

APPLICATION NUMBER	CB/20/01367/FULL
LOCATION	Haynes Park, Church End Road, Haynes, Bedford, MK45 3BL
PROPOSAL	Meeting Hall (Class D1) incorporating ancillary facilities including toilets, medical rooms and circulation. Demolition of the pool structure and landscaping including reinstatement of historic landscape features, hard and soft standing and a wilderness garden.
PARISH	Haynes
WARD	Houghton Conquest & Haynes
WARD COUNCILLORS	Cllr Hares
CASE OFFICER	Annabel Robinson
DATE REGISTERED	06 May 2020
EXPIRY DATE	05 August 2020
APPLICANT	Science of the Soul
AGENT	Montagu Evans LLP
REASON FOR COMMITTEE TO DETERMINE	A Major application which is also a Departure

RECOMMENDED DECISION **Full Application Recommended for Approval**

Reason for Recommendation:

The proposal would conflict with Policy DM4 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (North) which is given moderate weight. The development is however supported by paras 83, 84 and 92 of the NPPF which weighs in favour of the application.

The development will result in less than substantial harm to the setting of the grade I listed building and the Conservation Area. Whilst great weight is given to the impact on the setting, in accordance with section 16 of the NPPF, the harm is, on balance outweighed by the public benefits, which are identified in the report.

The proposal would bring significant economic benefits in the form of the provision of jobs within the local area, and the supporting of a local established society on a site which has been in use for the purpose over 20 years, the use of the site for large scale gatherings was established though the temporary use previously given. The proposal is considered to be acceptable in terms of its impact on the landscape, character and appearance of the area, highway safety and capacity, and neighbouring amenity. There will be net gains to biodiversity and the provision of extensive tree planting which weighs in favour of the application. Other matters including flood risk are neutral. Having regard to the policies contained within the NPPF, it is considered that material planning considerations exist which outweigh the conflict with the Development Plan of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (North) as such, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable, subject to planning conditions and a completed s106 agreement.

Site Location:

The site consists of Haynes Park Estate, located to the north of Church End Road, Haynes. The site area is some 168 Hectares, most of which is private park land. The administrative area of Central Bedfordshire extends to all areas of the site where there is proposed built development, but the northern portion of the site falls within Bedford Borough and therefore is beyond the control of Central Bedfordshire.

Haynes Park forms the grounds of a Grade I Listed Building currently used as a Spiritual institution (Science of the Soul) with ancillary residential occupation. The grounds have extensive gardens and are accessed by a private drive off Church End Road, which is within the Haynes Conservation Area.

The Application:

The application seeks full planning permission for:

Meeting Hall (Class D1) incorporating ancillary facilities including toilets, medical rooms and circulation. Demolition of the pool structure and landscaping including reinstatement of historic landscape features, hard and soft standing and a wilderness garden.

A single building to house –

An assembly hall capable of holding a congregation of up to 25,000 people, and a series of ancillary spaces including:

- 480 toilets including DDA toilets.
- An area to accommodate books, audio and video.
- 2 conference rooms for 100 people each, with waiting areas within the building.
- First Aid rooms with easy access for an ambulance.
- Areas to serve pre-prepared packed-lunches to the congregation as they leave the main building.
- Covered walk way around the building for rain protection.
- Storage and plant rooms.

The proposed building would be circular in footprint, and form a single dome shape, proposed with sedum roof. The building would be 268 metres in diameter externally (230 internal built form), and have a total height of 22 metres.

The application is supported by the following documents:-

Application Plans (Existing and Proposed)

Landscape Plans

Planning and Heritage Statement

Design and Access Statement

Proposed Use Summary

Landscape Visual Impact Assessment

Archaeological Desk Based Assessment

Utilities Statement

Soil Investigation and Management Strategy

Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy

Great Crested Newt Habitat Suitability Index Report

Energy and Sustainability Statement

Bat Roost Assessment Report
Ecological Appraisal
Traffic Management Report and Travel Plan
Transport Statement
Statement of Community Involvement
Statement of Need
Arboricultural Impact Assessment
Planting Design Booklet
Management and Maintenance Plan (Landscape)
Badger Document

Background and Context:

Use of the site:

The site has been used by the applicant, a spiritual organisation known as Science of the Soul, for in excess of 20 years. They are an established organisation who have members across the United Kingdom and the world. The Science of the Soul congregation is spread across 90 countries of over 6 million people, approximately 35,000 living in the United Kingdom. Currently the site at Haynes Park is one of a number of UK locations for the organisation. The Science of the Soul community gather at Haynes Park in a variety of meetings throughout the year. There is a regular large scale meeting known as "Satsang" which is traditionally hosted in August over a long weekend. Historically the organisation hosted a second large scale meeting in March on the site, however this has not happened for the last few years.

Satsang is described by the applicant as follows:-

"Coming together in this way, once, or twice a week, is an essential part of the lives of those within the organisation. It creates within us an atmosphere of love and devotion for the Lord. We become a source of strength for each other; it helps build the faith within us to attend to our spiritual practice and encourages us to dedicate our lives more fully to our chosen path.

Our day-to-day lives are full of so many difficult challenges that it becomes easy to let these overpower us and negatively influence our way of thinking. We therefore all need a positive anchor in our lives, a place where we can go and be together with like-minded people, where we can gain a clearer perspective on our lives and focus on what really matters to us. That is why Satsang is so important.

Satsang also provides us with the opportunity to perform 'seva'. Seva means self-less service, and at Satsang we can also offer our time and effort in providing support to the running of the gatherings. Seva can take many forms, for example, we can help by stewarding people to their seats, assisting the elderly and infirm, providing refreshments, or a multitude of other activities. It is however not important what 'type' of seva we do, rather it is the attitude we take when we perform it. It is a fundamental precept of our teachings that whatever seva we volunteer for it should be done without expectation or to seek any kind of reward. Serving our fellow human beings in this way fosters humility, creates a deep sense of fulfilment and engenders a greater love for the Lord within us.

In the Science of the Soul philosophy, Satsang and Seva form the fundamental means of support for all our members as they tread the inner path of love and devotion. Being together at our gatherings and working hand-in-hand fulfils a deep need within each individual to be part of something beyond themselves. A place where they all feel they belong, where they are all treading the same path and they all support each other as one big family.”

The Satsang has been facilitated by the use of a temporary marquee building, which is erected on land to the rear of the main house. The marquee that was purchased has been in use for some 20 years and due to wear is at the end of use. The marquee was given planning permission indefinitely for no more than 49 days in any one calendar year. In addition, there was a condition attached to the planning permission, which stated “there shall be no more than two festival meetings in any one calendar year”. The condition was not qualified with operational numbers or a restriction on length of a “festival”. However, the Science of the Soul have been operating with either one or two large scale meetings a year since the permission for the marquee was approved.

Due to the popularity of the meeting and the scale of the organisation growing, the applicants are seeking a permanent solution to replace the temporary permission for the marquee.

Proposed use of the building:

The planning application seeks to construct a single circular building to facilitate large scale meetings. The meetings would be for the sole use of members of the Science of the Soul and not accessible to the public nor rented out. However, the community of Science of the Soul is considered a community facility.

The organisation has been operating from Haynes Park for a substantial amount of time and are considered to be part of the wider village community. The building would be to facilitate existing operations but with a more modern and accessible facility. The applicant has identified that the needs of their community are not being satisfactorily ensured by the temporary marquee, in the sense of satisfactory facilities on site (accessibility matters), temperature/climatic control and audio/visual system. It is proposed to remain hosting the large events twice a year, but the facility could be used for other smaller meetings which are held regularly within other areas of the Haynes Park estate.

Planning permission was granted for the provision of a marquee to be erected at the site in 2003, the application reference of MB/01/00534/FULL. Whilst the planning permission did not identify an end date, it restricted the use of the marquee to 21 days in addition to the 28 days which are allowed under permitted development rights for temporary buildings. In addition to this, a condition was attached which identified no more than two festivals in any one calendar year. The application was subject to a non-financial Section 106 Agreement for a 10-year landscape management plan, on the grounds immediately adjacent to the location of the marquee.

This planning application has been made following extensive pre-application engagement with the Local Planning Authority. The applicant approached Planning Delivery to discuss the possibility of the erection of an event hall in the context of the existing use of the site, and a formal pre-application process was undertaken. Follow-up post pre-application meetings with colleagues in Conservation,

Landscape and Highways also took place. At the time of pre-application engagement officers identified concerns with the scale and design of the building and, in terms of its relationship with the Listed Building/Landscape.

The design evolved through the discussions into the submitted application which included revision to both the location and design of the proposed building. The proposal will replace an existing marquee which is assembled and disassembled on the land subject of this application to facilitate large scale meetings that the owners of the site currently host. To assist in the determination of this application the applicant has provided a proposed use summary document which details the proposed use of the building. It is identified what the needs of the congregation are and, although there is proposed a moderate increase in the medium scale meetings at the site, this building would be to facilitate existing operations but in a permanent facility.

RELEVANT POLICIES:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (February 2019)

Section 2: Achieving sustainable development
Section 4: Decision-making
Section 6: Building a strong, competitive economy
Section 8: Promoting healthy and safe communities
Section 9: Promoting sustainable transport
Section 12: Achieving well-designed places
Section 14: Meeting the challenge of climate/coastal change, flooding
Section 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
Section 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Central Bedfordshire Core Strategy and Development Management Policies - North (2009)

CS1	Development Strategy
CS3	Healthy and Sustainable Communities
CS4	Linking Communities – Accessibility and Transport
CS13	Climate Change
CS14	High Quality Development
CS15	Heritage
CS16	Landscape and Woodland
CS17	Green Infrastructure
CS18	Biodiversity and Geological Conservation
DM3	High Quality Development
DM4	Development Within and Beyond Settlement Envelopes
DM11	Significant Facilitates in the Countryside
DM13	Heritage in Development
DM14	Landscape and Woodland
DM15	Biodiversity
DM16	Green Infrastructure
DM17	Accessible Green Spaces

Central Bedfordshire Local Plan - Emerging

The Central Bedfordshire Local Plan has reached submission stage and was submitted to the Secretary of State on 30 April 2018. Hearing sessions were held in the Summer of 2019 and will reconvene in December 2020.

The National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 48) stipulates that from the day of publication, decision-takers may also give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The apportionment of this weight is subject to:

- the stage of preparation of the emerging plan;
- the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies;
- the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework.

Reference should be made to the Central Bedfordshire Submission Local Plan which should be given limited weight having regard to the above. The following policies are relevant to the consideration of this application:

Policy CC1 Climate Change and Sustainability
Policy CC5 Sustainable Drainage
Policy EE1 Green Infrastructure
Policy EE2 Enhancing Biodiversity
Policy EE3 Nature Conservation
Policy EE4 Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows
Policy HE1 Archaeology and Scheduled Ancient Monuments
Policy HE3 Built Heritage
Policy HQ1 High Quality Development
Policy T3 Parking

Neighbourhood Plan

A Neighbourhood Plan area has been designated for Haynes and a draft plan has been prepared and consulted on. However, given the stage of preparation no weight is given to this Plan.

