DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

PROPOSED CHANGE OF USE OF EXISTING BUILDINGS TO A PLASTICS PROCESSING FACILITY AND PERMISSION FOR 3 ADDITIONAL BUILDINGS

LAUREL LODGE FARM, HURN ROAD, HOLBEACH HURN, SPALDING PE12 8JB

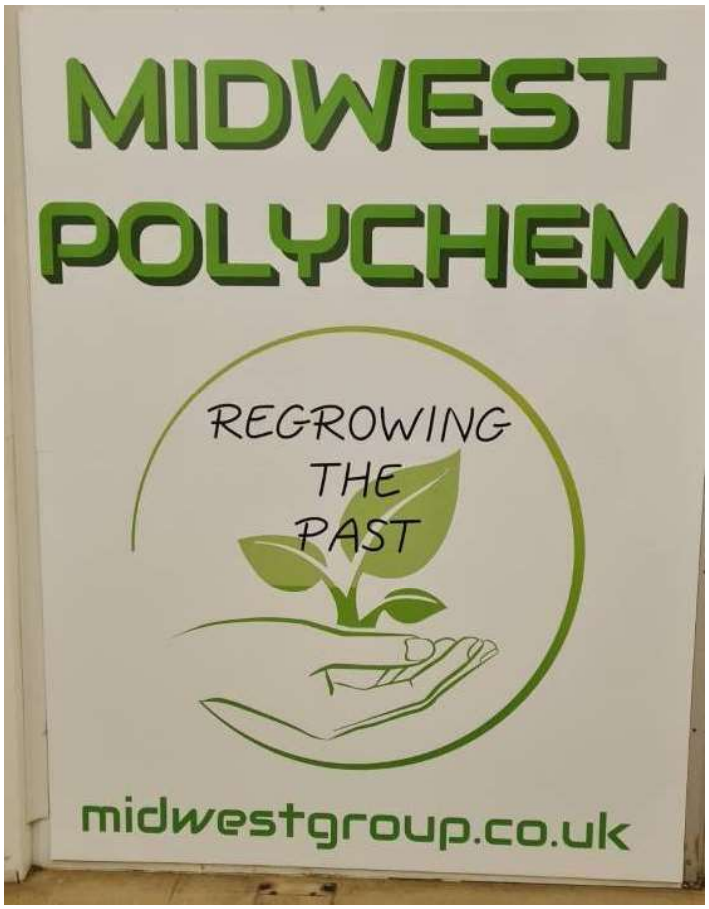


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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Simmonds Planning Ltd. have been instructed by Midwest Polychem Ltd to apply for the change of use of the site and existing buildings and the addition of 3 further buildings on land known as Laurel Lodge Farm, Hurn Road, Holbeach Hurn, Spalding PE12 8JB.

The applicant purchased the site and immediately applied to the South Holland District Council for a Lawful Development Certificate to evidence the historic B2 use under planning reference H09/0978/20. This was approved and due to the applicant's other facility which has been accepted as B2, works began to establish the new plastic processing unit.

The County Council confirmed that they considered the process to be a waste operation and offered assistance in very detailed pre-application advice. The applicants wish to express their gratitude for the assistance from County Council officers and this statement is based on the pre-application advice given by the Council.

1.2 Documents

This planning application is supported by the following documents and plans:

1. Design and Access Statement;
2. Location Plan
3. Site Plan Proposed and existing
4. Block plans
5. Highway layout plan- Local Transport Projects
6. Flood Risk Assessment

2.0 THE PROPOSAL AND PROPOSED USE

2.1 The planning application seeks to obtain permission for the change of use of the site and buildings for the plastic processing operation and also to obtain permission for the new buildings proposed to support the operation moving forward.

2.2 Midwest Polychem Ltd

2.2.1 The applicants, have over 10 years of processing experience and preside over one of the most advanced UPVC processing operations in the UK and are at the forefront of both the collection of redundant material and pioneering new technology, offering one of the most advanced and innovative recycling processes in the UK.

2.2.2 The applicants have an established processing site in the city of Hull (Unit 7 St John's Business Park, Hull) and they occupy an industrial unit under a B2 use.

