

Report to East Buckinghamshire Area Planning Committee

Application Number:	PL/20/0401/FA
Proposal:	Redevelopment of the site to create a new multifunctional Parish Centre with cafe, day nursery building, replacement rectory with detached garage, additional staff dwelling, 2 outbuildings to provide prayer room and substation/bin and bicycle store, associated parking and landscaping
Site Location:	St Leonards Parish Centre, Glebe Way, Chesham Bois, Buckinghamshire, HP6 5ND
Applicant:	St Leonard's Parochial Church Council
Case Officer:	Melanie Beech
Ward affected:	Amersham and Chesham Bois
Parish Council:	Chesham Bois
Valid date:	3 February 2020
Determination date:	15 January 2021
Recommendation:	Conditional Permission

1.0 Summary & Recommendation/ Reason for Planning Committee Consideration

- 1.1 This application seeks planning permission to demolish the existing parish centre in Chesham Bois, the associated outbuildings, and The Rectory; and redevelop the site to provide a new parish centre, prayer room, pre-school, a new Rectory, and an additional residential dwelling called Keeper's Cottage. Associated parking and landscaping is also provided.
- 1.2 The main issues to consider in determining this application are the impact of the proposed development on the character of the area (including Chesham Bois Conservation Area), the setting of The Old Rectory which is grade II listed, the impact on neighbouring amenity, and traffic/highway implications.
- 1.3 Cllr Harris has called the application to Committee, regardless of the officer's recommendation as he believes this to be a contentious application within the conservation area. He raises concern over the need for a new church of this size, inadequate parking, the impact of vehicle movements on existing houses, and the adverse impact on the conservation area.

- 1.4 The following report sets out the officer's assessment which establishes that the proposed development provides an innovative, high quality community facility which has been sensitively designed to reflect its woodland setting. This is served by adequate parking which is softened by existing and proposed landscaping. The proposed dwellings have also been designed to reflect the existing character of the area, making references to the Arts & Crafts design movement which is present in Chesham Bois. Although this will be a major development within the village, its impact can be mitigated through the use of planning conditions to ensure that current levels of amenity are not harmed to a significant degree. The application includes a number of technical reports, demonstrating that a great deal of thought and consideration has gone into the design of the development. In consultation with a number of consultees, it is the officer's view that the proposed development accords with the Development Plan policies and is therefore recommended for conditional permission.

2.0 Description of Proposed Development

- 2.1 The site is located within the parish of Chesham Bois. It is situated to the south of North Road, west of Glebe Way, and north of South Road. It currently includes St Leonard's Parish Centre with associated parking, The Rectory, and some small outbuildings. The existing parish centre is used by a number of local groups such as Maryland pre-school, the Taylor School of Dancing, the Women's Institute and St Leonard's Church office.
- 2.2 The application site is within Chesham Bois Conservation Area and is adjacent to a grade II listed building (The Old Rectory). It is also adjacent to an Established Residential Area of Special Character (ERASC).
- 2.3 The application seeks planning permission to demolish all of the existing buildings and redevelop the site to provide a new parish centre, prayer room, pre-school, a new Rectory, and an additional residential dwelling called Keeper's Cottage.
- 2.4 The proposed parish centre is a large building measuring approximately 35m wide x 23m deep. It has an undulating roof with a maximum height of 9.7m. The proposed materials are primarily timber cladding with a large amount of glazing on the elevations, and a green roof with glass lantern on top. Internally the parish centre consists of a full height main hall, an additional multi-purpose hall, café/meeting space with kitchen, parish council office and meeting rooms, toilets and shower room, and storage space. The main hall has a capacity of 275 (seated).
- 2.5 The pre-school is situated to the south of the main building and adopts a similar design approach with timber clad/glazed walls with a green roof. It is an 'L'

shaped building with a maximum width of 11.4m, depth of 16.3m and height of 3.8m.

- 2.6 The prayer room is a smaller round building situated to the west of the parish centre surrounded by trees.
- 2.7 The two new dwellings are situated in the northern part of the site, accessed from within the site. The New Rectory is a one and half storey dwelling measuring 15.9m wide x 12.6m deep at ground floor level, with a height of 7.9m. The proposed materials include flint walls and a natural slate roof. The property includes a kitchen, living and dining room on the ground floor and four bedrooms on the first floor. A double garage is proposed to the east of the dwelling.
- 2.8 Keepers Cottage is situated to the south-west of the New Rectory and is also a one a half storey dwelling with pitched roof gables on the front and rear elevations. The proposed materials include timber cladding and rendering with a natural slate roof. This property includes a kitchen/dining room, study and living room on the ground floor and two bedrooms on the first floor. It is intended that this property will be occupied by church staff.
- 2.9 It is proposed to use the existing access to the site for vehicles and convert the existing access for The Rectory into a pedestrian and cycle access into the site. A total of 114 car parking spaces are provided in addition to bike racks and stores for 46 bicycles.
- 2.10 Much of the existing vegetation will be retained with new planting proposed within the site.
- 2.11 The application is accompanied by:
 - a) Planning statement
 - b) Design and Access statement
 - c) Vision and use statement
 - d) Statement of community involvement
 - e) Transport statement prepared by HVJ Transport Ltd
 - f) Supporting transport statement prepared by Waterman Infrastructure & Environment Ltd
 - g) Heritage Assessment prepared by Cotswold Archaeology
 - h) Landscape and visual assessment prepared by Adams Habermehl Landscape Architects
 - i) Noise impact assessment prepared by RF Environmental

- j) Energy statement prepared by NRG Consulting
- k) Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Arboricultural report prepared by Sylva Consultancy
- l) Flood risk and drainage strategy, and SuDS Maintenance guide prepared by Infrastruct CS Ltd
- m) Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, bat survey report and great crested newt report prepared by Ecology by Design.

3.0 Relevant Planning History

- 3.1 CH/1981/0928/FA - Erection of rectory and garage – Conditional Permission
- 3.2 CH/1987/1591/FA - Installation of temporary building for offices ancillary to use as parish centre - Conditional Permission
- 3.3 CH/1989/2536/FA - Retention of temporary building for offices ancillary to use as parish centre (renewal of planning permission 87/1591/CH) – Conditional Permission
- 3.4 CH/1989/3468/FA – Two storey extension to west elevation (of parish centre) – Conditional Permission
- 3.5 CH/1992/0597/FA - Two storey extension to west elevation and provision of additional car parking space – Conditional Permission
- 3.6 CH/1993/0403/FA - Two storey extension to west elevation to be built in two phases (amendment to planning permission 89/3468/CH) – Conditional Permission
- 3.7 CH/1993/1341/FA - Two storey extension to west elevation and provision of additional car parking spaces (amendment to planning permission 92/0597/CH) – Conditional Permission
- 3.8 CH/1994/1283/FA - Roof extension on western elevation and external staircase to first floor – Conditional Permission.
- 3.9 CH/1997/0867/FA - Extensions and loft room at church hall – Conditional Permission
- 3.10 There have also been a number of applications for works to trees within the site.

4.0 Summary of Representations

- 4.1 At the time of drafting this report, 465 representations have been made on the application. 356 of these object, 106 support, and 3 are neutral.

- 4.2 Chesham Bois Parish Council recommended refusal of the application based on the original plans. However, having considered the amended plans submitted on 11th August 2020, the Parish Council now recommend that the application be supported, subject to conditions.
- 4.3 Consultation responses have been received from Thames Water, Waste Management Team, Crime Prevention Design Adviser, Sustainable Drainage Team, Environmental Health Team, Tree Officer, Building Control, Urban Design Officer, Highway Authority, and Conservation and Listed Buildings Officer.
- 4.4 A summary of these comments is set out in Appendix A.

5.0 Policy Considerations and Evaluation

Development Plan:

- Chiltern District Local Plan adopted 1 September 1997 (including alterations adopted 29 May 2001), consolidated September 2007 and November 2011.
- Core Strategy for Chiltern District - Adopted November 2011.

Other material considerations:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), February 2019
- National Design Guide, October 2019
- Chiltern and South Bucks Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule
- Chiltern and South Bucks Townscape Character Study, November 2017
- Chesham Bois Conservation Area Appraisal, 1992.

Principle and Location of Development

Core Strategy Policies:

CS1 (The spatial strategy),
CS2 (Amount and distribution of residential development 2006-2026),
CS3 (Amount and distribution of non-residential development 2006-2026)
CS29 (Community)

Local Plan Saved Policies:

H3 (Provision of new dwellings in the built-up areas excluded from the Green Belt (other than in accordance with Policies H2, H4 & H7)),
CSF1 (Provision of community services and facilities in the built-up areas excluded from the Green Belt)

- 5.1 With regard to the new dwellings, the application site is located within the built up area of Chesham Bois, outside the Green Belt. In accordance with Policy H3 of the Local Plan, new dwellings are acceptable in these areas in principle subject to there being no conflict with any other policy. The policy states that proposals

should be compatible with the character of the area by respecting the general density, scale, siting, height and character of buildings within the locality. The presence of trees, shrubs, lawns and verges should also be respected.