Supplementary Planning Guidance/Other Documents

Central Bedfordshire Design Guide (March 2014)
National Planning Practice Guidance
Historic England "The Setting of Heritage Assets" (2017)
Landscape Character Assessment (2015)
Haynes Conservation Area Appraisal

Relevant Planning History:

Case Reference	CB/19/03932/SCN
Location	Haynes Park House, Haynes Park, Church End Road, Haynes, Bedford, MK45 3BL
Proposal	EIA Screening Opinion – New Meeting Hall
Decision	EIA – Not required
Decision Date	05/12/2019

Case Reference	CB/19/00230/FULL
Location	Haynes Park House, Haynes Park, Church End Road, Haynes, Bedford, MK45 3BL
Proposal	Installation of emergency internal and external lighting, subdivision of the library and enlargement of steps from the gravel path to the cedar lawn.
Decision	Full - Granted
Decision Date	10/04/2019

Case Reference	CB/18/02377/FULL
Location	Haynes Park House, Haynes Park, Church End Road, Haynes, Bedford, MK45 3BL
Proposal	Internal and external emergency lighting proposals
Decision	Application Withdrawn
Decision Date	10/10/2018

Case Reference	CB/18/02378/LB
Location	Haynes Park House, Haynes Park, Church End Road, Haynes, Bedford, MK45 3BL
Proposal	Listed Building: Internal and external emergency lighting proposals
Decision	Application Withdrawn
Decision Date	10/10/2018

Case Reference	MB/01/00534/FULL
Location	Haynes Park House, Haynes Park, Church End Road, Haynes, Bedford, MK45 3BL
Proposal	Full: Erection of marquee for 21 days in any one calendar year (in addition to the statutory 28 days allowed)
Decision	Full- Granted
Decision Date	29/04/2003

Consultees:

Haynes Parish Council No objection.

Highways Subject to a continuation of the Travel Plan/Traffic Management review in place in respect of the planning consent for the marquee and based upon the information provided in the 'Proposed Uses Summary Document', there is no objection from the Highways Authority.

Pollution No objection subject to informative relating to the movement of topsoil and potential contamination of surface or groundwater.

Sustainable Growth No objection with the inclusion of a condition to secure construction in accordance with the Energy and Sustainability Statement.

Fire Safety	Recommendations relating to the Vehicle Access Route Specifications and the installation of fire hydrants/sprinklers.
Waste Services	No comments to make.
Bedford Group of Drainage Boards	No comments to make.
Rights of Way	None received.
Archaeology	No objection subject to condition
Trees and Landscape	See landscaping and Technical Placemaking Group comments.
Environment Agency	No objection.
Government Pipeline and Storage System	None received.
UK Power Networks	None received.
Conservation Officer	<p>Objection sustained for the reason that the development, by virtue of its size, scale, footprint and massing, will have a dominating effect on the Grade I listed building, and therefore does not have special regard to the desirability of preserving the setting of the Grade I listed Haynes Park contrary to s.66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.</p> <p>The proposed scheme is for a Meeting Hall (Class D1) incorporating ancillary facilities, the demolition of the pool structure and landscaping including reinstatement of historic landscape features, hard and soft standing and a wilderness garden. I consider the Meeting Hall to have an obtrusive <i>dominance</i> as a consequence of development of the proposed footprint, size, height and massing located in a sensitive open green setting of the Grade I Listed Building.</p> <p>The proposed demolition of the pool structure is considered an enhancement of the setting of the listed building. The reinstatement of some of the landscape features, including the wilderness garden is a positive approach to the overall maintenance and restoration of the landscape around the Grade I listed building, and whilst there is some historic information about the character of the wilderness garden. These proposals would be secondary aspect of the proposed development and whilst, on their own right acceptable, in my view their positive impact is separate from the harm identified from the main Meeting Hall.</p>

Whilst I consider that specific harm to significance of the identified assets falls below the high bar of 'substantial harm' pursuant to paragraph 195 of the NPPF, the Framework requires that "great weight should be given to an asset's conservation".

Therefore, in accordance with Historic England's comments, and my own conclusions, I am of the opinion that the proposal is not acceptable in conservation terms due to the sensitive location and erosion on the setting of Haynes Park and to a lesser extent Haynes (Church End) Conservation Area.

Haynes Park is of exceptional significance and the setting of this listed building plays a positive role in the significance of this Grade I listed building. The proposed development would therefore have a harmful impact on the setting of the listed building. In accordance with Paragraph 194 of the NPPF "*Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification*" (NPPF, 2019). The proposed development has been found, by my own conclusions and those of Historic England, to cause 'less than substantial' harm to the setting of the Grade I listed Haynes Park.

As per Paragraph 196 of the NPPF, where the development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm needs to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use

Ecology No objection subject to the inclusion of conditions requiring a Construction Environment Management Plan (Biodiversity) and a Landscape and Ecology Management Plan to be submitted prior to commencement of development.

A District Licence approach will be taken in relation to the protection of Greater Crested Newts (GCN).

Airfield Office Environment None received.

Technical Group Placemaking Objection sustained for the following reasons:

- Unacceptable impact on the listed building and surrounding parkland.
- Use of underground SuDS solution is not supported and alternatives which integrate drainage with the surrounding environmental enhancements should have been explored.

- The relocation of topsoil to agricultural fields could have a detrimental impact.
- Archaeological field work including geophysical survey and trial trench evaluation is required to provide information as to the archaeology within the site.

Anglian Water Services No objection with informative added relating to connections to the used water network.

Royal Society for the Protection of Birds None received.

Historic England Serious concerns raised on heritage grounds due to the harmful impact of the proposed building on the grade I listed Haynes Park. The issues and safeguards (as summarised below) need to be addressed in order for the application to meet the requirements of paragraphs 7, 8, 193 and 194 of the NPPF. In determining this application the statutory duty of section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 should be taken into account.

Haynes Park is Grade I listed and falls within the top 1% of listed buildings nationally. The NPPF states that clear and convincing justification should be made for any harm to a listed building or its setting and great weight should be given to the conservation of listed buildings, irrespective of the level of harm.

Haynes Park is located on rising land which addresses the valley to the south and west. The building as been extended previously, including a complex of building to the north. The south and western side of the listed building remain legible and of high architectural quality.

The C18 gardens were compact and included a formal avenue approaching from the south, flanked by canals and ponds; three avenues to the north and formal gardens to the west. Later C18 and C19 removed some of this and established a wilderness garden and walled kitchen to the east of the house. The gardens comprise of multi-phase landscape in which the main listed building is the focus and dominant feature in the setting.

The proposed building is of a scale which would make it the dominant building in the area to the north west of the hall. Whilst there may not be some long-distance views given the existing topography it would be visible in some views, in particular from the south west of the house.

The northern side of the listed building has seen considerable change but the buildings here are of modest scale. The proposed development would dominate this part of the site and interrupt one of the avenues linking to the wider park and there is a key view of the listed building along the western terrace from which the new building would be a major presence. The sheer scale would make it a distracting if not dominant presence in this view, notwithstanding the green roof.

The scale and design of the building will cause harm to the significance of the listed building and it would not preserve those elements of setting that make a positive contribution to the heritage assets. The level of harm is 'less than substantial' in NPPF terms although in the immediate vicinity of the houses north and western side, this is 'quite a high order'. There is a need for the public benefit of the development to be weighed against the harm which is a matter for the Council.

The case for a new, permanent building, as opposed to a replacement temporary structure has not compellingly been made.

The Georgian Group

None received.

The Greensand Trust

None received.

Landscape Officer

In support of the application:

The site lies in a central position on the Greensand Ridge, at the edge of the north facing escarpment. The Greensand Ridge is a landscape of high sensitivity which has experienced a decline in landscape quality over many years and is considered vulnerable to the impact of inappropriate development. The Greensand Ridge forms "National Character Area 88 - " *The Bedfordshire Greensand Ridge* " - which is noted for the distinctive escarpment, the extent and importance of the historic and cultural landscape, woodland and a mixed farmed landscape combining arable and pastoral land use.

At the District level, the site is within Area 6B "*The Mid – Greensand Ridge*" landscape character area (lca) as identified by the CBC Landscape Character Assessment. The landscape strategy at both the national and district scale is to "*conserve and enhance*" traditional features, such as historic parkland, woodland and heathland. Both assessments emphasise the importance of enhancing and connecting green infrastructure, and in particular to support the expansion of heathland and acidic grassland. Some of the areas proposed to receive the excavated soils lie to the north of the Greensand Ridge, in the "*East Marston Clay Vale*" landscape character area, which is within Bedford Borough.

Historic parkland is one of the key “strategic sensitivities” of the *Mid Greensand Ridge* Ica where it is noted that parkland, heathland and acidic grassland all require active management to sustain their ecological and landscape value. Haynes Park, is part of the unique resource of nearly 30 parklands which extend across the Greensand Ridge, the area has the greatest extent of parkland within any of the National Character Areas. All are considered to make a vital contribution to this resource, whether Registered or not.

The Meeting Hall would be built at an approximate distance of 500m from the Grade 1 listed Mansion, introducing a structure which would be a total contrast to the style and scale of the historic building. There is no doubt that the location has a high sensitivity in terms of landscape change, although there are a range of ancillary buildings, including contemporary, between the Mansion and the proposed dome. These buildings help to create a division of space between the Meeting Hall and the Mansion - this is beneficial in mitigating the impact of the distinct contrast in styles. It is considered that the ancillary buildings would detract from the sense of arrival to the unique structure of the dome.

Haynes Mansion will, in my view, remain the dominant building - it will remain as the central focus within the historic parkland which forms its setting. The critical foreground views to the Mansion, as seen from the access and through the avenue approach, will not be impacted by the proposal, as the dome would be hidden by the rising landform. There will be some views, particularly in winter, of the new structure appearing to the north-west of the Mansion, which are considered to impact on the integrity of the site and so detract from landscape character. This is a relatively distant view and at this time of year, the sedum roof will be recessive, with brown and green tones, which will blend in with the wooded backcloth.

SuDS

Additional details are required to ensure that the flood risk to and from the site will not be increased as a result of the development and that the use of SUDS are integrated into the proposed works.

- The use of an integrated naturalised landscape SUDS scheme is preferred to the below ground crate storage proposed.
- The suitability of infiltration SUDS has not been fully considered. Where permeability is favourable on the site, shallow detention SUDS should be prioritised which could integrate with wider landscape and planting objectives.

- Further evidence is required to demonstrate feasibility of discharge to the unnamed tributary of the river flit, as well as well as confirmation from the landowners that this is acceptable. No details of the condition or capacity of the receiving watercourse/downstream network is provided.
- Soil spread from excavation as part of the development has the potential to disrupt existing drainage patterns. Further details and a mitigation plan are required to ensure floor risk will not be increased.

Cranfield Airport	None received.
Minerals and Waste	No comments to make.
Bedford Borough Council	None received.
Marston Vale Community Forest	Comments to follow on late sheet
Wilstead Parish Council	None received.
Naturespace Partnership	The site lies within a red/amber risk zone for Greater Crested Newts (GCN), and within an area with ponds less than 500 metres from the proposal area. Use of District Licence for GCN.

Other Representations:

Neighbours

There has been significant response to the public consultation with 3875 representations received. The comments are largely in support for the development. Many of the responses have been received from large cities within the UK, and India.

All consultation responses have been considered, however comments from surrounding properties and villages around a 10 mile radius of the site including Haynes, Wilstead, Houghton Conquest, Clophill, and Shefford using the A600 and A6 corridor are summarised below.

50 representations in favour of the proposal which can be summarised as follows:

- The requirement for a permanent building to meet the needs of the organisation to congregate.
- The development will help support the aims of a charitable organisation and the associated public benefits including local community contributions and upkeep of the listed building.
- The creation of a purpose-built hall will alleviate the need for a marquee which poses health and safety risks during erection/dismantling.

