape and part of it lies beyond the Defined Settlement (DS) of Bicknacre and within the Rural Area. This area is fenced off in line with the rear boundaries of the adjacent sites either side creating a straight boundary edge to the village, beyond which is farmland.
- 1.3. The proposal is to demolish the existing building and to construct a single storey building to be used as a retail unit along with two parking areas for the new retail unit and an existing childcare facility on an adjacent site. The overall appearance of the building uses gabled roof forms to provide some of the character of a rural barn. The proposed building is suitably designed for the village location and would also be in keeping with the historic public house to the north of the site.
- 1.4. There is a recent planning approval (21/01863/FUL planning history refers) for a building in Use Class E (retail and office) to be constructed on this site with associated parking areas, landscaping and a vehicular access from Main Road. The approved building is shown with two storeys and designed as a traditional barn. The principle of more intensive use of the site has therefore been established by this recent planning permission.
- 1.5. There is no objection in heritage terms to the demolition of the existing building at the site.
- 1.6. Given that the DS boundary runs in line with the rear boundary of the neighbouring properties and the existing use, the application site does not have the appearance and character of open countryside and is viewed as part of the run of built form which fronts Main Road.
- 1.7. Considering all other matters set out in this report the principle of development on this is site is acceptable as it would support economic growth in the area, provide employment opportunities and would be positioned in a sustainable location easily accessible by walking and cycling. No harm has been identified to the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside beyond the village boundary from the proposed development. As such, the proposal complies with Strategic Policy S8 and Policy DM8 of the Local Plan requirements.
- 1.8. The new building would be served by a relocated vehicular access from Main Road. The new retail unit would be served by 20 parking spaces. The adjacent childcare facility would be served with five parking spaces and a turning head accessed from the shared main access. The parking area would provide three EV charging spaces and three disabled parking spaces, as well as parking by motorbikes and bicycles. This parking provision is appropriate for the use and location.
- 1.9. A road refuge island would be installed to allow safe crossing for the public. The Highway Authority advises this to be sufficient for safe crossing of the road by pedestrians.
- 1.10. The proposal includes planting of several new trees and hedgerow along the boundaries of the site to mitigate the loss of several existing trees of low quality and to promote biodiversity on site. The proposal would result in overall 10% increase in BNG on site.

- 1.11. The impact on the closest residential property Horseshoe Farm has been carefully assessed in the provided Noise Report and an acoustic fence would be constructed along the southwest boundary with this residential house, to safeguard their residential amenity from noise associated with the activities within the site. This is considered acceptable and in line with the requirements set out in Policy DM29 of the Local Plan.
- 1.12. Approval is recommended subject to conditions.

2. DESCRIPTION OF SITE

- 2.1. The application site is known as Horseshoe Farm and lies opposite the neighbourhood centre of Bicknacre. It is accessed from Main Road (B1418) and currently contains a timber building The Pet and Country Store with an associated informal parking area part of which serves an adjacent childcare facility. The timber building is low in height and partly screened by roadside vegetation. To its southwest is a residential house with an office building, "Horseshoe Farmhouse"; to its north-east is a kids club and nursery. Further to the north lies The White Swan, a pub which is a non-designated heritage asset.
- 2.2. The application site is of an irregular form and a rear part of it lies beyond the Defined Settlement (DS) of Bicknacre. The site fronts the main road and has a main access from it. The existing building and service areas around it including the existing parking area are located within the DS boundary. The rear part of the application site, which is currently predominantly grassed, is in the rural area. This area is fenced off in line with the rear boundaries of the adjacent sites creating a straight boundary edge to the village beyond which is farmland.

3. DETAILS OF THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1. The proposal is for a single storey retail building, sited end on to the road, rectangular in shape and measuring 34.5m in length and 12.5m in width. The gross internal space would measure 386 sqm. The height would be about 7.2m. The overall appearance of the building is of a rural barn, with gabled roof forms used to disguise its retail function. There would be two gables to the front with glazing and an area for signage. The building is proposed to be constructed of red brick and black weatherboard with red roof tiles (details of the materials would be reserved by a condition). The service plant would be positioned to the rear of the building.
- 3.2. The building would be positioned along the northeast site boundary and would back onto the nursery. It would be set back from the front to allow for access roads and parking, including parking for the nursery. Vehicular access from the road would be shared with the nursery. The main car park for the shop would be southwest of the building. The parking area would provide three EV charging spaces and three disabled parking spaces, as well as parking by motorbikes and bicycles. There would be 20 parking spaces to serve the shop. The nursery will be served with five parking spaces and a turning head.
- 3.3. The service yard would be at the back of the building and along the rear boundary line. A turning space would be provided in the rear so that larger delivery vehicles would reverse within the site to enter the main road in a forward gear.
- 3.4. The proposal includes planting of 11 new trees and new hedging along the boundaries of the site.

- 3.5. The highway access to the site would be relocated to southwest, the existing accesses would be closed and a 20 m pedestrian pavement created. A road refuge island would be reacted to facilitate safe crossing for the public.
- 3.6. An additional acoustic fence would be constructed along the southwest boundary with the residential house, Horseshoe Farm.

4. OTHER RELEVANT APPLICATIONS

4.1. 21/01863/FUL - Approved 17th February 2022

Demolition of existing building. Construction of new building for retail and office uses (Class E use), with associated parking and landscaping. Formation of access.

Note:

The proposed building was for retail and office uses, both of which also fall within Class E, which is the existing use of the site. It was acknowledged that the building would be located further into the site than the existing building, but it would have replicated the scale, proportions and detailing of a traditional barn and in the context of the surrounding built form on this side of Main Road, the proposed building would have been in keeping with the other two-storey buildings. The design and appearance of the building would have been in keeping with the historic public house to the north of the site.

The DS boundary has been drawn tight around the rear of the existing building therefore any extension or increase in the size of the built form would have likely needed to be located outside the DS boundary. However, as a result of the DS boundary also running further to the rear of the neighbouring properties, this particular site was not viewed as open countryside and was viewed as part of the run of built form which fronts Main Road. Therefore, in this context, and because the design and appearance of the development was acceptable, the proposal was considered not to result in harm to the intrinsic character and beauty of the surrounding countryside.

Strategic Policy S8 supports the delivery of economic growth across all areas of Chelmsford. This site comprises previously developed land partly in the DS of Bicknacre and is in a sustainable location. For these reasons the proposal was considered to comply with the Local Plan policies.

4.2. 19/01358/FUL - Approved 25th September 2019

Creation of a car park to provide 16 additional parking spaces with landscaping planting.

Note:

It was considered that the proposed development, whilst outside the DS boundary, would not have adversely impacted the intrinsic character and beauty of the wider countryside. It would have served existing local facilities. The development would have been contained within the site's limit which has been created by a distinct boundary of the nearby agricultural field. The proposed hardstanding would have not appeared to encroach into the wider countryside and would have appeared well contained and close to the settlement.

4.3. 11/01309/FUL - Approved 10th October 2011

Change of use from a B1 furniture workshop and associated A1 retail outlet to a sole A1 retail use for a pet shop.

Note:

It was considered that the proposed change of use is appropriate to the locality and would not have generated any unacceptable noise and activity particularly given its location on a busy main road. It would have been a use that would serve the local community and would have been complementary to the other commercial uses within the immediate vicinity.

Suitable car parking facilities were available by way of the large surface car park and no objections are raised by the Highway Authority to the use of the existing access into this car park subject to the sight splay to the south of the access (exit) being maintained clear of any obstructing vegetation.

4.4. 08/00271/FUL - Approved 3rd April 2008

Change of use of former farm shop to a workshop and associated retail outlet.

Note:

This planning permission followed an allowed appeal. The application was for the re-use of the former farm shop as a carpenter's workshop, showroom and retail sales premises. During the consideration of the proposal, it was determined that whilst the site is in the rural area planning policies support rural economic growth and employment opportunities in the rural area especially where the access to the site is sustainable (walking, cycling).

A concern was raised about the traffic, but this was overcome by improving the vehicular access to the site.

The impact on the residential neighbouring site was also considered acceptable. The noise impact from vehicle movement was considered negligible.

The subject building was not considered of particularly good design and appearance. It was stated that the appearance of the locality would probably be enhanced by the removal of the building. It was concluded that the harm that would been caused by its retention and re-use would be minimal.

4.5. 94/05030/FUL - Refused 19th April 1994

The sale of a small amount of bought in fresh fruit and vegetables to enable continuity of supply to the villagers between home grown croppings

4.6. 93/05035/FUL - Refused 21st December 1993

The sale of a small amount of bought in agricultural produce to enable continuity of business and supply to the villagers between home grown croppings

4.7. 88/0803 - Refused 8th August 1988 – *Appeal Dismissed*

Alterations and change of use of redundant farm buildings to farm shop for sale of English fruit and vegetables including our own farm produce

4.8. 86/0926 - Refused 18th August 1986 - Appeal Dismissed

Erection of two buildings comprising doctors surgery with ancillary living accommodation above and separate detached residential bungalow.

5. SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS

Woodham Ferrers & Bicknacre Parish Council - The Parish Council objects to this proposal.

The Parish Council is aware that planning consent 21/01863/FUL is a material planning consideration in determining the current application but the former consent is significantly different from this application because:

- This application has a much larger footprint with the building set further back into the site.
- This application is for a much different building. The previous application was for a two-storey office building with a small retail unit at the rear. This is for a much larger wholly retail mini supermarket.

The grounds of objection are:

1. Highway.

The application site is situated about midway between two mini roundabouts where four roads converge. The roads lead to South Woodham Ferrers, East Hanningfield, Danbury and Maldon. The stretch between the two roundabouts is about 150 metres and is very busy with traffic coming from four directions. It will involve delivery vehicles turning right into and out of the site crossing through traffic. New development in the Dengie Peninsula and South Woodham Ferrers will exacerbate this problem.

2. Pedestrian Safety

There is no crossing across the B1418. Virtually all housing in Bicknacre is on the opposite side of the road to the site. Whilst the site may be accessible to cars there is no safe access for pedestrians. Parents and children visiting and collecting children from Jester's Kids Club will have to cope with delivery vehicles waiting to turn into the site and whose view will be obscured by turning traffic. The obvious solution is a pelican type crossing or similar, but this could itself cause traffic to back up to the two mini roundabouts and beyond. We consider this to be a major safety issue. Any resident wishing to access the proposed store, particularly children, the elderly and infirm will be very vulnerable to serious injury. There is no adequate access for non-car users and is contrary to policy DM20.

