

Planning application for a new industrial building for B1/B8 purposes and associated parking.

The Vinery, Poling, Arundel BN18 9PY.



Planning, Design and Access Statement

December 2019

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Introduction

1. This document is a supporting statement for a planning application for a new B1/B8 storage building at The Vinery, Poling. The building will be located at the western end of the Vinery site and will comprise a new warehouse, workshop and associated office building for Tributes Ltd, an existing tenant within the Vinery complex. The use of the building will be primarily B8 storage, but there will be some light fabrication activity within the B1 category (i.e. a use compatible with close proximity to residential areas), as well as office use associated with the business.

2. The site is currently vacant and is within an area of land that has an extant planning approval for a green and kitchen waste composting plant. (Ref. WSCC/080/10/PO) This development was commenced, but has not progressed due to fundamental changes in the waste collection and processing regime in West Sussex and the landowner has decided to use the site for other industrial uses.

3. The Vinery site has been transformed over the past 15 years from a rundown and unused mushroom factory to a modern employment park providing over 15,000 m² of employment floorspace, all of which is currently rented out. Since the original approval to change the use of the former mushroom tunnels, further planning permissions have been granted to permit the relocation within the site, and reuse, of a further 11 former growing tunnels for B8 use (A/120/08) and for any mix of B1 and B8 uses within the site. Permission has also been granted for new units adjacent to unit 34 (A/5/13), and for a new building at unit 35a (approved under A/131/13). A further warehouse building was granted approval in 2018 at unit 35B under reference A/154/17/PL. A very large warehouse scheme for Fargo was completed on land to the south of the Vinery complex in 2016. (A/74/13).

4. The Vinery provides very good quality employment space at extremely reasonable rental rates and is an ideal location for starter companies in particular. The current application has come about as a result of further demand for floorspace from an existing tenant of the site who wishes to consolidate and expand their business.

Context

5. The application relates to an acre of land which forms part of the overall Vinery site as shown on the submitted plans. There are currently a wide range of industrial buildings across the Vinery site, but the land at the western end of the site has remained vacant pending the proposed development of a composting plant, which was granted approval by West Sussex County Council in 2012.

6. Although development of this scheme was commenced, no significant building works have been undertaken, and there is no commercial interest from the private sector to take the proposal forward. It should also be noted that the County Council has not designated the site for waste disposal purposes, and it is for all intents and purposes part of the Vinery general industrial area.

7. The owner of the Vinery has now decided to develop this land in separate parcels for commercial developments, and this application relates to the first of these.

8. The potential purchaser of the site is a company called Tributes Ltd. Tributes have been established at the Vinery for over five years and now occupy the existing office building at the entrance to the site and lease seven of the former tunnels, formerly used for mushroom growing.

9. Tributes key business is the importing and distributing of woven (willow, bullrush and bamboo) coffins throughout the UK. The business has grown significantly over recent years with the increased demand for the use of sustainable materials for burials and cremation.

10. In addition to coffins, the company also design a range of funeral accessories, some of which are fabricated on site, and some of which are outsourced. These items include such things as scatter tubes and urns for cremated remains, memorial keepsakes, picture frames and memory boxes. The firm provide a personalised service for every order, which may include engraving of the above items.

11. The company receives the fabricated coffins in bulk by way of approximately 2 HGV deliveries per week. The individual orders are processed and then dispatched via courier company or the company's own fleet of vans. The company currently employs 30 people in their storage buildings, workshop and office and it is expected that this number could grow to up to 35-40 within the next few years.

The Vinery Site

12. The overall Vinery site extends to approximately 6 hectares, the majority of which is now covered by existing buildings, car parking, open storage and roads. The Vinery is located immediately to the south of the main A 27 trunk road which also marks the boundary to the South Downs National Park. There is a substantial tree screen between the road and the Vinery, and there is further screening provided by a row of existing Lleylandi trees on parts of the eastern and southern boundaries.

13. South of the Vinery site is the Fargro development which is a large distribution warehouse providing materials and supplies for garden centres. (A/74/13) As part of this development and to accommodate the increase in traffic generated by the Fargro development, the access was upgraded to improve the diverge taper from the highway to the entrance road.