- The current marquee is not fit for purpose due to being insufficiently insulated and uncomfortable.
- Economic benefit to local businesses in the surrounding area resulting from the hosting of large-scale events at the site each year.
- The meeting hall attracting global visitors.
- The visually attractive/innovative design of the proposal and the chance for it to become a landmark within CBC.
- The improvements to ecology and biodiversity as a result of the landscaping proposals.
- The proposal being designed sympathetically within the landscape for minimal visual intrusiveness.
- The organisation's continuing charitable contributions to the Parish and the wider area.

7 objections received which can be summarised as follows:

- The disproportionate size and scale of the meeting hall.
- Insufficient justification for a permanent structure as opposed to the current marquee arrangements given the limited number of events per calendar year.
- The size, scale and permanence of the building may open up the possibility of more frequent events to the disruption and detriment of the locality.
- Health and safety issues during the construction phase of development.
- Questioning the need for a hall of such capacity when the existing marquee can accommodate 10,000 people.
- Ambiguities in the number of events and the number in attendance at each event contained within the application.
- Noise and disturbance resulting from the holding of events each year.
- Drainage issues resulting from accommodating a large number of people at each event.
- Increased strain on transport infrastructure in terms of congestion and the need for road repairs.
- Threats to highway safety as a result of hosting large events.
- Harm to the setting of the Listed Building and the surrounding landscape.
- Questioning the organisation's charitable/religious nature.
- Lack of community benefit in terms of public access to the site.

3 general comments raising the following consideration:

- Recommending conditions be attached relating to the retention of the boundary hedges on Church End Road and restrictions on the number of events per year, as well as the capacity at each event.

Determining Issues:

Planning law requires that planning applications are determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The main considerations of the application are;

1. Principle
2. Impact upon the Listed Building and Conservation Area
3. Affect on the Character and Appearance of the Area - Landscape
4. Neighbouring Amenity
5. Highway Considerations
6. Planning Obligations
7. Other Considerations
8. Planning Balance and Conclusion

Considerations

1. Principle of Development

- 1.1 The Development Plan comprises of the Core Strategy Development Management Policies 2009 – this document sets out the Council’s spatial strategy for development.
- 1.2 Policy CS1 classifies settlements by virtue of their scale, services and facilities and the thrust of Policy DM4 is to apply weight in favour of development within settlement ‘envelopes’ and restrict development divorced from the settlements identified within Policy CS1. These two Policies outline the settlement strategy for the current plan-led system for the delivery of development, channelling developments to larger, more sustainable, areas. That approach is consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework and also is the approach adopted in the emerging Local Plan.
- 1.3 Beyond settlement boundaries, Policy DM4 allows for limited extension to gardens, it also support the use of land within settlements for mixed community and other uses where a need for such a use is identified through the Infrastructure Audit or up to date evidence and then notes:
- 1.4 “Where no land is available within the settlement, a site adjacent to the settlement may be granted planning permission. Such development should make the best use of available land and lead to more sustainable communities.”
- 1.5 The application site is not adjacent to any DM4 settlement boundary, is detached from the nearest settlement of Haynes. Therefore, Policy DM4 does not support the proposed development, in this location.

- 1.6 The Development Plan as a whole must be considered (i.e. not just the specific policies) – consistent with Policy DM4 para 11.1.3 sets out that community, education, health, sports and play facilities are encouraged and that ‘In circumstances where there is a clear need for this sort of development, but a lack of alternative sites within the Settlement Envelope, sites adjacent to the Settlement Envelope will be considered favourably’.
- 1.7 There is no definition within the Development Plan in relation to ‘community facilities’. but, as the site is not adjacent to the settlement envelope, there is no further policy support for the proposed development.
- 1.8 Emerging Policy SP7 of the Local Plan sets out that where there is an identified need for further community facilities and there is no land available within the settlement, a site adjacent to the settlement may be granted planning permission. For the reasons outlined previously, the development conflicts with this criteria also.
- 1.9 Paragraph 83 a) of the revised NPPF makes it clear that policies and decisions should support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas through the reuse of buildings or the erection of well-designed new buildings. The revised NPPF recognises that sites to meet community needs may have to be found adjacent or beyond existing settlements and locations not well served by public transport. Para 84 of the NPPF stresses that sites to meet community needs in rural areas may have to be beyond existing settlements and in locations not well served by public transport. The need for such development is to be sensitive to its surroundings and not to have a harmful impact on roads and exploit opportunities to make a location more sustainable.
- 1.10 The NPPF also requires applications and decisions to recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside (170(b)). The application site is currently open, in use for arable purposes, although not farmed and is located on attractive gently sloping rural land. It contributes positively to the rural character and beauty of the countryside.
- 1.11 The preface to Policy DM4 makes clear that certain types of development that are in accordance with the now defunct PPS7 will be permitted. Furthermore, the settlement envelopes were not defined to accommodate housing or other growth over the plan period but to reflect ‘the character of the predominant land use’. Policy DM4, read in the context of its preface is not therefore completely restrictive and, whilst the Framework seeks to protect landscape commensurate with its status, and that Policy DM4 does not attempt to evaluate different landscapes, the Framework also makes clear that the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside should be recognised.
- 1.12 In accordance with the above the Council has accepted that Policy DM4 is not fully consistent with the NPPF, therefore full weight cannot be given to Policy DM4 and is tempered to moderate weight.

- 1.13 Policy DM11, 'Significant Facilities within the Countryside' sets out the policy approach for a number of significant higher educational and research institutes which make a significant contribution to the local economy. These sites are in open countryside where normally there are restrictions on development and the policy approach allows the growth and development of these sites to assist with the wider objectives of the Core Strategy. Policy DM11 does not identify Haynes Park as a location where significant expansion would be appropriate but the policy does set out that further major facilities that may be developed within the district with a similar level of importance in terms of employment or research will be considered against the following criteria.
- Impact on the open countryside;
 - Provision of sustainable transport;
 - Justification;
 - Scale, layout and design - which must be appropriate to the establishment and its setting.
- 1.14 The policy approach in DM11 is considered to be broadly consistent with para 83 and 84 of the NPPF and, in this respect, weight can be attached to policy DM11. It is considered that the use of the D1 meeting hall as proposed in this application would not strictly fall within the category of either employment (other than during the construction phase) or a traditionally considered 'research' facility.
- 1.15 Paragraph 92 of the NPPF sets out that, to provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning decisions should plan positively for the provision and use of community facilities such as meeting places and places of worship to enhance the sustainability of communities. The development accords with this policy and this attracts significant weight.
- 1.16 There is no definition of 'research' in policy DM11 but, in the context of paragraphs 83 and 92 as noted above, a research facility could be considered to align with the proposed use of the building, as the meetings explore concepts of spirituality, and research of the mind/human nature. Limited weight is therefore given to the consistency with policy DM11.
- 1.17 The report highlights above the extant planning permission for the marquee and references the applicants need statement. The proposed building will provide the community with a significantly enhanced facility. These are material considerations which, in combination with para 92 of the NPPF weigh in support of the proposed development.
- 1.18 Summary – the principle of development
- 1.19 The proposed development of the scale and use proposed conflicts with policy DM4 of the Core Strategy and SP7 of the emerging Local Plan. Policy DM4 attracts moderate weight and policy SP7 limited weight. However, the harm associated with the conflict with these policies must be considered and balanced in the round with the Development Plan as a whole and other material considerations.

- 1.20 The other relevant policy to this development proposal in terms of principle is considered to be DM11 of the Core Strategy. This policy attracts weight given its consistency with the NPPF but, given that the proposed use does not fall within the strict terms of the policy for educational/research facilities, the weight is tempered accordingly to be limited.
- 1.21 Paragraphs 83, 84 and 92 are relevant policies relating to the construction of development beyond settlement envelopes for meeting places and places of worship. The development would accord with these elements of the NPPF and this attracts significant weight.
- 1.22 The purpose of the planning system is nonetheless to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (NPPF para 7). The development proposal will therefore need to be considered against the three objectives which are discussed further in this report.

2. **Impact upon the Listed Building and Conservation Area**

2.1 The Listing and designation:

2.2 Haynes Park is a Grade I Listed Building. The Listing is as follows:

HAYNES CHURCH END Haynes Park

(Formerly listed as Clarendon School, previously listed as Haynes School)

22.10.52 I Country house. Originally called Hawnes. Various building periods, incorporating and replacing earlier structures. W elevation c.1725 for Lord Carteret (Earl Granville from 1744, and prominent statesman), probably by Thomas Ripley of the Board of Works. S elevation c.1785-90 for Henry Thynne, Baron Carteret, probably by James Lewis. E elevation 1849-50 for Rev. Lord John Thynne, Canon and Sub-dean of Westminster, by Cubitts. W elevation is red brick with flared headers, with later white brick parapet. S and E elevations are white brick with ashlar dressings. Slate roofs. Square quadrangular building of 2 storeys and attics with C19 and C20 additions to N forming another courtyard. W elevation: 5-bay facade, articulated by brick pilasters, 4 to central bay, 2 each to outer bays, supporting rubbed brick moulded cornices. 2:3:3:3:2 sash windows with glazing bars under gauged brick segmental heads. Doorway to RH of central bay. S elevation: 3:7:3 sash windows, first floor ones with glazing bars, ground floor ones without glazing bars. Projecting outer bays have 2 storeyed bows. To centre of recessed block are 4 Portland stone Corinthian pilasters with paterae to surmounting entablature. Balustraded parapet with Carteret arms to centre. E elevation: 10 window range, all sashes. Off-centre Greek Doric portico with paired columns to centre. Double art-glazed doors in moulded surround. Balustraded parapet, similar to S front. N elevation: rather plain, parts obscured by C20 additions. Variety

of ridge stacks. Interior: W wing contains c.1725 open well oak staircase with paired fluted Tuscan column balusters, Corinthian newels, foliate carving to open strings and parquetry quarter-landings. Retains also some wood panelling and fielded panel doors. S wing retains c.1790 decoration to entrance hall and corridor in Neo-Classical style. Hall decoration includes high relief plaster overdoors and oval plaster panels with female figures. Corridor, vaulted, with rounded half-domed ends, has plasterwork decoration incorporating vines, oak leaves and squirrels. E wing retains marble fireplaces with Ionic columns.

The Haynes (Church End) Conservation Area is located to the south of the site. The Conservation Area Appraisal, whilst dated (July 1989) references the important views out of the Conservation Area – the most important and significant are to the north across the shallow valley to the listed building.

2.3 Legislation and policy background:

2.4 Section 66(1) of the Listed Buildings Act provides:

“In considering whether to grant planning permission ... for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.”

2.5 CS15 and DM13 Core Strategy and Development Management Policies sets out that:-

The Council will:

- Protect, conserve and enhance the district’s heritage including its Listed Buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Conservation Areas, Registered Parks and Gardens and archaeology and their setting.*
- Conserve and where appropriate enhance the quality and integrity of the local built and natural environment, including historic structures or open green spaces considered to be of special local interest.*
- Designate and keep under review Conservation Areas in order to protect or enhance their special architectural or historic interest. This will include the implementation of an on-going programme of Conservation Area Character Appraisals to include a review of their special interest and boundaries.*
- Monitor and survey the condition of Listed Buildings and periodically review and update a Register of Buildings at Risk, providing appropriate grant assistance to encourage their essential sympathetic repair.*

The Council will ensure that:

- proposals for development relating to Listed Buildings and registered Parks and Gardens will pay particular attention to the conservation of locally distinctive features and uses;*
- planning applications for development within Conservation Areas will be assessed against the Conservation Area appraisals and inappropriate development will be refused.*

2.6 Policies CS15 and DM13 are based upon the statutory provisions in the Act as noted but are also based on not out of date Planning Practice Statements rather than the National Planning Policy Framework. This tempers the weight given to these Development Plan policies.