3. Size

The approved scheme for office and retail had a retail footprint of 110.5 square metres. The proposed scheme has a footprint of 386 square metres, over three times as large. It is overdevelopment. Cars parking within the site will exacerbate congestion and cause nuisance. Turning delivery vehicles will conflict with parked vehicles. The proposal seeks to extend the defined settlement boundary solely for the purpose of constructing a much larger retail unit than previously permitted. The proposal therefore fails to satisfy the criteria in policy DM8 for new buildings and structures in the rural area

4. Impact

The proposal is to extend the built area further into agricultural land beyond the defined settlement boundary. This will also create light pollution across the adjacent field to Thrift Wood, an Essex Wildlife Trust nature reserve affecting wildlife. It will be unsightly when viewed across the field from St Peter's Way an ancient long distance footpath and bridleway.

Horseshoe Farm is a residential building immediately to the west. The proposed retail building

is planned to be built very close to the mutual boundary and for a much greater length than the previously approved application. This will cause noise, fumes and light pollution from cars, delivery vehicles, trolleys and shoppers. It fails to safeguard the living environment of the occupiers of Horseshoe Farm and is contrary to policy DM29.

Further comments were received requesting conditions if the proposed scheme is to be recommended for approval:

- Delivery hours restricted to 8am to 6pm Excluding Sundays and Bank Holidays.
- Opening hours restricted to 8am to 8pm.
- A Section 106 agreement for a crossing, improved street lighting and road improvements to alleviate congestion.
- Provision for litter.
- Consideration should be given to renewable energy sources e.g. solar panels.
- Use of 'white noise' for reversing on delivery lorries
- Acoustic boundary with neighbouring properties.

Public Health & Protection Services – An asbestos survey should be carried out prior to demolition. If any asbestos is found, this must be removed by a qualified contractor and disposed of at a suitably licensed facility.

A non-residential development should provide electric vehicle charging points equivalent to 10% of the total parking provision.

A condition should be added in relation to plant noise. Plant must not exceed the sound power levels as set out in the Noise Assessment.

Economic Development & Implementation - The economic development team support this application which will bring an improved customer experience to the existing retail offer whilst also creating new jobs. Both businesses on the site will benefit from new parking arrangements and infrastructure, supporting longer term sustainability and growth of the enterprises.

Essex County Council Highways — From a highway and transportation perspective the impact of the proposal is acceptable to the Highway Authority subject to recommended conditions.

Historic England – no comments.

Essex County Council (SUDS) – Given the submitted Flood Risk Assessment Response to LLFA's Comments (dated 19 March 2025), the information contained within the email received on the 11/04/25 including the half drain down time calculation and the associated documents which accompanied the planning application, SUDS do not object to the granting of planning permission for the proposed development submitted to recommended conditions.

Local residents – a large number of objections received. Issues raised include:

The proposal would generate increased traffic and turning movements, including by HGV's
serving the development, on a busy stretch of road between two mini roundabouts where at
present there is no pedestrian crossing. The retail unit would be on the opposite side of the road
from where most residents live and the existing footway. The proximity of Jester's Kids Club and
Nursery raises additional safety concerns. The overall effect of the proposal would be
detrimental to highway safety.

- Concern raised that there would be insufficient parking to serve the proposed development and the adjacent children's nursery, and there is insufficient space for a large delivery vehicle to turn safely within the site.
- There is no need for a new retail store in the village, particularly one of this size which would
 result in the loss of the existing pet store at the site and is likely to adversely affect trade at
 existing retail outlets in the locality, particularly the Priory Village Store which incorporates a
 post office.
- Most of the site lies outside the defined settlement boundary and within the rural area where more restrictive planning policies apply.
- The proposal would detract from the rural character of the location and area both from the loss
 of a local business and from the introduction of a modern supermarket and car parking with its
 associated activity, signage and lighting.
- The proposal would have an adverse effect on neighbouring property from the activity associated with the proposed use. The use would be likely to result in an increase in vehicular and other activity, noise from air conditioning and refrigeration units and the introduction of lighting. Air pollution from traffic movements is also a concern.
- The premises could become a gathering place in the evenings which in turn could result in noise and disturbance. There is also likely to be an increase in littering in the area.

6. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Principle of development (Policies S1 Spatial principles; S8 Delivering Economic Growth, DM8 New Buildings and Structures in the Rural Area)

- 6.1. The site currently contains a building which is used as a retail shop. It was a former farm shop and a workshop, which was changed to its current use and occupied by a pet shop in around 2011 (planning history refers). The recent unimplemented planning approval 21/01863/FUL was for retail use and an office space. As such, the principle of retail use on this site has been long established by the previous planning approvals.
- 6.2. Strategic Policy S8 of the Local Plan supports the delivery of economic growth on previously developed land and in rural and sustainable locations. This application site comprises previously developed land and is in a sustainable location and within walking and cycling distance for residents of Bicknacre. The proposal accords therefore with the strategic aims of the Local Plan.
- 6.3. Although the existing building is located within the Defined Settlement (DS) boundary for Bicknacre, most of the site is located within the Rural Area beyond the DS boundary. The proposed building and the associated parking would be positioned partly within the DS and the Rural Area. As a result, a part of the built form would be located in the Rural Area and impact on it needs to be considered.
- 6.4. Policy DM8 relates to the construction of new buildings in the Rural Area. This requires development to not adversely impact the identified intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and to also be for one of the stated forms of development set out in the policy. Point xiii. permits the replacement of existing buildings subject to compliance with Part C. Part C contains three criteria as follows:
 - i. the existing building being replaced is of permanent and substantial construction; and
 - ii. the new building is in the same use as the existing; and
 - iii. the new building would not be out of keeping with its context and surroundings, and does not result in any other harm.

6.5. In respect of these criteria:

- i. the existing building (pet shop) on the site is in use and is of permanent and substantial construction.
- ii. the use of the existing building falls within Class E. The proposed building would be for retail use, which also falls within Class E.
- iii. although the building would be larger and encroach into the Rural Area in comparison to the existing building, it has been designed to replicate the scale, proportions and detailing of a traditional barn. In the context of the surrounding built form on this side of Main Road and the Rural Area beyond the site, the proposed proportions and appearance of the new building would not be seen as an incongruous addition to the area. The proposed building is considered to be suitably designed for the village location and would also be in keeping with the historic public house to the north of the site.
- 6.6. As established during the previous recent planning application (planning history refers) of a two-storey building on this site for retail and office uses, the defined settlement boundary has been drawn tightly around the rear of the existing building therefore any extension or increase in the size of the built form would be likely to result in development located outside the village boundary. However, as a result of the defined settlement boundary also running further to the rear of the neighbouring properties, this particular site is not open countryside and is viewed as part of the run of built form which fronts Main Road. In this context, and because the design and appearance of the development is acceptable, the proposals would not result in harm to the intrinsic character and beauty of the surrounding countryside.
- 6.7. The principle of development on this is site is therefore acceptable as it would support economic growth in the area, provide employment opportunities and would be positioned in a sustainable location easily accessible by walking and cycling. No harm has been identified to the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside beyond the village boundary from the proposed development. As such, the proposal complies with Strategic Policy S8 and Policy DM8 of the Local Plan requirements.

Design & Heritage Assets (Policies S3; DM13, DM14)

- 6.8. The application site forms part of Horseshoe Farm, a farmstead of eighteenth century or earlier origins. The wider context is formed by various traditional buildings along Main Road, including the White Swan Public House to the northeast which can be considered as a non-designated heritage asset for its communal, historic and architectural, albeit at a modest level.
- 6.9. The farm building to be demolished is likely to be the remnant of the traditional farmstead, but has been considerably altered, so there is no objection on heritage grounds to its demolition.
- 6.10. The scheme sets the new building back into the site and uses a series of gabled roof forms to disguise the standard retail footprint, reference the history of the site and give a distinctive character. The elevations have brick, boarding and shop fronts, together detailing to add interest.
- 6.11. The car parking would be exposed but also partly screened by landscaping and seen in the context of the adjacent car park. There would be no adverse heritage impacts.

- 6.12. An informative is attached to this recommendation advising the applicant that a signage to the proposed use would require separate grant of advertisement consent.
- 6.13. The consultation response from Essex County Council Historic Environment Branch has identified that the existing building is a Georgian timber-framed agricultural building. While there is no objection to the demolition of the existing building, it is part of a dwindling architectural heritage, and it is recommended that it should therefore be 'preserved by record' prior to its demolition. A condition is attached to this recommendation with regards to this matter.

Neighbour Amenity (*Policy DM29*)

- 6.14. Policy DM29 of the Local Plan states that development proposals must safeguard the amenities of the occupiers of any nearby residential property by ensuring that development is not overbearing and does not result in unacceptable overlooking or overshadowing. Development must also avoid unacceptable levels of polluting emissions, unless appropriate mitigation measures can be put in place and permanently maintained.
- 6.15. The property to the southwest of the site is residential but it comprises of a dwelling and an office building. The office building sits in between the dwelling and the application site. An acoustic report has been submitted with this application outlining recommendations to minimise the noise impact on this neighbour; a condition is attached to this recommendation requiring compliance with the report.
- 6.16. The acoustic report recommends, and the proposal includes an acoustic fence to be constructed along the boundary with the neighbouring residential site (Horseshoe Farmhouse). It is considered that this would mitigate the noise levels from the proposed development to acceptable levels. In addition, a buffer zone of 3m wide and new trees as well as a new hedgerow would be introduced along the boundary with Horseshoe Farmhouse. As such, given the residential house is on a busy road, and is next door to an existing retail unit, and taking into account the recommended mitigation measures in the acoustic report, the effect of the proposal on the residential living conditions of the occupiers of Horseshoe Farmhouse is considered to be acceptable in the context of Policy DM29 of the Local Plan.
- 6.17. The proposed building would be located 21m away and to the north of the boundary with Horseshoe Farmhouse, and due to the modest height would not result in any harmful overbearing impacts on the amenity of this neighbouring site.

Highway safety and parking (Policy DM27)

- 6.18. There are two existing accesses to the site from Main Road. It is proposed to consolidate these to provide a single access point to serve the new building and the adjacent childcare facility. Parking provision would remain in place for this facility in addition to parking being available for the proposed development. The scheme proposes 25 parking spaces, all would accord with the minimum sizes recommended for a parking bay. Disabled parking spaces and EV charging points would also be incorporated into the parking provision. The site also provides a service area to the rear and a turning space for servicing vehicles. The overall parking provision for the retail unit and the childcare facility would comply with the parking requirements set in Policy DM27 of the Local Plan.
- 6.19. During the life of the application a new pedestrian refuge island has been proposed to be installed on Main Road to provide easy and safe access to the site by foot. It would connect the two pavements on both sides of the road. This would improve the connectivity to the site and provide a safe crossing to other business on the east side of Main Road, including the Kid's club and nursery and the public house.

- The residential property, Horseshoe Farm, would also benefit from new a safe crossing to the heart of the village.
- 6.20. The vehicular access was also revised (widened) during the life of the application to ensure that the larger vehicles would be provided with adequate turning space to join the traffic.
- 6.21. The proposals have been considered by the Local Highway Authority, they have not raised objections subject to adding appropriate conditions. There would not be any unacceptable highway safety impacts as a result of the proposed development.