14. To the east of the Vinery site is a row of 16 private houses which share the access onto the A 27.

The application site

15. The application site is approximately 1 acre (0.4 ha.) in area and is located at the far south-west corner of the Vinery site. The land slopes gently from north to south,

but is otherwise flat. Immediately to the south of the site is an area of green space, which was the residual land left after the Fargo scheme was developed. This land which has been landscaped in accordance with an approved landscape plan, is bounded on the east by a public footpath running from the Vinery site to the village of Poling, and on the west by an existing watercourse. On part of this land there is an existing Lleylandi tree screen.

16. On the northern part of the western boundary of the site there is another substantial Lleylandi tree screen. The site has been largely cleared of former buildings associated with the mushroom factory, but there are two remaining mushroom tunnels, which would be cleared as part of the development. These tunnels would however be retained for use during the construction period.

17. On the southern boundary of the site, there was formerly a large pile of topsoil, but this has now been removed as part of the implementation of a new car park, further to the east, which was granted approval under planning permission A/44/18/PL. The land has now been tapered down into the adjoining site. An oak tree which was originally on the site was blown over in the November gales.

The proposed development

18. The proposed development would be a single building with a mono pitch roof and set on concrete foundations. The building footprint would be 1664 m² and would include internal offices on a mezzanine level. The building, which would be 34.3 m wide by 48.5 m long, would be faced with green profiled steel cladding which would reflect other structures within the Vinery site. The overall floorspace of the building will be 2110 m² with 1655 m² used for B8 purposes and 455 m² used for B1 purposes.

19. The building would have an overall height of 10.3 metres to the apex of the roof with an eaves height of 7.1 metres. This compares to an overall height of between 11.5m and 13 metres for the approved waste building at the site, and so will be considerably smaller.

20. The building would have roller shutter doors on the eastern elevation to allow HGV access, and there would be parking provided around the site. There is sufficient land to provide parking to the recommended standard, although it would be proposed to only provide sufficient spaces for the current workforce and likely visitors. There are however only occasional visits from reps and rarely if ever public visits.

21. It is proposed that a planting scheme would be devised to improve the screening of the site from the south, although it is pointed out that the planting scheme already implemented on the land further to the south will provide significant screening in the future. It is anticipated that the landscaping details will be conditioned.

Layout/Scale/Appearance

22. The proposed industrial unit will be of similar height to the adjacent building built in 2015 immediately to the east for the restoration of classic buses. This building has an overall height of 8 m and an eaves height of 6m. The industrial floorspace of the Vinery site as a whole is over 15000 sq m. and so the proposed addition represents a relatively small proportion of the total floorspace.

23. The visual impact of the development from the south will only be of any significance from the public footpath and will not fundamentally change the developed character of the whole area. The impact will, on the other hand, be significantly less than would have been the case with the approved waste building on the site. The already landscaped area to the south will mitigate any long distance views into the site, and the tree screen on the eastern boundary will screen long distance views from this direction. The development will not be visible from the residential properties to the west of the Vinery site.

24. Further planting around the site, which can be agreed as a condition of any approval, will further soften the impact of the development from outside the site.

25. From within the Vinery, the proposal will have no significant impact on the site or its surroundings. The building will reflect the overall character of the existing site.

Access and parking

26. There is an existing access to the site via the internal road network which is currently being upgraded by the site owner. The proposed development will be accessible to HGVs and other vehicles via this internal road network.

27. Access to the Vinery site from the A 27 has recently been improved as a result of the development on land to the south of the Vinery for Fargro Ltd. The junction meets the standards required for relatively high volumes of traffic accessing and egressing the site.

28. It is proposed that the development will provide spaces for up to 35 cars to the east and the south of the proposed building as shown on the block plan. This will provide for the needs of the employees and the visitors to the facility.

29. In accordance with the WSCC Parking Guidelines 2019 an assessment has been made of the requirements of the business for parking and the opportunities for reducing car travel. It should be noted however that the location of the Vinery and the fact that access is only available from the main A27 does reduce the opportunities for walking, cycling and using public transport to access the site.