Emerging Policy HE3 requires the following: -

Development proposals that could affect the significance of Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and non-designated heritage assets of local importance and/or their setting will be granted provided they:

- *Uphold the key criteria of the NPPF (including having regard to “substantial harm” and “less than substantial harm”, para 132 – 136) and accord with the relevant sections of the Design Guide for Central Bedfordshire; and*
- *Preserve, sustain and enhance the special character, significance, appearance and locally distinctive features of the asset/s whether it be a Listed Building, Conservation Area or non-designated building/structure in terms of scale, form, proportion, design, materials and the retention of features; and*
- *Make a positive contribution to the setting of the asset/s and its historic significance, and include hard and soft landscape proposals, where appropriate, that respect its character and appearance of the heritage asset;*
- *Are accompanied by a Built Heritage Statement informed by appropriate expertise and describing all the heritage assets (designated and undesignated) that will be affected by the development and include an assessment of the level of impact that the development proposal will have on the asset/s, having regard to the relevant Conservation Area appraisal. Exceptions will be made where advice from the Council by appropriate expertise and describing all the heritage assets (designated and undesignated)*
- *Where development proposals have the potential to impact on the setting or significance of these assets then a consideration of the affect of the development on that setting must be included in the Built Heritage Statement. x Developments that will result in a reduction of the number of heritage assets on the Heritage@Risk Register will be encouraged.*

2.7 The policy approach in HE3 is consistent with the NPPF but, given the stage of preparation of the Local Plan, limited weight is attached. The main assessment of this application in a policy context is therefore against section 16 of the NPPF, which is discussed below:-

The Glossary to the NPPF defines Heritage Asset as “[a] building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest ...”. The “Setting of a heritage asset” is defined in glossary as:

“The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.”

2.8 The definition of “Significance (for heritage policy)” is defined in the glossary as:

“The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting”.

2.9 Paragraph 189 of the NPPF says that “[in] determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting”.

2.10 Paragraph 193 and 194 of the NPPF sets out that, when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building, park or garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.

2.11 Paragraph 195 of the NPPF says that “[where] a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss”, or four specified considerations apply. Paragraph 196 goes on to say that “[where] a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use”.

2.12 The definition of the “Setting of a heritage asset” in the “Glossary” to the NPPF is explained in paragraph 18a-013- 20190723 of the Planning Policy Guidance, under the heading “What is the setting of a heritage asset and how should it be taken into account?”:

All heritage assets have a setting, irrespective of the form in which they survive and whether they are designated or not. The setting of a heritage asset and the asset’s curtilage may not have the same extent.

The extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to the visual relationship between the asset and the proposed development and associated visual/physical considerations. Although views of or from an asset will play an important part in the assessment of impacts on setting, the way in which we experience an asset in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors such as noise, dust, smell and vibration from other land uses in the vicinity, and by our understanding of

the historic relationship between places. For example, buildings that are in close proximity but are not visible from each other may have a historic or aesthetic connection that amplifies the experience of the significance of each.

The contribution that setting makes to the significance of the heritage asset does not depend on there being public rights of way or an ability to otherwise access or experience that setting. The contribution may vary over time.

When assessing any application which may affect the setting of a heritage asset, local planning authorities may need to consider the implications of cumulative change. They may also need to consider the fact that developments which materially detract from the asset's significance may also damage its economic viability now, or in the future, thereby threatening its ongoing conservation.

2.13 Historic England Guidance

2.14 In December 2017 Historic England published guidance entitled 'The setting of Heritage Assets'. This guidance is considered to be up to date and represents a material consideration to which weight can be attached.

Under the heading "The extent of setting", the guidance references the definition of the "Setting of a heritage asset" in the NPPF. The guidance says that "While setting can be mapped in the context of an individual application or proposal, it cannot be definitively and permanently described for all time as a spatially bounded area or as lying within a set distance of a heritage asset. This is because the surroundings of a heritage asset will change over time, and because new information on heritage assets may alter what might previously have been understood to comprise their setting and the values placed on that setting and therefore the significance of the heritage asset."

2.15 Under the heading "Setting and the significance of heritage assets" the guidance says, Setting is not itself a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation, although land comprising a setting may itself be designated. Its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset or to the ability to appreciate that significance.

2.16 The guidance also sets out under the heading "Views and Setting" the following:- *The contribution of setting to the significance of a heritage asset is often expressed by reference to views, a purely visual impression of an asset or place which can be static or dynamic, long, short or of lateral spread, and include a variety of views of, from, across, or including that asset.*

2.17 The responses from Historic England and the Councils Conservation Officer

- 2.18 Both HE (Historic England) and the Councils CO (Conservation Officer), agree that the development will result in harm to the setting of the Grade I Listed building and setting of the Haynes Conservation Area. Both consultees have advised that the harm that they would attribute to the development would be considered less than substantial harm to the character and significance. Both consultees have objected to the application. Third party representations in objection have also raised concern in respect of the impact on the setting of the listed building.
- 2.19 Historic England refer to the applicants assessment of the existing site and provide comments regarding the significance of the listed building and its setting. HE acknowledge that the setting of the house on its northern side (where the proposed development is to be sited) has seen considerable change but existing buildings are of modest scale. HE are critical of the size and design of the proposed development, commenting that it will dominate the northern setting; will be built across the line of one remaining avenue and; that the siting would be a major presence in a key view along the western terrace. HE comment that the impact on the setting is less than substantial but, in the northern and western side this is 'of quite high order'. HE state that it is for the Council to determine whether the public benefits outweigh the harm.
- 2.20 The CO considers the significance of the listed building in detail and comments that this derives from the architecture of the building, its history and its siting on a prominent hilltop within the setting and visibility from various points in the countryside and relationship with the Haynes Conservation Area. The CO comments that the building has 'landmark' status which adds particular value to the site, specifically the significance of the open landscape which creates a 'sense of place' and clear hierarchy with the village of Haynes. The CO considers the relationship with the Haynes Conservation Area and the value of the site in terms of views out from that designated area to the application site.
- 2.21 Significant weight should be applied to these objections, and the identified level of harm within the objections. The responses clearly identify that the preference for development would be with an alternative, or possibly for a further temporary solution.
- 2.22 The applicant's submissions:
- 2.23 Within the documents submitted a (P&HS) Planning and Heritage Statement has been provided. Within this statement it is clear that the applicant does not believe that the development will result in material harm to the setting of the Listed Building due to the design and location of the building, and the proposed mitigation and enhancement works.
- 2.24 The P&HS considers in some detail the degree to which the settings and views make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s) or allow significance to be appreciated.
- 2.25 With reference to the LVIA (as discussed in section 3 below), the applicants report explains that the new building will not be experienced in the key elements of the listed building which contribute to its significance as the building is located in a part of the site which has been the subject of significant and recent change.

- 2.26 The applicant comments that there is limited intervisibility between the listed parts of the property in its local setting and the new structure. The topography also means that the building has limited visibility in views towards it from the surrounding sensitive viewpoints. The tranquillity of the experience of the listed building will be maintained and, in some places enhanced through the reinstatement of the wilderness garden and other elements of historic gardens which will help people experience the building and its setting.
- 2.27 The applicant comments that the proposed development will not be seen behind or in front of the listed building and the grade I building remains the prominent architectural features in all of the key approaches from the west, south and east and views of the building from these directions are preserved. There are views of the listed building from Church End Road to the west but this is not an important view and the listed building is hidden by trees and the proposed building will be seen in the gap created by a thinner part of the tree belt – the proposed green roof will appear as a discreet addition in this view.
- 2.28 The applicant considers that the ‘experience’ of the listed building, will not be compromised as it will remain the main structure, and the proposed building will be only seen within the vicinity of contemporary buildings to the north of the listed building which are of no architectural value. The bulk and mass of the building is reduced by the curved nature of the roof which reduces the impression of the height and the provision of a green roof will help blend the building into the grounds.
- 2.29 The applicants P&HS identified a number of physical benefits which can be attributed weight upon the consideration of the application. These benefits include, inter alia, the restoration of the Wilderness Garden to the west of the main house, restoration of the parkland (grounds of Haynes Park), the removal of pool house from the main frontage parkland setting which would reinstate a clear line of sight between the house and church. The statement reads, *“If the planning authority were to come to the view that these heritage benefits are not sufficient to outweigh the harm identified, then it would be necessary to turn to consider the wider public benefits to be delivered by the proposals in line with the NPPF. These include significant community benefits to a well-established spiritual organisation which has over the years cared for a beautiful historic building, whose architectural quality it also values as providing a fitting home for its UK and international centre.”*
- 2.30 In addition to the physical benefits of Haynes Park, the applicant highlights the environmental, social and economic benefits of the development. Full consideration of the whether this application would be considered sustainable development will be made below, however it is considered appropriate to identify any benefits of the scheme so they can be balanced against the harm to the designated heritage asset.
- 2.31 It is considered that a net gain can be achieved for sustainability purposes, the proposed building has been designed to be energy efficient and makes good use of technology and design to require low future maintenance.

2.32 However, the main benefit of the development as proposed would be to the community. The use of the building is long established, and this site forms the European headquarters for the organisation. The organisation has a requirement to ensure the long-term viable use of the site. The proposed development is a permanent solution, to a need that has been identified for this community. There is considered to be a degree of economic benefit during the manufacture and construction of the building, and in addition to this upon the times where the large scale meetings are held a wider economic benefit to the local community in terms of hospitality services that are required for people traveling to the site.

2.33 Officer Assessment

2.34 The proposal does not alter or extend the Listed Building, and therefore it is considered that the development does not significantly impact upon the fabric of the Listed Building. However, the proposal is within the immediate setting of the Listed Building and the wider setting of Haynes (Church End) Conservation Area.

2.35 It is considered that the proposed development would be behind the main house, at a distance of some 200 metres. Although there is substantial physical separation, due to the significant scale of the building it is considered that there would be an impact upon the setting of the Listed Building and how it is perceived within its own grounds. Further assessment of the impact on significance is discussed below.

2.36 The main consideration therefore relates to the impact on the setting of the designated heritage asset and, in this respect, the criteria set out in the Historic England guidance, as summarised above is most relevant:-

- 1) *Which heritage assets and setting is affected.*
- 2) *The degree to which the settings and views make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s) or allow significance to be appreciated*
- 3) *The effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on that significance or on the ability to appreciate it*
- 4) *Ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm.*

2.37 **Which heritage assets and setting are affected.**

2.37.1 The heritage assets and the setting affected, would be Haynes Park House (Grade I Listed Building) and the Haynes (Church End) Conservation Area. The applicant has provided sufficient information and assessment which is proportionate to the significance of the Grade I Listed Building, Haynes Park and the designated Conservation Area in accordance with para 189 of the NPPF.

2.38 **The degree to which the settings and views make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s) or allow significance to be appreciated**

2.38.1 The report has summarised the differing views of the applicant, the Councils Conservation Officer and Historic England as to the degree to which the settings and views make to the contribution of the significance of the asset and how they are experienced.