Other matters

Hours of opening (Policy DM29)

6.22. The proposed new retail unit would operate between 7am and 10pm every day. These times are considered to be reasonable and should not result in unacceptable levels of noise and disturbance to nearby residential property. A condition is attached to this recommendation securing the opening hours. Delivery is recommended to be carried out during the opening hours only.

Sustainable Buildings (Policy DM25)

6.23. EV Charging points are also required for commercial buildings and the proposed three EV charging points meets this policy requirement, which is provided as part of the proposal.

Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain (Policies S4; DM16)

- 6.24. Strategic Policy S4 of the Local Plan seeks to conserve and enhance the natural environment through protection of protected sites and species, whilst planning positively for biodiversity networks and minimising pollution. Policy DM16 of the Local Plan seeks to conserve and enhance the networks of habitats, avoid negative impacts on biodiversity and deliver a net gain in biodiversity where possible.
- 6.25. This submission is accompanied by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) prepared by Richards Graves Associates. The PEA states that the site does not offer suitable habitat for roosting bats within either the existing building or trees. There was no evidence of badgers or suitable habitat for dormouse or common reptiles on site and the site is not well connected to other larger areas of habitats that may be more suitable. The habitat on site does however offer suitable habitat for nesting birds; the survey recommends that any vegetation clearance be undertaken outside the bird nesting season. There is a pond within 500 m of the site, but it is separated from the site by roads, built development and arable fields, it is therefore unlikely that any species would be harmed by the proposed development.
- 6.26. The PEA set out the precautionary measures that are secured by a condition added to this recommendation. Overall, the proposed scheme is considered to result in no harm to protected species subject to adherence to the recommendation contained in the approved PEA.
- 6.27. In terms of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) the baseline habitats include modified grassland, bramble scrub and urban trees. The habitat is to be created is mixed scrub and urban trees. The baseline hedgerow includes native hedgerow and non-native and ornamental hedgerow. Native hedgerow would be created on-site. BNG requirements would be satisfied.

6.28. The final BNG plan is reserved by a condition attached to this recommendation.

Trees and soft landscaping (Policy DM17, DM24)

- 6.29. Policy DM17 of the Local Plan states that planning permission will be granted for development that does not result in unacceptable harm to natural landscape features that are important to the character and appearance of the area. Policy DM24 states that development proposals should retain existing trees and other landscape features where appropriate and explore opportunities for new tree planting.
- 6.30. The application is accompanied by an Arboricultural Impact Assessment. The assessment confirms that there are no trees of high quality within the site (Category A) or protected trees. One tree within the site is of moderate quality (Category B), there are four trees of low quality (Category C) and two trees of lower quality (Category U). The proposal includes removal of one tree in Category B to facilitate the proposal, along with two other trees in Category C. It should be noted that the removal of these trees was accepted under the previous planning application and the loss of a Category B tree is required to provide suitable and safe access to the site. The loss of the trees would be mitigated by planting additional trees within the site. The final details of soft landscaping and planting of trees are secured by a condition added to this recommendation. The proposal accords to requirements of Policy DM17 and DM24 as it would provide suitable mitigation for the loss of trees.

Flood risk (Policy S2)

- 6.31. The site is in Flood Zone 1. During the life of the application revisions to the initial drainage scheme were required. The applicant has submitted a preferred option for the water discharge which would discharge surface water from the site to the ordinary watercourse northwest of the site via the applicant's farmland in accordance with drawings 61300-RJL-XX-XX-DR-C-0002 and 0003. The discharge the foul water would be into a sewer in Main Road. The scheme is also designed to incorporate permeable paving. This system is designed as a tanked permeable system that provides attenuation to help to limit the discharge flows from the site.
- 6.32. The LLFA has not raised objection to the proposed drainage scheme, subject to conditions listed in this recommendation.

Conclusion

- 6.33. Considering all matters set out in this report the principle of development on this is site is acceptable as it would support economic growth in the area, provide employment opportunities and would be positioned in a sustainable location easily accessible by walking and cycling. No harm has been identified to the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside as a result of the proposed development. As such, the proposal complies with Strategic Policy S8 and Policy DM8 of the Local Plan requirements.
- 6.34. The assessment established that the proposed development would retain an acceptable relationship with the neighbouring residential site, would not adversely impact on the highway safety and efficiency, would provide acceptable levels of parking for the retail use the nursery and the Kid's Club.
- 6.35. The proposal includes planting of several new trees and rows of hedge along the boundaries of the site to mitigate the loss of several existing trees of low quality and to promote biodiversity on site. The proposal would result in overall 10% increase in BNG on site.

6.36. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised it is concluded that the proposed development is acceptable and in accordance with the adopted Local Plan Policies.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

6.37. This application is CIL liable.

RECOMMENDATION

The Application be APPROVED subject to the following conditions:-

Condition 1

The development hereby permitted shall begin no later than 3 years from the date of this decision.

Reason

In order to comply with Section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Condition 2

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans and conditions listed on this decision notice.

Reason:

In order to achieve satisfactory development of the site.

Condition 3

No development shall take place until a final written Biodiversity Net Gain Plan (The BNG Plan) in the form of the national BNG Plan template, for the provision of a minimum 10% biodiversity net gain, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The BNG Plan shall relate to the development for which planning permission is granted, and include:

- i. completed metric calculation tool;
- ii. pre-development and post-development plans (showing the location of on-site habitat, the direction of north and drawn to an identified scale);
- iii. biodiversity net gain register reference numbers (if purchasing off-site units); and
- iv. proof of purchase if purchasing statutory biodiversity credits.

The development shall not be begun until such time that The Biodiversity Net Gain Plan (BNG Plan) has been approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall subsequently be carried out in accordance with The BNG Plan.

Reason:

To ensure the statutory biodiversity gain condition of the Environment Act 2021 is met and to ensure the development accords with Policy DM16 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Condition 4

Prior to the commencement of the development, a Precautionary Ecological Method Statement should be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. It shall include the following:

- Sensitive timing of works
- Reasonable avoidance measures
- Measures to be implemented should a protected species be found

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed Precautionary Ecological Method Statement at all times.

Reason:

In the interests of Biodiversity and protected species in accordance with Policy DM16 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Condition 5

No development to which this permission relates shall commence until a programme of historic building recording and analysis has been secured and implemented in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason:

To ensure the proposed development does not detract from the historical value or character and appearance of the listed building in accordance with Policy DM13 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Condition 6

No development shall take place on any part of the site until a written Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP), in the form of the national Natural England and DEFRA template, for a minimum period of 30 years for the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved HMMP shall be strictly adhered to and implemented in full for its duration and shall contain the following:

- details setting out how the onsite or off-site gains will be managed;
- Details of the persons responsible for the implementation, management and monitoring;
- details of how habitats will be monitored (including specific details for each type of habitat);
- details, including a schedule, of monitoring reports to be submitted to the local planning authority over at least a 30 year period;
- details of how management will be reviewed;
- details of adaptive management to account for habitat restoration if the management plan is not working.

Reason:

To ensure the statutory biodiversity gain condition of the Environment Act 2021 is met and to ensure the development accords with Policy DM16 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Condition 7

Prior to any construction works, detailed drawings and sections showing the finished levels of all parts of the development in relation to the levels of the surrounding area and neighbouring buildings shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

To ensure that the development is constructed at suitable levels in relation to its surroundings in accordance with Policy DM23 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Condition 8

Prior to their use, details of the materials to be used in the construction of the development hereby permitted shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason:

To ensure that the development is visually acceptable in accordance with Policy DM23 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Condition 9

Prior to their installation large scale drawings shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority showing details of the following:-

- (a) windows,
- (b) doors,
- (c) shop fronts,
- (d) eaves,
- (e) verge,
- (f) plinth,
- (g) brick detailing,
- (h) vents and flues.

The development shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason:

To ensure the proposed development is visually satisfactory and does not detract from the nearby non-designated heritage asset in accordance with Policy DM14 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Condition 10

Prior to first occupation of the development hereby permitted, details of both hard and soft landscape works shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The works shall be carried out as approved prior to the first occupation of any part of the development or in the first available planting season following such occupation. The landscaping details to be submitted shall include:

- a) hard surfacing, other hard landscape features and materials;
- b) existing trees, hedges or other soft features to be retained;
- c) planting plans including specifications of species, sizes, planting centres, number and percentage mix;
- d) details of planting or features to be provided to enhance the value of the development for biodiversity and wildlife;
- e) details of the planting of trees within the site;
- f) management details and a five year maintenance plan.

Reason:

In order to add character to the development, to integrate the development into the area and to promote biodiversity in accordance with Policies DM16, DM17 and Policy DM23 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Condition 11

No unbound material shall be used in the surface treatment of the vehicular access hereby permitted within 6 metres of the highway boundary.

Reason:

To avoid displacement of loose material onto the highway in the interests of highway safety.

Condition 12

The areas of hardsurfacing hereby permitted shall be constructed using a permeable surface or shall include drainage to prevent discharge of surface water onto the Highway.

Reason:

To prevent hazards caused by water flowing onto the highway and to avoid the formation of ice on the highway in the interest of highway safety.

Condition 13

Prior to first occupation of the proposed development the 25no. parking spaces (5no. for the Nursery and 20no. for the Food Store) shown in the Site Layout & Block Plan, drawing no. 24-0079-002 Rev P, including any parking spaces for the mobility impaired, shall be constructed hard surfaced, sealed and marked out in parking bays ready for use in accordance with the Parking Standards. The vehicle parking area and associated turning area shall be retained in this form at all times. The vehicle parking shall not be used for any purpose other than the parking of vehicles that are related to the use of the development.

Reason:

To ensure that on street parking of vehicles in the adjoining streets does not occur in the interests of highway safety and that appropriate parking is provided.

Condition 14

No occupation of the development shall occur until the construction of the new vehicular access to the site as shown in the Site Layout & Block Plan, drawing no. 24-0079-002 Rev P and other highway works listed within this condition have been provided, and regulated by an appropriate Highways Legal Agreement between the Applicant/Developer and the Highway Authority using the powers of the Highways Act, 1980, to regulate the highway works to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority:

- i. The new 20 metre length of footway to the front of the Food Store and the parking area for the Nursery on the east side of Main Road (B1418).
- ii. Provision of the pedestrian refuge/splitter island with dropped kerb tactile pedestrian crossings.
- iii. Provision of clear to ground vehicular visibility splays of 2.4 metres x 43 metres to the new vehicular access as measured from the nearside carriageway edge.
- iv. No waiting at any time Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) shall be provided to prevent parking on the Main Road (B1418) carriageway from the White Elm Road roundabout junction to the north to extend to the south to the Priory Road roundabout junction, details to be agreed with and provided at no cost to the Highway Authority.
- v. Provision of all signing and lining in association with the highway works.

