

**Item No 01:-**

**15/03215/FUL (CT.2609/Y)**

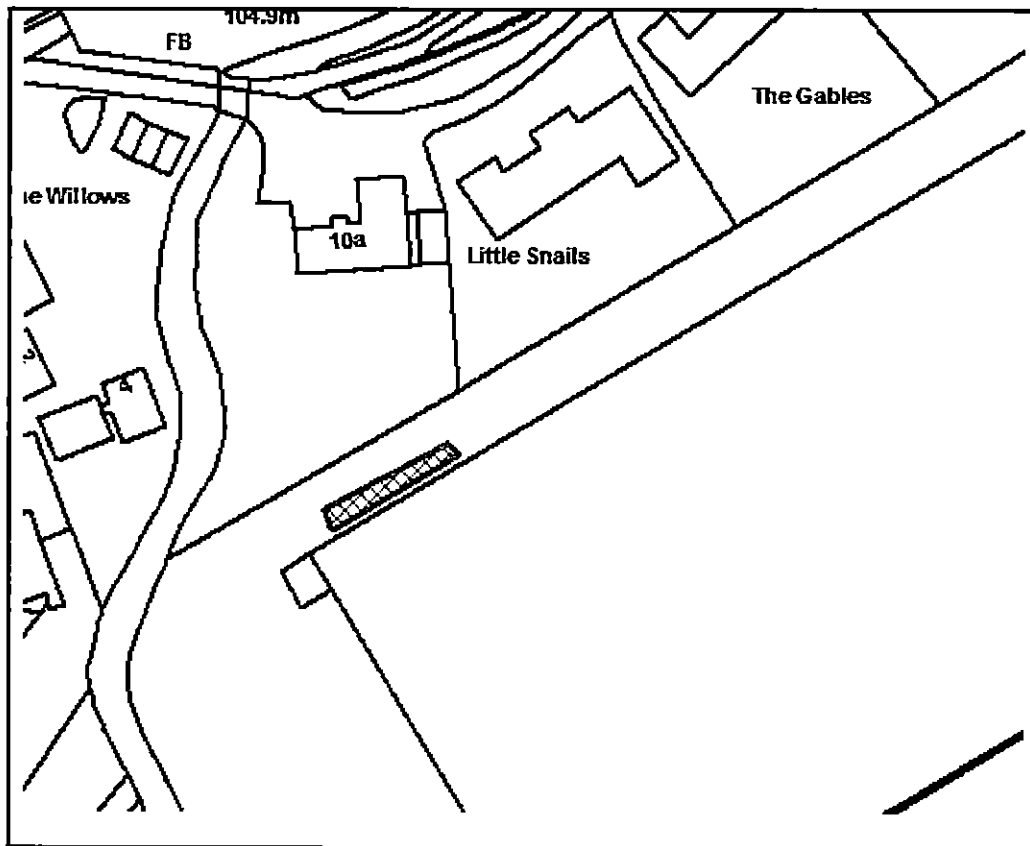
**The Colt Car Company Ltd  
Watermoor Road  
Cirencester  
Gloucestershire  
GL7 1LF**

Item No 01:-

Erection of external racking at The Colt Car Company Ltd  
Watermoor Road Cirencester Gloucestershire

<b>Full Application</b> <b>15/03215/FUL (CT.2609/Y)</b>	
Applicant:	The Colt Car Company Ltd
Agent:	Glevum Design & Build
Case Officer:	Scott Britnell
Ward Member(s):	Councillor Joe Harris
Committee Date:	11th November 2015

Site Plan



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**RECOMMENDATION: PERMIT**

**Main Issues:**

- (a) The impact of the development upon the character of the area
- (b) The impact of the development upon the living conditions of nearby and neighbouring residential dwellings
- (c) The loss of on-site car parking spaces

**Reasons for Referral:**

This application has been called in by Councillor Harris due to the number of objections received, which includes a representation from the Town Council and so that the Committee can assess whether the impact on neighbouring properties is deemed to be unacceptable.

