

**PLANNING CONSULTATION BY EPPING FOREST DISTRICT  
COUNCIL**

**APPLICATION FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE TO PROVIDE  
CLASS B2, B8, E (G)(III), AND F1 FLOORSPACE, PARKING, IMPROVED  
ACCESS, AND ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPING  
AT NAZEING GLASSWORKS, 1 NAZEING NEW ROAD, NAZEING,  
BROXBOURNE, EN10 6SU**

Presented by Head of Planning

**SUMMARY**

The application seeks the redevelopment of a long standing employment site within the Regional Park known as Nazeing Glassworks, to provide a mix of flexible employment uses. The Authority's Park Development Framework Area Proposals (PDF) anticipated change within existing sites such as this and seek to ensure improvements can be secured for the Park through high quality development and measures that will enhance boundary treatments and open space and help reduce disturbance, and visual impact.

Although the proposed redevelopment is broadly acceptable in terms of its impacts on the visual and recreational amenity of the Regional Park the report recommends a holding objection due to insufficient biodiversity information in respect of Protected Species, designated sites and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). This information is needed in advance of any formal decision being reached in order to fully consider the ecological impacts of the proposal.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members Approve: (1) that Epping Forest District Council be informed that whilst the Authority accepts the principle of the proposed redevelopment of the Nazeing Glassworks site for employment uses it places a holding objection on the current application in order that:

- a) further ecological surveys and reports including an Ecological Impact Assessment, can be undertaken as recommended by the Preliminary Ecological Assessment to enable the impacts of the proposed development, on the ecology of site, the surrounding Regional Park and onsite woodland to be fully considered prior to determination of the application;
  - b) a Biodiversity Net Gain assessment can be completed and the landscape scheme revised accordingly;
  - c) the location of Unit 7a can be reconfigured so that the built footprint is set back from the woodland and area designated as Green Belt to protect its ecological and landscape value;
  - d) the Authority would wish to be consulted on the outcome of the additional survey work and Biodiversity Net Gain report, the mitigation measures that follow and a revised layout for the southern part of the site;
- (2) that should the Council be minded to grant consent for the proposed development then the Authority would wish to see the following conditions attached requiring:
- a) the submission of a revised landscape plan informed by a Biodiversity Net Gain assessment;
  - b) the submission of a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) prior to the commencement of the development to ensure the on-going management and maintenance of the boundary planting and existing vegetation, and its function as a landscape buffer and wildlife corridor;
  - c) the production of an Environmental Construction Management Plan;
  - d) a lighting strategy for biodiversity, both for the construction period and once the site is occupied to take account of protected species such as bats, and the adjoining areas of the Regional Park and the

habitats these contain;

- e) a detailed scheme for the proposed pedestrian/cycle route into the site from the south, taking into account the ecology of the woodland; and

- (3) the Council should consult the Authority on the above conditions in due course.

## **DESCRIPTION OF SITE**

- 1 The majority of the application site is a long standing employment site (extending to 2.9Ha/ 7.16 acres) located within the Regional Park, to the south of the River Lee Navigation and Carthagenia. It is set back from Nazeing New Road behind a row of residential properties and, sitting adjacent to its north and eastern boundary, is a holiday caravan park. Further to the north is Nazeing South Lagoon a Local Wildlife Site, which wraps around the south eastern boundary together with the open spaces of Nazeing Meads. Immediately to the north west is an existing commercial industrial site. Please refer to the Plan at Appendix A to this report.
- 2 The site comprises the Nazeing Glass Works Factory and associated shop together with various small commercial buildings including offices, light industrial, storage, and other uses. The existing buildings consist of one main continuous mass together with some smaller buildings and associated structures; together they comprise approx. 8,494sqm Gross Internal Area (GIA). The remaining buildings and areas of hardstanding and low grade internal roads account for over 60% of the site. It is understood that the existing buildings are in poor condition with low energy efficiency and do not meet current building standards. They are typical of mid to late 20th century industrial buildings being a maximum height of circa 8m to eaves and clad in a mixture of profiled sheets and brick façade elements.
- 3 A substantial area of open grassland sits outside the employment area designation (1.5ha) and occupies the south west component of the site. This includes mature tree planting along the western boundary adjacent to (i.e. behind) the existing residential properties. To the south of the grassed area is a densely vegetated habitat of scrub and trees which extends beyond the site boundary and within which lies the Nazeing ditch. This section of the application site forms part of the Green Belt.
- 4 Access to the site is gained from Nazeing New Road along a narrow road which runs through the site and provides access to extensive areas of parking and the commercial units. Broxbourne Station is situated 0.6miles to the north west (approx. 12 mins walk), a bus stop is located directly outside the site on Nazeing New Road and the Lee Valley Walk runs alongside the Navigation. To the south east lies the Lee Valley Pathway which passes along Nursery Road. The site is located within Flood Zone 2 and 3 but benefits from flood defences.
- 5 In 2020 the Authority responded to a consultation on an outline planning application (report RP/3/20) for the comprehensive redevelopment of the same site for a mixed use of employment and residential units. Whilst the Authority had no objection in principle to the outline application it sought the inclusion of a number of conditions to cover the final appearance of the development, a