30. It is considered however that out of the 35-40 proposed staff at the site, two or three will cycle or car share for at least some of the time. Covered cycle parking (10 spaces) and shower/changing facilities will be available in the building for staff to

use. In order to be able to attract and retain staff at this location it is considered that adequate car parking is essential. There is also a need for a limited number of visitor spaces to include visits by couriers to deliver and collect small items.

31. It is considered that 35 spaces will allow for the needs of the staff and visitors to the site taking account of annual leave, sickness absences etc.

32. In terms of commercial vehicles, provision is to be made for up to 2 HGVs to visit the site at any one time to allow for simultaneous loading and unloading. (As noted above there are a maximum of two HGV deliveries of coffins per week) The way the company operates is that collections of coffins for outward shipping are made at the end of every day by a delivery company using a small lorry. These are then taken to a central sorting office for onward delivery, usually to a funeral directors, anywhere in the country.

33. Provision will be made to allow for 20% of the parking spaces to have access to an EV charging point in accordance with the guidance.

Hours of operation

34. It should be noted that the general restriction on hours of operation for the Vinery site as a whole is currently 7.00am to 6.00 pm Monday to Friday and 7.00am to 13.00 pm on Saturdays. The Fargo development adjoining the site did however lead to the improvement of the site access to the A27 and as a result of this the Fargo permission allowed for operations at that site between 06.00 to 18.00 Monday to Friday and 07.00 to 13.00 on Saturday. It is requested that the same hours of operation approved to Fargo is applied to this site. Even though the earlier start time is not essential for the current proposed activity, it is considered that the greater flexibility that this time limit would allow would be beneficial to the business, with no detriment to the residential properties to the east of the Vinery site.

Planning policy

35. Government policy is aimed at making planning permission for employment development easier to obtain and more flexible, primarily to ensure the planning system helps rather than hinders the economy. The National Planning Policy Framework in particular seeks to support business development and remove obstacles to investment.

36. At a national level, there is significant support for proposals that would support local economic development. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) suggests that there is a need for the planning system to perform an economic role by *'contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation'* (Para 7)

37. The NPPF also suggests that *'Local Planning Authorities should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area.'*(para 14) and should

'support existing business sectors, taking account of where they are expanding or contracting and , where possible, identify and plan for new or emerging sectors likely to locate in their area. Policies should be flexible enough to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan and to allow a rapid response to changes in economic circumstances.' (para 21)

38. It is clear that sustainable economic development has a high priority in national planning policy and where this can be achieved with limited detrimental impact, there would be strong justification for approving any scheme which safeguarded local jobs and businesses.

39. The adopted local plan for Arun District Council also seeks to safeguard existing employment sites and facilitate their upgrading and improvement. Policy DM 1 states that:

'the Council will seek to protect and enhance existing employment sites and premises in order to maintain a supply of good quality commercial sites and premises to meet the needs of businesses and the local economy.'

The Council will promote and support positive measures to upgrade existing employment areas through:

- 1. supporting appropriate proposals for development/redevelopment of employment floorspace, upgrading or modernisation of existing premises and/or proposals which make more efficient use of underutilised employment sites and premises.'*

40. The current proposal, to provide new facilities for an existing employer, would seem to fit entirely within the current policy.

Traffic issues

41. A Transport Assessment (TA) for the whole Vinery site was originally prepared by DM Mason Engineering Consultants Ltd in December 2004. The study was used as the basis for the original planning application for the change of use from mushroom production facility to industrial B1 and B8 uses. The estimated total number of vehicle movements per week during mushroom production was 2440, made up of 140 HGV movements, 40 LGV movements and 2260 car movements. This equated to 28 HGV's movements per working day, 8 LGV's and 452 cars. Of this total, the mushroom production facility generated 308 vehicle movements per day, with the adjacent residential area generating the rest.

42. The estimated vehicle flows for the change of use element in the TA were based on the TRICS model which is regularly used for these types of analyses. The model assumed that traffic flows equivalent to a farm diversification to employment uses would be generated, and estimated 79 HGV movements per working day, 140 LGV's and 389 cars, equating to 608 daily movements. The total flows to and from the industrial area were thus expected to be greater than the original traffic generation of the mushroom factory, but planning permission was granted on the basis that the growth in traffic was not likely to be significant.