**1. Site Description:**

The Colt Car Company site sits at the eastern end of Watermoor Road with residential roads and dwellings neighbouring it to the west and north. It is a well-established employment site situated within the Development Boundary. To the south the site is bounded by the A419 Bristol Road while allotment gardens occupy the land to the east.

**2. Relevant Planning History:**

The site has been the subject of a number of planning applications over the past two decades. The most recent consent was granted on 14 April 2015 for the erection of a single storey storage building. That application originally included external racking in the same location as proposed within but was withdrawn following concerns expressed by Local Members.

**3. Planning Policies:**

LPR05 Pollution and Safety  
 LPR18 Develop within Development Boundaries  
 LPR24 Employment Uses  
 LPR39 Parking Provision  
 LPR42 Cotswold Design Code  
 NPPF National Planning Policy Framework

**4. Observations of Consultees:**

Environmental Protection Officer: No objection, subject to the following planning condition: -

Before the development commences a scheme shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority which specifies the provisions to be made for the control of noise emanating from the site. The noise mitigation scheme should be maintained and shall not be altered without the prior written approval of the local planning authority.

Reason: To protect the amenity of the locality, especially for people living and/or working nearby, in accordance with Cotswold District Local Plan Policy 5 and PPG 24."

The Highways Officer: No objection to the proposals. Their full response is as follows: -

"On street parking is controlled in this area of Cirencester and Cirencester is an accessible location providing access by sustainable modes of transport including walking and cycling. In the

context of paragraph 32 of the NPPF the impact of the development is not severe; therefore the proposal is policy compliant.

I would hope that the planned loss of these spaces would encourage more of the staff to car share or to find other modes of transport, but the size of the scheme is not sufficient that I could secure this as part of the application"

#### **5. View of Town/Parish Council:**

The Cirencester Town Council Object to the proposal on the grounds of its appearance and impact upon the living conditions of the occupants of nearby residential properties.

#### **6. Other Representations:**

Seven third party letters of objection have been received including a petition with 8 signatories, 6 of whom had provided the remaining aforementioned letters/e-mails.

The objections are summarised below: -

The impact of the racking upon the character of the area

The impact of the racking and its use upon the living conditions of the occupants of nearby and neighbouring residential dwellings

#### **7. Applicant's Supporting Information:**

Design and Access Statement

#### **8. Officer's Assessment:**

##### **Proposal**

This application proposes the erection of external racking to the western end of the north elevation of the site's largest building. While works have commenced, and are well progressed, the development has not been completed. As such the application is not seeking retrospective consent to retain the racking in its current state.

The racking is required to store the rigid plastic shells that are found to the rear of Mitsubishi flatbed cars and vans. The Design and Access Statement (DAS) advises that, due to their bulk, these items greatly restrict other general storage spaces within the warehouse.

The racking is constructed of galvanised steel and provides 21 separate bays (7 wide x 3 high). It has a depth of just less than 2.1 metres with a width of 18.9 metres and height of 6 metres. The racking would sit up against the kerb of the pavement to the north of the building resulting in the loss of 8 existing on-site car parking spaces.

Whilst the drawings do not show the racking to be physically connected to the warehouse the DAS proposes that it may be tied back for stability purposes only.

##### **(a) The impact of the development upon the character of the area**

Section 7 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that, "good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people."

Local Plan Policy 18 states that "the siting, appearance and scale of the [proposed] development respects the surrounding countryside, topography, and the traditional form, character, appearance and setting of the settlement, and would cause no significant adverse environmental or visual harm to the site or its surroundings..."

Local Plan Policy 24 (paragraph 6) states that "new buildings and structures that are required for, and directly related to, an existing business will be permitted provided the development is designed to avoid visual harm..."

