



**CUSHMAN &  
WAKEFIELD**

**Planning Statement – Chiltern  
House, Waterperry Court,  
Middleton Road, Banbury  
OX16 4QC**

Prepared for

**Driver and Vehicle Standards  
Agency**

October 2018

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Version	Prepared by	Approved by	Date
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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 On behalf of the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA), Cushman and Wakefield (C&W) are instructed to submit a planning application for a modular building car licence testing at Chiltern House, Middleton Road, Banbury, OX16 4QG.
- 1.2 This document should be read in conjunction with the following submitted with this application:
- Statutory planning application forms and certificates;
  - Site Location Plan prepared by C&W; and
  - Layout and Elevation drawings provided by DVSA.
- 1.3 This Statement examines the potential impacts of the proposed use. Section 2 sets out the context and history of the site. Section 3 explains the proposed development and Section 4 an assessment of planning policy.

### The Site and Surrounding Area

- 1.4 The application refers to Chiltern House, consists of 1,626 sq ft existing office accommodation over two floors, within the wider office development at Waterperry Court. Car parking is allocated to each of the office units and 8 spaces will be made available for the proposed use. The main access to the site is from Merton Street.
- 1.5 Chiltern House located south east of Banbury town centre. The surrounding uses are mixed in nature including other employment uses and residential. Royal Mail Banbury Delivery Office and Banbury Rail Station and car park are adjacent to the site.
- 1.6 A Site Location Plan is provided at Appendix 1 for information.

## 2. Proposed Development

- 2.1 This application proposes the use of Chiltern House for car licence testing, and as such a change of use from office use (B1) to a driving test centre (sui generis) use. There will be no change to the existing access which will remain from Merton Street.
- 2.2 Car licence testing will take place between 0700 and 1700 Monday to Saturday.
- 2.3 4 full time examiners will be based at the site (depending on demand) providing approximately 6,900 tests per year.
- 2.4 Chiltern House will be used as office space by examiners to write up reports between tests, and provide space for candidates to register and instructors to wait while test candidates undertake the on-road part of the test off site. The internal layout will continue to be given over to office space for use by the examiners.
- 2.5 The on-road element of the test comprises four vehicle movements per test, candidates arrive with their instructor, leave site to undertake the on-road element of the test with the examiner and then return to leave with their instructor.
- 2.6 8 car parking spaces will be allocated for candidates and examiners.
- 2.7 Tests will result in 88 movements in total per day (4 movements per test, up to a maximum of 22 test per day) with an additional 12 movements maximum from the examiners arriving and leaving.
- 2.8 The proposed use will ensure the DVSA are able to continue to provide testing services to meet demand in the local area.

### Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency

- 2.9 The DVSA is an executive agency, sponsored by the Department for Transport aiming to improve road safety in Great Britain by setting standards for driving and motorcycling, and making sure drivers, vehicle operators and MOT garages follow roadworthiness standards. DVSA are responsible for the statutory regulation of driving instructors and trainers, and promoting voluntary registers and non-statutory activities to improve road safety and driving standards.
- 2.10 The organisation provides a range of licensing, testing, education and enforcement services. There are over 400 practical driving and multi-purpose test centres and theory test centres run by the DVSA nationally.

### 3. Relevant Planning Policy

- 3.1 The Planning and Compensation Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with relevant policies set out in the appropriate development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 3.2 Planning policy relevant to the site is contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2018), the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1) and saved policies from the Cherwell Local Plan (1996). Key policies are set out below. Development which supports growth sustainable development and the identified employment areas will be supported.

#### Planning History

- 3.3 A search of Cherwell District Council’s planning records does not identify any planning history relevant to Chiltern House, but the following related to Waterperry Court:

Reference	Description	Decision
04/02191/F	Change of use of ground floor and part first floor tor recruitment agency (A2) from offices (B1)	Approved

#### National Planning Policy Framework (Update 2018)

- 3.4 The NPPF sets a presumption in favour of sustainable development and a positive approach to planning as a means of supporting the country’s economic and housing growth, while protecting the environment. It directs local planning authorities to approve development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay.
- 3.5 Paragraph 7 of the NPPF advises that there are three dimensions to sustainable development economic, social and environmental. It is advised that all roles are viewed mutually and not in isolation. 4.4 Paragraph 14 of the NPPF outlines that “at the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking.

#### Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1)

- 3.6 The Cherwell Local Plan 2011 – 2031 (Part 1) was adopted in July 2015. The plan sets out the strategic planning policies for development and the land use.
- 3.7 The site is not specifically allocated but is within the 50m buffer zone of the Cherwell Conservation area.
- 3.8 **Policy SLE 1: Employment Development** outlines that “in cases where planning permission is required existing employment sites should be retained for employment use unless the following criteria are met:
  - the applicant can demonstrate that an employment use should not be retained, including showing the site has been marketed and has been vacant in the long term.the applicant can demonstrate that there are valid reasons why the use of the site for the existing or another employment use is not economically viable.

- the applicant can demonstrate that the proposal would not have the effect of limiting the amount of land available for employment”

### 3.9 Policy

**Policy SLE 1: Employment Development** further states that employment proposals in Banbury will be supported if they meet the following criteria:

- “Are within the built up limits of the settlement unless on an allocated site
- They will be outside of the Groxveen Belt, unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated Make efficient use of previously-developed land wherever possible
- Make efficient use of existing and underused sites and premises increasing the intensity of use on sites
- Have good access, or can be made to have good access, by public transport and other sustainable modes
- Meet high design standards, using sustainable construction, are of an appropriate scale and respect the character of its surroundings
- Do not have an adverse effect on surrounding land uses, residents and the historic and natural environment”

### **Cherwell Local Plan (1996)**

3.10 ‘Saved’ policies of the Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 1996 remain part of the statutory Development Plan.

3.11 **Retained Policy EMP1** states that in regard to Banbury the council will release land for employment generating development if there are clear indications that the availability of land is frustrating the creation of sufficient jobs to ensure full employment.

### **Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 2)**

3.12 Cherwell are preparing a Part 2 to the Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1) which will contain non-strategic site allocations and development management policies. This is currently at options consultation stage.

## 4. Planning Assessment and Conclusion

- 4.1 The proposal will allow the provision of driver licence tests from Chiltern House to meet local demand. The proposed use will provide 4 full time jobs for local examiners.
- 4.2 The site is well suited for the proposed use. Provision of the proposed facility makes an efficient use of land and will secure provision of licence testing to meet demand in the area and provide local employment.
- 4.3 The existing office space and associated car parking are capable of accommodating the proposed use and the cumulative impact of the proposed development and associated transport movements will be limited. There are no immediate residential neighbours and the use will not result in any impact on residential amenity. No noise impact is anticipated.
- 4.4 The proposed testing facility will ensure the DVSA can meet local demand for car licence tests.
- 4.5 Vehicle movements will occur throughout the day and may represent minor increase in comparison to the existing office use but will be minor when considering this in comparisons to the vehicular movements related to the Royal Mail delivery office and the Banbury station car park. These movements in and out of the site will last only for a brief period and will not be visually intrusive.
- 4.6 The proposed driving test centre use will retain an employment use, operating in a similar manner to the existing office use. sui generis) will operate in a similar manner and part

### Conclusion

- 4.7 The provision of testing at this site will meet the objectives of both national and local planning policy to make most efficient use of land, maximize the use of developed sites and support employment development in the local area.
- 4.8 It is not anticipated that there will be a significant impact from the proposed car testing and associated vehicle movements and these will be minimal in comparison to the use of the Royal Mail delivery office and station car park.
- 4.9 Th change of sue will secure a new employment use within the area and provide the opportunity for local people to improve their employment opportunities through learning to drive. Although the B1 use classification will be removed, the sui generis use will operate in a similar manner to the office use





## Appendix 1 – Site Location Plan