2007 Traffic count

43. A count of traffic movements was undertaken by **Count On Us** between the 19th July and 8th August 2007. The count found that the vehicle movements recorded for development were significantly below that estimated for the original application.

5 day average daily movements	westbound	eastbound
19 th -25 th July	91	91
26 July – 1 st Aug	100	100
2 nd Aug – 8 th Aug	85	88

44. The actual vehicle flows at the time of the count were thus, on average, only about one third of the total originally estimated based on TRICS. (i.e. A maximum of 200 vehicle movements per day, compared to over 600 estimated for the B1/B8 approval). The collected data indicated the majority of the flows were 'in' during the morning and 'out' during the afternoon, representing the arrival and departure of workers in their cars.

45. At the time of the traffic survey, most of the floorspace within the site was occupied. The majority of the floorspace is currently being used for B8 storage primarily by a number of dealers in antique furniture. The goods are stored prior to further distribution. Most of the movements of these goods are by van or LGV's. Overall there are only a limited number of HGV visits to the site.

46. It should also be recognised that the original traffic survey was done during a period when maintenance and upgrading work (including the installation of approved cladding to the buildings) was being undertaken. The recorded traffic flows thus included deliveries of material for this temporary work and the travel of workers employed on site.

47. Since the original traffic count, the overall approved floorspace at the site has been increased significantly as described above.

48. It was accepted that these subsequent approvals would generate some additional traffic. The level of traffic was considered likely to increase in direct proportion to the increase in floor space. The new approvals have added over 2500 m² of internal floor space. The previously existing floorspace at the site comprised 3800 m² within traditionally constructed buildings and 8400 m² within former

growing tunnels. The new approvals since the original traffic count therefore represent a 20% increase in floorspace.

49. Even if this was to lead to a 20% increase in traffic levels (to a maximum of 240 vehicle movements per day) the figure is significantly below that which was estimated at the time of the original application (over 600 vehicle movements).

2012 traffic count

50. A further count of vehicle movements was undertaken by Count-on-Ups in 2012. The count of 119 vehicles (8 HGV) for the residential properties Lillian Terrace was lower than the original TRICS based estimate of 180. The count of traffic associated with the B1/B8 uses was 320 vehicles daily two-way (64 HGV). This was still well below the original TRICS estimate of over 600 movements.

51. The current proposal will not in itself generate any new traffic flows into the Vinery as the company are already located on the site. It is accepted however that the vacant space when the company relocates will generate further traffic movements which could be in the region of 20-40 vehicle movements per day.

52. Since the transport assessment and the traffic counts have been undertaken and as a direct consequence of the Fargo development to the south of the site, the access to the A 27 has been substantially improved in accordance with a scheme agreed with the Highways Agency. It is considered therefore that the levels of new traffic likely to be generated by this development will not be significant in the context of the site as a whole.

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Fig 1. Aerial view of the Vinery site



Fig 2. The application site before commencement of the approved waste plant which has never been completed