Local Plan Policy 42 requires that "development should be environmentally sustainable and designed in a manner that respects the character, appearance and local distinctiveness of Cotswold District with regard to style, setting, harmony, street scene, proportion, simplicity, materials and craftsmanship"

The Cotswold Design Guide is a Supplementary Planning Document which promotes good design. With regards to development within "industrial estates" this guidance proffers that "outdoor storage areas should be well screened by walls or close-boarded fences".

The racking has an industrial appearance in line with the warehouse against which it is set. Whilst views of the racking are available from the neighbouring residential dwellings and some public vantage points, it is clearly read in connection with the warehouse and so does not appear incongruous within this context. It has a very simple, uncomplicated appearance and is relatively lightweight in visual terms.

The racking would, if approved, be finished with a metal sheet roof and metal strips to the sides; although the front would remain open, thus ensuring its lightweight appearance is retained. In terms of its scale the racking is clearly a subservient structure and the materials employed are wholly appropriate for this context.

It is acknowledged that the racking is not fully screened by the boundary treatment to the west of the site. This treatment consists of walling and various planting behind within the gardens of the neighbouring properties. Whilst supplementary planning document The Cotswold Design Code requests that external storage is well screened, the context of this specific development is such that it would not be possible to fully screen the racking. To do so would require a boundary treatment of significant height that would likely produce negative impacts. Given the setting of the racking against the warehouse with its industrial appearance, and its design and form, it is adjudged that its appearance is acceptable and does not cause material harm to the area. Consequently, the fact that the racking is not fully screened from view does not justify refusal of this application.

In light of the above assessment, the racking due to its location and its acceptable design, scale and form is adjudged to comply with Local Plan Policies 18, 24 and 42 and section 7 of the NPPF.

**(b) The impact of the development upon the living conditions of the occupants of neighbouring and nearby dwellings**

Local Plan Policy 5 requires the Local Planning Authority to consider the potential for development to cause unacceptable pollution, including noise. This policy also sets out the LPA's approach to developments that may pose safety hazards.

Local Plan Policies 18 and 42 are also relevant to the consideration of this element of the proposals.

A number of objections have been made with regards to the impact of the proposal upon the living conditions of nearby residential properties. Whilst the racking is visible from a number of adjacent dwellings and their gardens, its subservience with the building against which it is set and its materials of construction do not materially alter the outlook available from these properties. It

is important to note that as existing, that outlook is dominated by the warehouse. Set against that building, the racking would not result in a sense of overbearing or enclosure.

An objection has been made with regards to the impact of the racking at night, which due to the existing external lighting is partly illuminated. Further comments have also been made with regards the variety of stock that is stored upon the racking. It is suggested that the changing nature of the stock imbues the racking with an ever-changing appearance and so prevents neighbouring occupiers becoming accustomed to it.

With regards to its night time appearance the racking is not judged to represent material harm to the amenity of the occupants of the neighbouring properties. In respect of the use of the racking for storing different stock/goods, this is only to be expected. The LPA, if approving this application, could not reasonably require only specific goods to be stored upon the racking. Such a requirement would have to be secured through condition and it is the officer's view that such a stipulation would be overly onerous and unreasonable.

An objection has also been made in respect of the potential health and safety implications of having high level storage in proximity to residential properties. The site visit photographs show that should items fall from the racking they are unlikely to reach the neighbouring gardens. Further, any working practices in relation to the storage of goods, such as their movement by fork lift trucks, would need to be carried in accordance with all relevant Health and Safety Regulations. The appropriate body for ensuring compliance with those rules is the Health and Safety Executive and any unsafe practices should be reported to them accordingly. It must also be noted that it is not the role of the planning system to regulate issues that are covered by other legislation.

With regards to potential for overlooking, the racking system is clearly designed for storage purposes. Loading and unloading items (to the top two tiers in particular) would almost certainly require a fork lift truck or similar equipment, and so opportunities for overlooking from this structure would be extremely limited.

