

Committee Date	13.10.2022	
Address	Farringleys Westerham Road Keston BR2 6HB	
Application Number	21/01640/FULL1	Officer – Joanna Wu
Ward	Bromley Common & Holwood	
Proposal	Change of use from F2 (c) Equestrian sports, to Reiki Centre together with elevational alterations and porch/canopy	
Applicant	Agent	
Ms Lauren Goldberg	Mr John Escott	
Farringleys South Park Keston BR2 6HB	Robinson Escott Planning Downe House 303 High Street Orpington BR6 0NN	
Reason for referral to committee	Councillor call in	
Call-In	Yes	

RECOMMENDATION	Application Permitted
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<p>KEY DESIGNATIONS</p> <p>Areas of Archaeological Significance Site Interest Nature Conservation Biggin Hill Safeguarding Area Green Belt London City Airport Safeguarding Smoke Control</p>

Land use Details		
	Use Class or Use description	Floor space (GIA SQM)
Existing	Agricultural	117
Proposed	Reiki Centre (Class E(e))	117

Vehicle parking	Existing number of spaces	Total proposed including spaces retained	Difference in spaces (+ or -)
Standard car spaces	15	17	+2
Disabled car spaces	-	-	-
Cycle	-	-	-

Electric car charging points	0
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Representation summary	Neighbour notification letters sent 29.04.21 Newspaper advert published 17.05.21 Site notice displayed 21.06.21
Total number of responses	29
Number in support	0
Number of objections	29

1. SUMMARY OF KEY REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- The existing building is proposed to be converted and re-used which would comply with the Green Belt policy, i.e. Paragraph 150(d) of the NPPF;
- The proposal would not have any detrimental adverse amenity impact on neighbouring properties;
- There would be sufficient parking for a total of 2 visitors during Monday to Friday and 15 visitors (maximum) during Saturday and Sunday.

2. LOCATION

- 2.1 The application site is located on the west part of Farringleys, one of the residential dwellings fronting a private cul-de-sac, accessed from the road leading to the Mansion within the Holwood Estate.
- 2.2 There were originally 10 barns or stables within the curtilage of Farringleys. As part of the requirements of a previous condition attached in the planning permission (planning ref: 10/03675/FULL1) for a two storey side extension to the host dwelling at Farringleys, six outbuildings were demolished and currently leaving only four outbuildings on site.
- 2.3 These four outbuildings (a barn and three stables) remain on site but they are not in use.
- 2.4 The site is located in the Green Belt and is also affected by other designations as follows:-
- Area of Special Landscape Character
 - Area of Archaeological Significance
 - North part of the application site is within a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC).

