

**UNIT 6, LUPTON ROAD**

Proposed change of use to auction facility.

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**1. Officer Recommendation:****SUPPORTS**

- Subject to no objection from Highways.
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**2. Key Issues:**

- Change of Use

The lawful use of the existing building and land is likely to be light industry (as built) and would now fall under the broad use class E. The proposed use as an auction house may be considered Sui Generis by the District Council, being a mainly retail function but one where goods are not available for immediate sale or order to any visiting or passing member of the public. If permitted, and if the District declares the proposed use Sui Generis further change of use would be subject to new planning applications.

- Parking and Access

The number of parking spaces would remain at 20 (including 1 light goods vehicle space), which the applicant states will be sufficient for the proposed use. Within their submitted Design, Access and Planning statement the applicant states the busiest times will be during viewing days when they expect up to 20 “visitors” on site including their staff. It is claimed that most people attend auctions virtually. Members will be aware that Lupton Road is heavily constrained by being a narrow road, often lined with parked vehicles with difficult access and egress arrangements for many of the existing units.

- Employment

The current, presumed Class E use covers at least 710 sq.m. of floorspace (gross internal). The applicant states there would be no change to the existing number of employees (6 full-time) which conflicts with their declaration that the existing use class order of the land is unknown. The unit could reasonably employ some 14 persons, assuming the former light industrial use. With the broad range of uses covered by Class E, however, it could be higher. It cannot be considered employment land, however, unless it is established through information not available to the Town Council that the lawful use is either heavy industry or storage/warehousing.

- Impact on Neighbouring Amenity

There would be no impact on neighbouring amenity as a result of the proposals.

- Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area

No internal or external alterations are proposed for the building.

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### 3. Planning History: None of relevance.

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### 4. Risk Appraisal

Dependent on the Town Council's recommendation to SODC is it likely that there would be a contrary decision by SODC? If so then a councillor should be nominated at the meeting to represent the views of the Town Council at the planning committee.

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### 5. Policies Relevant to the Application

The following policies are of particular relevance when considering this application.

#### Thame Neighbourhood Plan

- WS12 Retain existing employment land in employment use
- GA6 New development to provide parking on site for occupants and visitors
- ESDQ15 Developers must demonstrate in a Design and Access Statement how their proposed development reinforces Thame's character
- ESDQ16 Development must relate well to its site and its surroundings
- ESDQ17 Development must make a positive contribution towards the distinctive character of the town as a whole
- ESDQ18 New development must contribute to local character by creating a sense of place appropriate to its location
- ESDQ19 The Design and Access Statement and accompanying drawings must provide sufficient detail for proposals to be properly understood
- ESDQ29 Design car parking so that it fits in with the character of the proposed development

#### SODC Local Plan 2035 Policies

- DES1 Delivering high quality development
- DES3 Design and access statements
- DES6 Residential amenity
- DES7 Efficient use of resources
- DES8 Promoting sustainable design
- EMP2 Range, size and mix of employment premises
- EMP3 Retention of employment land
- ENV12 Pollution – impact of development on human health, the non-strategic natural environment and/or local amenity (potential sources of pollution)
- STRAT1 The overall strategy
- TH1 The strategy for Thame
- TRANS2 Promoting sustainable transport and accessibility
- TRANS4 Transport assessments, transport statements and travel plans
- TRANS5 Consideration of development proposals