Concern has also been expressed with regards to the increase in noise levels resulting from fork lift movements and general storage activities adjacent to the boundary with neighbouring residential properties. The Council's Environmental Protection Team have assessed the proposals and consider them acceptable subject to a condition controlling noise associated with the use of the external racking. As the proposals are almost complete and in use, any such condition would be required to be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA within 2 months from the date of a decision. Thereafter the agreed provisions for controlling noise emanating from the use of the racking shall come into effect from the date of the LPA's approval and shall remain in place in perpetuity.

Subject to the aforementioned noise condition it is adjudged that the proposals would not have any materially harmful impacts upon the living conditions of neighbouring or nearby properties. The application is therefore compliant with Local Plan Policies 5, 18 and 42 and section 7 of the NPPF.

### **(c) The impact of the development upon on-site car parking provision**

Section 4, Paragraph 32 of the NPPF refers to developments that generate significant amounts of movement and advises that such proposals should be accompanied by a Transport Statement or Assessment. As noted by the Highways Officer this application is not 'severe' and so the requirement for a statement or assessment is not required and the development is adjudged to be policy compliant.

There are currently 189 car parking spaces on site, of which 18 are visitors' spaces. The proposals would result in the loss of 8 spaces. The DAS suggests that this loss can be easily accommodated.

Local policy indicates that the minimum number of car parking spaces that would be expected to be provided on this site is 85. This figure has been reached using the method set out at Appendix 9 of the Local Plan and accounting for the 3 different and distinct use classes, B1, B8 and C3 that are currently in operation.

It has been assumed that 18 of the 181 car parking spaces that would be retained if the racking is permitted would be dedicated for visitors. Therefore 163 car parking spaces would remain for staff, which is almost double that required by the Local Plan. Consequently, the loss of 8 car parking spaces is acceptable in this context. In addition the Highways Officer has no objection to the proposals on the grounds of the loss of these spaces. Their full response is set out earlier in this report and it is noted that they consider the proposals compliant with paragraph 32 of the NPPF and Local Plan Policy 39.

The loss of the small number of car parking spaces may also lead to staff considering more sustainable modes of transport, given that the site is within a very sustainable location. Consequently, the loss of these parking spaces may have a beneficial impact upon (sustainable) transport habits.

### **Other Matters**

The site is within a Flood Zone 2/3 area but it is adjudged, given the nature of the proposals that the racking would not result in increased flood risk.

### **9. Conclusion:**

The racking is an acceptable addition into an established industrial context. No material harm has been identified in respect of its impacts upon the character of the area or living conditions of the occupants of neighbouring and nearby properties. Further, the loss of 8 parking spaces can be accommodated given the provision which would be retained. The application is therefore adjudged to comply with Local Plan Policies 5, 18, 24, 39 and 42 and Sections 4 and 7 of the NPPF and is recommended for approval, subject to any conditions referred to above.

### **10. Proposed Conditions:**

The development shall be started by 3 years from the date of this decision notice.

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

The development hereby approved shall be implemented in accordance with the following drawing number(s): PL3, PL7, PL8

**Reason:** For purposes of clarity and for the avoidance of doubt, in accordance with paragraphs 203 and 206 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Within 2 months from the date of the granting of this planning permission a scheme shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority which specifies the provisions to be made for the control of noise associated with the use of the external racking hereby approved. The noise mitigation scheme shall come into effect from the date of the local planning authority's approval of such and shall be maintained and shall not be altered thereafter without the prior written approval of the local planning authority.