2.38.2 Paragraph 190 of the NPPF explains the role of the Local Planning Authority in decision making, this includes the necessity to take account of necessary expertise. Having regard to the views of Historic England and the Councils Conservation Officer, it is evident that the setting of Haynes Park house in its open form does contribute to the significance of the Listed Building. The setting being largely open from substantial built form allows Haynes Park (house) to be appreciated as the dominant building within the local area and within the site. The nature of the manor house is such that the grandeur of it is uncompromised within the setting. The Listed Building is able to be appreciated from views outside the site, and the setting is intrinsically linked to the existing interpretation of the building. It is considered that the setting and views are highly significant in terms of the heritage asset.

2.39 **The effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on that significance or on the ability to appreciate it**

2.39.1 The relevant expert advice that has been received in regard to this application is that the development will be harmful to the setting of Haynes Park, and therefore there is regard for the harm that has been identified. The proposed development would reduce and change some of the views into the site and would have a significant impact upon the ability to appreciate the setting especially when standing at the rear of the building looking towards the existing grounds. When at this view point the development would alter the way that the setting of the Listed building is experienced. It is considered that the development would be harmful in this regard (the ability to appreciate the Listed Building). On balance the proposed development would have less than substantial harm on the Listed Building, however great weight is attributed to the harm that has been identified from this development.

2.39.2 As set out above it is considered that the development would have an impact upon the setting of the Listed Building, and it would be considered harmful. With regard to the Haynes (Church End) Conservation Area, it is considered that there would be very limited impact upon the Haynes (Church End) Conservation Area, as the nature of the Conservation Area is enclosed and linear. The only impact would be that the development may be visible from some views, however due to the orientation of Haynes Park, the development would be unlikely to substantially alter the appearance of the views as demonstrated though the LVIA.

2.40 **Ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm**

2.40.1 The application is made with a suite of measures which would maximise enhancements and minimise harm. It is considered that, due to the scale of the building in the setting, it is not possible to conclude that it would be possible to avoid harm to the setting of the Listed Building.

2.40.2 Prior to the application being made, discussions were undertaken regarding which structures on the site detracted from the historic setting, and if there were any areas within the site that would benefit from restoration. The result of the measures would be that the redundant swimming pool building which is situated on the front (southern) parkland of the site would be removed. This has the substantial benefit of removing all built form between the main house and St Mary's Church. Although the building is not large, it is considered that its removal would be beneficial to the wider landscape and appreciation of Haynes Park from views up the driveway and from Haynes Church End village. This is considered an onsite enhancement that would be delivered through this development.

2.40.3 In terms of minimising harm, a significant level of onsite parkland restoration and localised landscape works would help minimise harm. These works are detailed within the landscape section, but it is considered the reinstatement of the 19th Century Wilderness Garden would help maximise onsite enhancements.

2.40.4 In generalised terms it is considered that the design and siting of the building also minimise harm to the setting of Haynes Park. The whole design process has been to achieve a building that would be although large and capable of hosting large scale events, would not appear dominant in relation to Haynes Park house, and not detrimentally impact upon the setting, so the prominent building remains the focal point of the site.

2.41 Summary of evaluation of harm impact upon Heritage Assets

2.41.1 On balance it is considered that there would be harm to the setting of the Grade I Listed Building, the advice from the necessary experts identify that the development would result in less than substantial harm. It is considered that this conclusion, when considering Historic England's guidance on assessment, is reasonable. There would be an impact upon the setting, and when on site viewing the proposed development the experience of the Listed Building would be altered, therefore there is identified harm to the setting. In accordance with Paragraph 193 of the NPPF great weight must be attributed to the harm. It is considered that there is very limited harm to the setting of Haynes (Church End) Conservation Area.

2.41.2 The Development Plan sets out *The Council will: • Protect, conserve and enhance the district's heritage including its Listed Buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Conservation Areas, Registered Parks and Gardens and archaeology and their setting.* It is considered that there is some conflict with the requirement of the Development Plan, as above harm is identified to the Listed Building. However when the development is considered in the context of paragraph 196 of the NPPF (where the proposal will lead to less than substantial harm) then there can be a balancing exercise, where consideration of the public benefits of the proposal can weigh in favour of allowing a degree of harm.

2.41.3 As set out above the application has been made to fulfil an identified need for the facility to continue the existing activities on the Haynes Park site, it is considered that the public benefits for the development, as set out within paragraphs 2.21- 2.24 of this report, with the substantial identified support for the development, and the onsite mitigation/enhancement measures, as set out within paragraphs 3.15-3.19 of this report, that the development would be acceptable in terms of 196 of the NPPF and Development Plan policies.

3. **Impact upon the Character and Appearance of the Area – Landscape and Design**

3.1 Due to the scale of the building proposed and the location within the open countryside careful consideration is required for the impact that the development may have upon the character and appearance of the area, and the wider landscape impact.

3.2 The application has been supported by a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), the scope of which was agreed with the Councils Landscape Officer at pre-application stage. It is proposed that the building would be the largest central free span dome in Europe, which would have a height of some 21.8 metres above ground level. The roof would be constructed from sedum which is a genus of flowering plants in the family Crassulaceae, members of which are commonly known as stonecrops, they are leaf succulents found primarily in the Northern Hemisphere.

3.3 Due to the scale of the building and open nature of the surrounding landscape, it is likely to be visible within a wider setting than the immediate site. The LVIA addresses the application impacts in terms of impact upon Landscape Character (the effects of the development upon character areas) and a Visual Context (the effects of the proposed development on views from visual receptors and upon the amenity value of the views). Intrinsicly linked to the consideration of landscape impact is the consideration of the design of the building itself.

3.4 The key views which were considered included views from the rear of the main house, Public Right of Way Footpaths 2 and 7, the view from the entrance of Haynes Park, the view from St Marys Church and other views from surrounding the site. The LVIA focused on 15 locations to assess the development.

3.5 The LVIA identified that the development would result in a number of long term effects including:

- Presence of a large-scale building;
- A change in land use from the existing agricultural use to the proposed meeting hall with associated infrastructure and landscaping;
- Presence of lighting associated with the development, subject to detailed design;
- Green spaces for recreation;
- Retained and managed woodland, trees and hedgerows; and
- New shrub, tree and heathland planting within the development area.

3.6 The relevant Policies to consider Landscape impact:

3.7 The most relevant development plan policies are as follows:-

Policy CS14 – High Quality Development:

The Council will require development to be of the highest quality by:

- *Respecting local context, the varied character and the local distinctiveness of Mid Bedfordshire places, spaces and buildings in design;*

Policy CS16 – Landscape and Woodland:

The Council will:

- *Conserve and enhance the varied countryside character and local distinctiveness in accordance with the findings of the Mid Bedfordshire Landscape Character Assessment;*
- *Continue to support the creation of the Forest of Marston Vale recognising the need to regenerate the environmentally damaged landscape through woodland creation to achieve the target of 30% in the Forest area by 2030;*
- *Conserve woodlands including ancient and semi-natural woodland, hedgerows and veteran trees; and*
- *Promote an increase in tree cover outside of the Forest of Marston Vale, where it would not threaten other invaluable habitats.*

Policy DM14- Landscape and Woodland:

The Council will ensure that:

- *Planning applications are assessed against the impact the proposed development will have on the landscape, whether positive or negative. The Landscape Character Assessment will be used to determine the sensitivity of the landscape and the likely impact. Any proposals that have an unacceptable impact on the landscape quality of the area will be refused;*
- *Trees, woodlands and hedgerows in the district will be protected by requiring developers to retain and protect such features in close proximity to building works. Tree Preservation Orders will be used to protect trees under threat from development. Any trees or hedgerows lost will be expected to be replaced; and*
- *Tree planting or contributions towards planting for the purposes of the enhancing the landscape will be sought from new developments. Any planting for the purposes of mitigating the carbon impact of new development will be sought in line with government advice.*

It is considered that the policies are consistent with the NPPF, as they recognise the importance of conserving and enhancing the natural environment as set out paragraphs 170-183 (NPPF) and therefore can be afforded significant weight.

3.8 Paragraph 170 – NPPF

Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);*
- b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;*

3.9 The Policies to consider Design:

3.10 Paragraph 131 – NPPF

In determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings

Policy DM3 – High Quality Development –

All proposals for new development, including extensions will:

- be appropriate in scale and design to their setting.*
- contribute positively to creating a sense of place and respect local distinctiveness through design and use of materials.*
- use land efficiently.*
- use energy efficiently.*
- respect the amenity of surrounding properties.*
- enhance community safety.*
- comply with the current guidance on noise, waste management, vibration, odour, water, light and airborne pollution.*
- incorporate appropriate access and linkages, including provision for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport.*
- provide adequate areas for parking and servicing.*
- provide hard and soft landscaping appropriate in scale and design to the development and its setting.*
- incorporate public art in line with the thresholds determined by the Planning Obligations Strategy.*
- ensure that public buildings are accessible for all, and comply with current guidance on accessibility to other buildings*
- respect and complement the context and setting of all historically sensitive sites particularly those that are designated.*

Policy DM3 is considered to be consistent with the aims of Section 12 of the NPPF (Achieving well designed places) and therefore can be afforded significant weight.

3.11 Landscape Character Assessment

3.12 The Greensand Ridge, specific area The Mid – Greensand Ridge (Character area 6B):

6B.1.35: Conserve the ridge in providing a strong wooded horizon, skyline and backdrop to the surrounding vales- any ridge top change could have a major impact on views.

6B.1.39: Retain views to important local landmarks, particularly gateways to villages,keeping such views free from development which would obstruct or obscure.

6B.1.40: Promote green infrastructure and explore options for improving recreational opportunities and public access. but Avoid impact upon the rural, tranquil character defining much of the ridge.

6B.1.45: Further heathland restoration, creation and extension of existing sites.

6B.1.48: Conserve the remaining areas of pasture and consider opportunities for restoration of pasture to create a mixed landscape mosaic.

6B.1.49: Conserve and enhance the historic parkland landscapes

3.13 Consideration of the impact to landscape:

3.14 The Councils Landscape officer has made an assessment of the application, and the LVIA which supports the scheme and has concluded that the development would be a unique building that would not be visually intrusive within the wider landscape setting sufficient to raise concerns, rather it is considered a landform that will become a future landmark. There are some concerns regarding the limited space to enable a transition from the Mansion (Haynes Park House) to the Meeting Hall (proposed building) but the development would bring gains to the historic parkland and green infrastructure.

3.15 With the application, there are significant localised landscape improvements, within the landscape planting design booklet, these have been subdivided into “landscape around the meeting hall”, “landscape improvements to coach park”, “landscape improvements to tea building”, “landscape improvements to the Wilderness Garden”, “landscape improvements to pond area” and “Tree planting to southern parkland”.

3.16 In the area immediately around the hall, a detailed planting plan has been provided, to create a specific plant experience, the planting mix that has been proposed has been designed to create contrasting colours, smells and shapes to create a sense to place. Substantial grass and shrub planting is proposed, in addition to 26 new trees adjacent to the hall, with an additional 32 within the Northern park land, which would also be enhanced into acid grassland, flowering grassland, health land and wildflower meadow. To enhance and partly enclose the site to the north 95 additional trees are proposed on the woodland buffer.