- 5.2 The proposed parish centre, prayer room and pre-school are community facilities which are to be considered under policy CSF1 of the Local Plan and policy CS29 of the Core Strategy. Policy CSF1 states that within the built up areas excluded from the Green Belt, the development of community facilities will be acceptable provided that the proposal would not involve the loss of residential land or an existing dwelling, and that the proposal would not be detrimental to the character and amenities of the area by reason of appearance, layout, noise, traffic generation, vehicle parking, loss of landscaping or general disturbance. These matters are assessed in the following sections of the report but provided there is no detrimental impact on these matters and there is no conflict with any other policy, the proposed community facilities are acceptable in principle.
- 5.3 Policy CS29 encourages the provision of community facilities in areas of the district where there is an identified need. Development should be located near to existing community infrastructure, frequent and reliable public transport services and main transport routes. The need for the new parish centre has arisen due to the current parish centre being out-dated, too small and limiting in its layout and use. Church services currently happen in the historic church of St Leonards and at the Beacon School, and regular activities such as dance classes, youth work and meetings of the parish council, happen at the site. However, consolidating the various functions creates an opportunity to provide a modern, well designed multi-purpose venue for local community use. The location of the site in relation to public transport services and main transport routes is assessed later in this report.
- 5.4 Chapter 8 of the NPPF promotes healthy and safe communities. Paragraph 92 states that planning decisions should plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (including meeting places, cultural buildings and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments.
- 5.5 The following sections of this report assess the impact of the proposal on planning matters but provided there is no conflict with any Development Plan policy, the proposed development is acceptable in principle.

Raising the quality of place making and design

Core Strategy Policies:

CS4 (Ensuring that the development is sustainable)

CS20 (Design and environmental quality)

Local Plan Saved Policies:

GC1 (Design of development throughout the district)

GC4 (Landscaping throughout the district)

H11 (Distance between flank elevation(s) of a proposed multi-storey dwelling and boundary of dwelling's curtilage throughout the district)

CA1 (Works to buildings in Conservation Areas as defined on the Proposals Map)

CA2 (Views Within, out of, or into the Conservation Areas as defined on the Proposals Map)

CA3 (Changes of use in Conservation Areas as defined on the Proposals Map)

CA4 (Demolition of unlisted buildings in Conservation Areas as defined on the Proposals Map)

Existing Character

- 5.6 The application site is located in the southern part of Chesham Bois Conservation Area, which is a designated heritage asset. In accordance with Paragraph 184 of the NPPF, heritage assets should be “conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.”
- 5.7 The Chesham Bois Conservation Area Appraisal (1992) describes the area as a late 19th Century settlement, with much of its character derived from the distinctive architectural styles of that period. It states that there is a pleasing contrast between the dense groups of small, late 19th Century terraced and semi-detached cottages in the village and the larger detached houses which stand in substantial plots. In addition, there is a scattering of interesting and attractive buildings which have survived from previous centuries, which add to the variety and character of the conservation area.
- 5.8 Other vital elements of the conservation area, particularly in the vicinity of the application site, are the presence of attractive woodland areas, mature trees and hedges, all of which contribute to the semi-rural character of the area.
- 5.9 The Council’s Conservation and Listed Buildings Officer has described the area as suburban Metroland, i.e a semi-planned settlement consisting of individual houses set within their own landscaped ground, the majority of which are influenced by the British Arts & Crafts design movement. The houses are generally characterful and well maintained, as are the public avenues and streets and the mature trees that they contain. Each residence is normally of a generous size, and is characterised by a richness of detail, with a heavy roofscape consisting of tiled roof coverings with substantial chimneys. However, quite apart from the buildings of note, the area in which the site lies has a characteristic ambience which is more powerful in its significance than any one individual property.

Impact of the proposed development

- 5.10 In consultation with the Council's Conservation and Listed Buildings Officer, it is the quality of the environment described above that sets the agenda for new development, which must complement and enhance these characteristics. The new parish centre has been designed following a thorough appraisal of the area by the applicants, pre-application dialogue with the Council and consultation with the local community. The result is a modern design with a pleasing mixture of rectangular forms coupled with a central round rooflight above an atrium. The timber cladding to the walls relate well to the historic barns that appear across the Chilterns and the glazing makes the building appear open and, to a degree, transparent. The undulating green roof reflects the surrounding woodland which harmonises well with the leafy surroundings of Chesham Bois.
- 5.11 The Council's Urban Design Officer agrees that the proposed development, particularly the concept of a "draped canopy" over the proposed parish centre, responds creatively and sensitively to its woodland setting. He states that "the idea of the principal building within a woodland setting is reflected in the form of the building, its scale, the use of materials, the extensive use of glazing (that will allow views through the building as well as out into the woodland and its canopy when people are within it); alongside the landscape approach that is complemented by features such as a swale."
- 5.12 It is acknowledged that the new parish centre is a large building and that some of the representations received on the application raise concern over its scale being excessive. However, given the size of the site and the amount of existing vegetation surrounding it, the new parish centre will be well screened from wider views and not highly visible within the area. This is demonstrated by the photomontage of the proposed development contained in Appendix 4 of the Landscape and Visual Assessment submitted with the application.
- 5.13 With regard to the proposed dwellings, these draw influences from the Arts & Crafts movement, reflecting the design of existing houses within the area and adjacent 'Residential Area of Special Character'. There is a variety of plot shapes and sizes within the vicinity and in this regard, the layout of the proposed dwellings is considered to be acceptable. The proposed pre-school follows the same architectural language as the proposed parish centre, and the proposed prayer room is a small, inoffensive building situated amongst existing and proposed planting.
- 5.14 In order to conserve the character of the area and the significance of the conservation area, the use of high quality and appropriate materials, finishes and detailing will be critical. This includes the appropriate use of materials for

the internal access roads and parking areas, where tarmac and white lining should be avoided. Subject to these details, which can be secured by condition, it is considered that the proposed development accords with the relevant development plan policies and guidance in relation to design and character of the area, as well as policies and guidance in relation to conserving the significance of the conservation area. As noted by the Council's Urban Design Officer, "Conservation Areas cannot be kept as museum pieces – fixed and unchanging. They must be allowed to grow and change - sensitively and in a carefully considered way...the evidence presented in the planning application demonstrates this sensitivity and care."

Historic environment (or Conservation Area or Listed Building Issues)

Core Strategy Policies:

CS4 (Ensuring that development is sustainable)

Local Plan Saved Policies:

LB2 (Protection of setting of Listed Buildings throughout the district)

CA1 (Works to buildings in Conservation Areas as defined on the Proposals Map)

CA2 (Views Within, out of, or into the Conservation Areas as defined on the Proposals Map)

CA3 (Changes of use in Conservation Areas as defined on the Proposals Map)

CA4 (Demolition of unlisted buildings in Conservation Areas as defined on the Proposals Map)

5.15 The main designated heritage assets affected by the proposed development are the Chesham Bois Conservation Area and The Old Rectory, which is a grade II listed building. However, there are some other listed buildings located on the other side of North Road.

5.16 The impact on the conservation area is discussed above in the section of this report relating to 'raising the quality of place making and design'. As such, this section will focus primarily on the removal of the existing buildings and the potential impacts on the nearby listed buildings.

5.17 In consultation with the Council's Conservation and Listed Building Officer, the loss of The Rectory is contentious to a degree, as the building assumes a neo Arts & Crafts design of reasonable quality. However, the building does not possess any critical degree of quality and its removal may be justified under paragraph 196 of the NPPF which states that any harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

- 5.18 Similarly, the existing parish centre is relatively plain and whereas it may have been fitting for the time when it was built, it is now likely to be struggling to meet the needs of its users or perform as well as it should or could do in terms of its environmental credentials.
- 5.19 With regard to the proposed development, as discussed above, it has been designed to reflect and respect the surrounding area and therefore, subject to the use of high quality materials and finishes, no objection is raised with regard to its impact on the nearby listed buildings, particularly taking into account paragraphs 186 – 202 of the NPPF, which encourage local planning authorities to balance any harm against public benefits.

Promoting healthy and safe communities

Core Strategy Policies:

- CS4 (Ensuring that development is sustainable)
- CS20 (Design and environmental quality)
- CS29 (Community)

Local Plan Saved Policies:

- GC1 (Design of development throughout the district)
- CSF1 (Provision of community services and facilities in the built-up areas excluded from the Green Belt)

- 5.20 Paragraph 91 of the NPPF seeks to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places, which
- a) promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other
 - b) are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion (for example through the use of clear and legible pedestrian routes and high quality public space which encourage the active and continual use of public areas)
 - c) enable and support healthy lifestyles.
- 5.21 Paragraph 92 goes on to state that planning decisions should plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces and community facilities (including meeting places, cultural buildings and places of worship).
- 5.22 As stated above, the need for the new development has arisen due to the current parish centre being too small, out-dated and limiting in its layout and use. The proposed new parish centre provides a modern, well-designed, multi-

purpose venue which will encourage social interaction and community cohesion. There is therefore a significant public benefit to the scheme.