In the event that the application for the TRO (iv above) is not approved, and no alternative scheme has been identified and permitted, the applicant shall provide to the local planning authority a written statement explaining the reasons why it is not possible to introduce parking restrictions in this area.

To provide appropriate footway connections and adequate inter-visibility between vehicles using the road junction and those in the existing public highway in the interest of highway safety.

Condition 15

Prior to the first use of the development hereby permitted bicycle parking spaces shall be laid out within the site in accordance with drawing No 24-0079-002 Rev P and those spaces shall thereafter be kept available at all times for the bicycle parking in association with the permitted use within the site.

Reason:

To ensure that sufficient bicycle parking is available to serve the development in accordance with Policy DM27 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Condition 16

Prior to the first occupation of the building hereby permitted, three electric vehicle charging points shall be installed and retained in accordance with details that that shall have been previously submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason:

To ensure that the development is constructed sustainably in accordance with Policy DM25 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Condition 17

Prior to use/occupation a maintenance plan detailing the maintenance arrangements including who is responsible for different elements of the surface water drainage system and the maintenance activities/frequencies, has been submitted to and agreed, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority.

The maintenance plan should account for all the sites surface water pipework up to and including the point of connection to the ordinary watercourse, as well as the maintenance for the headwall.

Should any part be maintainable by a maintenance company, details of long term funding arrangements should be provided.

Reason:

To ensure appropriate maintenance arrangements are put in place to enable the surface water drainage system to function as intended to ensure mitigation against flood risk. Failure to provide the above required information prior to occupation may result in the installation of a system that is not properly maintained and may increase flood risk or pollution hazard from the site.

Condition 18

The applicant or any successor in title must maintain yearly logs of maintenance which should be carried out in accordance with any approved Maintenance Plan. These must be available for inspection upon a request by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

To ensure the SuDS are maintained for the lifetime of the development as outlined in any approved Maintenance Plan so that they continue to function as intended to ensure mitigation against flood risk.

Condition 19

No goods, plant, machinery, merchandise or materials shall be stored outside.

In the interests of the visual amenities of the area in accordance with Policy DM23 of the Chelmsford Local Plan and in the interests of protecting the living environment of occupiers of neighbouring dwellings in accordance with Policy DM29 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Condition 20

No works except demolition shall takes place until a detailed surface water drainage scheme for the site based on the principles of Drainage Plans 61300-RJL-XX-XX-DR-C-0002 and 0003, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme should include but not be limited to:

- Limiting discharge rates to 1l/s for all storm events up to and including the 1 in 100 year plus 45% allowance for climate change storm event. All relevant permissions to discharge from the site into any outfall should be demonstrated.
- Provide sufficient storage to ensure no off site flooding as a result of the development during all storm events up to and including the 1 in 100 year plus 45% climate change event.
- Final modelling and calculations for all areas of the drainage system.
- The appropriate level of treatment for all runoff leaving the site, in line with the Simple Index Approach in chapter 26 of the CIRIA SuDS Manual C753. Two stages of treatment to be provided for the sites Medium Pollution Hazard Level.
- Detailed engineering drawings of each component of the drainage scheme.
- A final drainage plan which details exceedance and conveyance routes, FFL and ground levels, and location and sizing of any drainage features.
- The final drainage plan to indicate the locations of the rainwater down pipes from the proposed store draining into the permeable paving, as well as the location of the proprietary treatment system (Aqua-Filter or similar) to be installed to provide the required treatment.
- An updated drainage strategy incorporating all of the above bullet points including matters already
 approved and highlighting any changes to the previously approved strategy.

The scheme shall subsequently be implemented prior to use/occupation.

Reason:

To prevent flooding by ensuring the satisfactory storage of/disposal of surface water from the site. To ensure the effective operation of SuDS features over the lifetime of the development. To provide mitigation of any environmental harm which may be caused to the local water environment. Failure to provide the above required information before commencement of works may result in a system being installed that is not sufficient to deal with surface water occurring during rainfall events and may lead to increased flood risk and pollution hazard from the site.

Condition 21

The use hereby permitted shall only take place between the following hours: 07:00 - 22:00 Mondays – Sundays.

Reason:

In the interests of protecting the living environment of occupiers of neighbouring dwellings in accordance with Policy DM29 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Condition 22

Deliveries shall be taken at or despatched from the site only between 07:00 and 22:00 on Mondays to Sundays.

In the interests of protecting the living environment of occupiers of neighbouring dwellings in accordance with Policy DM29 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Condition 23

The development hereby permitted shall only be carried out in accordance with the details and recommendations contained in the approved Noise Assessment, December 2024, including the installation of a 2m high close boarded acoustic fence to the southwest boundary in accordance with approved drawing No 24-0079-002 Rev P.

Reason:

In the interests of protecting the living environment of occupiers of neighbouring dwellings in accordance with Policy DM29 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Condition 24

The development hereby permitted shall only be carried out in accordance with the details and recommendations contained in the approved Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report, Version 1.0.

Reason:

To ensure that no harm is caused to protected species in accordance with Policy DM16 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Condition 25

Prior to their installation, details of the facilities for the storage of refuse and recyclable materials shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall not be occupied until the facilities for the storage of refuse and recyclable materials have been provided in accordance with the approved details.

Reason:

To ensure that suitable facilities for refuse disposal are provided and that such facilities are visually satisfactory in accordance with Policy DM23 and DM26 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Condition 26

Prior to their installation details of any means of external lighting shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The lighting shall then be installed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason:

To ensure that the development would not result in unacceptable light pollution within the rural area in accordance with Policy DM8 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Condition 27

- a) Details of the proposed treatment of all boundaries, including drawings of any gates, fences, walls, railings or piers, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.
- b) The development shall not be occupied until the boundary treatments have been provided in accordance with the approved details.

To ensure the proposed development is visually satisfactory and does not prejudice the appearance of the locality in accordance with Policy DM23 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Condition 28

In relation to tree protection, tree surgery and construction methods, the development shall only be carried out in accordance with the submitted arboricultural report entitled Tree Survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement (November 2024).

Reason:

To safeguard the existing trees which are of amenity value and add character to the development in accordance with Policy DM17 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Condition 29

No service vehicles beyond a maximum length 10.5 metres shall be used to service the development hereby permitted.

Reason:

In the interests of highway safety.

Condition 30

All roads shown on the approved drawings to be served by a refuse collection vehicle shall be constructed to a standard capable of carrying a 26-tonne vehicle.

Reason:

In the interests of highway safety and to ensure that the development is accessible in accordance with Policy DM23 and Policy DM24 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

NOTES TO APPLICANT

1 Hours of work during construction

In order to cause minimum nuisance to neighbours, the applicant is strongly advised to follow guidelines for acceptable working hours set out by the Council's Public Health and Protection team.

Noisy work:

- Can be carried out between 0800 and 1800 Monday to Friday
- Limited to 0800-1300 on Saturdays
- At all other times including Sundays and Bank Holidays, no work should be carried out that is audible beyond the boundary of the site

Light work:

- Acceptable outside the hours shown above
- Can be carried out between 0700 and 0800; and 1800-1900 Monday to Friday

In some circumstance further restrictions may be necessary.

For more information, please contact Chelmsford City Council Public Health and Protection Services, or view the Council's website at www.chelmsford.gov.uk/construction-site-noise

- The Party Wall Act 1996 relates to work on existing walls shared with another property or excavation near another building.
 - An explanatory booklet is available on the Department for Communities and Local Government website at
 - http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/buildingregulations/buildingpolicyandlegislation/currentlegislation/partywallact
- The proposed demolition in the scheme should not be carried out until you have given notice to the Chelmsford City Council (Building Control Manager) of your intention to do so pursuant to Section 80 of the Building Act 1984.
 - Notice should be in writing and accompanied by a block plan (e.g. 1/500) clearly identifying the building(s) to be demolished.
- The Local Highway Authority (Essex County Council) must be contacted regarding the details of any works affecting the existing highway. Contact details are: Telephone: 0845 603 7631. Email: development.management@essexhighways.org.
- The applicant is advised to contact the Highway Authority (Essex County Council) for details of the requirements regarding road layout and disposal of surface water from the new roads. Contact details are: Development Management Team, Essex Highways, Springfield Highways Depot, Colchester Road, Chelmsford. CM2 5PU. Telephone via Contact Essex: 0845 603 7631. Email: development.management@essexhighways.org.
- The Council's Public Health and Protection Services team should be contacted with regard to the need for any new or varied Licences or Permits that may be required under the Licensing Act 2003.
- The proposed development may be liable for a charge under the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as Amended). If applicable, a Liability Notice will be sent as soon as possible to the applicant and any other person who has an interest in the land. This will contain details of the chargeable amount and how to claim exemption or relief if appropriate. There are further details on this process on the Council's website at www.chelmsford.gov.uk/cil, and further information can be requested by emailing cilenquiries@chelmsford.gov.uk. If the scheme involves demolition, for the purposes of the Regulations the development will be considered to have begun on commencement of the demolition works.
- This permission is subject to conditions, which require details to be submitted and approved by the local planning authority. Please note that applications to discharge planning conditions can take up to eight weeks to determine.
- 9 It is recommended that an asbestos survey is undertaken prior to demolition. Any asbestos found must be removed by a qualified contractor and disposed of at a licensed facility.
- In accordance with Section 76 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, your attention is drawn to Section 21 (2) Access to Goods, Facilities, Services and Premises Part 3 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended 2005). The development hereby approved in outline appears to fall within the categories indicated in Section 21 (2) of Part 3 of the Act. Provision should be made to meet the needs

of both sensory and mobility impaired disabled people. Such provision, using the guidance given in British Standards Institution Code of Practice - BS8300:2001 (as amended June 2005): Design of buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of disabled people, should include, where appropriate,

- (i) suitably signed and located car parking spaces;
- (ii) safe access around and into all buildings;
- (iii) clear circulation spaces and travel route within all buildings;
- (iv) all necessary facilities and amenities within buildings;
- (v) PEEPS (Personal Emergency Escape Plan Strategy) and;
- (vi) prominent user friendly sign posting of all routes and amenities within and around buildings.

As the Secretary of State attaches great importance to the provision of facilities for the disabled in a building to which the 1995 Act applies, the City Council expects compliance with the Act in the submission of details pursuant to this permission.

