

## Full Council

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<b>Date:</b>	<b>31 July 2018</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>DAF Trucks Ltd, Eastern Bypass, Thame OX9 3FB</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Graeme Markland, Neighbourhood Plan Continuity Officer</b>

### Background

1. The proposed development site is approximately 0.55 hectare in size, quadrangular in shape, and is currently parking for the office and industrial site occupied by DAF Trucks and formerly, Kubota. In April 2018 an application was submitted to change the use of the parking and construct a 68-bedroom care home, specialising in dementia care.
2. The Town Council submitted a response to the District Council on 14 May 2018. Among other reasons, the application was recommended for refusal on the grounds of loss of employment land, and the need to ensure the proper strategic planning of such facilities. The need for the facility had not been proved, and the local CCG object to the proposal.

### Proposed Development

3. The application, P18/S1243/FUL, is for an amendment to the earlier application, producing further evidence on, among other matters, the level of parking proposed for the facility; the need to amend the access to make it more suitable for pedestrians; the submission of a Travel Plan and details on drainage. These details were asked for by the Oxfordshire County Council Transport Development Control.
4. Separately, the agent for the scheme, Montagu Evans, has sent a letter to the District responding to some criticisms and requests for information and evidence.

### Discussion – Planning application

5. A subsequent response has been submitted by OCC Transport Development Control on 25 July 2018.
6. OCC now deem that the access arrangements, parking, pedestrian movement through the site and vehicle tracking (for refuse vehicles) are now acceptable.
7. Matters still to be resolved, for which more information may be required, include details on drainage and the travel plan. In the case of the latter, a response is awaited from the travel plan team.
8. OCC have presented a list of planning conditions they consider necessary, should the scheme gain approval. They cover matters such as proof of turning circles, secure cycle parking provision, off-site highway (pedestrian access) works, drainage, travel plans and travel information packs and the need for a construction traffic management plan.

### Discussion – Montagu Evans letter

9. The applicant's agent writes to the District's planning case officers with a number of comments:
  - They state that the use of the existing access from Howland Road to serve the residential function has already been met, by the District's approval of the

permitted development scheme; and furthermore, it is therefore suitable to serve the warehouse at the rear of the site, too.

- Officers have claimed that without adequate marketing evidence for the application site, the application does not address Policy E4, which seeks to protect employment land and buildings for employment purposes. Montagu Evans state they are “in the process of addressing these requirements in respect of other parts of the Kingsmead Business Park site to determine if an alternative form of development would be justified”. The agent then goes on to point out that the DAF element does not need marketing, and that as the car park served the DAF building, neither does that. They quote comments from Economic Development officers that they claim support this view.
- They claim they have actively marketed the warehouse site for over 12 months, without clear interest of occupation or redevelopment. The location and suitability of the site are the reasons given. They state this further demonstrates the lack of interest in traditional employment uses within the Kingsmead Business Park
- They state this is all material, and supports the case for approving the planning application for the care home scheme.

10. The agent’s letter then goes on to cover matters raised by the Town Council in its deliberations on the application:

- They state there is no requirement to demonstrate need for the proposed care home. However, “Care UK has identified that there is sufficient need and demand within Thame for a care home of this type and scale”.
- There is no requirement to assess the impact on local health services in respect of the proposal. The agent understands, however, that “future residents would benefit from extensive on site health services which would operate independently of other local facilities”.
- Private care home provision is not planned for at a regional level, and typically site allocations are not made for such provision. “Need/demand is usually identified by a care home operator, and sites sourced in line with a range of viability criteria”.
- The scheme is of high quality design, having regard to the site and its surroundings.

11. The agent states our objections do not amount to valid reasons as to why the scheme should be refused.

### **Recommendation:**

12. Members may wish to consider if a response is required to the assertions and statements from the applicant’s agent.