- 5.23 With regard to crime, the comments from the Crime Prevention Design Adviser are noted. She raises concern over the excessive permeability of the site and the absence of a lighting plan and security strategy. The need to create a safe site must be balanced against the importance of enhancing the character of the conservation area, which is characterised by natural woodland and soft boundaries that are generally open and permeable.
- 5.24 Paragraph 75 of The National Design Guide states that “successful development depends upon a movement network that makes connections to destinations, places and communities, both within the site and beyond its boundaries”. Indeed, even part (b) of paragraph 91 of the NPPF outlined above which relates to crime, cites the use of clear and legible pedestrian routes as a way of creating safe and accessible places.
- 5.25 The proposed development provides some natural surveillance within the site and it is considered that an appropriate balance can be struck between achieving a safe site whilst enhancing the character of the area. In this regard, conditions are recommended to provide a revised boundary plan and lighting scheme.

Amenity of existing and future residents

Local Plan Saved Policies:

GC3 (Protection of amenities throughout the district)

GC7 (Noise-generating developments throughout the district)

H12 (Private residential garden areas throughout the district)

- 5.26 Local Plan Policy GC3 refers to the protection of amenities throughout the district. It states that the Council will seek to achieve good standards of amenity for the future occupiers of that development and to protect the amenities enjoyed by the occupants of existing adjoining and neighbouring properties
- 5.27 The closest residential property to the proposed development is The Old Rectory. Factors to consider in terms of whether the proposed development is acceptable on the amenities of this property include issues of overlooking, a loss of privacy, the new buildings creating an overbearing impact or causing a loss of light. The south-western corner of Keepers Cottage is situated 2.1m away from the boundary with The Old Rectory, which complies with Policy H11 (requiring new dwellings to be at least 1m from the boundary). The only first floor window in the rear elevation serves a bathroom and en-suite and is shown on the plans

to be obscurely glazed. As this window overlooks the front garden of The Old Rectory (as opposed to any private areas), this relationship is considered to be acceptable, subject to a condition to ensure that the first floor window is obscurely glazed in accordance with the plan. The proposed parish centre is over 26m away from the boundary with The Old Rectory and therefore, although a large building, will not cause a loss of amenity for the existing occupiers of the neighbouring property. It is noted that car parking spaces will be situated along the boundary with The Old Rectory, but this boundary is well screened with existing and proposed planting. This can be retained by way of a landscaping condition on any permission granted.

- 5.28 Other neighbouring residential properties are located further away and the impact of the proposed development on their amenities is considered to be acceptable.
- 5.29 With regard to future occupiers of the development, the two new dwellings have sufficient space, light and outlook, as well as adequate private outdoor amenity space. It is noted that the intention is for Keepers Cottage to be occupied by church staff. This will be up to the church to administer, but it is not considered that there are sufficient planning reasons to restrict the occupation of this dwelling in this regard, which is acceptable in principle without any such restriction.
- 5.30 Other users of the development include visitors to the parish centre, prayer room and pre-school. A good standard of amenity has been provided for these users, including a sizeable pre-school garden and outdoor informal play and seating area.
- 5.31 Based on the above assessment, the proposal is considered to achieve good standards of amenity for future occupiers of the site whilst protecting the amenities of adjoining and neighbouring properties, in accordance with Policy GC3 of the Local Plan. The impact on amenity with regard to noise and disturbance is discussed later in the report under the heading of 'Environmental Issues'.

Transport matters and parking

Core Strategy Policies:

CS25 (Dealing with the impact of new development on the transport network)
CS26 (Requirements of new development)

Local Plan Saved Policies:

TR2 (Highway aspects of planning applications throughout the district)

- TR3 (Access and road layout throughout the district)
- TR11 (Provision of off-street parking for developments throughout the district)
- TR15 (Design of parking areas throughout the district)
- TR16 (Parking and manoeuvring standards throughout the district)

Sustainability

- 5.32 Paragraph 7 of the NPPF states that “the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development”. Sustainable development consists of three overarching objectives; economic, social and environmental. One of the ways in which development can contribute to the environmental objective of sustainable development is to promote walking, cycling and the use of public transport as an alternative to the private car. Ideally, development should be located close to existing infrastructure, public transport services and main transport routes.
- 5.33 The site is located in Chesham Bois, approximately half a mile from Amersham Town Centre. There are pedestrian footways which link the site to nearby residential areas and there is good internal connectivity within the site. The provision of 46 cycle parking spaces, as well as showers and lockers within the new parish centre, are welcomed as a way to encourage cycling to the site. There are also bus stops on Bois Lane and Sycamore Road, both within 200m of the proposed development.
- 5.34 The application is accompanied by a Transport Statement which includes a Framework Travel Plan to mitigate the potential impact of additional car journeys and to encourage sustainable forms of travel to the site.
- 5.35 The location of the site in relation to public transport routes and pedestrian footways, as well as the provision of plentiful cycle parking, means that sustainable modes of travel to the site are possible. In order to ensure that these are utilised, a condition is recommended on any permission granted to require a full travel plan to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority, which shall set out measures to reduce single occupancy journeys by the private car. Notwithstanding this, it is acknowledged that people may choose to drive to the site and therefore it is important to consider any potential impacts of the development on the highway network.

Impact on the highway network

- 5.36 The applicant has submitted an interrogation of the Trip Rate Information Computer System (TRICS database) to establish the traffic generation potential of the existing site compared to the proposed use. In consultation with the Highway Authority, it is not considered that the development would give rise to an unacceptable impact on the highway network, given the existing traffic flows

within the vicinity. It is noted that the main increase in travel to the site is likely to be on a Sunday, when traffic flows are typically at their lowest.

- 5.37 With regard to the access, the Highway Authority have confirmed that the existing access is satisfactory, subject to the provision of visibility splays, which can be secured by condition. Although they have also requested improved visibility at the Glebe Way/North Road junction, this is outside the application site and therefore outside the scope of the application. Notwithstanding this, the applicant/future occupier of the New Rectory is encouraged to keep landscaping in the northern part of their garden to a low level, so as not to obscure visibility from this junction. The Highway Authority have also confirmed that the internal road layout provides sufficient manoeuvring space for cars and refuse vehicles.

Parking

- 5.38 Policy TR16 of the Local Plan sets out parking standards for the district. Taking into account all of the proposed uses, there should be 191 parking spaces for this development. However, these parking standards are very dated and paragraph 105 of the NPPF states that local parking standards should take into account the accessibility of the development, the type, mix and use of the development, the availability of public transport, local car ownership levels, and opportunities for providing spaces for charging plug-in and other low emission vehicles.
- 5.39 In this case, a total of 114 spaces are provided for the parish centre and pre-school, consisting of 22 spaces within the primary car park, 70 in the secondary car park, and 22 in the overflow car park. This exceeds the demand suggested by the applicant, which is 64, based on a parking accumulation exercise using the TRICS database. This level of parking is justified as the peak demand for parking at the site is likely to be for those attending worship on a Sunday morning, when other uses such as the pre-school, cafe and parish office will be closed. There are also good opportunities to walk or cycle to the site, and it is noted that a survey carried out by the applicant indicated that 63% of the participants currently walk to the site.
- 5.40 With regard to the proposed dwellings, each has two car parking spaces which is considered adequate for the size and type of accommodation proposed.
- 5.41 Based on the proposed and expected use of the development, the amount of parking provision is considered to be acceptable. To insist on more parking would result in the need for more areas of hardstanding, to the detriment of the character of the area.
- 5.42 Finally, the Highway Authority have confirmed that the layout and size of the parking spaces are sufficient to allow vehicles to park and manoeuvre.

5.43 Overall, in consultation with the Highway Authority, the proposed development is not considered to have a detrimental impact on the highway network, subject to conditions. As development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual impacts on the road network would be severe (paragraph 109 of the NPPF), no objections are raised in this regard.

Environmental issues

Core Strategy Policies:

CS4 (Ensuring that development is sustainable)

CS20 (Design and environmental quality)

Local Plan Saved Policies:

GC3 (Protection of amenities throughout the district)

GC7 (Noise-generating developments throughout the district)

GC8 (Residential and other noise sensitive development in areas of high noise level throughout the district)

GC9 (Prevention of pollution throughout the district)

5.44 Policy GC7 of the Local Plan states that noise-generating development will not be permitted where the noise levels and/or the noise characteristics which would result from that development would cause an unacceptable degree of disturbance to the occupants of any residential or other noise-sensitive development in the vicinity of the application site. In addition, paragraph 180 of the NPPF says that planning decisions should ensure that new development is appropriate for its location, taking into account the likely effects of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment.