This development will result in the need for a new postal address. Applicants should apply in writing, email or by completing the online application form which can be found at www.chelmsford.gov.uk/streetnaming . Enquires can also be made to the Address Management Officer by emailing Address.Management@chelmsford.gov.uk

12 The applicant is advised that:

- Prior to any works taking place in public highway or areas to become public highway the developer shall enter into an appropriate legal agreement with the Highway Authority to regulate construction works.
- ii. The Highway Authority cannot accept any liability for costs associated with a developer's improvement. This includes design check safety audits, site supervision, commuted sums for maintenance and any potential claims under Part 1 and Part 2 of the Land Compensation Act 1973. To protect the Highway Authority against such compensation claims a cash deposit or bond may be required.
- iii. The above to be provided at no cost to the Highway Authority
- iv. The above to be imposed on the planning permission (if granted) by planning obligation or condition, as necessary.

The applicant shall note the following:

- A Stage 1 Road Safety Audit has been provided for the new vehicular access with pedestrian refuge/splitter island and designer's response.
- Part of the Road Safety Audit will require a skid resistance assessment (in accordance with DMRB CS228). This shall be carried out by arrangement with Essex County Council together with any remedial construction work resulting from the assessment, at the developers cost as part of any proposed highway scheme.
- The applicant is advised that Main Road is an important distributor route, whose function is to carry traffic safely and efficiently between major centres within the region and consequently carries high volume traffic. To protect the route function, no development shall take place, including any ground works or demolition, parking of vehicles or storage of materials, without prior agreement of the Local Authority.
 - 14 Under Section 148 of the Highways Act 1980 it is an offence to deposit mud, detritus etc. on the highway. In addition, under Section 161 any person, depositing anything on a highway which results in

a user `of the highway being injured or endangered is guilty of an offence. Therefore, the applicant must ensure that no mud or detritus is taken onto the highway.

POSITIVE AND PROACTIVE STATEMENT

The Local Planning Authority provided advice to the applicant before the application was submitted. The Local Planning Authority has assessed the proposal against all material considerations including planning policies and any comments that may have been received. The planning application has been approved in accordance with the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework to promote the delivery of sustainable development and to approach decision taking in a positive way.

Plans to be listed on any Decision Notice:

24-0079-001/E

24-0079-002/P

DR1/B

DR3

DR4

DR5

Road Safety Audit Response Report/March 2025

Stage 1 Road Safety Audit/Final/March 2025

Flood Risk Assessment/61300 / 19 March 2025

24-0079-003/E

24-0079-004/B

24-0079-005/D

Biodiversity gain plan

Noise Assessment

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal report

Summary Historic Building report

Sustainable drainage assessment

Transport statement

Tree Survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement

Appendix 2 – Consultations

Woodham Ferrers & Bicknacre Parish Council

Comments

05.02.2025 - Priory Pet and Country Store, Main Road. Bicknacre 24/01773/FUL

The Parish Council objects to this proposal.

The Parish Council is aware that planning consent 21/01863/ FUL is a material planning consideration in determining the current application but the former consent is significantly different to this application because:

'This application has a much larger footprint with the building set further back into the site.

'This application is for a much different building. The previous application was for a two storey office building with a small retail unit at the rear. This is for a much larger wholly retail mini supermarket.

The grounds of objection are:

1. Highway.

The application site is situated about midway between two mini roundabouts where four roads converge. The roads lead to South Woodham Ferrers, East Hanningfield, Danbury and Maldon. The stretch between the two roundabouts is about 150 metres and is very busy with traffic coming from four directions. It will involve delivery vehicles turning right into and out of the site crossing through traffic. New development in the Dengie and South Woodham Ferrers will exacerbate this problem.

2. Pedestrian Safety

There is no crossing across the B1418. Virtually all housing in Bicknacre is on the opposite side of the road to the site. Whilst the site may be accessible to cars there is no safe access for pedestrians. Parents and children visiting and collecting children from Jesters Kids Club will have to cope with delivery vehicles waiting to turn into the site and whose view will be obscured by turning traffic. The obvious solution is a pelican type crossing or similar but this could itself cause traffic to back up to the two mini roundabouts and beyond. We consider this to be a major safety issue. Any resident wishing to access the proposed store, particularly children, the elderly and infirm will be very vulnerable to serious injury. There is no adequate access for non-car users and is contrary to policy DM20.

3. Size

The approved scheme for office and retail had a retail footprint of 110.5 square metres. The proposed scheme has a footprint of 386 square metres, over three times as large. It is overdevelopment. Cars parking within the site will exacerbate congestion and cause nuisance. Turning delivery vehicles will conflict with parked vehicles. The proposal seeks to extend the defined settlement boundary solely for the purpose of constructing a much larger retail unit than previously permitted. The proposal therefore fails to satisfy the criteria in policy DM8 for new buildings and structures in the rural area

4. Impact

The proposal is to extend the built area further into agricultural land beyond the defined settlement boundary. This will also create light pollution across the adjacent field to Thrift Wood, an Essex Wildlife Trust nature reserve affecting wildlife. It will be unsightly when viewed across the field from St Peter's Way an ancient long distance footpath and bridleway.

Horseshoe Farm is a residential building immediately to the west. The proposed retail building is planned to be built very close to the mutual boundary and for a much greater length than the previously approved application. This will cause noise, fumes and light pollution from cars, delivery vehicles, trolleys and shoppers. It fails to safeguard the living environment of the occupiers of Horseshoe Farm and is contrary to policy DM29.

17.03.2025

In addition to the comments previously submitted by the Parish Council, if officers are minded to recommend approval of application 24/01773/FUL, it would like the following restrictions to be applied:

- Delivery hours restricted to 8am to 6pm Excluding Sundays and Bank Holidays.
- Opening hours restricted to 8am to 8pm.
- A Section 106 agreement for a crossing, improved street lighting and road improvements to alleviate congestion.
- Provision for litter.
- Consideration should be given to renewable energy sources e.g. solar panels.
- Use of 'white noise' for reversing on delivery lorries
- Acoustic boundary with neighbouring properties.

Public Health & Protection Services

Comments

10.01.2025 - An asbestos survey should be carried out prior to demolition. If any asbestos is found, this must be removed by a qualified contractor and disposed of at a suitably licensed facility.

A non-residential development should provide electric vehicle charging points equivalent to 10% of the total parking provision.

A condition should be added in relation to plant noise. Plant must not exceed the sound power levels as set out in the Noise Assessment.

Economic Development & Implementation

Comments

16.01.2025 - The economic development team support this application which will bring an improved customer experience to the existing retail offer whilst also creating new jobs. Both businesses on the site will benefit from new parking arrangements and infrastructure, supporting longer term sustainability and growth of the enterprises.

Essex County Council Highways

Comments

No response received

Highways Agency Development Control

Comments

11.04.2025

From a highway and transportation perspective the impact of the proposal is acceptable to the Highway Authority subject to the following conditions:

- 1. Prior to first occupation of the development, the construction of the new vehicular access shown in the Site Layout & Block Plan, drawing no. 24-0079-002 Rev P, shall be regulated by an appropriate Highways Legal Agreement between the Applicant/Developer and the Highway Authority using the powers of the Highways Act, 1980, to regulate the highway works. This will provide for but not be limited to the following:
- The new 20 metre length of footway to the front of the Food Store and the parking area for the Nursery on the east side of Main Road (B1418).
- Provision of the pedestrian refuge/splitter island with dropped kerb tactile pedestrian crossings.
- Provision of clear to ground vehicular visibility splays of 2.4 metres x 43 metres to the new vehicular access as measured from the nearside carriageway edge.
- No waiting at any time Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) shall be provided to prevent parking on the Main Road (B1418) carriageway from the White Elm Road roundabout junction to the north to extend to the

south to the Priory Road roundabout junction, details to be agreed with and provided at no cost to the Highway Authority.

Provision of all signing and lining in association with the highway works.

Reason: To provide appropriate footway connections and adequate inter-visibility between vehicles using the road junction and those in the existing public highway in the interest of highway safety.

2. No unbound material shall be used in the surface treatment of the vehicular access within 6 metres of the highway boundary.

Reason: To avoid displacement of loose material onto the highway in the interests of highway safety.

3. There shall be no discharge of surface water from the development onto the Highway.

Reason: To prevent hazards caused by water flowing onto the highway and to avoid the formation of ice on the highway in the interest of highway safety.

- 4. Main Road is an important distributor route, whose function is to carry traffic safely and efficiently between major centres within the region and consequently carries high volume traffic. To protect the route function, no development shall take place, including any ground works or demolition, until a Construction Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved plan shall be adhered to throughout the construction period. The Plan shall provide for;
- the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors,
- loading and unloading of plant and materials,
- storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development,
- wheel and underbody washing facilities.

Before and after condition survey to identify defects to highway in the vicinity of the access to the site and where necessary ensure repairs are undertaken at the developer expense, where it is caused by developer.

Reason: To ensure that on-street parking of these vehicles in the adjoining streets does not occur and to ensure that loose materials and spoil are not brought out onto the highway in the interests of highway safety.

Note - MUD / DEBRIS ON HIGHWAY - Under Section 148 of the Highways Act 1980 it is an offence to deposit mud, detritus etc. on the highway. In addition, under Section 161 any person, depositing anything on a highway which results in a user of the highway being injured or endangered is guilty of an offence. Therefore, the applicant must ensure that no mud or detritus is taken onto the highway.

5. Prior to first occupation of the proposed development the 25no. parking spaces (5no. for the Nursery and 20no. for the Food Store) shown in the Site Layout & Block Plan, drawing no. 24-0079-002 Rev P, including any parking spaces for the mobility impaired, shall be constructed hard surfaced, sealed and marked out in parking bays ready for use in accordance with the Parking Standards. The vehicle parking area and associated turning area shall be retained in this form at all times. The vehicle parking shall not

be used for any purpose other than the parking of vehicles that are related to the use of the development.

Reason: To ensure that on street parking of vehicles in the adjoining streets does not occur in the interests of highway safety and that appropriate parking is provided.

6. Cycle parking shall be provided in accordance with the EPOA Parking Standards. The approved facility shall be secure, convenient, covered and provided prior to occupation and retained at all times.

Reason: To ensure appropriate cycle parking is provided in the interest of highway safety and amenity.

- 7. Prior to the Food Store becoming operational a Service & Car Park Management Plan shall be submitted and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. The approved plan shall be adhered to at all times. The Plan shall provide for:
 - Service vehicles servicing the site of maximum length 10.5 metres shall be used to service the Food Store;
 - ii. Deliveries to the convenience store would be managed in advance;

Reason: In the interests of highway safety

General

- Prior to any works taking place in public highway or areas to become public highway the developer shall enter into an appropriate legal agreement with the Highway Authority to regulate construction works.
- II The Highway Authority cannot accept any liability for costs associated with a developer's improvement. This includes design check safety audits, site supervision, commuted sums for maintenance and any potential claims under Part 1 and Part 2 of the Land Compensation Act 1973. To protect the Highway Authority against such compensation claims a cash deposit or bond may be required.
- III The above to be provided at no cost to the Highway Authority
- IV The above to be imposed on the planning permission (if granted) by planning obligation or condition, as necessary.