- 3.17 The restoration of the “Wilderness Garden” to the west of the house, this represents an enhancement for both the landscape and the heritage of the site. The strategy for the Wilderness Garden is focused on restoring the garden to the late 19th Century design and layout, this would be done through the planting of the Wilderness Garden Shrub Mix. 12 new deciduous trees would be planted in the western side of the garden in order to increase the canopy cover.
- 3.18 The existing planting around the periphery of the coach park will be supplemented with a range of new planting, including lines of trees, clipped beech hedges and native understorey to help improve the setting of the coach park, creating layers of planting to screen and filter views of the coaches when being used. This would be done with 23 larger trees, and 100 smaller species “Understorey planting”. Additional planting is also proposed adjacent to the tea building, as this is on the route to the proposed hall. Planting would replace existing hardstanding. Within this area 10 additional trees are proposed, ornamental hedging and new flower beds.
- 3.19 In addition, the enhancement of the surrounding park land including substantial planting within the southern parkland, including 37 new trees, which would complement the formal tree lined access to the main house. This would be a total of 235 larger scale trees, and a significant amount of smaller species, hedging, grasses, and flowering plants.
- 3.20 Due to the design of the building, including the dome shape and green roof (sedum – a succulent plant), it is more likely that from distant views into the site, the building will appear as a new landform rather than a traditional building. Sedum will vary in terms of colour throughout the year, so the visual impact would be changeable depending on season and condition of the sedum roof. As part of the application a drainage/watering detail has been provided to ensure the long term stability of the planting proposed on the roof.
- 3.21 The building would be central within the Greensand Ridge, which is considered to be a landscape of high sensitivity and, due to previous erosion in quality, is considered to be vulnerable. Therefore, any harm to the character of the Greensand Ridge should be avoided. However, it is considered, on balance, that the positive impacts in terms of the restoration of the parkland would provide a benefit to the wider views within the Greensand Ridge, and even though the building would appear as a land form, it would not result in a harmful visual intrusion upon the skyline.
- 3.22 The Councils landscape officer has been clear and detailed when considering each sensitive view point, including that from St Marys Church, the nearby farm houses, West Farm Cottage and near public footpaths. Part of the scheme of benefits of the application includes the removal of the swimming pool building from the frontage of the site, which would reinstate a clear line of vision between the main house and St Marys Church. The overall conclusion is that the development would be considered positive in that the enhancements to green infrastructure and the historic garden features are beneficial and, although there are concerns regarding the impact in some views, the building will create a

new landmark which will be accepted as a unique and distinctive addition to the heritage of the Greensand Ridge.

3.23 In relation to the design of the building, the NPPF demonstrates that great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability. Significant pre-application design work was undertaken prior to an application being made, where differing shapes and locations of the building were considered. The starting point of the design work was around the number of people that may need to be safely within the space and consideration of the type of activity that would be undertaken. With regard to having a seating area for the quantum of people required it is considered that a circular shape provides both space and atmospheric ambience appropriate for the setting of spiritual engagement. The proposed structure would comprise of a free span dome some 162 metres in diameter. The building design uses both the topography of the immediate site, and the wider topography to harmonise into the setting. Internally the existing round site level would be used to create an internal slope, which would provide additional views of the speakers at the large scale events. The exterior design of the building has been chosen to assimilate into the landscape and create the vision of a land feature opposed to a building. The windows proposed at regular intervals within the dome would provide natural light to the users of the building, but external glare reduced by the use of ceramic frit. The inside would not be lit (other than emergency/low level lighting), so light spill would not appear harmful to the wider setting. On balance it is considered that the shape and materials proposed would represent a high-quality innovative design, appropriate for the highly sensitive location.

3.24 It is considered, on balance, that the development of the building, due to its design and siting would not have a detrimental impact upon the character and appearance of the area, or the wider landscape. The resultant development would be considered a positive addition to the site in terms of landscape impact, creating a future landmark, having the opportunity to remove structures from the site that detract and restore habitat and landscaping to the site that would be considered an improvement. There is, in this respect considered to be no conflict with the above mentioned policies of the Development Plan – CS14, CS16, DM14 and DM3.

4. **Neighbouring Amenity**

4.1 Within the redline application site, there are approximately 10 properties which register as individual addresses and, although within the control of the applicant and their use is linked to the main European headquarters of the Science of the Soul organisation, would be considered within a residential use. It is considered appropriate to assess the impact the proposed development would have on these properties and wider amenity of residential properties adjacent to the site.

4.2 Within the site:

4.3 The proposed building would be within close proximity of addresses 1-6 The Garden House, Church End Road Haynes, at a distance of some 60 metres. Given the size of the building proposed, it is considered that it would be prominent when viewed from these dwellings. Although the proposed building would be visible, it is considered that the existing ancillary residential use, would not be so negatively impacted by the proposed building that it would be unacceptable. The dwellings are used by members of the society in connection with the educational and spiritual activities on the site. They are lived in by caretakers of the site, and function as part of the overall use of the Haynes Park grounds. In terms of impact upon the ancillary residential use of the dwellings within the site, it is considered that the proposed development would be complimentary to the site as a whole.

4.4 Amenity of residential properties outside the site:

4.5 The closest residential properties outside the site are some 480 metres (measured from the proposed building) to the south west dwelling called "West Park Cottage", and some 0.5 miles (measured from the building) to the south at the Vicarage, Church Lane Haynes. It is considered that the massing of the proposed building due to scale and location would not significantly impact upon the residential amenity of any neighbouring residential properties in terms of loss of light, outlook, privacy of cause an overbearing impact upon them.

4.6 Noise and general disturbance:

4.7 It is necessary to consider residential amenity in wider terms, due to the use of the proposed building. The main events that take place currently at the site which attract significant visitor number occurs twice a year. However, Haynes Park is within active use all year-round.

4.8 The Councils Pollutions department have raised no objection to the development in terms of potential noise impacts. As the events are currently operational within a temporary structure, it is likely that a permanent building would reduce any noise impacts that currently exist during the large-scale meetings.

4.9 The impact associated with highway movements of the development are considered to be acceptable in terms of residential amenity. The events are run with a strict Travel Plan that gets members on and off the site with efficiency.

4.10 It is acknowledged that at the times of the large-scale meetings the localised traffic impacts would be in excess of standard expected levels. However, the application has been made to replace the existing temporary structure and therefore it is considered that the use of the building is unlikely to be substantially in excess of the current situation. It is therefore considered that, in highways terms, the residential amenity of adjacent properties would not be significantly more harmful than that which currently exists.

4.11 Response to consultation:

4.12 As part of the application process a consultation process was undertaken, which included neighbour letter, site notice and press notice. The response to the application was substantial.

4.13 In favour of the application some 3867 comments were received. It is clear that there is a very significant level of desire for the facility to be provided at Haynes Park. These comments identified the need for the building, the architectural quality of the building and the generalised support for the existing activities at Haynes Park. The vast majority of those representations received are from members of the spiritual organisation who live in different parts of the UK and different countries.

4.14 As set out above within the consultation section, when considering the responses it was appropriate to look at the locations of the comments to ensure that comments from those residents closest to the application site have been fully considered in detail. Comments have been summarised, from nearby villages Haynes, Wilstead, Houghton Conquest, Clophill, and Shefford using the A600 and A6 corridor.

4.15 Seven objections have been received which can be summarised as follows:

- The disproportionate size and scale of the meeting hall.
- Insufficient justification for a permanent structure as opposed to the current marquee arrangements given the limited number of events per calendar year.
- The size, scale and permanence of the building may open up the possibility of more frequent events to the disruption and detriment of the locality.
- Health and safety issues during the construction phase of development.
- Questioning the need for a hall of such capacity when the existing marquee can accommodate 10,000 people.
- Ambiguities in the number of events and the number in attendance at each event contained within the application.
- Noise and disturbance resulting from the holding of events each year.
- Drainage issues resulting from accommodating a large number of people at each event.
- Increased strain on transport infrastructure in terms of congestion and the need for road repairs.
- Threats to highway safety as a result of hosting large events.
- Harm to the setting of the Listed Building and the surrounding landscape.
- Questioning the organisation's charitable/religious nature.
- Lack of community benefit in terms of public access to the site.

4.16 Fifty representations in favour of the proposal which can be summarised as follows:

- The requirement for a permanent building to meet the needs of the organisation to congregate.
- The development will help support the aims of a charitable organisation and the associated public benefits including local community contributions and upkeep of the listed building.

- The creation of a purpose-built hall will alleviate the need for a marquee which poses health and safety risks during erection/dismantling.
- The current marquee is not fit for purpose due to being insufficiently insulated and uncomfortable.
- Economic benefit to local businesses in the surrounding area resulting from the hosting of large-scale events at the site each year.
- The meeting hall attracting global visitors.
- The visually attractive/innovative design of the proposal and the chance for it to become a landmark within CBC.
- The improvements to ecology and biodiversity as a result of the landscaping proposals.
- The proposal being designed sympathetically within the landscape for minimal visual intrusiveness.
- The organisation's continuing charitable contributions to the Parish and the wider area

4.17 Although there is significant support identified for the proposal, it is appropriate to address the 7 objections, and 3 generalised comments to ensure all matters have been thoroughly assessed throughout the wider report. The objections largely relate to the concern that a permanent building is not desirable either within the setting of the Listed Building/landscape concerns, or because of the potential disruption that may be caused from the use of a permanent building/traffic concerns. The concerns regarding the impact on setting and landscape are considered in detail previously in this report.

4.18 To provide comfort for residents the applicant provided a "Proposed Use Summary Document", this document demonstrates the existing activities that regularly take place on the Haynes Park site, and the proposed alteration.

4.19 Existing activity (maximum numbers shown):

Monday – Friday daily 200 visitors to the site
 Wednesday evening – 450 visitors to the site
 Weekends – 4000 visitors to the site
 3 Day National Satsung Event (August) – 25,000 visitors
 2 Day Spiritual Event (summer, not currently held, but held between 2000-2013) – 20,000 visitors

4.20 Proposed activity (maximum numbers shown):

Monday – Friday daily 200 visitors to the site
 Wednesday evening – 450 visitors to the site
 Weekends – 4000 visitors to the site
 A monthly single meeting (to replace a weekend event) – 5000 visitors to the site
 3 Day National Satsung Event (August) – 25,000 visitors
 2 Day Spiritual Event (summer) – 20,000 visitors

4.21 It is appropriate to control the use of the large scale events through a Section 106 Agreement, rather than by planning condition to which the applicant has agreed. There is an existing use on the site, within a variety of buildings, and temporary structures. The previously approved marquee attempted to control use by restricting the use to 49 days. It is considered that the proposed use of the permanent building would be substantially under the previously approved limitation on large scale meetings.

5. **Highways Considerations**

5.1 The application is supported by a Transport Assessment (TA), which has been assessed as appropriate and robust. The proposed use of the building is not substantially dissimilar to the existing activities on the site. The events in terms of traffic management are co-ordinated between the applicant and the Police, and, in general, are considered to be well arranged.

5.2 The highways officer has raised no objection to the development based upon the Proposed Use Summary Document, subject to a Travel Plan and Traffic Management review. Therefore, it is considered that the development is acceptable in terms of traffic impacts and highway safety and does not result in a severe impact in NPPF terms.

5.3 Parking:

5.4 The parking would be onsite, there is an existing small hard surfaced car park to the front of Haynes Park House, this would not be affected by the development. The large scale event parking is managed within the grounds of the site, on the parkland areas. The parking although considered “informal” would be managed by the Society. It is considered that there is satisfactory space to ensure parking on the public highway would not be required.

