

Planning & Environment

Date:	19 December 2017
Title:	Building 1 (DAF Trucks), Kingsmead Business Park, Howland Road OX9 3FB
Contact Officer:	Graeme Markland, Neighbourhood Plan Continuity Officer

Background

1. Members will recall this application has been the subject of a number of planning applications in recent years. The most recent was for a prior approval application for permitted development, P17/S2624/PDO.
2. The Town Council objected to this application, primarily on the basis that the site is a mix of office, training and sui generis uses. Prior approval applications under “O” of the General Permitted Development Order can only be made where the use is within class B1a, office use. In spite of the Town Council’s submissions the case officer believed the training uses were ancillary to the office uses, and finding no other pertinent reasons for objection, granted permission. Prior approvals are delegated decisions at the District, and there is no mechanism for calling-in such an application.

Proposed Development

3. Application P17/S127/PDO once again proposes the change of use of the offices (B1a) to residential, dwelling-house use (C3). The plans for the building are unchanged from the approved scheme; it is the amount and layout of parking that has changed. The extent of the parking has been reduced to contain that immediately to the west and the east of the building. The eastern car park is shown altered from the current layout; a small roundabout feature has been removed, and an extra 7 parking spaces placed within. Indicated on the plan are what are described as “enhanced landscaping” around the building’s perimeter. Access to the remainder of the site is shown as currently exists.

Discussion

4. The application is presumably being sought in order to clarify the extent of land to be included within the change of use site. As originally made, the approved scheme could not have proceeded without further planning permission as it incorporated works outside that considered permitted development. These are changes to the parking regime and the inclusion of a play area. By excluding a significant proportion of the parking area more land is freed up for speculative development, or to avoid confusion around the function of the parking area in relation to the remaining industrial unit.
5. This application also includes works likely to be considered development. Shown on the proposed site layout plan are enhancements to the building’s landscaping, and a change in the parking layout at the front of the DAF offices. It is indicated that the existing roundabout (with three flagpoles) will be removed and replaced with 7 parking spaces.
6. As before however, the principle of changing the use of these offices to residential use via a permitted development application is flawed. The building remains in mixed-use development. The Town Council is aware of the quantum of training that is carried out for the employees of DAF’s franchised dealerships (over 130). As a part of the normal business operations of DAF, the training should not be considered ancillary.

7. DAF's new build headquarters building in Haddenham are under construction (see Aylesbury Vale District Council planning application 16/04276/ADP). Recently amended plans show the building to be divided up so that almost 30% of the active, usable floorspace is devoted to training use. Two open-plan training areas outside of the workshop facilities are shown, totaling approximately 600 sq. metres of floorspace. This is a greater proportion devoted to training facilities than DAF's current facilities.
8. Other reasons for suggesting this is not permitted development (mixed businesses on the site, a canteen used extensively by visitors, parking areas shared between all uses) remain.

Recommendation:

9. It is recommended that this planning application for permitted development is recommended for refusal on the current mixed use nature of the application site and the works proposed.