detailed lighting strategy, and the incorporation of a range of mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures recommended by the ecological assessment. The outline application was however refused by Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) on a number of grounds but in particular that the proposal would result in the unacceptable loss of employment floorspace within a designated employment site, which had also been identified as appropriate for employment intensification.

- 6 The applicants of the current proposal contacted officers at the Authority in the summer of 2022 to discuss early proposals for the redevelopment of the site for employment uses. At that time emphasis was placed on the need for any application to address issues relating to biodiversity, the quality of development and landscaping, particularly in respect of the site boundaries with the adjacent areas of the Regional Park.

## **POLICY BACKGROUND**

- 7 The majority of the application site sits within an area designated for employment use in the Epping Forest District Local Plan 2023 under site NAZE E3. Local Plan Policy E1(a) states that the Council will seek to retain and enhance existing employment sites and premises for their existing authorised uses within Use Class B2, B8 or E, or Sui generis uses of an employment character. Policy E1(b) of the Local Plan states that proposals for the redevelopment, renewal, intensification, or extension of existing employment sites and premises for employment uses will be supported. Policy P10 'Nazeing' identifies the key infrastructure needs for Nazeing to support residential, traveller and employment development and under P10 E(iii) states that development proposals will be expected to deliver and/or contribute proportionately towards infrastructure items, including walking and cycling facilities, and linkages to key destinations, such as the Lee Valley Regional Park.
- 8 A small portion of the site lies within the Green Belt – the majority of which is to be retained as a woodland and identified as part of the landscaping for the wider site. Some built development will however intrude into Green Belt land. Policy DM4 (B) 'Green Belt' states that "Within the Green Belt planning permission will not be granted for inappropriate development, except in very special circumstances, in accordance with national planning policy". Policy DM9 (A) 'High Quality Design' seeks to ensure all new development achieves a high quality of design and contributes to the distinctive character and amenity of the local area.
- 9 The Local Plan is recognised as having an important role in terms of the protection, enhancement, development and management of the Lee Valley Regional Park (LVRP) and the public enjoyment of its leisure, ecological, heritage, and sporting resources. The Local Plan 2023 recognises and supports the Regional Park, its vision and remit as a key asset for the District, and as a component of the region's green and blue infrastructure (para 2.23). It also recognises the Park Development Framework (PDF), and its specific proposals for the future use and development of the Regional Park including the importance of improving access into and through the Park for pedestrians and cyclists.
- 10 Policy DM1 'Habitat Protection and Improving Biodiversity' states that all development should seek to deliver net biodiversity gain, integrating biodiversity

within the development, and protecting and enhancing natural habitats. It also states that "Development proposals must seek to avoid harm to, protect and enhance natural habitats, species, areas and corridors for biodiversity".

#### **11 Park Development Framework**

Area 7.A.2 Proposals from the Park Development Framework for "Wetland Park Central and East Nazeing Meads and Carthagena" apply in this case. These include Landscape Proposals that seek to work with stakeholders to improve the impact on the Regional Park of industrial sites (and their intensification) structures and buildings through measures that contribute a reduction in noise, traffic generation, visual impact and intrusion. High quality development is to be sought and particular attention to be paid to enhancing the boundaries with open space. The site sits within the Landscape Strategy Character Area A3 an area with a coherent semi-natural character which should be protected, including wide open views across the lakes towards the largely undeveloped skyline to the east. The framework of mature trees that help create the rural landscape setting and the diverse and valuable wetland habitats should be conserved and enhanced.