5.45 It is noted that the existing uses on the site already generate a level of activity and noise, including uses and classes happening between the hours of 8:00 and 22:30, as set out in Appendix C of the Vision and Use Statement submitted with the application. Some concern has been raised within the representations received on the application that the level of noise and disturbance will increase as a result of the proposed development.

5.46 Appendix D of the Vision and Use Statement sets out a proposed use schedule, with the main differences being the worship on Sunday mornings which is expected to be attended by 100 – 120 people, “Encounter” on Sunday evenings (50 people), mid-week teaching on Wednesday evenings (30 people), an additional youth evening (20 people) and a senior lunch on Fridays (40 people). In addition, the new parish centre obviously has a larger capacity for private events such as parties and concerts.

- 5.47 In order to demonstrate that the additional activity will not be detrimental to the amenities of existing residents, a noise impact assessment, accompanied by a noise management plan, has been submitted with the application. This sets out the main uses of the development, potential noise generating activities, and the main noise receptors. It concludes that the design of the new parish centre is such that the main hall is enclosed on three sides by additional rooms which increases the acoustic integrity of the building and minimises noise breakout. It states that appropriate noise limits and control measures can be imposed to ensure adequate protection is offered to surrounding residential properties.
- 5.48 Based on the above assessment, and in consultation with the Council's Environmental Health Team, it is considered that subject to conditions, the proposed development is acceptable in terms of noise and disturbance levels, in accordance with Policy GC8 of the Local Plan and the requirements of the NPPF. The recommended conditions include the submission of a Demolition and Construction Management Plan, limitations on noise levels from any mechanical plant and use of the parish centre, and operating hours. The recommended hours of use are 7:00 – 23:00, which allows time for events to start at 8am and finish at 22:30 to include time for people to set up and vacate the site.
- 5.49 It is also noted that the new parish centre includes a small kitchen, which has the potential to generate cooking odours. To ensure that these are kept to within an acceptable level, a condition is recommended to require full details of the kitchen extract system to be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority.
- 5.50 With regard to lighting, a balance must be struck between conserving the character of the area whilst ensuring that the development can be used adequately and safely. As such, it is recommended that a condition be imposed on any planning permission granted to require a lighting plan to be submitted and approved by the local planning authority.
- 5.51 With regard to contaminated land, the application has been assessed by the Council's Environmental Protection Team, who have concluded that the site has not had a previous potentially contaminative use. Therefore, there are no objections to this issue, subject to any unexpected contamination being reported to the local planning authority.
- 5.52 With regard to waste, there is a covered bin store located to the north-west of the new parish centre. The Council's Waste Team have confirmed that they are satisfied with the location of the proposed bin store, which is approximately 33m from the highway. There is also adequate space within the curtilage of each residential dwelling to store waste and recycling bins.

5.53 Based on the above assessment, it is considered that, subject to conditions, the proposed development has an acceptable impact on the environment in terms of noise, odour, light, contamination and waste.

Flooding and drainage

Core Strategy Policy:

CS4 (Ensuring that development is sustainable)

Local Plan Saved Policy:

GC10 (Protection from flooding in the areas as defined on the Proposals Map and throughout the district)

5.54 The site is not within a designated Critical Drainage Area and is located within flood zone 1, which is land with the lowest flood risk. However, it is important to consider proper drainage of the site and in this regard, a Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Statement was submitted with the application. Throughout the course of the application, revisions were made to the Flood Risk Assessment in order to overcome initial concerns of the Council's SUDS team in relation to infiltration rates. Following these amendments, there is now no objection from the SUDS team and therefore the Council is satisfied that flooding and drainage have been given due regard. It is recommended that conditions be imposed on any permission granted to require a surface water drainage scheme to be submitted (based on the Flood Risk Assessment already submitted) as well as a whole-life maintenance plan.

5.55 Furthermore, the condition requiring details of materials will ensure that the parking areas are as permeable as possible. The comments from Thames Water are also noted and informatives are recommended where necessary.

Landscape Issues

Core Strategy Policies:

CS4 (Ensuring that development is sustainable)

CS20 (Design and environmental quality)

Local Plan Saved Policies:

GC1 (Design of development throughout the district)

GC4 (Landscaping throughout the district)

5.56 Policy GC4 of the Local Plan seeks to retain existing established trees and hedgerows in sound condition and of good amenity and wildlife value. It also encourages landscaping appropriate to the site. In this regard, an Arboricultural Impact Assessment has been submitted with the application, which has been reviewed by the Council's tree officer. Based on his comments, the trees shown for removal are primarily in poor condition with limited life-spans. The trees around the boundaries of the site are shown for retention and would maintain a good level of screening around the site. Overall, the proposed development retains the better trees on the site and proposes significant levels of new planting. Therefore, there is no objection to the development in this regard, provided there is adequate protection for the retained trees.

Ecology

Core Strategy Policies:

CS4 (Ensuring that development is sustainable)

CS24 (Biodiversity)

Local Plan Saved Policies:

NC1 (Safeguarding of nature conservation interests throughout the district)

5.57 Policy CS24 of the Core Strategy states that the Council will aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity within the District. In this respect it states that development proposals should protect biodiversity and provide for the long-term management, enhancement, restoration and, if possible, expansion, of biodiversity, by aiming to restore or create suitable semi-natural habitats and ecological networks to sustain wildlife. Where development proposals are permitted, provision will be made to safeguard and where possible enhance any ecological interest. This is consistent with paragraph 174 of the NPPF which aims to promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species, and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.

5.58 In this regard, a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) was submitted with the application, which confirmed that the existing parish centre, The Rectory and some of the surrounding vegetation had the potential to support roosting bats. It also concluded that there were some suitable habitats on site to support great crested newts and other reptiles, nesting birds and badgers. The PEA recommended that bat surveys were carried out, that any vegetation clearance and demolition of buildings should be done outside bird-nesting season, and

that the boundary woodland should be retained due to its potential to provide habitats for great crested newts and other common reptiles. Furthermore, the PEA made recommendations for enhancements and mitigation works.

- 5.59 Based on these recommendations, emergence and re-entry bat surveys were carried out and a report submitted with the application. The surveys found evidence of roosts within The Rectory and therefore, for the development to proceed, a license from Natural England will be required. Furthermore, compensation measures will be required in the form of mitigation and enhancement, which can be secured by condition.
- 5.60 In addition to the bat survey, a great crested newt report was submitted, which confirms that the two ponds in proximity to the site (located 230m and 330m to the west of the site boundary) were not suitable to support great crested newts.
- 5.61 Based on the above, the Council is satisfied that due regard has been given to biodiversity and protected species. Provided the mitigation measures suggested in the survey are implemented, the proposed development is considered to comply with Policy CS24 of the Core Strategy and paragraphs 174 – 177 of the NPPF.

Building sustainability

Core Strategy Policies:

CS4 (Ensuring that development is sustainable)

CS5 (Encouraging renewable energy schemes)

Local Plan Saved Policy:

GC1 (Design of development throughout the district)

- 5.62 Policy CS5 of the Core Strategy requires 10% of the total energy use for a development of this scale to be from decentralised and renewable or low-carbon sources. In this regard, an Energy Statement was submitted with the application which assesses the proposed development against Part L of the 2013 Building Regulations. Measures to reduce CO2 emissions include the use of efficient building materials to minimise heat loss, low energy heating systems and low energy lighting. Air source heat pumps will also be used. In addition to the green roof, the parish centre elevations also show scope for future provision of solar panels.
- 5.63 Based on the Energy Statement, it is considered that the proposed development can comply with Policy CS5 of the Core Strategy without having a detrimental impact on the character of the area. As such, no objections are raised subject to a condition.

6.0 Weighing and balancing of issues / Overall Assessment

- 6.1 The proposed development is a major development for Chesham Bois and if implemented well, will provide a modern, well-designed community facility that can be used by a range of different people.
- 6.2 At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision taking, this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay. Sustainable development consists of three overarching objectives; economic, social and environmental.
- 6.3 The proposed development will contribute to the economic objective by creating jobs in the construction industry and bringing people into the area to use both the new facility and existing services in the vicinity.
- 6.4 There is a huge social benefit in creating a facility that will encourage social interaction, providing opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other. The proposed development provides an improved community facility for a range of different groups and members of society.
- 6.5 In terms of the environmental objective, opportunities have been identified to encourage walking and cycling to the site, and to create a development which is energy efficient through the use of sustainable building materials and renewable energy sources. The proposed development will enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area by keeping it active and vibrant, whilst respecting the existing character through careful and thoughtful design.
- 6.6 Taking into account all of the advice from specialist consultees and National Design Guidance, it is considered that the proposed development has been well thought out and designed to provide a positive facility for the local community. Although the concerns from residents are noted, the development complies with the relevant Development Plan policies and the NPPF, and is therefore recommended for approval, subject to conditions.