2.2.3 Midwest Polychem's vision is clear in that they focus on environmental issues and the project is aimed at reducing the vast amounts of plastic waste being landfilled and ending up in the oceans. Currently oceans around the world receive an annual worldwide figure of 8-14 million tonnes of dumped plastics and the United Kingdom is contributing an estimated 1.7 million tonnes to this figure.

2.2.4 The general public are now being made more aware of the devastating effects of plastic pollution. The applicant has concentrated on this issue and perfected a process using innovative machinery, designed in part by themselves, which can process the plastic and bring it back into use as a useful product. This process, therefore, takes the waste plastic and reprocesses it in order to bring it right back to the consumer stage therefore there is no waste resulting from a redundant material.

2.2.5 The waste plastic is processed to create a staple fibre and polyester yarn. These products have various uses around our day to day lives, and it is this use and demand which will reduce the plastic that we throw away as it has a value in the consumer market.




Images above of the end product.

2.3 The Process

2.3.1 The facility would principally process baled PET bottles and waste uPVC windows and doors and these materials would arrive at the facility in bale form.

2.3.2 The products are sorted by being fed into the first process machinery which then washes and sends the product along through machinery which shreds and then granulates the product. The process involves water as this reduces any dust and leaves a process which has little or no escape of residual dust into the buildings leaving a very clean form of processing. Magnets are used to remove any metallic objects for the produce and the product is then processed in various units which gives a variety of size and colour for the end product.

2.3.3 What is clearly evident is that the machinery used is state of the art; it is controlled from one unit located in an operations room, health and safety measures are in place and a paramount consideration to the applicant, the machinery is contained within the largely enclosed buildings and noise levels are low even when

processing. The process is also very clean and almost clinical with any dust being extracted during the process.

2.3.4 The machinery used includes a series of shredders, granulators, washing plant, dryers, float sink separation (to remove labels and PE or PP caps), air knives, metal detectors and colour sorters. The images below show examples of the machinery in place:

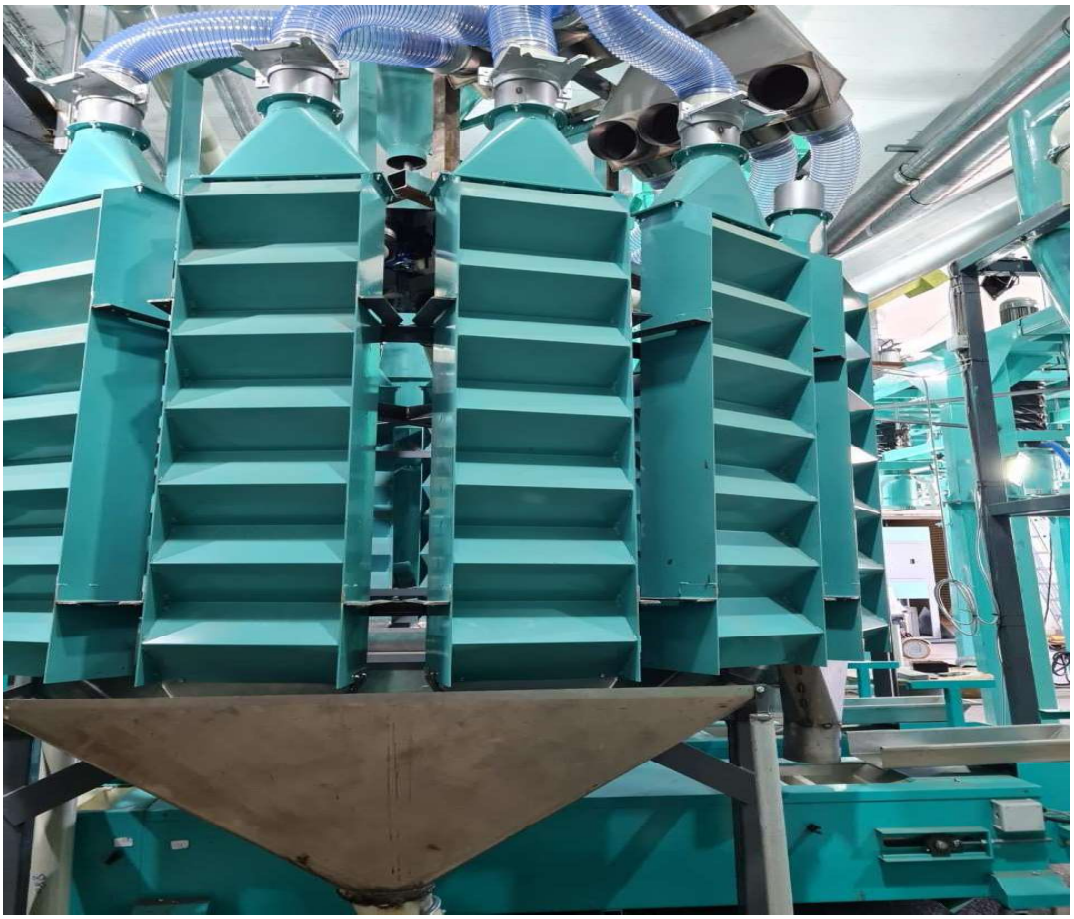



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2.3.5 The processed pellets/flake would be packaged in 1 tonne bags ready for dispatch and the site would process around 3,000 tonnes per month / 36,000 tonnes per annum.

2.4 JOB CREATION

One of the major benefits to this processing site will be the job creation and rural prosperity. The proposal is expected to generate between 60-80 jobs from this project alone, and there are other projects on other sites proposed for the future.

The applicants are encouraging CV drops from applicants at the site office and have future plans to work with the local Job Centre. The applicants are not just asking for skilled workers but see this as an opportunity to support those with no skills who wish to learn and establish skills; younger workers are seen as a key asset to this venture and the applicants are keen to invest in those wishing to establish a career and will

be actively engaging in apprenticeship schemes. The applicants have a strong work ethos and see this site as a positive generator of long term jobs which offers training and skill development which will set local workers up now and in the future. The pandemic has negatively affected many businesses in the area, but this venture is economically sound in its foundations and will offer much needed jobs in the South Holland area.

2.5 HOURS OF OPERATION AND VEHICLE MOVEMENTS

2.5.1 The applicants have confirmed that the plant's operating hours will be Monday-Saturday 0600-1800.

2.5.2 In terms of vehicle movements it is estimated that there will be an average of 5 lorries per day entering the site, bringing in raw materials and then 5 leaving the site to distribute the finished products.

2.5.3 The site has a large area for parking and the manoeuvring of vehicles and with the one way system in place (please see Highway section), movements on site will be safe, considered and fluid causing no adverse impact or disruption to the locality. Employees are able to park their own vehicles on site, therefore there are no expected issues with parking on the highway or outside of the site.

2.5.4 Therefore lorry movements are considered to be relatively low compared to previous food distribution ventures carried out on this site and with vehicles following a one way system entering from Hurn Road and exiting form RJ Wilsons on to A17 (an already established route from previous operations, the impacts are considered to be low and acceptable.

3. THE SITE LOCATION

3.1 The application site is located adjacent to the north of the A17 carriageway, midway between the nearby settlements of Holbeach and Fleet Hargate.

3.2 The property comprises a range of buildings and associated land to the side and rear. The largest set of buildings on the site consists of three steel portal frame buildings

with brick elevations and cladding. The property has been internally fitted with the extensive and innovative machinery used in the plastic processing activity. All machinery is housed internally which limits any external impacts. The product is initially sorted into clear and coloured plastic, washed and then processed through a number of machines before the product in packed for distribution. A separate brick-built building (bungalow) accommodated the applicant's office staff and provides meeting rooms and office space for managers. There are also a range of brick-built outbuildings to the boundary of the site which are in need of restoration and repair.

3.3 The total Site Area is approximately 3.48ha and has hosted a range of previous uses, and through a recently granted CLEUD from South Holland, a long term B2 use.

3.4 To the front of the site is the Laurel Farm Café/Truck Stop and to the east of the site is RJ Contractors which are advertised as an electrical/mechanical engineering company. To the west lie the nearest residential properties (on Washway Road), however these are not considered to be in the close vicinity to the site. The wider area is dominated by the usual flat South Holland arable farm landscape.

4.0 PLANNING POLICY

The proposals are supported by national planning guidance and by Local Plan policy, which makes it clear that the rural economy should be encouraged to grow to provide sustainable economic growth and jobs.