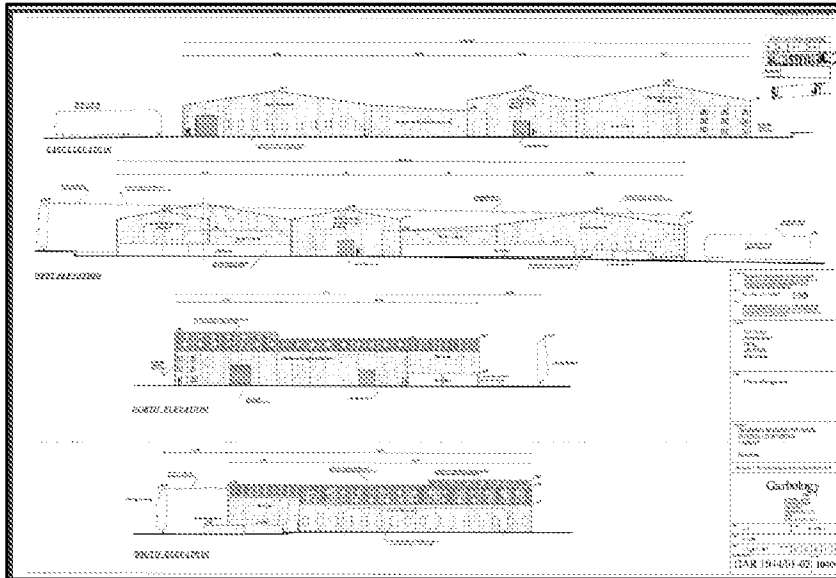


Fig 3. The elevations of the approved waste plant

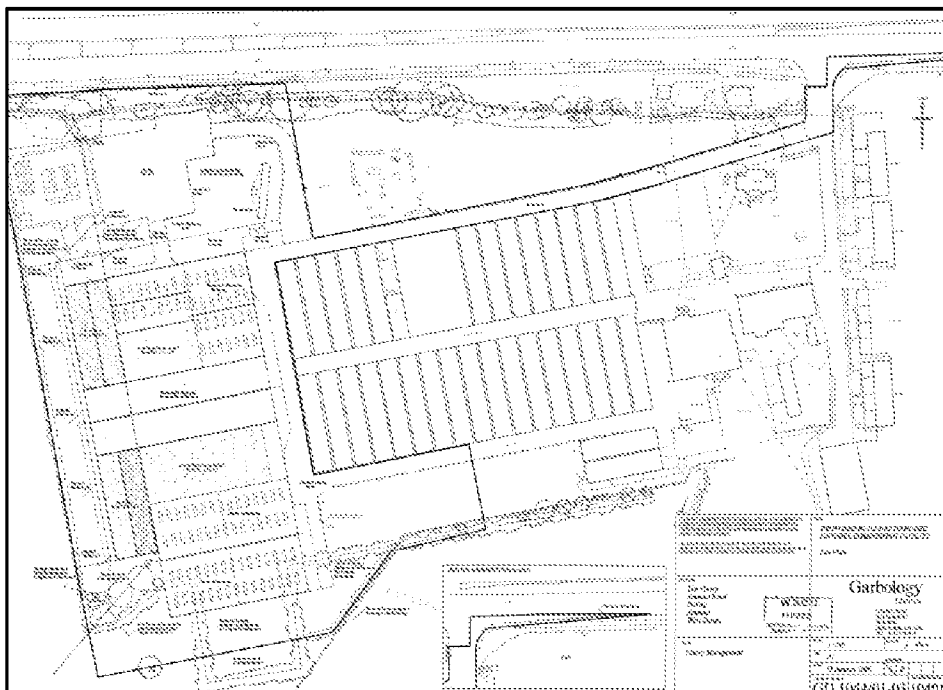


Fig 4. The plan of the approved waste plant

Trees

53. The only trees within the application site are the Lleylandii tree screens on the eastern boundary. Other parts of the tree screen that formerly ran across the site were removed as part of the implementation of the approved compost development. A survey of the trees on site has been recently updated by ACD Ltd and is attached to this application. The survey suggests that the trees do have a significant life left

but that this could be extended by appropriate pruning to reduce the tops and side growths.

54. The survey report also recommends that to avoid the tree root protection area (RPA) of these trees the new building should be set back from the boundary of the site by at least 7 m and this requirement has been incorporated into the design

Ecology

55. An assessment of the site has been undertaken by Peach Ecology and is attached to the application. The site has been cleared of buildings and vegetation and there is no significant ecological interest likely to be affected by development.

Lighting

56. There will be limited external lighting on the building and skylights will be provided to provide natural light internally.

Flood risk and drainage

57. The site is within Flood zone 1 and is too small to generate a requirement for a formal flood risk assessment. The land slopes gently from north to south and there is an existing watercourse to the south of the site that water would naturally drain to. This watercourse flows towards the south.

58. The foul drainage from the site is proposed to be dealt with by means of a package treatment plant which will be located at the south west corner of the site and which will discharge into the adjacent watercourse. This will of course be subject to an Environment Agency licence being granted for this facility.