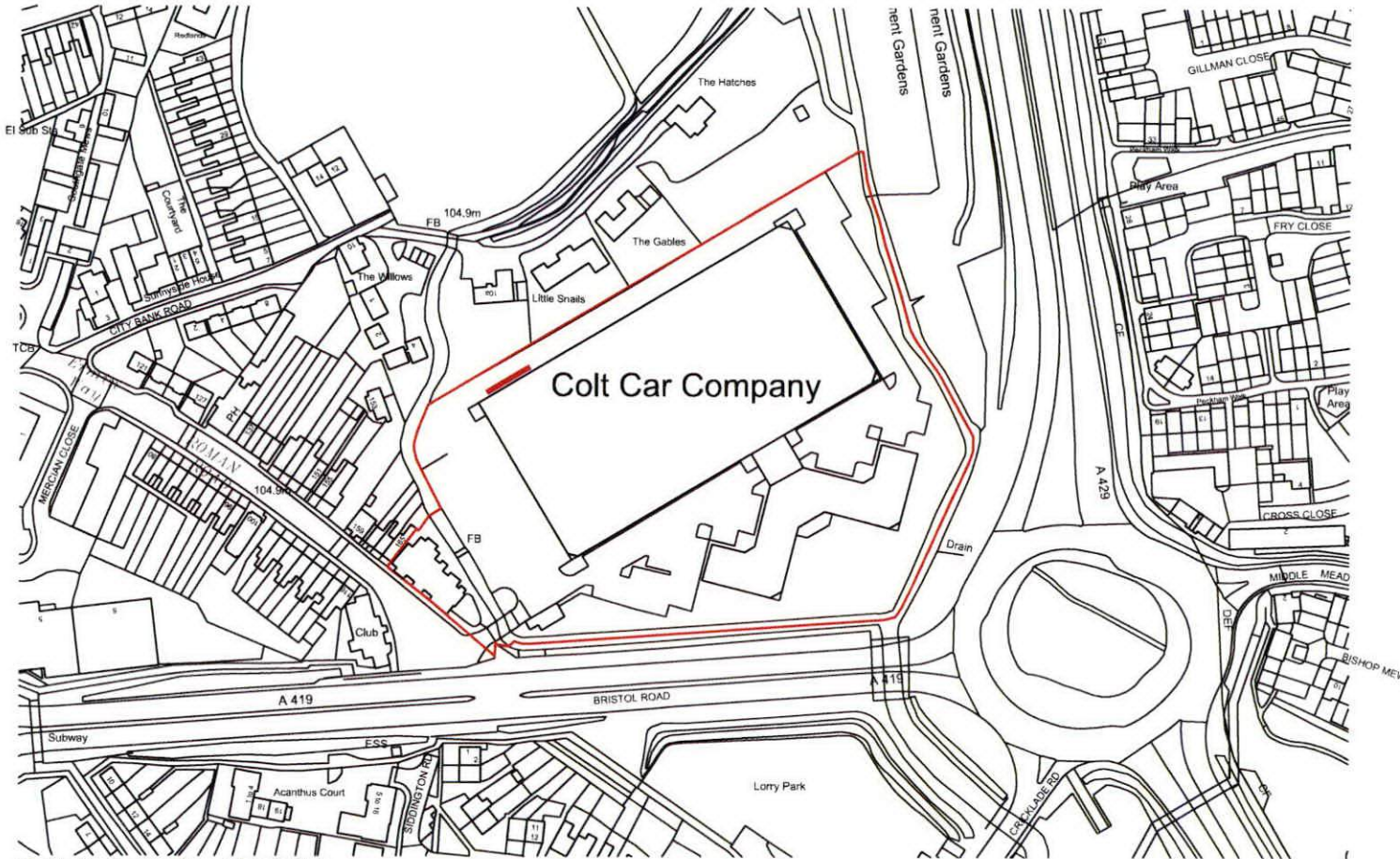
**Reason:** To protect the amenity of the locality, especially for people living and/or working nearby, in accordance with Cotswold District Local Plan Policy 5 and PPG 24.



15/03215/FUL - APPENDIX 1

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PROJECT:  
Proposed External Racking  
at Watermoor Road,  
Cirencester Glos, GL7 1LF  
DRG TITLE:  
Site Location Plan

JOB NO: 15.06      DRG NO: PL8  
SCALE: 1:2500 @ A4      DRN BY: RG  
DATE: July 2015      CKD BY: .