4.1. THE NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (THE "NPPF" 2019)

The NPPF sets out Central Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

Paragraphs 7 and 8 define the commitment to sustainable development based on three dimensions:

“An economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

‘’A social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and

‘’An environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

Key to this application is within Section 6 and is headed - ‘Supporting a prosperous rural economy which states at Paragraph 83:

Para 83. Planning policies and decisions should enable:

a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;
b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;
c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and
d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.

Paragraph 84 states:

Planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport). The use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist.

4.2 What is key in the NPPF is positive planning to support existing rural business ventures and the sustainable growth of business both through the conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings.

The County Council is asked to consider that the proposals are clearly compliant with this national guidance in this respect. The site has been previously used for commercial activity and particular long term B2 use. The site has not been used for a number of years and has been advertised for many years with no interest. The applicant has breathed life back into this site and wish to continue its commercial use which will bring a degree of vitality back into this area, and economic prosperity.

The site is already an established commercial unit and the proposal utilises all of the existing buildings with little or no external changes, apart from renovation and maintenance to improve the visual appearance of the main warehouse buildings. Fencing and some screened is in place and the applicant would welcome any additional screening requirements from the Council, especially if it comes with an emphasis on native species.

With regards to the new proposed buildings, the submitted plans show 3 buildings of reasonable size and scale to existing units, which sits close to the existing built form allowing an unobtrusive addition to the site which allows for growth and expansion without causing any great adverse effect.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted to the Council that the proposal complies with the Framework objectives for rural business, the reuse of existing sites and the growth agenda in rural parts which bring jobs and prosperity. The proposal provides and opportunity to bring an existing commercial site back into use with only the addition of additional buildings which are comparable in scale and appearance to existing developments along the A17. The applicant would ask the Council to view the proposal in its current context and conclude that it remains the same in terms of its impacts on the countryside location and surroundings and will be sustainable and economically beneficial to the local area.

4.6 The Development Plan- Relevant Polices to be considered:

Lincolnshire Minerals & Waste Local Plan: Core Strategy & Development Management Policies 2016 (CSDMP)

Policy W1 – Future requirements for new waste facilities
Policy W3 – Spatial Strategy for New Waste Facilities
Policy W4 – Locational Criteria for New Waste Facilities in and around Main Urban Areas
Policy DM1 – Presumption in favour of sustainable development
Policy DM2 – Climate Change
Policy DM3 – Quality of life an amenity
Policy DM14 – Transport by Road
Policy DM15 – Flooding and Flood Risk
Policy DM16 – Water Resources
Policy DM17 – Cumulative Impacts

South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036 (SELLP)
Policy 1 – Spatial Strategy
Policy 2 – Development Management
Policy 3 – Design of Development
Policy 4 – Approach to Flood Risk

Policy 7 – Improving South East Lincolnshire's Employment Land Portfolio (Other Employment Sites)
Policy 30 – Pollution

5. PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

It is accepted that this site is located in the open countryside, outside of any defined settlement boundaries but this site is well located and is a significant job creator.
Policy 1 of the SELLP supports development where it is necessary to such a location and/or where it can be demonstrated that it meets the sustainable development needs of the area in terms of economic, community or environmental benefits.

In undertaking the exercise on the principle of this development in this location the Council is asked to consider the following positive contributing factors:

- The site is an existing commercial site benefitting from historical B2 use which has been endorsed by SHDC in the recently approved CLEUD.
- The last B2 use was for vegetable washing and preparation and involved a workforce on site and numerous lorry movements; the fallback position is that of a B2 use which potentially could generate greater impacts than this proposal, with noise, dust and vehicular movements under what would be a lawful operation. The proposal before the Councils is a measured and considered operation of relatively low impact which can be controlled by way of condition if the Council deemed necessary.
- The nearest settlement to the site is Holbeach and although Holbeach is not identified as a main urban area the site the Council is asked to consider the physical location positively as its site is directly adjacent to the A17. The A17 is one of the main routes in this area and gives access to Spalding and Boston, Spalding and Boston are both identified as main urban areas within Policy W3 and with the site having direct adjacent access to the A17 the Council is asked to consider that this positive feature of the site will weigh in its favour and would not compromise or undermine the spatial strategy promoted by Policy W3 (Spatial Strategy for New Waste Facilities) and is also a suitable site in terms

of Policy W4 (Locational Criteria for New Waste Facilities in and around Main Urban Areas) of the CSMDP.