59. In respect of surface water drainage, it is noted that there is an existing privately owned and maintained pipe running from the roadside ditch at the north of the Vinery site alongside the A 27 to the watercourse to the south. This pipe would be within the area proposed for the building proposed by this application. It is therefore, the intention of the landowner to divert this pipe and upgrade its capacity. The pipe will be relocated to the east of its current position within the base of the new road being constructed in this area. The pipe will be accessed by manhole covers at regular intervals and will be outside the application site. It should be noted that the previous approval for the site had agreed a relocation of the pipe to the west of the proposed building. In that scheme it was proposed that all the storm water would be stored for reuse in the composting process.

60. Rainfall runoff from the proposed building will be directed to this pipe for discharge to the watercourse to the south of the site.

61. Permeable surfacing will be used for the new parking area.

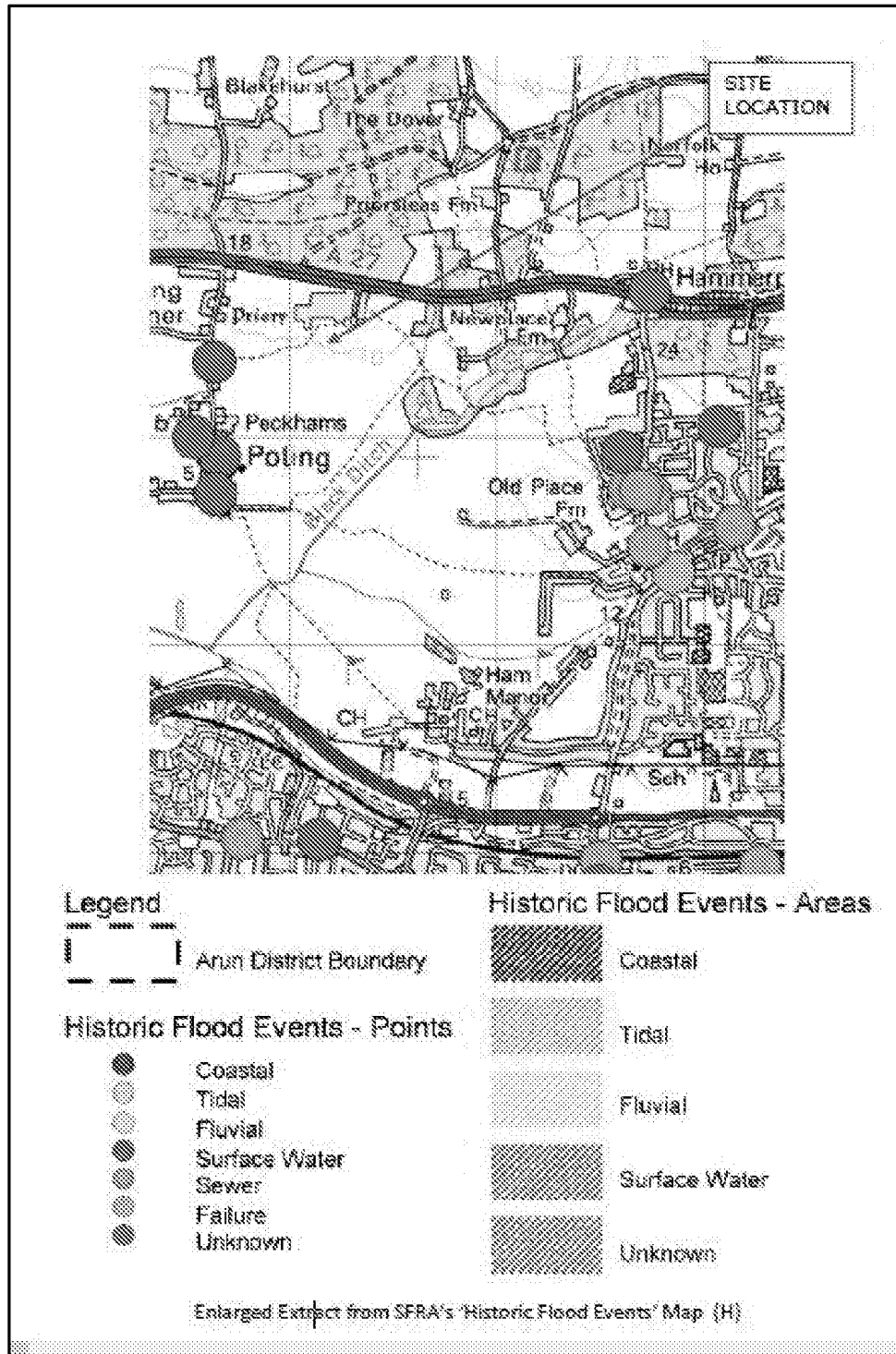


Fig 5. Historic flood events (from SFRA)

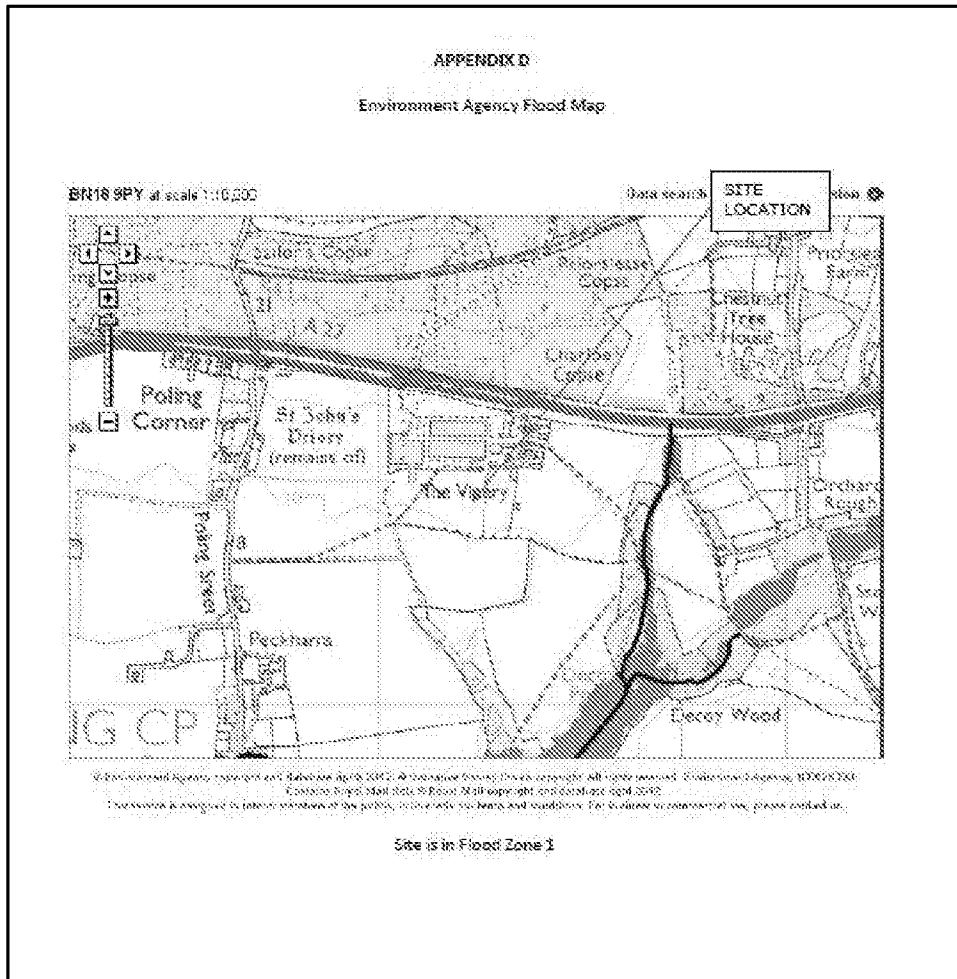


Fig 6. The site is within Flood Zone 1

Conclusion

62. The proposed development will provide for further employment growth at the Vinery within an established employment site. The new building will have minimal impact on the amenity of the area and is commensurate with the existing activities and operations of the site. The proposal accords with national and local planning policy.