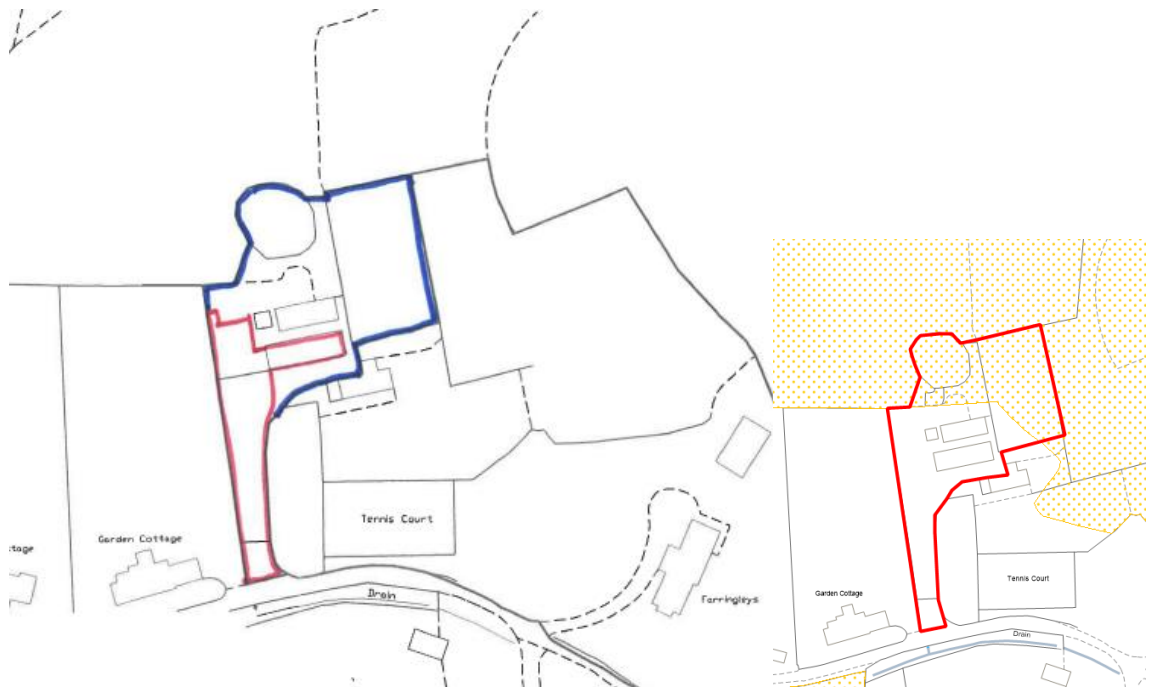


Fig 1. Site location plan and the Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (orange shaded area)

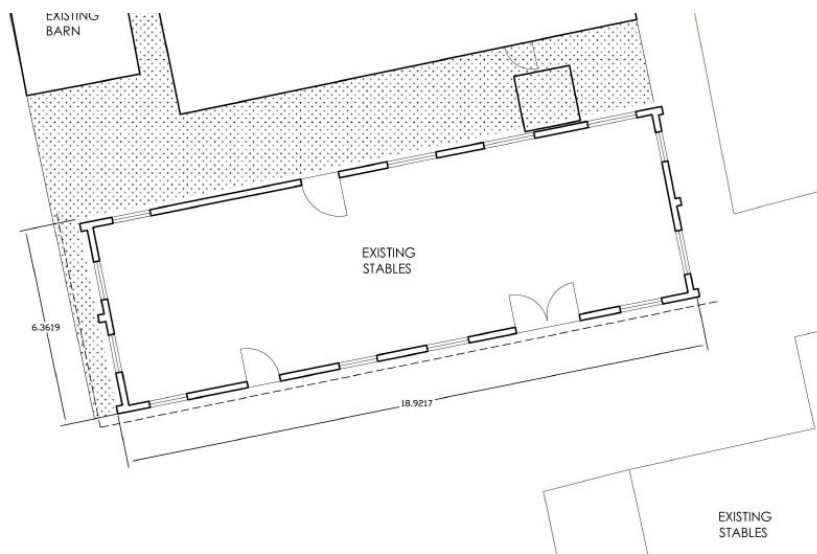


Fig 2. Floor plan of former building.

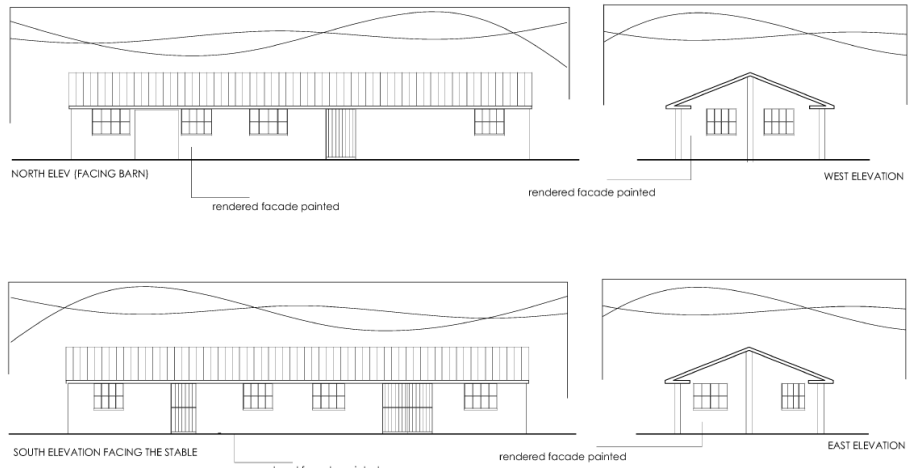


Fig 3. Elevations of former/demolished building.



Photo 1. Existing stable (Conversion and re-use) – South elevation.