Notes

- A Stage 1 Road Safety Audit has been provided for the new vehicular access with pedestrian refuge/splitter island and designer's response.
- Part of the Road Safety Audit will require a skid resistance assessment (in accordance with DMRB CS228). This shall be carried out by arrangement with Essex County Council together with any remedial construction work resulting from the assessment, at the developers cost as part of any proposed highway scheme.

The above conditions are to ensure that the proposal conforms to the relevant policies contained within the County Highway Authority's Development Management Policies, adopted as County Council Supplementary Guidance and NPPF 2024.

Informatives:

All work within or affecting the highway is to be laid out and constructed by prior arrangement with, and to the requirements and satisfaction of, the Highway Authority, details to be agreed before the commencement of works.

The applicants should be advised to contact the Development Management Team by email at development.management@essexhighways.org

Historic England

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No comments.

Essex County Council (SUDS)

Comments

11.04.2025

Thank you for your email received on 11/04/2025 which provides this Council with the opportunity to assess and advise on the proposed surface water drainage strategy for the above mentioned planning application.

As the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) this Council provides advice on SuDS schemes for major developments. We have been statutory consultee on surface water since the 15th April 2015.

In providing advice this Council looks to ensure sustainable drainage proposals comply with the required standards as set out in the following documents:

- Non-statutory technical standards for sustainable drainage systems
- Essex County Council's (ECC's) adopted Sustainable Drainage Systems Design Guide
- The CIRIA SuDS Manual (C753)
- BS8582 Code of practice for surface water management for development sites.

Lead Local Flood Authority position

Having reviewed the Flood Risk Assessment Response to LLFA's Comments (dated 19 March 2025), the information contained within the email received on the 11/04/25 including the half drain down time calculation and the associated documents which accompanied the planning application, we **do not object** to the granting of planning permission based on the following:

Condition 1

No works except demolition shall takes place until a detailed surface water drainage scheme for the site based on the principles of Drainage Plans 61300-RJL-XX-XX-DR-C-0002 and 0003, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme should include but not be limited to:

- Limiting discharge rates to 1l/s for all storm events up to and including the 1 in 100 year plus 45% allowance for climate change storm event. All relevant permissions to discharge from the site into any outfall should be demonstrated.
- Provide sufficient storage to ensure no off site flooding as a result of the development during all storm events up to and including the 1 in 100 year plus 45% climate change event.
- Final modelling and calculations for all areas of the drainage system.
- The appropriate level of treatment for all runoff leaving the site, in line with the Simple Index
 Approach in chapter 26 of the CIRIA SuDS Manual C753. Two stages of treatment to be provided for
 the sites Medium Pollution Hazard Level.
- Detailed engineering drawings of each component of the drainage scheme.
- A final drainage plan which details exceedance and conveyance routes, FFL and ground levels, and location and sizing of any drainage features.
- The final drainage plan to indicate the locations of the rainwater down pipes from the proposed store draining into the permeable paving, as well as the location of the proprietary treatment system (Aqua-Filter or similar) to be installed to provide the required treatment.
- An updated drainage strategy incorporating all of the above bullet points including matters already approved and highlighting any changes to the previously approved strategy.

The scheme shall subsequently be implemented prior to use/occupation.

Reason:

- To prevent flooding by ensuring the satisfactory storage of/disposal of surface water from the site.
- To ensure the effective operation of SuDS features over the lifetime of the development.
- To provide mitigation of any environmental harm which may be caused to the local water environment.

• Failure to provide the above required information before commencement of works may result in a system being installed that is not sufficient to deal with surface water occurring during rainfall events and may lead to increased flood risk and pollution hazard from the site.

Condition 2

Prior to use/occupation a maintenance plan detailing the maintenance arrangements including who is responsible for different elements of the surface water drainage system and the maintenance activities/frequencies, has been submitted to and agreed, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority.

The maintenance plan should account for all the sites surface water pipework up to and including the point of connection to the ordinary watercourse, as well as the maintenance for the headwall.

Should any part be maintainable by a maintenance company, details of long term funding arrangements should be provided.

Reason: To ensure appropriate maintenance arrangements are put in place to enable the surface water drainage system to function as intended to ensure mitigation against flood risk.

Failure to provide the above required information prior to occupation may result in the installation of a system that is not properly maintained and may increase flood risk or pollution hazard from the site.

Condition 3

The applicant or any successor in title must maintain yearly logs of maintenance which should be carried out in accordance with any approved Maintenance Plan. These must be available for inspection upon a request by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the SuDS are maintained for the lifetime of the development as outlined in any approved Maintenance Plan so that they continue to function as intended to ensure mitigation against flood risk.

We also have the following advisory comments:

We strongly recommend looking at the Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy to ensure that the
proposals are implementing multifunctional green/blue features effectively. The link can be found
below.

https://www.essex.gov.uk/protecting-environment

• Please note that the Environment Agency updated the peak rainfall climate change allowances on the 10 May 2022.

Flood risk assessments: climate change allowances - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

• Any works to a ditch may require a S23 Ordinary Watercourse Consent. Please see the below link for more information and how to apply.

https://flood.essex.gov.uk/maintaining-or-changing-a-watercourse/

Any questions raised within this response should be directed to the applicant and the response should be provided to the LLFA for further consideration. If you are minded to approve the application contrary to this advice, we request that you contact us to allow further discussion and/or representations from us.

Summary of Flood Risk Responsibilities for your Council

We have not considered the following issues as part of this planning application as they are not within our direct remit; nevertheless these are all very important considerations for managing flood risk for this development, and determining the safety and acceptability of the proposal. Prior to deciding this application you should give due consideration to the issue(s) below. It may be that you need to consult relevant experts outside your planning team.

- Sequential Test in relation to fluvial flood risk;
- Safety of people (including the provision and adequacy of an emergency plan, temporary refuge and rescue or evacuation arrangements);
- Safety of the building;
- Flood recovery measures (including flood proofing and other building level resistance and resilience measures);
- Sustainability of the development.

In all circumstances where warning and emergency response is fundamental to managing flood risk, we advise local planning authorities to formally consider the emergency planning and rescue implications of new development in making their decisions.

Please see Appendix 1 at the end of this letter with more information on the flood risk responsibilities for your council.

INFORMATIVES:

- Essex County Council has a duty to maintain a register and record of assets which have a significant impact on the risk of flooding. In order to capture proposed SuDS which may form part of the future register, a copy of the SuDS assets in a GIS layer should be sent to suds@essex.gov.uk.
- Any drainage features proposed for adoption by Essex County Council should be consulted on with the relevant Highways Development Management Office.
- Changes to existing water courses may require separate consent under the Land Drainage Act before works take place. More information about consenting can be found in the attached standing advice note.

- It is the applicant's responsibility to check that they are complying with common law if the drainage scheme proposes to discharge into an off-site ditch/pipe. The applicant should seek consent where appropriate from other downstream riparian landowners.
- The Ministerial Statement made on 18th December 2014 (ref. HCWS161) states that the final decision regarding the viability and reasonableness of maintenance requirements lies with the LPA. It is not within the scope of the LLFA to comment on the overall viability of a scheme as the decision is based on a range of issues which are outside of this authority's area of expertise.
- We will advise on the acceptability of surface water and the information submitted on all planning applications submitted after the 15th of April 2015 based on the key documents listed within this letter. This includes applications which have been previously submitted as part of an earlier stage of the planning process and granted planning permission based on historic requirements. The Local Planning Authority should use the information submitted within this response in conjunction with any other relevant information submitted as part of this application or as part of preceding applications to make a balanced decision based on the available information.

Local Residents

Comments

106 Representations received, the main issues are summarised as follows:

• The proposal would generate increased traffic and turning movements, including by HGV's serving the development, on a busy stretch of road between two mini roundabouts where at present there is no pedestrian crossing. The retail unit would be on the opposite side of the road from where most residents live and the existing footway. The proximity oof Jester's Kids Club and Nursery raises additional safety concerns. The overall effect of the proposal would be detrimental to highway safety.

Comment: The highway authority is satisfied that subject to compliance with conditions the proposed development would not materially harm traffic related safety or cause undue problems on the local highway network. The conditional requirements include a crossing point and provision of a pedestrian refuge in the centre of the carriageway.

Concern raised that there would be insufficient parking to serve the proposed development and the
adjacent children's nursery, and there is insufficient space for a large delivery vehicle to turn safely
within the site.

Comment: See report paragraph 6.18.

• There is no need for a new retail store in the village, particularly one of this size which would result in the loss of the existing pet store at the site and is likely to adversely affect trade at existing retail outlets in the locality, particularly the Priory Village Store which incorporates a post office.

Comment: The floor area of the store falls below the threshold for sequential testing. It is not the role of the local planning authority to safeguard existing businesses from competition. The location close to the centre of the village is sustainable and acceptable in planning terms.

• The majority of the site lies outside the defined settlement boundary and within the rural area where more restrictive planning policies apply.

Comment: Land adjacent to the northeast and southwest of the site lies within the defined settlement and the rear boundary of the site is consistent with the edge of the defined settlement on either side. The effect on the rural character of the area would be minimal. In addition, the previous planning permission for commercial and retail development and associated parking/servicing (reference 21/01863/FUL) establishes the principle of developing the site.

 The proposal would detract from the rural character of the location and area both from the loss of a local business and from the introduction of a modern supermarket and car parking with its associated activity, signage and lighting.

Comment: The design and proposed materials of the building are respectful of the village location. New landscaping will mitigate its impact and lighting and signage can be controlled by condition and separate advertisement consent legislation respectively.

The proposal would have an adverse effect on neighbouring property from the activity associated
with the proposed use. The use would be likely to result in an increase in vehicular and other
activity, noise from air conditioning and refrigeration units and the introduction of lighting. Air
pollution from traffic movements is also a concern.

Comment: These effects are unlikely to be so harmful to warrant refusal of the application.

• The premises could become a gathering place in the evenings which in turn could result in noise and disturbance. There is also likely to be an increase in littering in the area.

Comment: These matters can be controlled by effective management.

• The proposed development is likely to result in an adverse effect on wildlife at the site and in the vicinity.

Comment: See report paragraphs 6.24 – 6.28.