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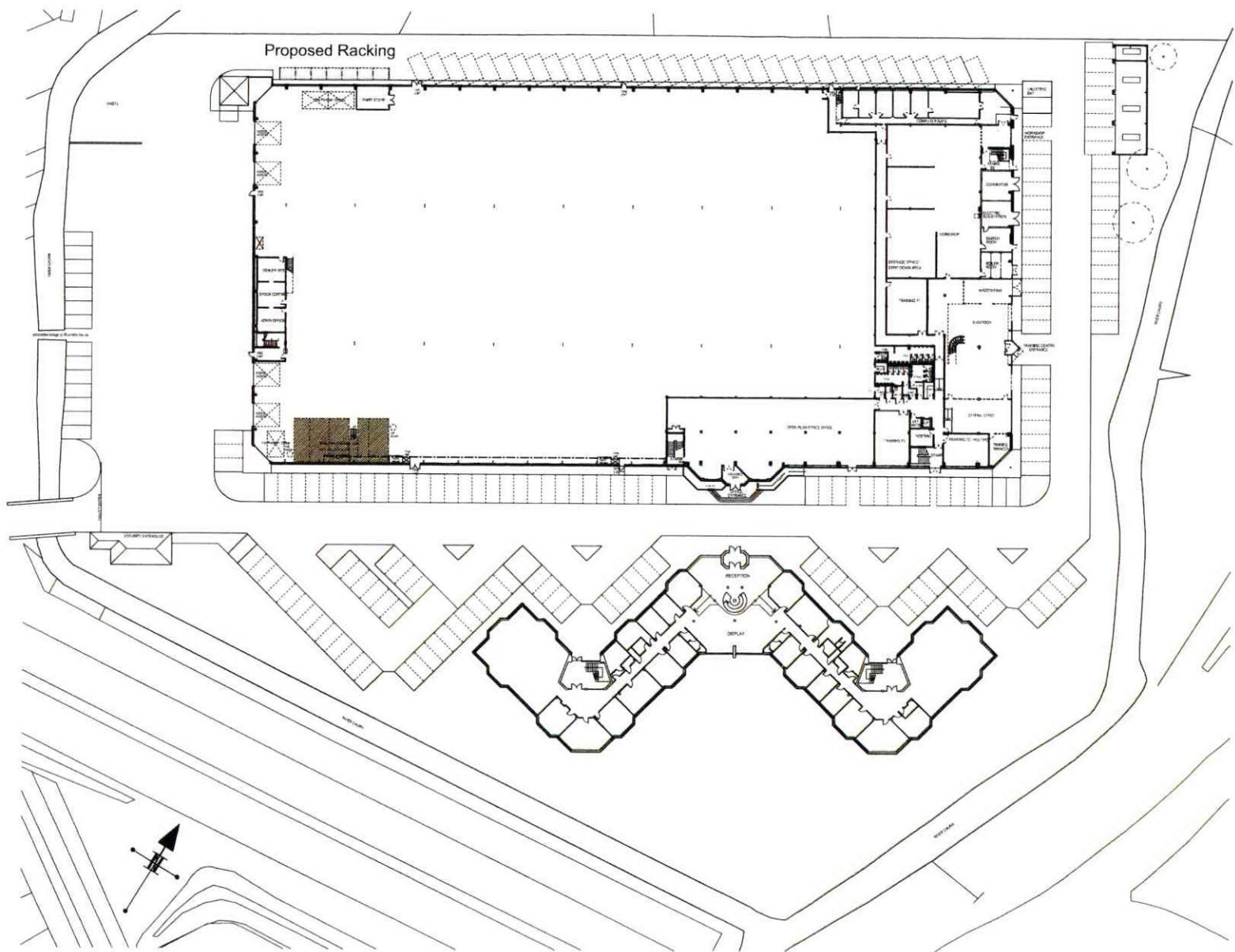
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APPENDIX 1  
15/03215/FUL



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Drawing Revisions			
ISSUE	DATE	REVISION	BY