Photo 2. Existing stable - East elevation



Photo 3. Existing parking area - view from the north

3. PROPOSAL

- 3.1 Planning permission is sought for “Change of use from F2 (c) Equestrian sports, to a Reiki Centre together with elevational alterations and porch/ canopy”. The proposal would be a Reiki Education and Wellbeing Centre. It would provide Reiki sessions and life coaching; meditation classes and Reiki courses. The total floorspace of the existing stable for the proposed Reiki Centre would be 117m². The submitted floorplan shows that a new there is a canopy area, measuring 3.7m wide, 3.6m long and 3m high is proposed. The Centre would provide a classroom, two treatment rooms, an office, a kitchen and a Reiki room.
- 3.2 There is an access driveway leading from South Park northwards to the existing stable and there is an existing hard surfaced parking area adjacent to the buildings. A total of 19 parking spaces would be provided on the site, 17 of which would be allocated for the Reiki Centre and 2 of which would be allocated to the proposed new house (planning ref: 21/01645/FULL1).
- 3.3 The proposed finishing materials for the renovation of the existing stable would be part render and part timber cladding with a slate roof.
- 3.4 The application is supported by the following documents:
- Application form
 - Application drawings
 - Planning Statement/Design and Access Statement,
 - Preliminary Ecological appraisal (Submitted on 19.08.22),
 - Bat surveys
 - Structural Survey
- 3.5 In the original submission, the proposed Reiki centre was shown to provide a small classroom for up to 30 people, two treatment rooms and a meditation room. There would also be a small kitchen, shower and toilets and an office. On weekdays

(Monday – Friday), there would be a maximum of two clients per day for 1-1 Reiki sessions and life coaching. On every Sunday, there would be a weekly Reiki Meditation class for 10 – 20 people. Occasionally, once a month, there would be a Reiki Level 1 retreat (class) for approx. 15 people and a Reiki Level 2 session for approx.10 people.

- 3.6 Following further clarifications from the applicants, they have now confirmed the following:
- 3.7 During Monday to Friday (Weekday), there would be a maximum of 2 visitors per day on site. At the weekends, there would be no more than 15 people at one time during Saturday and Sunday for the weekly meditation class (maximum 2 classes per day). One Sunday a month there would be a one-day Reiki Level 1 Retreat (all day course) and the usual Sunday weekly mediation class on this weekend would take place on the Saturday instead. This means the centre would be in use for both the Saturday and Sunday for 1 weekend per month.
- 3.8 The hours of use would be 9:00am to 17:00pm (Monday to Friday, Sundays and one Saturday per calendar month).
- 3.9 it is noted that a separate planning application (planning ref: 21/01645/FULL1) for Construction of a single storey three bed dwelling house following demolition of existing outbuildings for use by the on-site proposed Reiki Centre proprietors has been submitted and this proposal is covered in a separate planning sub-committee report.

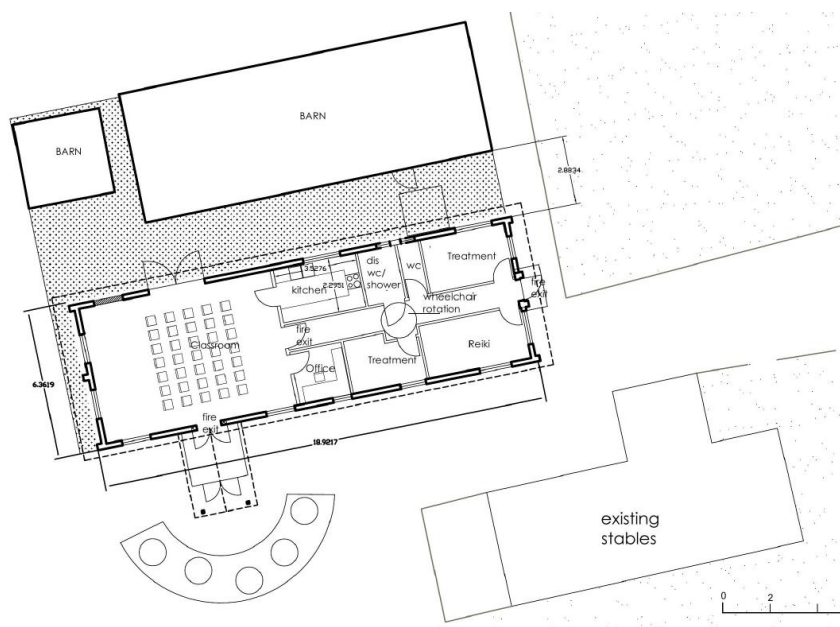


Fig 4. Proposed floor plans.