- 12 Biodiversity proposals seek to improve access to nature and the delivery of habitat improvements within the Wetland Park, such as waterway and ditch enhancements for wetland mammals e.g. Otter and Water Vole. Partnership working is required to bring the Nazeing Lagoons Local Wildlife Site into positive conservation management status taking account of their proximity to Lee Valley Special Protection Area (SPA). Sport & Recreation proposals highlight the importance of angling within the area and that this should continue to be improved as a core activity on Nazeing Southern Lagoon. Circular walks within the Wetland Park are to be promoted linking together existing routes through Nazeing such as the Lee Valley Pathway, and Walk.

### **DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT**

- 13 The applicant proposes the demolition and full clearance of the existing site and redevelopment to provide 10,205sqm (GIA) of flexible employment uses, including Class B2, Class B8, Class E(g)(iii) and up to 150sqm of Class F1 training uses. The new commercial floorspace is proposed across 7 new units, all except one of which, are subdivided to meet market demand in terms of size. The unit sizes would range between 328.87sqm and 1,486.20sqm with heights up to two storeys; max 10.5m Above Ordinance Datum (AOD). The units to the west of the site (close to the existing residential) are anticipated to have an eaves height of 7m with a ridge at no higher than 8.5m. The units to the east will have an eaves height of 9m and a ridge of 10.5m.

#### **14 Layout and Materials**

The proposed layout shows a terrace of units sited along the western boundary of the site screening activity from the adjacent residential neighbours. To the east two courtyards of units provide a flexible range of sizes for local businesses. In the south Unit 7a and some of its associated parking intrudes into the woodland and Green Belt area by approximately 11m. Please refer to the Proposed Site Plan at Appendix B to this report. The existing site access from Nazeing New Road is to be retained and enhanced to allow easy movement of vehicles and pedestrians. The proposals includes provision for:

- a minimum of 30 long stay cycle parking spaces (plus short term provision);
- 185 vehicle parking spaces, which is a reduction in 15 spaces compared to

existing situation (including disabled and electric vehicle charging provision, for 10% of spaces, with passive provision for 20% of the remaining spaces); and

- improved routes through and across the site for cyclist and pedestrians including improved pedestrian/ cycle access through the southern landscaped area with detailed specification and route to be agreed by condition.

- 15 The proposed materiality of the buildings would comprise high quality profiled and flat metal panel cladding systems. These are considered contemporary in appearance, and would be supported by accent materials such as timber panelling to provide additional character to the development. A limited palette of natural and neutral colours is proposed to provide a consistency in the appearance of the elevations, thereby creating a 'family' of high quality units.

**16 Landscape and Ecology**

A landscaping scheme is included as part of the development, this seeks to retain as much of the existing landscape as possible, as well as providing additional planting with native species to encourage enhanced ecology and biodiversity opportunities. The strategy aims to create a landscape buffer along the eastern boundary (approx. 3.5m wide) and proposes this should include species rich lawn, semi mature tree planting, shrub and ground cover planting and a meadow mix. A multi-functional landscape corridor is proposed through the centre of the development from north to south. The aim here is to soften the frontage of the built form through the introduction of tree (semi-mature) lined corridors, shrub and ground cover planting, street lighting and hedge screen planting. The area along the western boundary is to be left as existing with minimal intervention, although where appropriate additional trees will be added to provide screening for the adjacent properties. The southern area of woodland which lies within the Green Belt is to be left as existing.

- 17 Additional planting with native species of trees, shrubbery and hedges is proposed to encourage enhanced ecology and biodiversity opportunities. Bat and bird boxes and habitat piles are also proposed. The Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA) submitted with the application recommends a further habitat survey and bat surveys in order to inform the Ecological Impact Assessment. A Biodiversity Net Gain assessment will be undertaken to identify the potential for the proposals to deliver net gain, although, it is considered that BNG can be delivered on site through landscape planting and the enhancement of retained biodiversity habitats such as the woodland.
- 18 A Heritage, Townscape and Visual Assessment (HTVA) is submitted with the application and considers the potential changes to the visual amenity of people using the Park areas surrounding the site. It concludes that the views have demonstrated that *"the overall full visibility of the Proposed Development would be limited in both winter and summer months and the overall effect would largely be Minor Beneficial or Neutral."*
- 19 A Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage Report has been prepared by consultants and submitted in support of this application. This report demonstrates that the site would not be at serious risk of flooding and the proposed development would not increase the level of flood risk to others. A number of mitigation measures are proposed within the statement, as well as sustainable drainage measures, including permeated paving and swales.