0 10 20 30 40 50 metres

Comparative scale (1:1250)

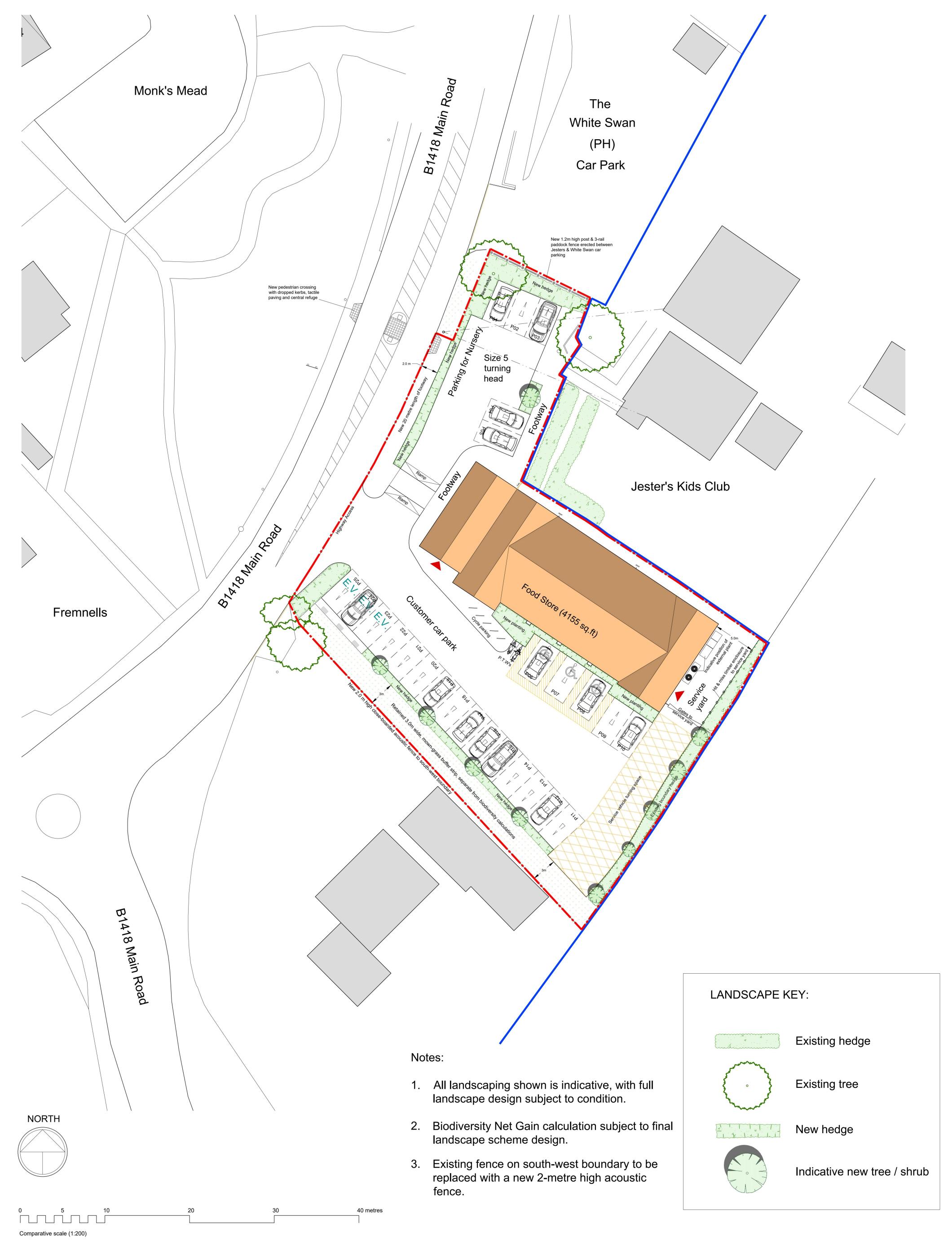
				Client : Mr. N. Halls
				Project : Proposed Food Store, Priory Pet Foods &
			1 1	Country Store Site, Bicknacre.
E	27.02.25	Minor adjustment to red line due to modification to highway access	GM	Drawing : Site Location Plan
D	19.11.24	Red & blue lines corrected to title plan & adjusted for new length of footway	GM	Drawing . Site Escation Fran
c	25.09.24	Red & blue lines amended	GM	
В	02.07.24	Red & blue lines amended	GM	
A	26.06.24		GM	Scale: 1:1250 @ A4 Status: Planning Rev:
No.	Date	Amendment	Initials	Date: June 2024 Dwg No : 24-0079-001

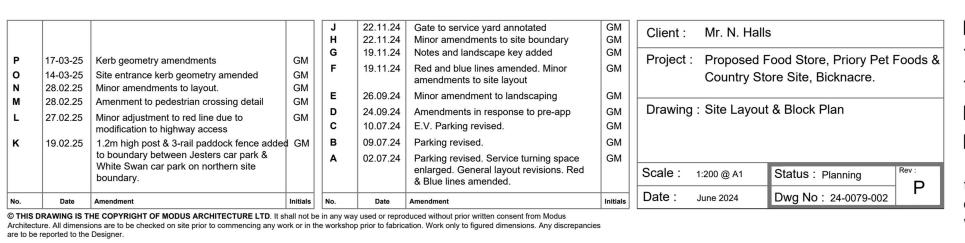
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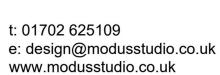
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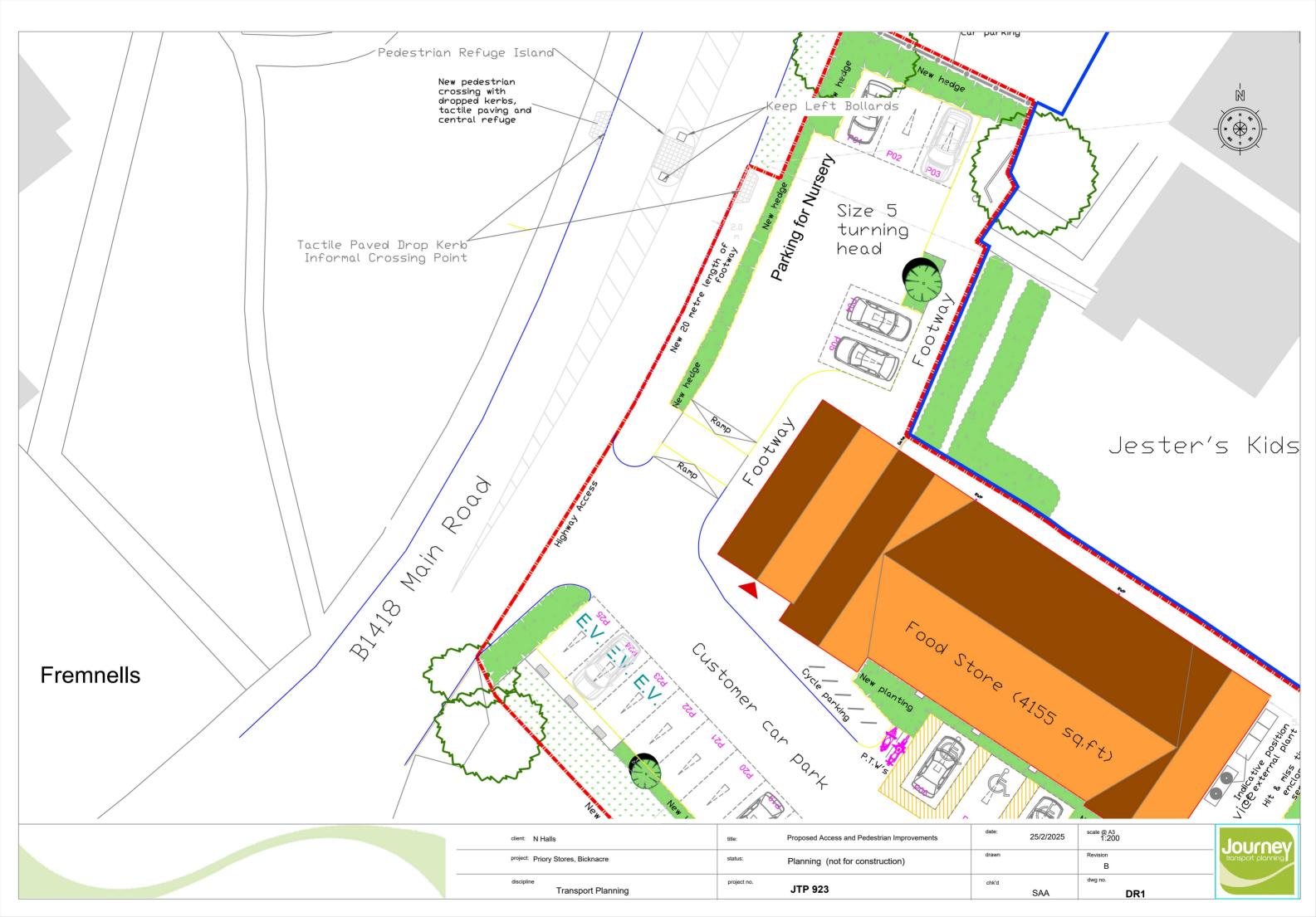


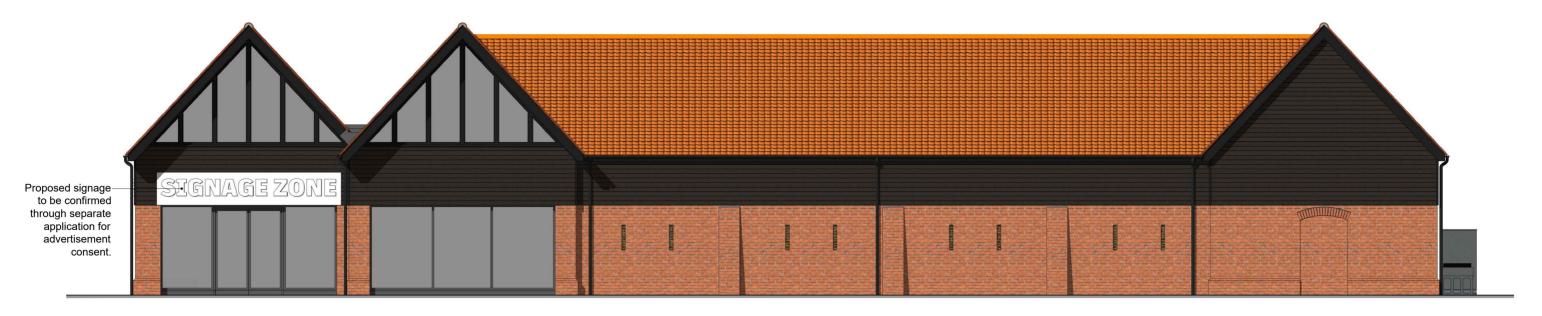


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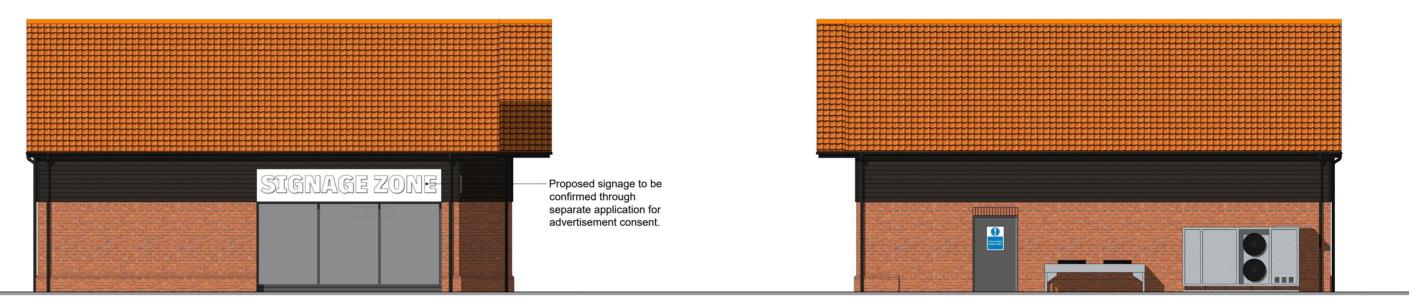