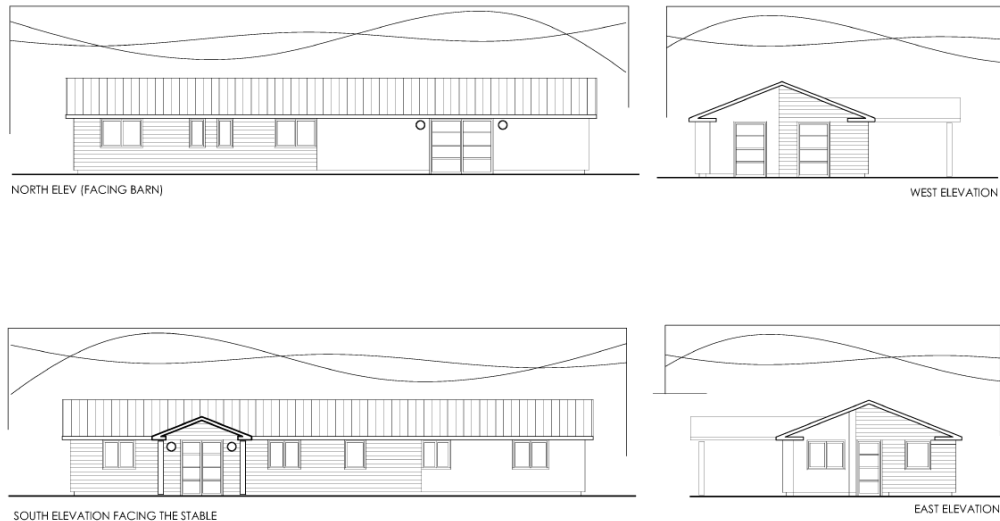


Fig 5. Proposed elevations.

4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 The relevant planning history relating to the application site is summarised as follows:
- 4.2 96/02691/FUL— Detached seven bedroom house and detached triple garage with one bedroom flat above – (Refused) 06.02.1997
- 4.3 97/00708/OUT – Detached house and detached garage outline – (Refused) 15.05.1997
- 4.4 97/01414/FUL – Detached five bedroom house and detached garage – (Refused) 10.07.1997
- 4.5 98/03321/FUL – Detached five bedroom house with indoor swimming pool and garage – (Refused) 04.03.1999
- 4.6 05/04022/FULL1 – Demolition of existing house and double garage and erection of two storey five bedroom replacement house and detached double garage – (Permitted) 27.02.2006
- 4.7 08/03480/FULL1 – Demolition of existing house and double garage and erection of two storey five bedroom replacement house and detached double garage – (Permitted) 08.12.2008
- 4.8 09/00556/FULL6 – Two storey side extension – (Refused) 24.09.2009
- 4.9 09/02704/FULL6 – Two storey side extension – (Permitted) 26.01.2010
- 4.10 10/01374/TPO – Lift lower canopies to give a clearance over the ground of no more than 4 metres and thin crowns by no more than 20% three oak trees at land at South Park, Westerham Road (to rear of 4 Forest Ridge) SUBJECT TO TPO 1 (BB and OUDC 1952) – (Received consent) 28.06.2010

- 4.11 10/01374/TPSPLD – Crown reduce by 30% three oak trees at land at South Park, Westerham Road (to rear of 4 Forest Ridge) SUBJECT TO TPO 1 (BB and OUDC 1952) – (Refused) 28.06.2010
- 4.12 10/02088/TPO – To reduce overhanging branch of 1 oak by 60% located adjacent to bridleway (at land rear of 10 Forest Ridge) SUBJECT TO TPO 1 – (received consent) 23.08.2010
- 4.13 10/03675/FULL6 – Two storey side extension – (Permitted) 01.03.2011
- 4.14 21/01645/FULL1 – Construction of a single storey three bed dwelling house following demolition of existing outbuildings– under a separate item in the PSC.