7.0 Working with the applicant / agent

- 7.1 In accordance with Section 4 of the National Planning Policy Framework, the Council, in dealing with this application, has worked in a positive and proactive way with the Applicant / Agent and has focused on seeking solutions to the issues arising from the development proposal. The Council works with applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by:
 - offering a pre-application advice service

- updating applicants/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application as appropriate and, where possible and appropriate, suggesting solutions.
- 7.2 In this case, the Council accepted amended plans and additional information which addressed concerns that were raised in relation to the original submission.
- 7.3 The applicant has agreed to the recommended pre-commencement conditions.
- 7.4 The following recommendation is made having regard to the above and also to the content of the Human Rights Act 1998.

Recommendation: Conditional Permission

Subject to the following conditions:-

1. The development to which this permission relates must be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
Reason: To prevent the accumulation of unimplemented planning permissions, to enable the Local Planning Authority to review the suitability of the development in the light of altered circumstances and to comply with the provisions of Section 91 (1) of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990, as amended.
2. Before any construction work at or above ground level commences, details of the materials to be used for the external construction of the development hereby permitted, including the surface materials for the new internal road, parking and turning areas, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall only be carried out in the approved materials. Hard surfacing materials shall be of a permeable surface or shall allow for natural drainage within the site.
Reason: To ensure that the external appearance of the development is not detrimental to the character of the locality, setting of nearby listed buildings or create flooding issues, in accordance with Policies GC1, GC10, LB2, CA1 and CA2 of the Chiltern District Local Plan Adopted 1 September 1997 (including alterations adopted 29 May 2001) consolidated September 2007 and November 2011, and Policies CS4 and CS20 of the Core Strategy for Chiltern District (Adopted November 2011).
3. Prior to the commencement of any works on site, detailed plans showing the existing ground levels and the proposed slab and finished floor levels of the buildings hereby permitted shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such levels shall be shown in relation to a fixed datum point located outside the application site. Thereafter the development shall not be constructed other than as approved in relation to the fixed datum point.

Reason: To protect, as far as is possible, the character of the locality, in accordance with Policies GC1, CA1 and CA2 of the Chiltern District Local Plan Adopted 1 September 1997 (including alterations adopted 29 May 2001) consolidated September 2007 and November 2011, and Policy CS20 of the Core Strategy for Chiltern District (Adopted November 2011).

4. Prior to the commencement of any works on the site, a Construction Traffic Management Plan detailing the management of construction traffic (including vehicle types, frequency of visits, expected daily time frames, use of a banksman, on-site loading/unloading arrangements and parking of site operatives vehicles) shall be submitted and approved in writing by the Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority. Thereafter, the development shall be carried out in accordance with such approved management plan.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety, convenience of highway users and to protect the amenities of residents, in accordance with Policies TR2 and TR3 of the Chiltern District Local Plan Adopted 1 September 1997 (including alterations adopted 29 May 2001) consolidated September 2007 and November 2011 and Policies CS25 and CS26 of The Core Strategy for Chiltern District, Adopted November 2011. This is a pre-commencement condition as development cannot be allowed to take place, which in the opinion of the Highway Authority, could cause danger, obstruction and inconvenience to users of the highway and of the development.

5. Prior to the use/occupation of the development hereby permitted, a Travel Plan framework for the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The framework shall set out measures to reduce single occupancy journeys by the private car and indicate how such measures will be implemented and controlled. The Travel Plan shall include a full analysis of the modal split at existing sites and indicate targets for modal shift in the forthcoming year. No part of the development shall then be occupied until the approved Travel Plan has been implemented and subject to annual review thereafter. For the avoidance of doubt the Travel Plan will require the appointment of a Travel Plan Co-ordinator.

Reason: In order to influence modal choice and to reduce single occupancy private car journeys and comply with national and local transport policy.

6. No other part of the development shall begin until all of the existing means of accesses into the site have been altered in accordance with the approved plans and constructed in accordance with the Buckinghamshire Council guide note "Industrial Vehicular Access Within the Public Highway".

Reason: In order to minimise danger, obstruction and inconvenience to users of the highway and of the development.

7. No other part of the development shall begin until visibility splays have been provided on both sides of the vehicular access between a point 2.4 metres along the centre line of the access measured from the edge of the carriageway and a point 43 metres along the edge of the carriageway measured from the intersection of the centre line of the access to the south, and towards the Glebe Way/North Road junction to the north. The area contained within the splays shall be kept free of any obstruction exceeding 0.6 metres in height above the nearside channel level of the carriageway.
Reason: To provide adequate intervisibility between the access and the existing public highway for the safety and convenience of users of the highway and of the access.
8. The scheme for parking and manoeuvring indicated on the approved plans shall be laid out prior to the initial use/occupation of the development hereby permitted and those areas shall not thereafter be used for any other purpose.
Reason: To enable vehicles to draw off, park and turn clear of the highway to minimise danger, obstruction and inconvenience to users of the adjoining highway, in accordance with Policies TR2, TR3, TR11 and TR16 of the Chiltern District Local Plan Adopted 1 September 1997 (including alterations adopted 29 May 2001) consolidated September 2007 and November 2011 and Policies CS25 and CS26 of The Core Strategy for Chiltern District, Adopted November 2011.
9. Reporting of Unexpected Contamination: In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development that was not previously identified it must be reported in writing immediately to the Local Planning Authority. An investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken, and where remediation is necessary a remediation scheme must be prepared, which is subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority. Following completion of measures identified in the approved remediation scheme a verification report must be prepared, which is subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority.
Reason: To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other offsite receptors.
10. No works other than demolition shall begin until a surface water drainage scheme for the site, based on Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Statement (ref. 3278-CHES-ICS-XX-RP-C-001 Rev D, November 2020, Infrastruct), has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall subsequently be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the development is completed. The scheme shall also include:

- Infiltration rate testing in accordance with BRE365 in the locations of the proposed infiltration components as shown on Drawing no. 051 Rev. P05.
- Subject to infiltration being inviable, the applicant shall demonstrate that an alternative means of surface water disposal is practicable subject to the drainage hierarchy as outlined in paragraph 080 of the Planning Practice Guidance.
- Full construction details of all SuDS and drainage components
- Detailed drainage layout with pipe numbers, gradients and pipe sizes complete, together with storage volumes of all SuDS components
- Calculations to demonstrate that the proposed drainage system can contain up to the 1 in 30 storm event without flooding. Any onsite flooding between the 1 in 30 and the 1 in 100 plus climate change storm event should be safely contained on site.
- Details of proposed overland flood flow routes in the event of system exceedance or failure, with demonstration that such flows can be appropriately managed on site without increasing flood risk to occupants, or to adjacent or downstream sites.

Reason: The reason for this pre-construction condition is to ensure that a sustainable drainage strategy has been agreed prior to construction in accordance with Paragraph 163 of the National Planning Policy Framework to ensure that there is a satisfactory solution to managing flood risk.

11. Prior to the occupation of the development a whole-life maintenance plan for the site must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The plan shall set out how and when to maintain the full drainage system (e.g. a maintenance schedule for each drainage/SuDS component), with details of who is to be responsible for carrying out the maintenance. The plan shall also include as as-built drawings and/or photographic evidence of the drainage scheme carried out by a suitably qualified person. The plan shall subsequently be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: The reason for this prior occupation condition is to ensure that arrangements have been arranged and agreed for the long term maintenance of the drainage system as required under Paragraph 165 of the NPPF.

12. No development shall take place until an Arboricultural Method Statement, which shall include a Tree Protection Plan, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This shall show details of all work within the root protection areas of the retained trees and hedges both within and around the site including details of protection measures for the trees and hedges during the development, and information about any excavation work, any changes in existing ground levels and any changes in surface treatments within the root protection areas

of the trees, including plans and cross-sections where necessary. In particular, it shall show details of specialised foundations, ground protection measures and no-dig construction where appropriate. The work shall then be carried out in accordance with this method statement.

Reason: To ensure that the existing established trees and hedgerows in and around the site that are to be retained, including their roots, do not suffer significant damage during building operations, in accordance with Policy GC4 of the Chiltern District Local Plan Adopted 1 September 1997 (including alterations adopted 29 May 2001) Consolidated September 2007 and November 2011.

13. No development above ground level shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority a scheme of landscaping at a scale of not less than 1:500 which shall include indications of all existing trees and hedgerows on the land, with details of those to be retained, those to be felled being clearly specified, and full details of those to be planted. This shall include full details of the locations, size and species of all trees, hedgerows and shrubs to be planted, removed and retained and should include the installation of bat and/or bird bricks and/or boxes.

Reason: In order to maintain, as far as possible, the character of the locality and to ensure biodiversity enhancements and to ensure a good quality of amenity for future occupiers of the dwellings hereby permitted, in accordance with policies GC1 and GC4 of the Chiltern District Local Plan Adopted 1 September 1997 (including alterations adopted 29 May 2001) consolidated September 2007 and November 2011, and policies CS20 and CS24 of the Core Strategy for Chiltern District (Adopted November 2011).