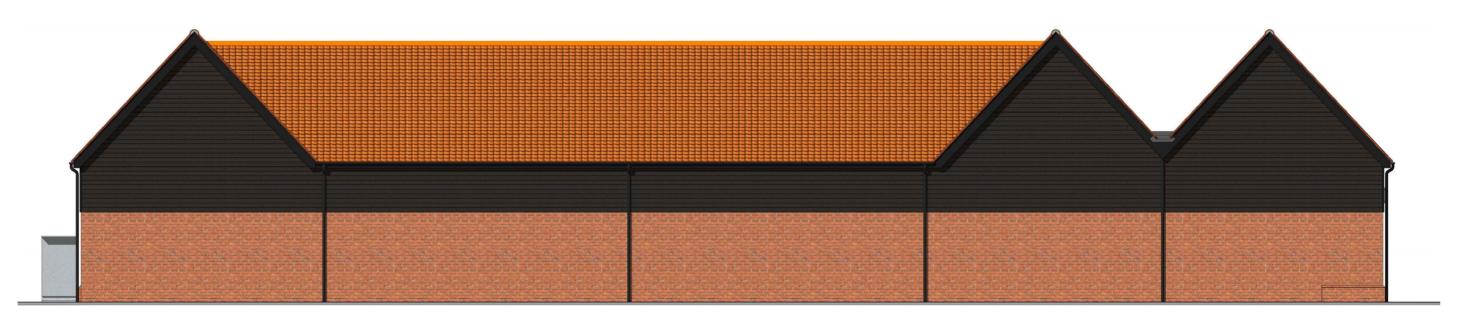


Southwest (Car Park) Elevation

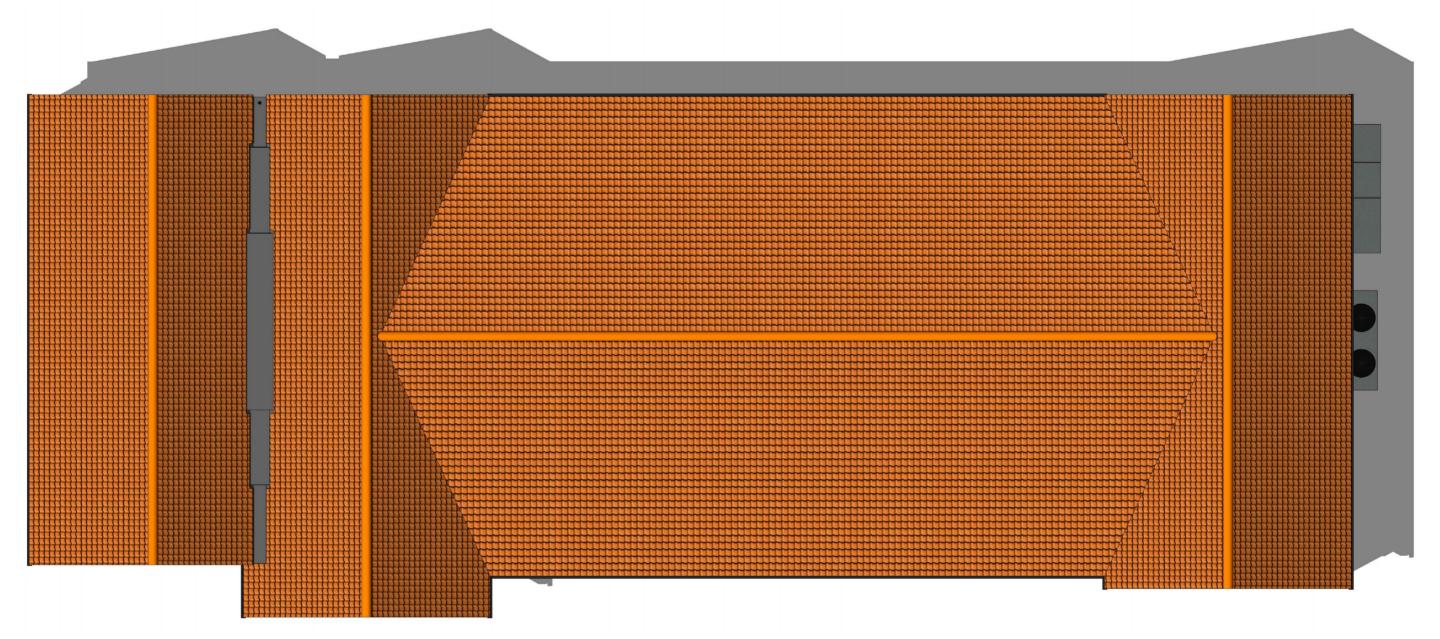


Northwest (Street) Elevation

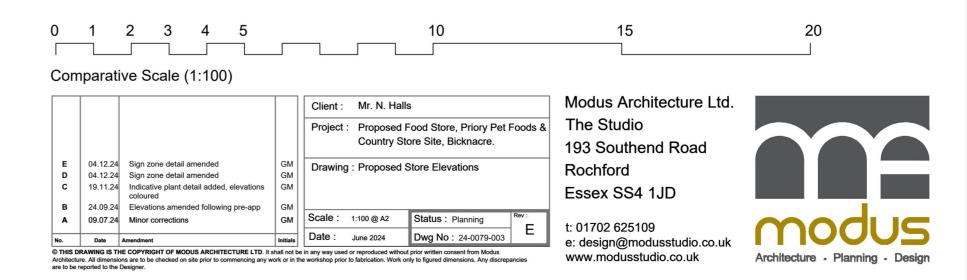
Southeast Elevation

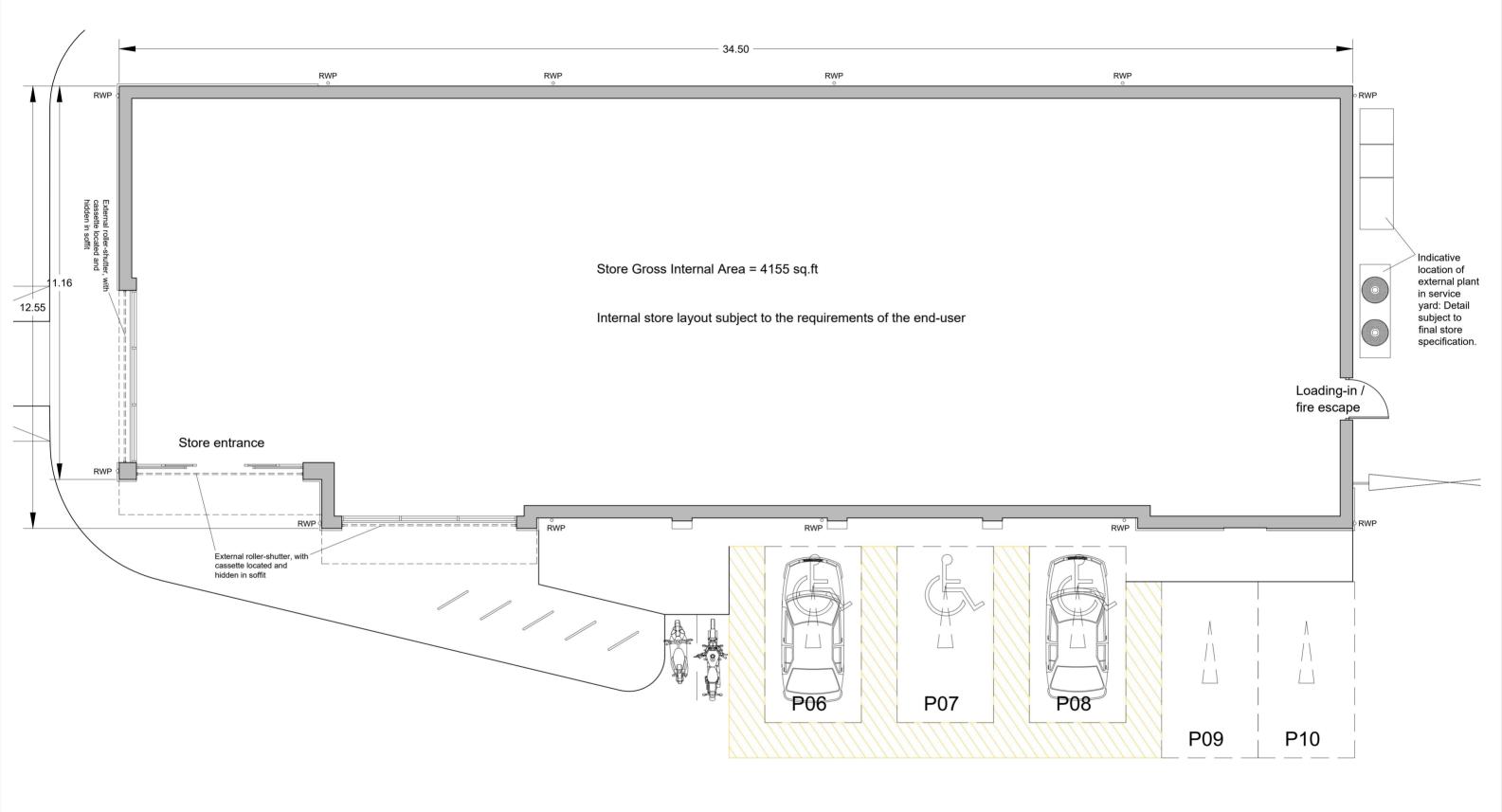


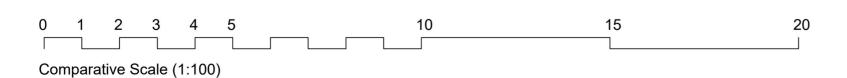
Northeast Elevation

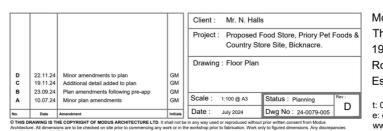


Roof Plan









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