On this basis the Council is respectfully asked to consider that the principle of development in this case is acceptable.

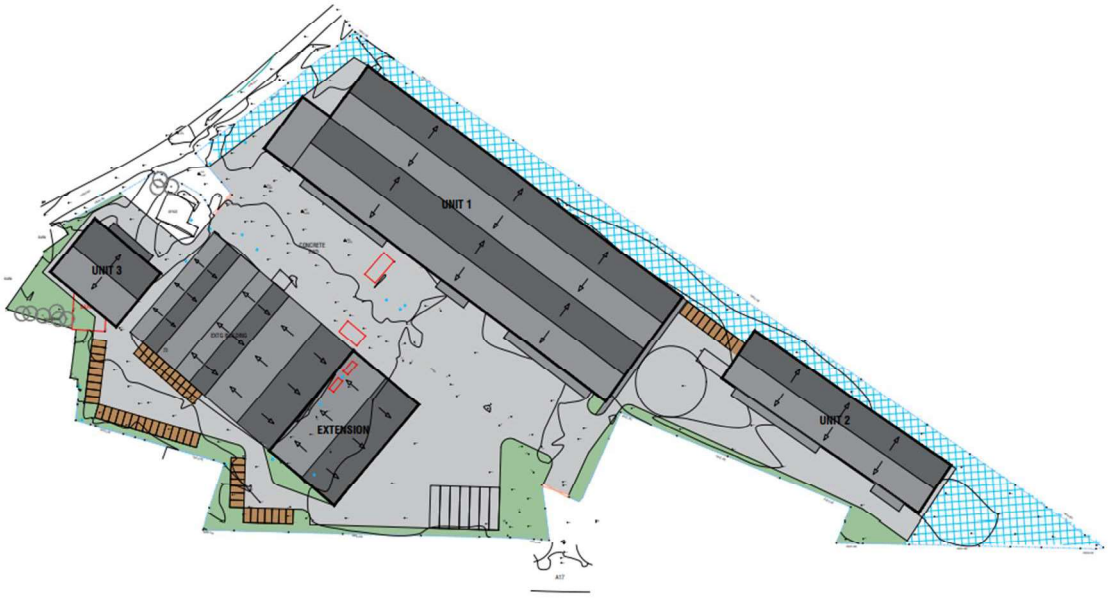
6.0 OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 Design and Visual Impacts

The proposal seeks to use the existing warehouse units on site and it was the existing size and scale of these buildings which made this site ideal for the applicants proposal. These buildings have already been repaired and made visually more attractive to the area.

A modest extension to the existing building is proposed on the south-eastern elevation in order to provide an additional much needed area for the processing. This extension visually is not considered to be intrusive.

6.2 New additional unts to support the business.



Unit 1- a new building is proposed on the north- eastern boundary of the site. This makes use of a large unused area of the site and provides a large ground floor space for extended operations, a ground floor office and a mezzanine level to accommodate further office space and meeting room. to provide

In terms of the new building proposed, this has been designed to complement the existing units and is of a comparable scale and design.



The Image above shows the design of unit 1 which is considered to compliment the existing units. The Council is asked to note the modest height of the building which enables the unit to blend within the existing commercial context.

Unit 2- this new unit is proposed in the far eastern corner of the site, again on an area which is currently under-utilised. This provides an additional area of 1663 m², for the expanded operations of the applicant. The additional space would enable the applicant to fulfil the expected employment capacity and provide the product at the rate of its current demand. The building again is of a modest height so as to blend into the vista of the current site context and the design again complements the existing bult form.

Unit 3 – unit 3 is the smaller of all the units proposed with a footprint of 712 m². This unit provides an area for storage, amenity/ WC facilities and on the first mezzanine floor, a conference facility. This unit sets very close to the existing facilities to the west of the site and with the landscaping as shown on the plan, any views from the public highway would largely be limited.