10

PROJECT:  
Proposed External Racking  
at Watermoor Road, Cirencester

DRG TITLE:  
Block Plan

JOB NO: 15.06	DRG NO: PL7	REV: 
SCALE: 1:500 @ A2	DRN BY: RG	
DATE: Jul 2015	CKD BY: 	

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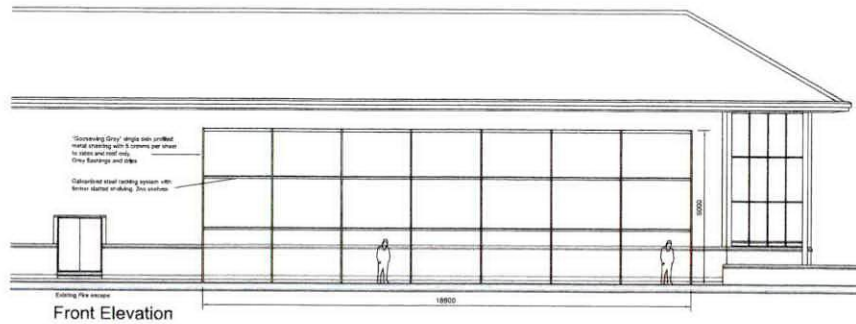
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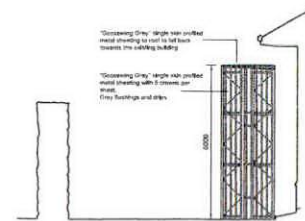
15/03215/FUL - APPENDIX 2

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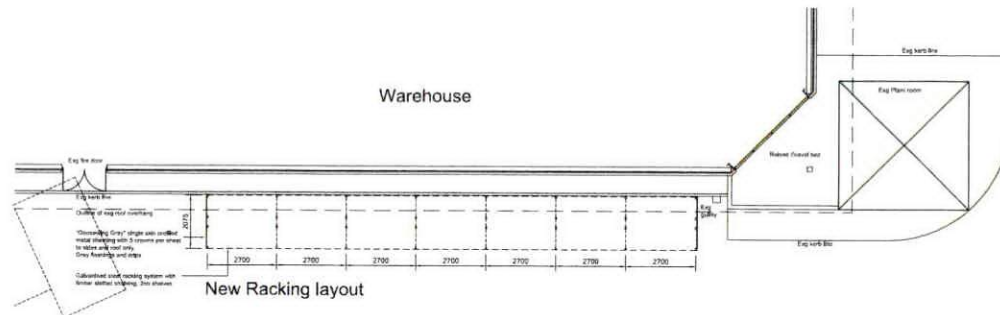
Drawing Revisions			
ISSUE	DATE	REVISION	BY