14. All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the occupation of the buildings or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner, and any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased, shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: In order to maintain, as far as possible, the character of the locality and to ensure biodiversity enhancements and to ensure a good quality of amenity for future occupiers of the dwellings hereby permitted, in accordance with policies GC1 and GC4 of the Chiltern District Local Plan Adopted 1 September 1997 (including alterations adopted 29 May 2001) consolidated September 2007 and November 2011, and policies CS20 and CS24 of the Core Strategy for Chiltern District (Adopted November 2011).

15. The development hereby permitted shall be undertaken in accordance with the recommendations provided within the Bat Survey Report produced by Ecology by Design (September 2019), in particular the mitigation plan in Appendix 4 and the proposed enhancements in Appendix 5.
Reason: In the interests of improving biodiversity in accordance with NPPF and Core Strategy Policy 24: Biodiversity of the Chiltern District Core Strategy and to ensure the survival of protected and notable species protected by legislation that may otherwise be affected by the development.
16. Notwithstanding the details shown on drawing PA-20 Rev PL1, prior to the use/occupation of the development hereby permitted, full details of the proposed boundary treatments around and within the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved boundary treatments shall then be erected/constructed prior to the use/occupation of the development hereby permitted.
Reason: To protect, as far as possible, the character of the locality and the amenities of the future occupiers of the development, in accordance with policies GC1, GC3, CA1 and CA2 of the Chiltern District Local Plan Adopted 1 September 1997 (including alterations adopted 29 May 2001) consolidated September 2007 and November 2011, and policy CS20 of the Core Strategy for Chiltern District (Adopted November 2011).
17. Prior to the use/occupation of the development hereby permitted, the bin and bike stores shall be implemented in accordance with the details shown on the approved plans and thereafter not used for any other purpose.
Reason: To ensure that the development respects the character of the area, does not appear cluttered with bins and to ensure that there is adequate bin storage for future occupiers of the development, and to encourage cycling to the site, in accordance with policies GC1, GC3, CA1 and CA2 of the Chiltern District Local Plan Adopted 1 September 1997 (including alterations adopted 29 May 2001) consolidated September 2007 and November 2011, and policies CS4, CS20, CS25 and CS26 of the Core Strategy for Chiltern District (Adopted November 2011).
18. Before any construction work above ground commences, details of the measures to provide at least 10% of the energy supply of the development secured from renewable or low-carbon energy sources, including details of physical works on site, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The renewable energy equipment shall be installed in accordance with the approved details prior to the occupation of the dwelling(s) and shall thereafter remain operational.

Reason: To increase the proportion of energy requirements arising from the development from decentralised and renewable or low-carbon sources, in accordance with policy CS5 of the Core Strategy for Chiltern District (Adopted November 2011).

19. Prior to the use/occupation of the development hereby permitted, a lighting scheme for the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. The approved lighting scheme shall then be implemented prior to the occupation/use of the development. No other external lighting shall be erected or installed within the site other than as approved under this condition.

Reason: To ensure that the site is safe whilst maintaining the character of the area and safeguarding ecology, in accordance with Policies GC1, LB2, NC1, CA1 and CA2 of the Chiltern District Local Plan Adopted 1 September 1997 (including alterations adopted 29 May 2001) consolidated September 2007 and November 2011, and Policies CS4 and CS20 of the Core Strategy for Chiltern District (Adopted November 2011).

20. The parish centre, prayer room and pre-school hereby approved shall only be used between the hours of 7:00 and 23:00 on any day of the week.

Reason: To protect the amenity of future occupants and existing neighbours, in accordance with Policy GC3 of the Chiltern District Local Plan Adopted 1 September 1997 (including alterations adopted 29 May 2001) consolidated September 2007 and November 2011.

21. The new parish centre hereby approved shall be designed to ensure during worship and during recreational events (including private events) the noise rating level measured at the boundary of the site shall not exceed 10 dB(A) below the lowest LA90,1hr day time (Day time 07.00 - 23.00 hours).

Reason: To protect the amenity of future occupants and existing neighbours, in accordance with Policy GC3 of the Chiltern District Local Plan Adopted 1 September 1997 (including alterations adopted 29 May 2001) consolidated September 2007 and November 2011.

22. Prior to the installation of any mechanical plant associated with the development hereby permitted, an acoustic report demonstrating that at all times the operational plant on site shall not give rise to a BS4142 rating level greater than 10 dB below the background noise level at the nearest or worst affected property, shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The mechanical plant as approved shall be installed and permanently maintained thereafter.

Reason: To protect the amenity of future occupants and existing neighbours, in accordance with Policy GC3 of the Chiltern District Local Plan Adopted 1 September 1997 (including alterations adopted 29 May 2001) consolidated September 2007 and November 2011.

23. Prior to the construction of the kitchen(s) within the parish centre hereby approved, details of the following shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority:

- (i) The grease trap or grease digester system to be installed within the proposed kitchen, including full manufacturer's specifications;
- (ii) Any kitchen extraction system or other mechanical plant associated with the kitchen or any such unit, including full specifications of all filtration, deodorising systems, noise output and the provision of associated ducting and termination points (for the avoidance of doubt the mechanical extraction and ventilation associated with the kitchen(s) should not give rise to a BS4142 rating level greater than 10 dB below the background noise level at the nearest or worst affected property).

The approved scheme shall be installed and commissioned prior to the first use of the relevant unit and shall be permanently maintained thereafter.

Reason: To protect the amenity of future occupants and existing neighbours, in accordance with Policy GC3 of the Chiltern District Local Plan Adopted 1 September 1997 (including alterations adopted 29 May 2001) consolidated September 2007 and November 2011.

24. Before any construction work above ground commences, details of the finishes of all the buildings hereby permitted shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Details shall include the following:

- details of the windows and doors for the parish centre and new dwellings (including openings, sills and sections where appropriate)
- details of rainwater goods
- details/specifications for the green roofs
- details of the eaves of the parish centre and new dwellings to show exposed rafter ends where appropriate.

Reason: To ensure that the external appearance of the development is not detrimental to the character of the locality or setting of nearby listed buildings, in accordance with Policies GC1, LB2, CA1 and CA2 of the Chiltern District Local Plan Adopted 1 September 1997 (including alterations adopted 29 May 2001) consolidated September 2007 and November 2011, and Policy CS20 of the Core Strategy for Chiltern District (Adopted November 2011).

25. Prior to the occupation of the dwelling shown on the plans as "Keepers Cottage", the window at first floor level in the western elevation shall be fitted with obscured glazing and any part of the window(s) that is less than 1.7 metres above the floor of the room in which it is installed shall be non-opening. The window shall be

permanently retained in that condition thereafter unless agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect the amenities and privacy of the adjoining property, in accordance with policy GC3 of the Chiltern District Local Plan Adopted 1 September 1997 (including alterations adopted 29 May 2001) consolidated September 2007 and November 2011.

26. This permission relates to the details shown on the approved plans as listed below:

List of approved plans:

<u>Received</u>	<u>Plan Reference</u>
3 Feb 2020	PA-01 Rev PL1
11 Aug 2020	PA-02 Rev PL2
3 Feb 2020	PA-03 Rev PL1
11 Aug 2020	PA-04 Rev PL2
11 Aug 2020	PA-05 Rev PL3
11 Aug 2020	PA-06 Rev PL2
3 Feb 2020	PA-07 Rev PL1
3 Feb 2020	PA-08 Rev PL1
3 Feb 2020	PA-09 Rev PL1
10 Feb 2020	PA-10 Rev PL2
11 Aug 2020	PA-11 Rev PL2
11 Aug 2020	PA-12 Rev PL2
3 Feb 2020	PA-13 Rev PL1
3 Feb 2020	PA-14 Rev PL1
3 Feb 2020	PA-15 Rev PL1
3 Feb 2020	PA-16 Rev PL1
3 Feb 2020	PA-17 Rev PL1
3 Feb 2020	PA-18 Rev PL1
11 Aug 2020	PA-19 Rev PL1
11 Aug 2020	PA-20 Rev PL1
11 Aug 2020	0771.1.1 Rev B

INFORMATIVE(S)

1. The Council is the Charging Authority for the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). CIL is a charge on development; it is tariff-based and enables local authorities to raise funds to pay for infrastructure.

If you have received a CIL Liability Notice, this Notice will set out the further requirements that need to be complied with.

If you have not received a CIL Liability Notice, the development may still be liable for CIL. Before development is commenced, for further information please refer to the following website <https://www.chiltern.gov.uk/CIL-implementation> or contact 01494 732792 for more information.