- A number of parking bays are shown to the western boundary of the site. This will separate the car parking facility from the main lorry movements within the site, ensuring an element of vehicle and pedestrian safety. It is considered that an adequate number of spaces are provided for the running of the site.

Respectfully the Council is asked to consider the new building in the context of the existing site, the scale of production and the creation of jobs. The site is already well established and there are no nearby residential properties which will be negatively affected.

Policy expects new developments to be of a suitable design, size, scale and relative to existing development and land-uses; to have suitable access and drainage.

There are no nearby heritage assets and no sensitive landscape receptors. On this basis, when balancing the benefits of the project, it is considered to be compliant with Policies 4 and 31 of the SELLP.

These new buildings also reflect various sites and buildings in terms of design and scale, which are common along the A17. The Council is asked to consider the design and scale proposed which seeks to mirror on site and nearby development and conclude compliance in terms of SELLP Policies 2 and 3 or CSDMP Policy DM3 from an overall design perspective.

6.2 Access and Highways

The applicant has benefitted from the advice of the highways officer prior to the submission of this application. On the advice of the officer the egress to the site onto the A17 has been improved and upgraded to an adoptable standard. A plan has been submitted to demonstrate the extent of the works and the applicant instructed LTP (Local Transport Projects) to produce a comprehensive highway assessment plan, detailing the access and egress and also the new one way system which will be adequately signed and adhered to be the applicant and any visitors to the site.

The applicant is grateful for the advice given on the highways arrangements and the new layout is considered to increase highway safety and provide a fluid movement of vehicles through the site with very little impact on the highway or neighbouring businesses.

Internal arrangements see a one-way system in place with adequate space retained for the parking of vehicles within the site. On this basis the Highway Authority is asked to consider the lack of any severe or even moderate highway harm, the measures that have been put in place and the overall excellent visibility of the egress onto the A17.

6.3 Impact on Residential Amenity

There are no immediate neighbours to the site and with the appropriate screening it is considered that bringing this site back into use for the proposal, brings overwhelming benefits locally and to the District.

The applicants respectfully ask the Council to consider the high standard already achieved on the site which will continue under a permission and in line with any conditions deemed appropriate by the Council.

6.4 Flood Risk

The application site is within Flood Zone 2 and 3. A through and comprehensive flood risk assessment has been submitted with the application, which demonstrates the how flood risk can be adequately mitigated on the site without causing any increase of flood risk elsewhere.

6.5 Socio-economic

The proposals will support this innovative and environmentally motivated venture. This is considered to be a venture of national and even global importance which will be an asset to Holbeach and Lincolnshire. A business such as this, which produces a usable product out of waste plastic whilst providing employment and prosperity on a site in an excellent viable location, respectfully needs Council support. This is a growing business which is an important source of economic activity and employment which in these uncertain times is more important than ever in the planning balance.

6.6 Ecology

There is no reason why the proposed development should have any material impact upon ecology in the local area, the site has been subject to long terms commercial use with the buildings being secure with enclosed roofs. There are no trees of great merit nor established hedgerow, therefore any ecological harm is unlikely.

6.7 Community Involvement

The applicant would like to take the opportunity to express to the Council their intention to work with and involve the local community. Local Council Members and local MP's have been involved in this proposal from early doors. One local Member has taken the time to discuss concerns with any residents showing an interest and visitors to the site for arranged tours have been welcomed by the applicant.

The applicant held an official opening and welcomed investors, local members, MPs, Council officers and dignitaries to the site to explain the innovations in plastic processing and the ethos behind the company. This was met with great enthusiasm and high expectations for the future in plastic waste management. It is hoped that the Council can support the proposal in light of its compliance with local and national policy requirements.



6.0 Conclusions

Taking the above into account, it is considered that the proposals are sustainable and will boost the rural economy and help bring prosperity to the area through the utilisation and expansion of an existing B2 commercial site.

The proposals are not harmful to amenity, would not adversely affect highways and will not be harmful to the environment or ecology.

The Council is respectfully asked to consider the benefits of the proposals and their general conformity to both national and local plan policy requirements and to support this innovative and exciting plastic processing facility.

Angela Simmonds
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Simmonds Planning Ltd.