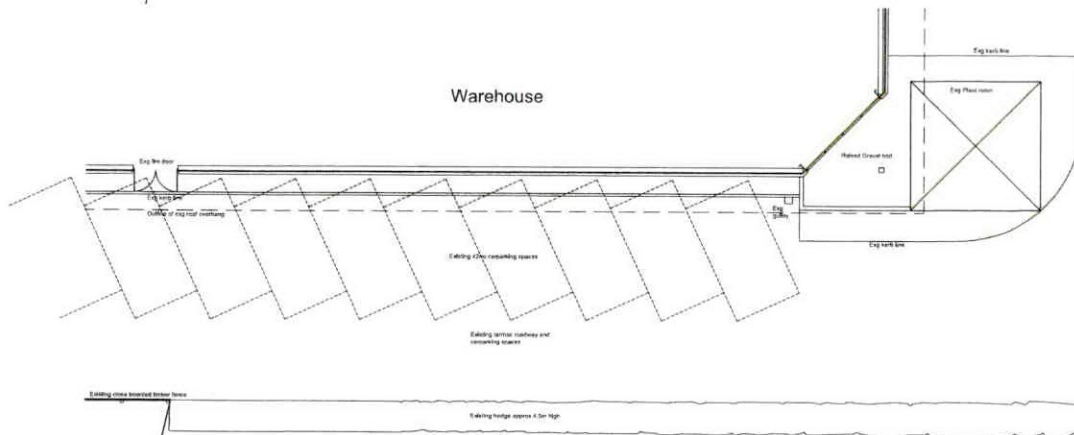
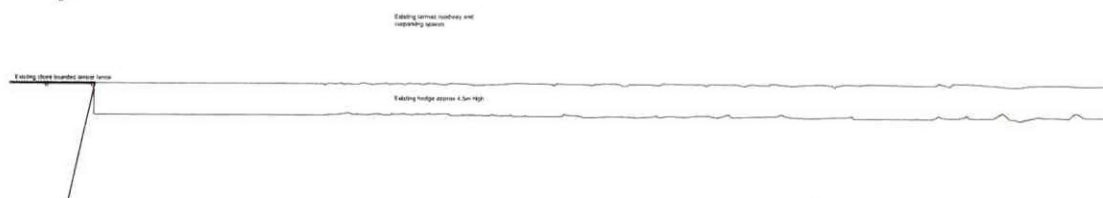
Front Elevation



Side Elevation



New Racking layout



Existing Part Plan

11

15103215FUL - APPENDIX 3

PROJECT:  
Proposed External Racking  
Watermoor Road, Cirencester

DRG TITLE:  
Proposed External racking

JOB NO: 15.06	DRG NO: PL3	REV: -
SCALE: 1:100 @ A1	DRN BY: RG	
DATE: Jan 2015	CRD BY:	

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**DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT**  
**For**  
**EXTERNAL RACKING SYSTEM**  
**At**  
**COLT CAR COMPANY LIMITED**  
**WATERMOOR,**  
**CIRENCESTER,**  
**GLOUCESTERSHIRE,**  
**GL7 1LF**

24<sup>th</sup> July 2015



# GLEVUM

## Design & Build

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### INTRODUCTION

The Colt Car Company currently have three significant buildings on the Watermoor site, these are the main Administration offices, a Warehouse/distribution building which also contains additional offices and a Training facility, and a 24 bed staff accommodation unit.

### DESIGN STATEMENT

#### RACKING FACILITY

It is proposed to install a three tier metal racking storage system (including the ground) to the North West elevation of the Warehouse building. This is to be a proprietary built system using galvanised steel uprights on base plates, with galvanised steel bearers and timber slats for shelving.

This facility is required to store the rigid plastic shells to the rear flat beds of the Mitsubishi light car/van ranges. These are very bulky items in their volume and greatly restrict other general storage within the warehouse, so it proposed to store these externally as they are designed for external use, without compromising other components which need to be stored within a building. For simple protection it is proposed to clad the small side walls and roof but the majority of the unit is still open to the elements from the North West.

The unit is to be 6m high and 2m wide in seven 2.7m long bays and secured to the existing tarmac and possibly tied back to the existing building for stability purposes only. This structure we deem is a temporary structure as it is easily demountable and removable and separate from the existing building

The siting of the racking unit is currently screened by a tall leylandi hedge on the boundary of 10A City Bank Road.

### ACCESS STATEMENT

The Racking system is designed to utilise existing car parking spaces with the total loss of 8 spaces.

When the original building was first occupied there were just over 400 members of staff. This was before the Warehouse office and Training Facility was added. Due to efficiencies made with computerisation over the last 30 years, the current operational staff on the whole of the Watermoor site is only 193 people. The current car parking provision is 189 spaces of which 18 are visitors spaces. The loss of these 8 spaces can easily be seen not to have an impact on the site as there is always a significant number of spare spaces available and will therefore not cause offsite parking issues either.

There is sufficient circulation access within the site not to cause issues with construction or usage when complete. As these facilities are within the curtilage of the existing site, no new vehicular or pedestrian access is to be constructed or altered.