2. No works of site clearance, demolition or construction shall take place until a European Protected Species Mitigation Licence has been granted by Natural England.
3. Where the developer proposes to discharge to a public sewer, prior approval from Thames Water Developer Services will be required. A Groundwater Risk Management Permit from Thames Water will be required for discharging groundwater into a public sewer. Any discharge made without a permit is deemed illegal and may result in prosecution under the provisions of the Water Industry Act 1991. The developer is expected to demonstrate what measures will be undertaken to minimise groundwater discharges into the public sewer. Permit enquiries should be directed to Thames Water's Risk Management Team by telephoning 020 3577 9483 or by emailing trade.effluent@thameswater.co.uk. Application forms should be completed on line via www.thameswater.co.uk. Please refer to the Wholesale; Business customers; Groundwater discharges section.
4. The applicant is advised that the off-site works to the highway will need to be constructed under a Section 184 of the Highways Act legal agreement. This Small Works Agreement must be obtained from the Highway Authority before any works are carried out on any footway, carriageway, verge or other land forming part of the highway. A minimum period of 3 weeks is required to process the agreement following the receipt by the Highway Authority of a written request. Please contact Highways Development Management at the following address for information:-
Highway Development Management (Delivery)
Buckinghamshire Council
6th Floor, Walton Street Offices
Walton Street,
Aylesbury
Buckinghamshire
HP20 1UY
5. The applicant is advised to keep landscaping within the northern part of the garden of the New Rectory to a low level so as not to obscure visibility from the Glebe Way/North Road junction.

APPENDIX A: Consultation Responses and Representations

Parish Council Comments

Comments on original plans (29th April 2020):

The Parish Council support the principle of the re-development of the Parish Centre and the uses proposed. However, they do not consider that the benefits of the scheme outweigh the material harm that would result from the proposed development. Therefore, they recommend refusal of the application for the following reasons:

- a) The scale and intensity of the proposals would result in harm to the setting of the Conservation Area and harm to the setting of the adjacent Listed Buildings contrary to Policies LB1, LB2, CA1 and CA2 of the Local Plan and Policy and CS20 of the Core Strategy (Design and Environmental Quality).
- b) The parking arrangements are insufficient and inadequate and would harm the local transport network contrary to Policy TR16 of the Local Plan and Policies CS25 and CS26 of the Core Strategy and Policy CP3 of the emerging Local Plan.
- c) The proposals would harm the amenity of nearby residents in terms of noise and light pollution and unacceptable levels of disturbance contrary to Policy GC3 (protection of amenities) and Policy GC7 (noise generating developments) of the Local Plan and Policy CS4 of the Core Strategy.

This recommendation was based on the professional planning experience of the Chair of Chesham Bois Parish Council, and independent reports commissioned by the Parish Council on matters of heritage and transport.

Comments on amended plans (8th October 2020):

“Chesham Bois Parish Council voted (by a majority) on 5th October 2020 to recommend to Buckinghamshire Council that, on balance, the revised planning application for the redevelopment of the Parish Centre (PL/20/0401/FA) be SUPPORTED.

Chesham Bois Parish Council remain concerned about harm to heritage assets and local residential amenity, in terms of noise, disturbance and light pollution. It is therefore most important that any planning permission requires the highest quality of materials to be used for all new buildings and boundary features and also that all of the parking spaces as shown on the revised plans (including the overflow spaces) are laid out and available at all times.”

Consultation Responses

Urban Design Officer:

Comments on original plans (28th April 2020):

Connections:

Good pedestrian connections are offered and reducing this permeability risks frustrating the most direct walking and cycling routes. Suggest creating natural surveillance from windows and securing the pathway between the main building and the pre-school. It would not be appropriate for the site to be secured by high fencing as this would be damaging to the conservation area (note the site is currently accessible 24/7).

Recommend splaying corners where paths meet other paths.

Encourage the use of “cycle buses”, more prominent cycle parking and changing, locker and shower facilities, to shift people’s modal choices.

Welcome the proposed use of the main building that offers social/cultural opportunities, particularly as Chiltern and South Bucks is expected to see major growth.

Design approach:

The concept of the “draped canopy” is a creative response to the woodland context.

“The proposed development responds sensitively to its woodland setting with considerable effort made to work around existing trees. The idea of the principal building within a woodland setting is reflected in the form of the building, its scale, the use of materials, the extensive use of glazing (that will allow views through the building as well as out into the woodland and its canopy when people are within it); alongside the landscape approach that is complemented by features such as a swale.”

A more domestic and traditional approach has been employed for the residential dwellings which is appropriate. Influences are drawn from the Arts and Crafts movement, seen within Chesham Bois and Amersham-On-The-Hill. The proposed materials are well considered.

The pre-school building follows the same architectural language as main building.

Visual impact:

The current entrance way is modest, there is a risk that widening it may create an unnecessarily dominant feature.

“On the basis of the information submitted, I do not consider the visual impact of the proposed new buildings to be significant and therefore inappropriate”.

Overall:

“I consider that the development is consistent with the following policies whilst also positively reflecting the advice afforded within the National Design Guide, in particular the importance the Guide places on context – NPPF 127, 128, 130, 131; Local Plan GC1 (a, b, d, e, h and i).

Commends the design approach by the applicants and states that “If the positive momentum is not lost a future Listed Building may well be in the making. Surely a new development such as this will serve to not only enhance a Conservation Area but keep it living and relevant to the community but also society as a whole. Conservation Areas cannot be kept as museum pieces – fixed and unchanging. They must be allowed to grow and change - sensitively and in a carefully considered way. I believe that the evidence presented in the planning application demonstrates this sensitivity and care. I therefore offer my support for this application.”

High quality detailing and materials will be important, and there are opportunities for biodiversity gain beyond the proposed green roof.

Comments on amended plans (7th October 2020):

The addition of a 1.5m boundary fence along the site boundary is an unfortunate addition to the proposals. The addition of walls and gates are alien to the setting and its prevailing and positive characteristics.

“The area is characterised by soft boundaries, tree cover and a strong natural woodland character. Boundaries are generally open and permeable – and this is critically part of the character of this particular designated Conservation Area”.

Inappropriate boundaries will harm the character of the area and there is no justification to require them, particularly considering the planning weight that needs to be afforded to the distinctive characteristics of place.

“Site security must be carefully balanced against risk and the need to create developments that are sensitive and appropriate to their setting. This is required under Paragraph 127c and 130 of the NPPF and further reinforced in the National Design Guide (see: Context).”

Conservation and Listed Buildings Officer:

“The scheme of development overall is positive”.

The historic assets in the vicinity are the conservation area and the designated properties that it contains.

“Quite apart from the individual buildings of note, the area in which the site lies has a characteristic ambience which is more powerful in its significance than any one individual property”.

The overriding character is suburban Metroland, i.e. a semi-planned settlement consisting of individual houses set within their own landscaped grounds, the majority of which are influenced by the Arts and Crafts design movement.

Houses, public avenues, streets and mature trees are generally well maintained.

Each residence is normally of a generous size, rich in detail with a heavy roofscape consisting of tiled roof coverings and substantial chimneys.

Any new build must complement and enhance these characteristics, as well as the listed buildings in the vicinity. New development must be well landscaped.

“The new building contains a pleasing mixture of rectangular forms, coupled with a central round rooflight above an atrium. Likewise the planar timber clad walls are relieved above by a sinuous and undulating monolithic low pitched roof form, covered in a living sedum / green roof material. A solar panel on the south side will enhance the building’s environmental credentials.”

The building fits the design brief very well, appearing open and to a degree transparent. It is forward looking with open areas and well connected spaces. The outward appearance is appropriate to the area. The use of timber cladding is well conceived and will relate well to the historic barns that appear across the Chilterns. The green roof will harmonise well with the leafy surroundings of Chesham Bois.

“The pre-school immediately to the South echoes the form of the main parish building in terms of its aesthetics.”

The removal of The Rectory and existing parish centre can be justified under paragraphs 186 – 202 of the NPPF in terms of the demonstrable public benefits that the project may deliver. Appropriate, good quality materials for the parking area and development will be important.

“The provision of a new elegantly designed community facility will in my opinion be capable of justifying any harm that the building will provoke within the surroundings. I am therefore content to confirm that the proposals accord with paras 186-202 of the NPPF, with the National Design Guide and with paras 16, 66 and 72 in relation to the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas and conserving the setting of listed buildings and their settings. I would be advocating a cautious recommendation for approval in this instance”

Highway Authority:

Comments on original plans (28th April 2020):

Glebe Way and Boise Lane are 30mph carriageways. Parking restrictions are not present within the vicinity of the site.

There is a network of pedestrian footpaths which link the site to residential areas but which are largely substandard in width. Nearest bus stops are 100m and 200m away, served by an

infrequent bus service. Bus stops with a more frequent service are located on Amersham Road/Chesham Road but these are over 300m away.

Proposal to use existing access to The Rectory for cycle and pedestrian access only.

Recommend condition to reinstate dropped kerb to ensure it is not used by vehicles.

Request a swept path analysis of access, and evidence that adequate visibility splays can be provided.

Transport Study states that church services on Sundays are likely to represent peak demand for the new parish centre. However, "traffic flows on the highway network are significantly lower on Sundays, and therefore the traffic impact of the proposed development is unlikely to be material."

Request further information on the impact of the development on the wider highway network.

Concerned that the level of parking provided is significantly lower than the required parking provision, leading to the potential for displaced parking on the highway.

