



The countryside charity  
Northamptonshire

**Planning Application S/2020/2337/MAO – Site AL4 – Podium Business Park, Shacks Barn Farm, A43 Oxford Road, Silverstone NN12 8TB**

## **1. Introduction**

1.1 The application is for outline planning permission with all matters reserved except access for proposed mixed use employment site: Class B2 (General Industrial) and B8 (Storage and Distribution). To include complimentary uses and associated works at Podium Business Park, A43/A413 in the parishes of Whittlebury and Silverstone

1.2 The plan calls for a 10 ha extension to the existing Podium Park SME business park, currently operating as units for high-tech industries serving the local motorsport industry. The buildings currently in use are exemplary in design and blend in with the immediate surroundings. They are also very well screened, all being below tree height.

## **2. Scale and Mass of proposed buildings**

2.1 The proposed plan will alter the scale, profile and function of the current business park. It is questionable if the proposed development will complement the existing development as the increase in heavy goods traffic using the site is most likely to impair current deliveries and vehicle movements to existing units.

2.2 Most importantly, the application deviates from the adopted SNC Local Plan Part 2, by seeking permission for three 15m high warehouse buildings, with potential for at least one 150,000 sq. ft. unit. This is not compliant with the adopted SNC Local Plan Part 2, as there is no provision for large scale units of this scale on any sites within the SNC Local Plan Part 2. Also, the site is located on a high plateau, Whittlewood Ridge, and 15m high building would be visible for several miles around. This is unacceptable in a rural location and is also not compliant with the LP2, which states that new buildings must be "*subservient to the existing facility.*"

2.3 It should be noted also that, as part of the requirements of the SNC Local Plan Part 2, all proposed buildings on all sites are placed within the allocation site area. The developer has already attempted to increase the development site area by 28% by placing drainage ponds outside of the allocated land area. This will set a precedent and should not be permitted.

## **3. Environmental Impact**

### 3.1 Traffic Impact assessment

Podium Park entrance is located on a small roundabout on the A413, but has no southbound access to the A43. This can only be accessed through the villages of Whittlebury and Silverstone. A traffic modelling report had been requested by the case officer over a year ago, but as far as we are aware, this request has still not been complied with. It is unacceptable for heavy goods vehicles to be using villages as a 'cut-through'. In the case of Silverstone, the entrance to the village on the southbound road has two schools, and to re-introduce heavy truck movement undermines the original investment in by-passing the village with the A43 dual carriageway.

3.2 Estimates of vehicle statistics from the applicants' own consulting engineers, MJM, should approval be given, show 176 B8 (38 tonne articulated heavy goods vehicle) movements between 08.00 and 09.00, when school access is busiest, and shows that 60 percent of those vehicle movements will be on the A413. This equates to one vehicle every 34 seconds. The current estimated traffic numbers for the same period in the morning, agreed by National Highways and Clowes, the applicants contractor, shows approximately 27 trucks, and 38 cars and vans will be using the A413. For the evening period between 17.00 and 18.00 hrs, the numbers are approximately 36 trucks and 54 cars and vans.

### 3.3 Air and noise pollution impact

Potential air pollution and associated noise pollution impact is of major concern in Silverstone High Street on the A413, adjacent to the new infant/junior school and at Whittlebury Infants School, which is already experiencing issues with the current volumes of traffic using Whittlebury High Street. A traffic modelling report must be provided together with an appropriate environmental impact assessment.

## **4. Conclusion**

In the opinion of CPRE Northamptonshire, it would be perfectly feasible for Podium Park to be extended if the project was compliant with the SNC Local Plan Part 2. However, the site is not compatible as a major logistics hub and would cause long-term environmental problems for both Silverstone and Whittlebury villages. Also, due to traffic access problems on to the southbound A43, the scheme is unworkable in its present form should not be given planning approval.

**16/8/22 CPRE Northamptonshire**