5. CONSULTATION SUMMARY

5.1 A) Statutory

- 5.1.1 Highway Department: No objection. The applicant has submitted a revised car parking plan which is satisfactory. However, the applicant must encourage people to share cars and also promote cycling. A travel plan should be submitted and approved in writing by the Council before the use of the building.
- 5.1.2 Tree Officer: No objection.
- 5.1.3 Environmental Health: No objection to this proposal. The construction aspect of the scheme should be guided by Bromley Council guidance and two informatives have been recommended.

5.2 B) Local Group

- 5.2.1 Bromley Biodiversity Partnership: The proposal is within the Site of Importance of Nature Conservation (SINC). Any artificial lighting scheme as part of the development must take account of bats in the surrounding area. A landscaping plan for the application site should be submitted prior to the commencement of the development.
- 5.2.2 Keston Resident's Road Safety Group: Objection. In the original submission, it is noted that the proposed centre would generate approximately 30 vehicles. This is far more than the current use of the house and its stables. It is understood that there is limited parking within the site and the proposed increase in parking provision will lead to additional spaces having to be provided. This will impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

5.3 C) Adjoining Occupiers

- 5.3.1 Nearby owners/neighbours were notified of the proposal and the following representations were made:

- The use is on green belt land and any development of this type would be detrimental to the area;
- Significant Increase in traffic noise, environmental and maintenance issues;
- The application states that there will be 19 parking spaces. With 30 clients per session, it is highly likely that cars will be parked on the lane and along the driveway, potentially causing obstruction. It should be noted that residents of Holwood are barred from parking anywhere on the Estate, apart from allocated parking spaces, by the terms of their Lease.
- A commercial enterprise, as proposed, is totally inappropriate in what is now a quiet, semi-rural residential area in the Green Belt. It is on a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), on the very border of a scheduled Ancient Monument, a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation and in an archaeological priority area and unspoiled nature of Darwin's 'Landscape Laboratory'.
- The access road is maintained by the residents at the Holwood Estate and it is a dangerous road;
- This will have a significant impact to neighbouring privacy and result in noise and light pollution. In the future, the centre will have lights which will impact the neighbouring view at night, and during the day there will be noise that will impact the quiet nature of the area.
- No commercial activities should be permitted and the existing site should not be expanded in any way, lastly no windows should be permitted which face the path at the back of the stables, as this will directly face the neighbouring property.
- Should this application be approved we request that an independent vehicle study is undertaken by Bromley Town Planning to establish the current vehicle movements to and from the stables and impose a cap, not to restrict expansion but to ensure any expansion is controlled enabling appropriate measures to be introduced in the future.
- Any approval for the Reiki and other self-healing/life coaching activities should not be permitted on the agricultural land adjacent to Orchard Cottage
- Object to the application as is, but would be prepared to support it, if more parking could be provided, or client numbers be limited appropriately.

6. POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

6.1 National Policy Framework 2021

6.2 NPPG

6.3 The London Plan 2021

D1 London's form and characteristics

D4 Delivering Good Design

D5 Inclusive Design

G2 London's Green Belt

T5 Cycling

T6 Parking

6.4 Bromley Local Plan 2019

20 Community Facilities
21 Opportunities for Community Facilities
30 Parking
31 Relieving Congestion
32 Road Safety
33 Access for All
37 General Design of Development
49 The Green Belt
69 Development and Nature Conservation Sites
70 Wildlife Features
72 Protected Species
73 Development and Trees
119 Noise Pollution
122 Light Pollution

6.5 Other Guidance

Supplementary Planning Guidance 1 – General Design Principles

7. ASSESSMENT

7.1 The main issues to be considered in respect of this application are:

- Principle
- Green Belt
- Design and landscaping
- Highways
- Neighbouring amenity
- Biodiversity and ecology impacts

7.2 Principle – Acceptable

7.2.1 Policy 20 of the Bromley Local Plan states that the Council promotes the quality of life and the health and wellbeing of those living and working in the Borough and will engage with providers and agencies to ensure the provision, enhancement and retention of a wide range of appropriate social infrastructure, including facilities for health and education; recreation, sports and play facilities. Policy 21 of the Bromley Local Plan further confirms that the Council will support opportunities for community facilities

7.2.2 This proposal includes a Reiki Centre with the elements of energy healing, meditation classes and Reiki Retreat course which would help to build healthier communities and promote healthy lifestyles. It is considered that the principle of this proposal is acceptable. Other issues, such as the potential amenity impacts and highway issues will be discussed below separately.