## PLANNING APPRAISAL

### 20 Principle of Development

The majority of the application site, is a well-established designated employment site within the Regional Park. As such the principle of redeveloping this site for a mix of employment units is compliant with Local Plan policy and accepted. The proposed extension of the employment use onto the area of grassland within the existing Nazeing Glassworks site is also considered acceptable under Local Plan policy E1(b). The minor extension south into the Green Belt due to the location of Unit 7a will require the Local Planning Authority to consider whether very special circumstances have been demonstrated that outweigh any harm to the Green Belt. Implications in terms of the impacts upon the Regional Park are discussed below.

- 21 The main issues for consideration by the Authority are firstly the degree to which the proposed redevelopment and extension of the Nazeing Glassworks employment site will impact upon the visual amenity and recreational enjoyment of the Park and secondly whether the development will have an impact on the ecology/biodiversity of the Park. As stated in the PDF Area Proposal 7.A.2, it is important that the proposed scheme demonstrates high quality development and enhances boundaries shared with the Park's open spaces.

### 22 Impact on the Visual Amenity, Landscape and Recreational Enjoyment of the Park.

Recreational enjoyment of the Park is closely related for many, to the quality and interest of the landscape and the associated views they experience during a visit. The scale of the proposed units, at 2 storeys and the location of the application site which benefits from a degree of screening helps to mitigate views of the proposed units and reduces their impact on the Park's landscape. This is demonstrated by the Heritage, Townscape and Visual Assessment (HTVA) submitted with the application which shows limited impact on views and landscape character. Please refer to the viewpoints included in Appendix C to this report.

- 23 On the southern and western boundaries the existing woodland within the green belt, the majority of which is to be retained, and the residential area fronting Nazeing New Road, largely conceals the new units from views along Nazeing New Rd. The mixed scrub and wooded edge to the Nazeing South Lagoon on the eastern boundary helps to soften views of the site from more distant points across the lake. Although the development will be visible between the trees in winter the use of timber panelling will assist in reducing the massing and to some extent help the buildings blend with the surroundings. Along the northern boundary the mix of existing tree cover and the industrial buildings adjacent to the site, together with the narrow boats and waterside structures results in only a minimal sense of intensification.

- 24 The applicant is seeking to maintain and enhance boundary planting to the application site and strengthen these with additional native tree and hedge planting. This is supported and will be an important measure to maintain the screening of the site and continuity of habitat corridors along the boundary of the site which link with the wider area. The space allocated for the boundary enhancements on part of the southern and the eastern boundary is narrow ranging between 3 and 5 metres. A Landscape Management Plan and planting scheme will need to be secured by condition should the Council be minded to

grant consent to ensure the planting survives and matures as envisaged by the applicant. Swift boxes and bat boxes should also be included in any habitat enhancements.

- 25 Although the Green Belt woodland area on the southern and western boundaries of the site will be retained, a small part will be lost to the proposed warehouse unit 7a, its car parking and a small picnic area. No justification is given for this incursion into the Green Belt. The applicant is already proposing to extend the employment use westwards across the area of grassland which falls outside the employment area, although it has functioned as part of the Nazeing Glassworks site for many years. The woodland is not part of the employment area and sits outside both the designated area and the existing site, hence its green belt designation. It is important both for the ecology of the woodland and its landscape function as an attractive feature and substantial buffer that it is retained as a whole and that the development is pulled back away from the woodland. Indeed the PEA identifies the woodland as important for nature conservation and recommends further habitat surveys to assess its value. Setting the development footprint back from the woodland would assist in minimising as far as possible disturbance from noise, traffic and lighting.
- 26 Finally it is noted in the Transport Statement that the applicant is proposing a new pedestrian/cycle route into the site from the south to offer an alternative to the main existing vehicular access point in the north. This is shown as an indicative route at this stage, passing through part of the woodland along the southern boundary of Unit 7a. A pre-commencement condition for the delivery of the route is proposed as its exact location will need to be agreed with the ecologist. Setting back Unit 7a would enable the route, at least in part, to be provided outside the main area of woodland and avoid disturbance/loss of habitat.