5.5 Green Travel Plan and Traffic Management:

5.6 The application is supported by a Traffic Management and Travel Plan Document as well as a Transport Assessment. A number of measures are identified as required within the Travel Plan, which includes:

- Continued implementation of the Traffic Management Plan for the Annual National and International Discourses;
- Designation of volunteer as TPC (Volunteer will have previous experience managing traffic and travel at Haynes Park);
- Continued Travel Surveys of members at each Annual Discourses and additional Travel Surveys
- Investigate improved walking and cycling access points to Haynes Park as part of future travel surveys amongst volunteers and members;
- Encourage Car Sharing for members to all Science of the Soul events;
- Provision of Minibus/Coach Travel from Local Branches to Regional Monthly Discourse and Annual Discourses;
- Provision of coaches and mini-buses as shuttle buses from nearby railway stations to Regional Monthly Discourse and Annual Discourses at Haynes Park;

- Promotion of Car Sharing and Sustainable Travel to Haynes Park using noticeboards, the Science of the Soul website, leaflets and posters.

6. **Planning Obligations**

6.1 It is considered reasonable and necessary for a Section 106 agreement to be secured. These have been set out below:

- 6.2
- Speed Indicator Device Contribution (Silver End Haynes) - £10,000 approximately.
 - A proposed use agreement, restricting the number of 'large scale events' (those which attract more than 6,000 visitors in one event) to no more than 5 within any calendar year, no longer than 3 days at any one time.
 - Landscape plan/maintenance plan

6.3 The applicant has agreed to the obligations and a draft heads of terms has been submitted.

7. **Other Considerations**

7.1 **Human Rights and Equality Act issues**

7.1.1 Based on information submitted there are no known issues raised in the context of Human Rights / The Equalities Act 2010 and as such there would be no relevant implications.

7.2 **Construction Code of Practice**

7.2.1 The Council has adopted a Construction Code of Practice for Developers and Contractors in order to minimise the impact of construction work on residents who live near to development sites. The applicant has agreed to comply with the requirements of the Code, and compliance will be secured by planning obligation.

7.3 **Environmental Code of Practice/Ecology**

7.3.1 The application is supported by confirmation from NaturSpace that the applicant can use the District Licence scheme to ensure no harm to Great Crested Newts (conditions required). In addition to this there is sufficient information with the application to ensure that the development would result in a net-gain to biodiversity. Upon the direct siting of the building, the ground is currently of limited ecological value, however the construction of a building, will alter the onsite situation. A new eco-system is proposed in the form of a green roof, which will bring variation to the immediate setting. In addition there is substantial planting, and meadow restoration proposed as mitigation. On balance it is considered that the development, subject to condition is acceptable in terms of ecology.

The Council has adopted an Environmental Code of Practice for Developers and Contractors. The applicant has agreed to comply with the requirements of the Code, and compliance will be secured by planning obligation.

7.4 **Drainage**

7.4.1 The Drainage Officer previously raised concerns regarding the proposed use of underground tanks, however it is considered that there is substantial areas of the site which could accommodate a hybrid drainage solution, which the applicant is proposing. The hybrid solution involves some underground tanking, this is for the direct run off due to the green roof, which will be collected in rills around the building. However, there will also be Sustainable Urban Drainage on the site, but this is subject to condition. which the applicant proposed. It is considered that subject to condition and further information a satisfactory drainage solution could be achieved.

7.5 **Archaeology**

7.5.1 At the time the application was submitted survey works had been undertaken, however further information was required during the application process. It is now considered that satisfactory information has been provided to ensure that, subject to condition, there would not be an over-riding constraint in terms of recording any heritage assets during the construction of the building.

7.6 **Sustainable Development and sustainability**

7.6.1 Economic dimension

The application will have benefits in terms of the construction phase of the development in the short term. The development because of its bespoke design and engineering speciality, would contribute to the economic sustainability of this development, which is a material consideration which attracts significant weight, having regard to the core priorities in the NPPF.

7.6.2 Social dimension

The objective of the social dimension is to support a strong and vibrant healthy community. It is considered that this development would help support the local community. There is an identified need for this development, as the current arrangements are not satisfactorily meeting the needs of the community, in terms of sustainable development, this can attract significant weight.

7.6.3 Environmental dimension

It is considered that this development does not represent over development, but efficient use of space available. The Councils Sustainability officer is satisfied that the measures such as Green Roof, Rainwater collection and head pumps to generate low carbon energy would be suitable measure for ensuring the application has been made with significant onsite enhancements, in terms of landscape and ecology. It is considered that the development is satisfactory in considerations of bio-diversity and landscape. It is considered that as a negative of the scheme there would be harm to the setting of Haynes Park house, however this harm is less than substantial and can be outweighed by the

public benefits of fulfilling a recognised need within the community, and the onsite benefits in terms of landscape enhancement and historic restoration.

7.7 Planning Balance and Conclusion

7.7.1 The proposed development is in conflict with Policy DM4, and due to the scale of the proposal is considered inappropriate development within the open countryside. In addition to this there is identified harm to the setting of the Grade I Listed Building, and limited harm to the Haynes Conservation Area. Great weight should be attributed to the harm. For the reasons outlined in the report, the less than substantial harm is outweighed by public benefits.

7.7.2 However, on balance, it is considered in this specific circumstance, because of the existing use of the site, the existing temporary consent, the exceptional design of the building in the way it has been designed to recede into the landscape, the significant onsite enhancements proposed, the need for the facility to be provided and the very significant public support for the application including no objection from the Parish Council would be considered on balance justification for approving the development.

7.7.3 The development would provide a sustainable form of development, providing a new community facility, which is required by the existing owners of the site. It is only considered appropriate to require a temporary consent for somethings where it is not known if there is a long term need, it is considered that as the large scale events have been operating from the site in excess of 20 years, it is reasonable to conclude that the meeting hall is required for the long term use of Haynes Park and therefore is considered acceptable subject to planning conditions and a completed s106 agreement.

Recommendation:

That Planning Permission be approved subject to a Section 106 Agreement being signed and the following conditions:

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2 Prior to the commencement of works above ground level, details of the construction materials for the external aspects of the development hereby approved, shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval in writing. The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To control the appearance of the building in the interests of the visual amenities of the locality, in accordance with Policies CS14 and DM4 of the adopted Local Plan, Policy HQ1 of the emerging Local Plan, the adopted Design Guide and the NPPF.

- 3 The planting and landscaping scheme shown on approved Drawing Nos. 11916_TG_P_001 rev. B, 11916_TG_P_002 rev. A, 11916_TG_P_003 rev. A, 11916_TG_P_004 rev. A, 11916_TG_P_130 rev. A, 11916_TG_P_140 rev. A, 11916_TG_P_150 rev. A, 11916_TG_P_300 rev. A, 11916_TG_P_301 rev. A, 11916_TG_P_302 rev. A, 11916_TG_P_005 rev. A, 11916_TG_P_101 rev. A, 11916_TG_P_102 rev. A, 11916_TG_P_103 rev. A, 11916_TG_P_104 rev. A, 11916_TG_P_105 rev. A, 11916_TG_P_106 rev. A, 11916_TG_P_107 rev. A, 11916_TG_P_108 rev. A, 11916_TG_P_110 rev. A, 11916_TG_P_120 rev. A shall be implemented by the end of the full planting season immediately following the completion and/or first use of any separate part of the development (a full planting season shall mean the period from October to March). The trees, shrubs and grass shall subsequently be maintained in accordance with the details in the 'Maintenance and Management Plan' document number 11916_R05e_CP_MM and any which die or are destroyed during this period shall be replaced during the next planting season with others of a similar size and species.

Reason: To ensure an acceptable standard of landscaping. (Sections 7 & 11, NPPF)

- 4 The buildings and structures shown in red on drawing no. 121805_(09)01 rev. P2 shall be demolished and all resultant detritus completely removed from the site prior to the commencement of building works.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the area in accordance with policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (2009) and Section 12, NPPF.

- 5 **No development shall take place until details of the method of disposal of foul and / or surface water drainage have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, including any land drainage system. Thereafter no part of the development shall be occupied or brought into use until the approved drainage scheme has been implemented.**

**Reason: To ensure that adequate foul and surface water drainage is provided and that existing and future land drainage needs are protected.
(Section 14, NPPF)**

- 6 **Part A: No development shall take place until a written scheme of archaeological resource management (SARM), has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.**

The SARM shall include the following components:

- 1. method statements for the intrusive archaeological trial trench evaluation of parts of the site which were not previously evaluated**
- 2. method statements for the investigation of archaeological remains present at the site**
- 3. method statements for the preservation *in situ* of any archaeological remains that cannot be fully investigated (if appropriate)**
- 4. a strategy for a programme of community engagement**
- 5. an outline strategy for post-excavation assessment, analysis and publication, including details of the timetable for each stage of the post-excavation works**

Part B: The said development shall only be implemented in full accordance with the approved SARM and this condition shall only be fully discharged when:

- 1. it has been confirmed in writing by the Local Planning Authority that all elements of the archaeological fieldwork have been completed**
- 2. a Post Excavation Assessment report and an Updated Project Design or a final archaeological report has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This shall be done within twelve months of the completion of the archaeological fieldwork unless otherwise agreed in advance in writing by the Local Planning Authority**
- 3. the post-excavation analysis as specified in the approved Updated Project Design (if a UPD is prepared); the preparation of the site archive ready for deposition at a store approved by the Local Planning Authority; the preparation of an archive report and the submission of a publication report have all been completed. This shall be done within two years of the conclusion of the archaeological fieldwork unless otherwise agreed in advance in writing by the Local Planning Authority**

7 No development shall take place (including demolition, ground works, vegetation clearance) until a construction environmental management plan (CEMP: Biodiversity) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The CEMP (Biodiversity) shall include the following:

- a) Risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities.**
- b) Identification of “biodiversity protection zones”.**
- c) Practical measures (both physical measures and sensitive working practices) to avoid or reduce impacts during construction (may be provided as a set of method statements).**
- d) The location and timing of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features.**
- e) The times during construction when specialist ecologists need to be present on site to oversee works.**
- f) Responsible persons and lines of communication.**
- g) The role and responsibilities on site of an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) or similarly competent person.**
- h) Use of protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs.**

The approved CEMP shall be adhered to and implemented throughout the construction period strictly in accordance with the approved details, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

8 A landscape and ecological management plan (LEMP) shall be submitted to, and be approved in writing by, the local planning authority prior to the commencement of the development. The content of the LEMP shall include the following:

- a) Description and evaluation of features to be managed.
- b) Ecological trends and constraints on site that might influence management.
- c) Aims and objectives of management.
- d) Appropriate management options for achieving aims and objectives.
- e) Prescriptions for management actions.
- f) Preparation of a work schedule (including an annual work plan capable of being rolled forward over a five-year period).
- g) Details of the body or organization responsible for implementation of the plan.
- h) Ongoing monitoring and remedial measures.

The LEMP shall also include details of the legal and funding mechanism(s) by which the long-term implementation of the plan will be secured by the developer with the management body(ies) responsible for its delivery.

The approved plan will be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

9 The development shall be implemented in accordance with the submitted documents 'Proposed Uses Summary Document, Version 1' by Montague Evans dated July 2020, as well as the Transport Statement and Traffic Management and Travel Plan by WSP dated April 2020.