7.3 Green Belt – Acceptable

7.3.1 The main issue in relation to the Green Belt is whether the proposal would represent inappropriate development and if the proposed development is considered as an exception under Paragraph 149.

7.3.2 Paragraphs 137 – 151 of the NPPF sets out the Government's intention for Green Belt. The NPPF states that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.

7.3.3 The Green Belt is intended to serve five purposes:

- a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

7.3.4 Paragraphs 147 – 151 deal specifically with development proposals in the Green Belt. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Paragraph 148 states that:

“When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

7.3.5 Paragraph 150 further states that:

“Certain other forms of development are also not inappropriate in the Green Belt provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. These are:

- (a) mineral extraction;
- (b) engineering operations;
- (c) local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location;
- (d) the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction;
- (e) material changes in the use of land (such as changes of use for outdoor sport or recreation, or for cemeteries and burial grounds); and
- (f) development, including buildings, brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.”

7.3.6 In this application, the most relevant section to assess this application is section (d) “the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction”.

- 7.3.7 The proposal includes the conversion of the existing barn into a Reiki centre. The structure of the barn would be retained. A structural assessment report has been submitted which confirms that the building is sound and does not require any major reconstruction works. Therefore, the building conversion, in principle, would comply with the Green Belt policy.
- 7.3.8 A porch canopy is proposed in the south elevation. Whilst this would constitute an addition to the building it is not considered to be disproportionate in size and is shown to be open sided, reducing its visual impact. A condition will be imposed to make sure that this area would not be enclosed in future. It is considered that the barn conversion would preserve the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the Green Belt policies.

7.4 Design – Layout, scale and landscaping – Acceptable

- 7.4.1 Design is a key consideration in the planning process. Good design is an important aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people. The NPPF states that it is important to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider area development schemes.
- 7.4.2 London Plan and Bromley Local Plan policies further reinforce the principles of the NPPF setting out a clear rationale for high quality design. London Plan Policy D4 requires developments to have regard to the form, function, and structure of an area. Policy 37 of the Bromley Local Plan states that all development proposals will be expected to be of a high standard of design and layout.
- 7.4.3 This proposal is for the conversion and re-use of the barn with a front entrance canopy. The proposed materials would be part timber cladding and part render with a slate roof. These materials are considered appropriate in the Green Belt and rural area and would not appear out of character within the surrounding area in general.
- 7.4.4 The barn is currently located on a hardstanding surface. Some soft landscaping works are proposed in front of the main entrance canopy. This is considered acceptable and a condition will be imposed for the submission of the soft landscaping details prior to the commencement of the works.

7.5 Highways and parking – Acceptable

- 7.5.1 The NPPF recognises that transport policies have an important role to play in facilitating sustainable development but also in contributing to wider sustainability and health objectives. The NPPF clearly states that transport issues should be considered from the earliest stage of both plan making and when formulating development proposals and development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.
- 7.5.2 The NPPF states that all developments that will generate significant amounts of movement should be required to provide a travel plan, and the application should

be supported by a transport statement or transport assessment so that the likely impacts of the proposal can be assessed.

- 7.5.3 London Plan and Bromley Local Plan Policies encourage sustainable transport modes whilst recognising the need for appropriate parking provision. Car parking standards within the London Plan and Bromley Local Plan should be used as a basis for assessment.
- 7.5.4 The application site lies within a rural area with a low 1b PTAL rating indicating that it would be reliant on private transport such as the private car and bicycle. The neighbouring comments are noted. The Highways officer has been consulted and the proposed numbers of parking spaces should be able to accommodate all the visitors within the application site. The maximum number of visitors and Reiki centre opening hours will be restricted so that the traffic impact on both weekdays and weekends would not be significantly adverse for the transport network. It is advised that the lighting scheme, cycle parking provision and a Travel Plan should be submitted and approved in writing by the Council before the use of the building. These will be covered by suitably worded conditions.