27 **Ecological Impacts**

The PEA identifies a number of further surveys and reports required to fully understand the ecological baseline and impacts of the proposed development, These should be submitted prior to determination. This is also the view of Place Services the Council's ecological advisors (based at Essex County Council) who have placed a holding objection on the application for this reason. Specifically the additional information required is as follows:

- The PEA noted the need for a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) due to the sites proximity to the internationally important areas including the Lee Valley Special Protection Area. It states that this would apply to both the construction and operational phases although as the development proposals are non-residential *"the likely impacts from increase recreation use are unlikely"*.
- Impacts on the adjacent Carthagena Estate Lakes, Broxbourne Gravel Pits Local Wildlife Site should also be assessed and set out in an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA).
- Bat surveys undertaken in 2018 will need updating and the submitted lighting plan should be reviewed as part of the EclA, particularly with respect to light spill into the adjacent woodland.
- Great Crested Newt (GCN) surveys should be undertaken on the nearby



ponds to provide the required Protected Species information. The results of these and the Bat surveys are required prior to determination because paragraph 99 of the ODPM Circular 06/2005 highlights that: "It is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development, is established before the planning permission is granted, otherwise all relevant material considerations may not have been addressed in making the decision.

- The PEA noted the need for an up to date habitat survey (known as a UK Habitat survey). This is required to work out the BNG baseline and final units. A BNG assessment is required as part of the application and this should inform the landscape plans and layout of the proposed development. Although biodiversity enhancements are indicated in the key to the landscape plans not all of the proposals appear on the plans.

28 An Environmental Construction Management Plan will also be required but this could be covered by an appropriate condition on any grant of consent.

#### 29 **Conclusion**

The proposed redevelopment and expansion of the existing Nazeing Glassworks employment site is acceptable in principle, although the extent of the development footprint on the southern boundary needs to be reconsidered and drawn back away from the Green Belt and woodland. Whilst the impact on the visual and recreational amenity of the Park has been shown to be minimal the lack of biodiversity information and up to date ecological surveys means the impacts of the proposed development are not fully understood at this stage. In particular the presence of protected species is a material consideration when a planning authority is considering a development proposal and it is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed application, is established before planning permission is granted, (ODPM Circular 06/2005).

30 A holding objection is recommended therefore, pending the completion, submission and consideration of the outstanding ecological surveys, the EclA and the BNG assessment and plan. This would also enable the reconfiguration of Unit 7a to be considered and the scheme layout redrawn to protect the ecology and landscape value of the woodland.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

31 These are addressed in the body of the report.

#### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

32 There are no financial implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

#### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

33 Planning applications referred to this Authority are submitted under the consultative arrangements of Section 14 (4-7) of the Lee Valley Regional Park Act 1966. The Act requires a local planning authority to consult with the Authority on any planning application for development, whether within the designated area of the Park or not, which might affect any part of the Park.

- 34 The Park Act enables the Authority to make representations to the local planning authority which they shall take into account when determining the planning application.

### **RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

- 35 There are no risk management implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

### **EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 36 There are no equality implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

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### **BACKGROUND REPORTS**

Application Papers 20.007

July 2023

### **PREVIOUS COMMITTEE REPORTS**

<b>COMMITTEE</b>	<b>REPORT NO.</b>	<b>REPORT NAME</b>	<b>DATE</b>
R&P	RP/3/20	Application for outline planning permission for demolition of all buildings & structures on site & a comprehensive mixed use development comprising up to 5,000sqm (gia) floorspace for employment uses including retail (class A1), office (class B1a), light industrial (class B1c), health care (class D1), leisure (class D2), a maximum of 230 residential (class C3) units, the formation of new pedestrian, cycle & vehicular circulation routes & means of access, new private & public open space, play space, cycle & vehicular parking.	26 03 2020

### **APPENDICES ATTACHED**

Appendix A	Location Plan of the application site
Appendix B	Proposed Site Plan
Appendix C	Extract from Viewpoint Assessment

**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

PDF	Park Development Framework
BNG	Biodiversity Net Gain
LEMP	Landscape & Ecological Management Plan
GIA	Gross Internal Area
EFDC	Epping Forest District Council
LVRP	Lee Valley Regional Park
SPA	Special Protection Area
AOD	Above Ordnance Datum
PEA	Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
HTVA	Heritage, Townscape and Visual Assessment
HRA	Habitat Regulations Assessment
EclA	Ecological Impact Assessment
GCN	Great Crested Newt

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Proposed new commercial development: Nazeing Glassworks Site, Nazeing New Road, EN10 6SU.

NTS @ A4  
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Appendix C Extracts from Viewpoint Assessment

View 4 from Carthage Lock Bridge



Existing view



**View with proposed development**



**View 8 Centre south of the Nazeling South Lagoon**



**Existing**



**With Proposed Development**



**View 9 for Nazeing Labyrinth Weir**





Existing view top and with proposed development bottom