Request further justification to demonstrate that the level of car parking proposed will meet the demand generated by the site to ensure there is no detriment to Highway safety and convenience.

Request an amended site layout to ensure that parking spaces and footpaths are useable.

Comments on amended plans (9th December 2020):

Additional Technical Note has been provided.

Use of access is acceptable subject to visibility splays.

Based on an interrogation of the TRICS database, "I do not consider that the development would give rise to an unacceptable impact on these junctions or any other junction in the vicinity of the site, given the existing flows on the network in the vicinity."

A parking accumulation exercise was undertaken using the TRICS database and indicates that in a worst-case scenario, the site would generate the demand for 64 car parking spaces, leaving a spare capacity of 27 spaces, excluding the secondary car park.

The site layout provides adequate space for vehicles to manoeuvre within the site.

No objections subject to conditions.

SUDS Team:

Comments on original submission (23rd March 2020), amended plans and revised Flood Risk Assessment (30th September 2020) and further revised Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Statement (2nd November 2020):

Requested further information relating to a feasible method of surface water disposal.

Comments on further revised Flood Risk Assessment (20th November 2020):

No objection subject to conditions requiring a surface water drainage scheme and a whole life maintenance plan to be submitted, approved and implemented.

Tree Officer:

Comments on original plans:

"Overall the proposal shows the retention of the better trees on the site and proposes significant new planting so I would not object to the application provided there is adequate protection for the retained trees."

Comments on amended plans:

“The changes have resulted in some changes to the proposed planting proposals on the Landscape Framework Plan and this also shows some additional boundary planting to provide more screening. Nonetheless, these changes have not altered my previous conclusion”.

Environmental Health (Contaminated Land):

The site has not had a previous potentially contaminative use. Therefore, no objection but recommend a condition requiring the reporting of any unexpected contamination to the Local Planning Authority.

Environmental Health:

Comments on original plans (22nd May 2020):

“I have reviewed the attached planning application, and can find nothing of concern from an E.H perspective. The premises is currently used extensively in the evenings for various clubs and gatherings, including music and is not close enough to any residential premises to cause a nuisance.”

Comments on amended plans (8th October 2020):

Noise report addresses obvious noise sources associated with the new Parish Centre but does not address potential noise from the substation or waste bins and cycle store.

Need to consider use and enjoyment of The Old Rectory which is the obvious potential noise receptor.

Overall, no objection subject to conditions.

Waste Services:

“Waste services note the proposal to redevelop St Leonards Parish Centre. We are satisfied with the proposal and bin store location, collection vehicle will not access or enter the site. All collections to take place in accordance with council policies.”

Crime Prevention Design Adviser:

Comments on original plans (23rd March 2020):

“Unfortunately I consider some aspects of the design and layout to be problematic in terms of crime and ASB and I do not believe that this application meets the requirements of the NPPF Section 8 subsection 91. Therefore, at this time I am unable to support this application. This position could be addressed with suitable amendments to the submitted plans and supporting documentation.”

Particular concern was raised with regard to excessive permeability of the site, the absence of a boundary treatment plan, and a lack of formal surveillance.

Comments on amended plans (6th October 2020):

“I have reviewed the amendments provided but unfortunately do not believe they are sufficient to address the risk in terms of crime and anti-social behaviour.”

Particular concerns are raised with regard to leaving the site open due to insufficient perimeter fencing and boundary treatments within the site, insufficient details relating to

lighting, an absence of formal security such as CCTV, obscured sightlines of the car park, and a lack of windows in the prayer room.

Building Control

“Access for the Fire Service to comply with Approved Document B.”

Thames Water:

“With regard to surface water drainage, Thames Water advises that if the developer follows the sequential approach to the disposal of surface water they have no objection. Where the developer proposes to discharge to a public sewer, prior approval from Thames Water Developer Services will be required.

Drainage serving kitchens must comply with Building Regulations Part H paragraph 2.2.1.

Recommend informative relating to discharging groundwater into any public sewer.

No objection with regard to waste water network and sewage treatment works infrastructure capacity.”

Representations

At the time of drafting this report, 465 representations have been made on the application. 356 of these object, 106 support, and 3 are neutral. These are summarised below:

Support:

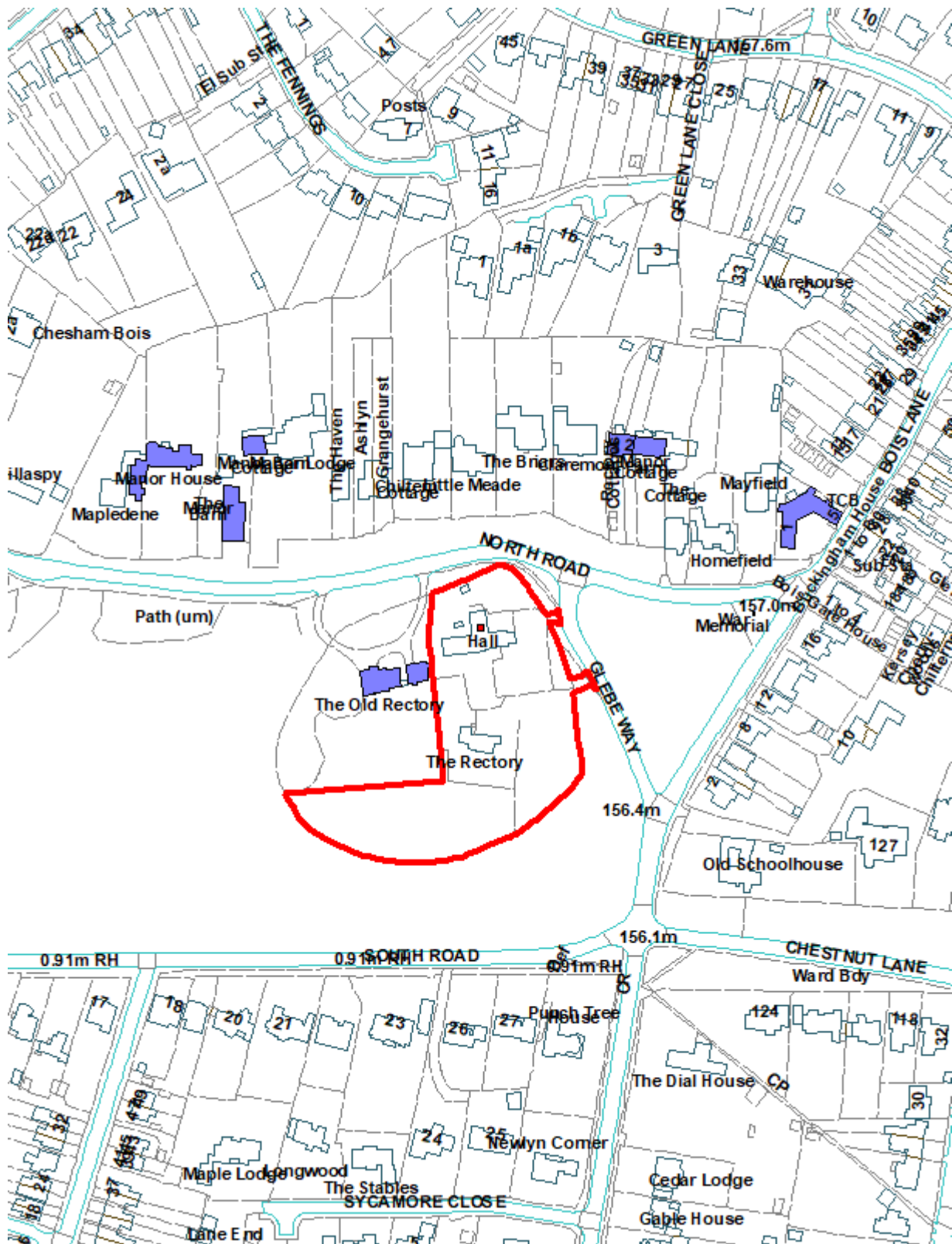
- Enhance community
- Benefit young families and pull community together
- Good use for current/ future generations
- Good design, blends with conservation area
- Sympathetic development of a brownfield site
- Benefit for Church
- Supports Maryland Pre-school, Chesham Bois C.E school, Parish, WI and other local users
- Regeneration needed
- More accessible for people with disabilities

Object:

- Detrimental to character (conservation area)
- Congestion/ Parking
- Increased congregation (e.g. in large car park)
- Does not preserve nature (e.g. cutting trees/ disrupt wildlife)
- Set precedent for future developments
- Lose community feel/ bring too many outsiders to small village
- Scale of the development should be reduced to respect historical/natural significance of village
- Overbearing/overshadowing and disproportionate to surrounding properties
- Impact on a Grade II listed building
- Loss of privacy for locals
- Noise/ light pollution
- Too contemporary in design
- Already nine churches in Amersham
- Construction work- noise and dust

- No need for more facilities
- Houses are restricted when they want to extend/remove trees but big developments are allowed
- Car park too big.

APPENDIX B: Site Location Plan



Do not scale – this map is indicative only

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