7.6 Neighbourhood Amenity – Acceptable

- 7.6.1 Policy 37 of the Bromley Local Plan seeks to protect existing residential occupiers from inappropriate development. Issues to consider are the impact of a development proposal upon neighbouring properties by way of overshadowing, loss of light, overbearing impact, overlooking, loss of privacy and general noise and disturbance.
- 7.6.2 The neighbouring objections are noted and some of the objections have been discussed in the above sections.
- 7.6.3 The building would not be clearly visible from neighbouring properties. With regards to Garden Cottage, the neighbouring property, the Reiki centre would be some 12m away from the well-screened shared boundary. It is noted that there are two west flank windows facing this neighbouring rear garden. Given that the building is only a single storey structure and there are existing west-facing windows, it is considered that these full-length windows would not result in any additional overlooking than already exists.
- 7.6.4 With regards to the potential noise and disturbance to the neighbouring amenity, the nature of this business is for mainly meditation and energy healing. It is noted that there are activities on both Saturday and Sunday but this is only on a monthly basis. On Sundays, the applicants confirm that there would be a maximum of 2 meditation classes, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Also, a maximum number of 15 visitors will be capped at any time during weekends. A travel plan will be required which will promote use of sustainable modes of transport. The proposal is considered that it would not result in any significant detrimental impact on the neighbouring properties during the opening hours. A condition will be imposed to restrict any loud music or any noise disturbance during opening hours. Also, it will further restrict any outdoor activities related to the Reiki centre.

7.7 Biodiversity and ecology impacts – Acceptable

- 7.7.1 Policy 69 relate to the development within the Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). Developments should improve existing or create new habitats or use design to enhance biodiversity and provide for its on-going management. Development will only be permitted if any potential harm can be overcome by mitigating measures.
- 7.7.2 Policy 72 of the Bromley Local plan states that planning permission will not be granted for development or change of use of land that will have an adverse effect on protected species, unless mitigating measures can be secured to facilitate survival, reduce disturbance or provide alternative habitats.
- 7.7.3 The northern part of the application site lies in the Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) and a Preliminary Ecological Appraisals (PEA) and a bat roost inspection survey have been submitted.
- 7.7.4 Both reports conclude a negligible potential for the buildings to support bat roosts and therefore no further Phase 2 surveying is recommended (i.e. emergence/ re-entry surveying). The proposal would have a limited impact and the buildings and wider site have been assessed for their potential to support protected species.
- 7.7.5 The Bromley Biodiversity Partnership has been consulted and did not object to these reports and the proposal. However, several conditions will be imposed such as the submission details for a landscaping scheme, a scheme of biodiversity enhancements and a sensitive artificial lighting scheme.

7.8 Trees – Acceptable

- 7.8.1 Policy 73 of the Bromley Local Plan requires that trees of environmental importance should be retained and protected. When considering development proposals, trees should be retained as much as possible.
- 7.8.2 The application site is covered by Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs). Tree officers have been consulted and they have raised no objection to the proposal.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 Having had regard to the above it is considered that the development in the manner proposed would be acceptable, subject to the imposition of suitable conditions, as it would not result in inappropriate development within the Green Belt by definition; it would not cause actual harm to its openness and would be in keeping with the character of the area and visual amenities of the Green Belt which are formed of its essential characteristics including its openness and its permanence.
- 8.2 Background papers referred to during production of this report comprise all correspondence on the files set out in the Planning History section above, excluding exempt information.

Recommendation:

PERMISSION BE GRANTED

Subject to the recommended conditions/informatives:

Type of use

Hours in use –

9:00 to 17:00 (Monday to Friday, Sunday)

9:00 to 17:00 (One Saturday per calendar month)

Maximum visitor (Monday to Friday) – 2 visitors

Maximum visitor (Saturday and Sunday) – 15 visitors at one time

No loud music and outdoor activities associated with this proposal

Sunday meditation class: Maximum 2 classes per day

Saturday course – only 1 class per day

Standard

Standard Time Limit

Standard Compliance with Plans

Pre-occupation

Cycle parking details

Landscaping details

Travel Plan

Lighting scheme

Integrated bat and bird bricks

Compliance

External materials

Front Canopy – no enclosure

Informatives

Control of Pollution/Construction sites

Unsuspected contamination

Street naming/numbering

No invasive non-native species to be included in the planting

Mixed native species hedgerows around the boundaries

Any other planning condition(s) considered necessary by the Assistant Director of Planning.