Reason: To ensure the safe operation of the surrounding road network in the interests of road safety.
(Section 94, NPPF)

10 **No development shall take place until a scheme has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority for the provision of fire hydrants and a scheme for access and facilities for the fire service at the development. Prior to the first occupation of the building the fire hydrant(s) and access serving that development shall be installed as approved. Thereafter the fire hydrant(s) and access shall be retained as approved in perpetuity.**

**Reason: In the interests of fire safety and providing safe and accessible developments.
(Section 7, NPPF)**

11 The development is to be constructed and achieve sustainability standards stated in the Haynes Park Meeting Hall Energy & Sustainability Statement dated April 2020. Prior to occupation of the building a Verification Report is to be submitted to provide evidence that the proposed standards were achieved. Any changes to the agreed standards must be agreed with Local Planning Authority in writing.

Reason: in the interest of sustainability and climate change mitigation & adaptation as required by the NPPF and Local Plan policies CS13, DM1 and DM2.

- 13 The development hereby permitted shall be undertaken in full accordance with the Council's adopted 'Environmental Code of Practice'
https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/44/planning/674/codes_of_practice_for_planning/3

Reason: In order to minimise the impact of development on existing trees, landscape features and biodiversity (Section 15, NPPF)

- 14 The development hereby permitted shall be undertaken in full accordance with the Council's adopted 'Construction Code of Practice for Developers and Contractors'
https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/44/planning/674/codes_of_practice_for_planning.

Reason: In order to minimise the impact of construction work on the amenities of nearby residential properties (Section 12, NPPF)

- 15 Prior to any above ground works, a scheme based on the findings within Soil Investigation and Management Strategy April 2020 identifying the locations of removed, moved or altered soil shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, all works shall be carried out in accordance with the scheme prior to the first use of the building hereby approved.

Reason: To ensure satisfactory soil management in the interest of visual amenity and drainage.

- 16 No development hereby permitted shall take place except in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Council's organisational licence (WML-OR24-2020-1) and with the proposals detailed on 'Haynes Park: Impact Map', dated 4th November 2020.

Reason: In order to ensure that adverse impacts on great crested newts are adequately mitigated and to ensure that site works are delivered in full compliance with the organisational licence WML-OR24- 2020-1

- 17 No development hereby permitted shall take place unless and until a certificate from the Delivery Partner (as set out in the District Licence WML-OR24-2020-1), confirming that all necessary measures in regard to great crested newt compensation have been appropriately dealt with, has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority and the local authority has provided authorisation for the development to proceed under the district newt licence. The Delivery Partner certificate must be submitted to this planning authority for approval prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved.

Reason: In order to adequately compensate for negative impacts to great crested newts.

18 No development hereby permitted shall take place except in accordance with Part 1 of the GCN Mitigation Principles, as set out in the District Licence WML-OR24-2020-1 and in addition in compliance with the following:

- Works which will affect likely newt hibernacula may only be undertaken during the active period for amphibians.
- Capture methods must be used at suitable habitat features prior to the commencement of the development (i.e. hand/destructive/night searches), which may include the use of temporary amphibian fencing, to prevent newts moving onto a development site from adjacent suitable habitat, installed for the period of the development (and removed upon completion of the development).
- Amphibian fencing and pitfall trapping must be undertaken at suitable habitats and features, prior to commencement of the development.

Reason: In order to adequately mitigate impacts on great crested newts.

19 The roof of the building hereby approved, shall be installed and maintained as approved under plans (PL)101 P2, (PL)400 P1, (PL)500 P1, any failure of the planting upon the roof shall be replaced within the next planting season for the lifetime of the building.

Reason: In the interest of visual amenity, the material of the roof is intrinsic to the success of the landscape integration. In accordance with policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (2009) and Section 12, NPPF.

20 Prior to the first use of the building hereby approved a Green Travel Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Green Travel Plan shall be implemented upon commencement of the development hereby approved and in line with provisions and timescales set out within the Green Travel Plan.

Reason: To ensure satisfactory movements to and from the site and to allow for monitoring.

21 The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out except in complete accordance with the details shown on the submitted plans, numbers 121805_(EX)001 rev. P1, 121805_(EX)010 rev. P1, 121805_(09)01 rev. P2, 121805_(09)02, 121805_(PL)010 rev. P2, 121805_(PL)100 rev. P1, 121805_(PL)101 rev. P2, 121805_(PL)300 rev. P1, 121805_(PL)301 rev. P1, 121805_(PL)400 rev. P1, 121805_(PL)500 rev. P1, 121805_(PL)501 rev. P1, 121805_(PL)502 rev. P1, 121805_(PL)503 rev. P1, 121805_(PL)504

Reason: To identify the approved plan/s and to avoid doubt.

- 22 No development shall commence above ground level until a scheme (based on current government policy/guidance at the time of submission) for the provision of electric charging points has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The charging points shall be provided as approved prior to the occupation of the buildings they serve.

Reason: To ensure the development protects and exploits opportunities for the use of sustainable transport modes for the movement of people in accordance with paragraph 105 e) of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019.

INFORMATIVE NOTES TO APPLICANT

1.
 - The British Standard for Topsoil, BS 3882:2015, specifies requirements for topsoils that are moved or traded and should be adhered to.
 - The British Standard for Subsoil, BS 8601 Specification for subsoil and requirements for use, should also be adhered to.

2. There are assets owned by Anglian Water or those subject to an adoption agreement within or close to the development boundary that may affect the layout of the site. Anglian Water would ask that the following text be included within your Notice should permission be granted.

Anglian Water has assets close to or crossing this site or there are assets subject to an adoption agreement. Therefore the site layout should take this into account and accommodate those assets within either prospectively adoptable highways or public open space.

If this is not practicable then the sewers will need to be diverted at the developers cost under Section 185 of the Water Industry Act 1991 or, in the case of apparatus under an adoption agreement, liaise with the owners of the apparatus. It should be noted that the diversion works should normally be completed before development can commence.

The development site is within 15 metres of a sewage pumping station. This asset requires access for maintenance and will have sewerage infrastructure leading to it. For practical reasons therefore it cannot be easily relocated.

Anglian Water consider that dwellings located within 15 metres of the pumping station would place them at risk of nuisance in the form of noise, odour or the general disruption from maintenance work caused by the normal operation of the pumping station.

The site layout should take this into account and accommodate this infrastructure type through a necessary cordon sanitaire, through public space or highway infrastructure to ensure that no development within 15 metres from the boundary of a sewage pumping station if the development is potentially sensitive to noise or other disturbance or to ensure future amenity issues are not created.

Wastewater Treatment

The foul drainage from this development is in the catchment of Haynes Water Recycling Centre which currently does not have capacity to treat the flows from the development site. Anglian Water are obligated to accept the foul flows from the development with the benefit of planning consent and would therefore take the necessary steps to ensure that there is sufficient treatment capacity should the Planning Authority grant planning permission.

Used Water Network

If the developer wishes to connect to our sewerage network they should serve notice under Section 106 of the Water Industry Act 1991. We will then advise them of the most suitable point of connection.

- INFORMATIVE - Notification of intention to connect to the public sewer under S106 of the Water Industry Act Approval and consent will be required by Anglian Water, under the Water Industry Act 1991.
- INFORMATIVE - Notification of intention to connect to the public sewer under S106 of the Water Industry Act Approval and consent will be required by Anglian Water, under the Water Industry Act 1991.
- INFORMATIVE - Protection of existing assets - A public sewer is shown on record plans within the land identified for the proposed development. It appears that development proposals will affect existing public sewers. It is recommended that the applicant contacts Anglian Water Development Services Team for further advice on this matter. Building over existing public sewers will not be permitted (without agreement) from Anglian Water.
- INFORMATIVE – Building near to a public sewer - No building will be permitted within the statutory easement width of 3 metres from the pipeline without agreement from Anglian Water.
- INFORMATIVE: The developer should note that the site drainage details submitted have not been approved for the purposes of adoption. If the developer wishes to have the sewers included in a sewer adoption agreement with Anglian Water (under Sections 104 of the Water Industry Act 1991), they should contact our Development Services Team on 0345 606 6087 at the earliest opportunity.

Sewers intended for adoption should be designed and constructed in accordance with Sewers for Adoption guide for developers, as supplemented by Anglian Water's requirements.

Surface Water Disposal

The preferred method of surface water disposal would be to a sustainable drainage system (SuDS) with connection to sewer seen as the last option. Building Regulations (part H) on Drainage and Waste Disposal for England includes a surface water drainage hierarchy, with infiltration on site as the preferred disposal option, followed by discharge to watercourse and then connection to a sewer.

From the details submitted to support the planning application the proposed method of surface water management does not relate to Anglian Water operated assets. As such, we are unable to provide comments on the suitability of the surface water management. The Local Planning Authority should seek the advice of the Lead Local Flood Authority or the Internal Drainage Board. The Environment Agency should be consulted if the drainage system directly or indirectly involves the discharge of water into a watercourse. Should the proposed method of surface water management change to include interaction with Anglian Water operated assets, we would wish to be reconsulted to ensure that an effective surface water drainage strategy is prepared and implemented.

3.
 - It is recommended that the NatureSpace Best Practice Principles are taken into account and implemented where possible and appropriate.
 - It is recommended that the NatureSpace certificate is submitted to this planning authority at least 6 months prior to the intended commencement of any works on site.
 - It is essential to note that any works or activities whatsoever undertaken on site (including ground investigations, site preparatory works or ground clearance) prior to receipt of the written authorisation from the planning authority (which permits the development to proceed under the District Licence WML-OR24-2020-1) are not licensed under the GCN District Licence. Any such works or activities have no legal protection under the GCN District Licence and if offences against GCN are thereby committed then criminal investigation and prosecution by the police may follow.
 - It is essential to note that any ground investigations, site preparatory works and ground / vegetation clearance works / activities (where not constituting development under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) in a red zone site authorised under the District Licence but which fail to respect controls equivalent to those in condition 3 above would give rise to separate criminal liability under District Licence condition 9 (requiring authorised developers to comply with the District Licence) and condition 21 (which requires all authorised developers to comply with the GCN Mitigation Principles) (for which Natural England is the enforcing authority); and may also give rise to criminal liability under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and/or the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (for which the Police would be the enforcing authority).
4. The applicants attention is drawn to their responsibility under The Equality Act 2010 and with particular regard to access arrangements for the disabled.

The Equality Act 2010 requires that service providers must think ahead and make reasonable adjustments to address barriers that impede disabled people.

These requirements are as follows:

- Where a provision, criterion or practice puts disabled people at a substantial disadvantage to take reasonable steps to avoid that disadvantage;
- Where a physical feature puts disabled people at a substantial disadvantage to avoid that disadvantage or adopt a reasonable alternative method of providing the service or exercising the function;
- Where not providing an auxiliary aid puts disabled people at a substantial disadvantage to provide that auxiliary aid.

In doing this, it is a good idea to consider the range of disabilities that your actual or potential service users might have. You should not wait until a disabled person experiences difficulties using a service, as this may make it too late to make the necessary adjustment.

For further information on disability access contact:

The Centre for Accessible Environments (www.cae.org.uk)

Central Bedfordshire Access Group (www.centralbedsaccessgroup.co.uk)

5. This permission relates only to that required under the Town & Country Planning Acts and does not include any consent or approval under any other enactment or under the Building Regulations. Any other consent or approval which is necessary must be obtained from the appropriate authority.

Statement required by the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 - Part 6, Article 35

The Council acted pro-actively through positive engagement with the applicant at the pre-application stage and during the determination process which led to improvements to the scheme. The Council has therefore acted pro-actively to secure a sustainable form of development in line with the requirements of the Framework (paragraph 38) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.