

## SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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**REPORT TO:** Development and Conservation  
Control Committee

12<sup>th</sup> May 2004

**AUTHOR/S:** Director of Development Services

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**S/0273/04/F – HATLEY  
ALTERATION AND EXTENSION OF BUILDINGS 3 AND 4. USE OF BUILDING 4 FOR  
INDUSTRIAL (MANUFACTURE OF FOILED PRODUCTS), USE OF BUILDINGS 1,2,3  
AND 5 FOR ASSOCIATED STORAGE, USE OF BUILDING 6 AS HOBBY WORKSHOP  
AND BUILDING 7 FOR HOBBY USE (PART RETROSPECTIVE), BUILDINGS AT MOAT  
FARM, EAST HATLEY FOR M W SOUTHERN.**

**Recommendation: Delegated Approval**

Members will visit this site on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2004

Site and Proposal

1. Moat Farm, East Hatley, is located to the east of the road known as East Hatley. It comprises a detached house accessed from the main road, to the east of which is a separate vehicular access and a long driveway serving a collection of single storey former agricultural buildings at the rear which are in the same ownership as the house.
2. This full application, registered on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2004, proposes the alteration and conversion of existing buildings to employment and hobby uses. Four persons will be employed on the site. The industrial process, which will be carried out in building 4 on the applicants plan, involves applying a decorative laminate to UPVC profiles. Parking space exists in front of building 4.
3. To the south and west of the site are gardens of residential dwellings in East Hatley. To the east and to the north Moat Farm itself is agricultural land.

Planning History

4. Planning consent was granted in 2002 for the use of buildings for light industrial and storage use – **S/0999/02/F**. The consent included restrictive conditions including limiting the use to specified buildings and the purposes described in the application. No more than 2 persons were to be working on the site at any one time.

Planning Policy

5. **Policy P2/6** of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 (“The County Structure Plan”) states that sensitive small-scale employment in rural areas will be facilitated where it enables the re-use of existing buildings.
6. **Policy EM10** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2003 (“The Local Plan”) states that planning permission will be granted for the change of use and conversion of rural buildings to employment use provided that, amongst other criteria, the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction and are capable of conversion without major or complete reconstruction; the form, bulk and general design of the buildings both before and after conversion are in keeping with their surroundings; the buildings

are capable of reuse without materially changing their existing character or impact upon the surrounding countryside; that safe and satisfactory vehicular access can be provided together with adequate space within the curtilage to accommodate ancillary requirements such as car parking and lorry manoeuvring without significant detriment to the setting of the building and the landscape within which it is located; and that the scale and frequency of traffic generated can be accommodated on the road system without undue adverse effects.

7. **Policy ES6** of the Local Plan states that the District Council will seek, by the means of appropriate conditions, to minimise the impact of noise and pollution on noise-sensitive development arising from any new industrial, commercial or recreational activities.

#### Consultation

8. **Hatley Parish Council** recommends refusal. Its comments are attached as Appendix 1.
9. **Chief Environmental Health Officer** raises general concerns regarding the impact of the development and suggests conditions controlling the times of use of power operated machinery, details of the location and type of any power driven plant or equipment, details of any external lighting and restricting hours of vehicle movements from delivery/collection vehicles.
10. **Local Highways Authority** states: "You will recall my comments and the subsequent discussions relating to the improvement of the access in respect of the earlier application S/0999/02/F.
11. Whilst the traffic likely to be associated with this proposal is relatively modest, it appears as though it has the potential to generate more traffic than the previous application originally intended.
12. Due to the ill defined junction arrangement and restricted visibility to the west, I have concerns relating to this proposal.
13. It this is to proceed, I strongly recommend that the improvement to the access set out in my consultation dated 27 May 2002, is now undertaken".
14. **Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service** states that additional water supplies for fire-fighting are not required.
15. **Environment Agency** states that the application does not consider sufficiently issues of foul and surface water drainage or pollution control and as the site is delineated within an area of environmental concern and methylene chloride is to be stored and used on the site, it recommends a condition requiring a scheme for the provision and implementation of surface and foul water drainage and pollution control is submitted prior to the commencement of any development.

#### Representations

16. 16 letters of objection (from 10 properties) have been received including a 45 signatory petition. The following is a summary of the objection points:

17. No further developments of this nature are required in Hatley as areas already established for industrial usage in Hatley and Gamlingay are still vacant and more appropriate sites exist in the wider area.
18. Impact on residential amenity – site in close proximity to residential properties - noise emanating from the site - potential lighting to parking and loading areas, particularly during the winter months – light pollution - larger, more extensive and more obtrusive areas of building, parking and materials storage - increase in numbers of staff, vehicle movements and times of activity will cause increased disturbance - the processing of plastic materials and plastic bondings will produce unpleasant and/or hazardous smells and fumes - noxious chemicals will be stored on site (particularly Methylene Chloride). Proposal will attract criminal interest and reduce security to surrounding properties.
19. Future growth of the business will create further demands for expansion and development of the site and its associated activities – precedent for similar proposals in the village.
20. Heavier demands on the local road network and increased traffic coming to and from the site including large vehicles. Possible additional traffic accidents. Very poor access.
21. Surface water drainage system may not cope with the additional development. The site has flooded in the past. This could lead to flooding in gardens of nearby properties. No provision stated for foul water drainage.
22. Chemical storage could be a fire hazard and may result in soil/water pollution – application gives no details on transportation arrangements, site handling or storage of hazard chemicals.
23. Impact on extension of buildings on surrounding countryside – edge of village location – development will be highly visible from the road and surrounding area. Application is for significant alteration and extension not re-use of existing buildings The form and bulk of buildings 3 & 4 would be materially changed.
24. Need for lavatories and washrooms and staff facilities has not been addressed.
25. Industrial site will change the character of this small quiet village.
26. Previous permission conditioned 2 staff only to limit traffic and disturbance to neighbours. This application doubles that.
27. ‘Hobby’ activities could be construed to mean anything – it is not defined in the application and will be carried out outside of normal working days and hours and will create further similar problems.
28. The Council should not be encouraging co-location of this business whose other site is in Bedford as it will involve increased road traffic between the two sites
29. Moat Farm is not a sustainable location for industrial development.
30. The local area has a low level of services/facilities and there is no public transport for employees.
31. There has been no provision for hard or soft screening or landscaping of the site.

### Planning Comments – Key Issues

32. The key issues are whether the proposal complies with the requirements of Policy EM10 and ES6 of the Local Plan.
33. The principle of using buildings within this site for employment purposes has been accepted by the granting of planning consent in 2002. However that consent was tightly conditioned based on consideration of the proposal put forward at that time in recognition of the sensitive location of the site, in a quiet rural area and in close proximity to residential dwellings. Any application for an alternative development of the site must be considered on its merits.
34. The application as currently submitted proposes the main industrial operation to be based in Building 4, which is furthest away from residential dwellings. Work on conversion of that building has commenced and therefore the application is in part retrospective. Whilst I do not condone situations where work has commenced prior to consideration of a planning application it should not prejudice its determination.
35. I am of the view that the physical works proposed in the conversion of Building 4 are acceptable and in accord with the requirements of Policy EM10 of the Local Plan. However I have advised the applicant that the proposal to link this building to the open pole barn at the rear (Building 3) and enclose this building for storage use is not acceptable and contrary to the aims of Policy EM10. I have asked that this element be deleted from the application. I have no objection to the use of Buildings 2 and 5 for storage in association with the proposed use. A condition can be attached to any consent to ensure that these remain storage buildings.
36. The Chief Environmental Health Officer has raised no objection in principle to the proposed use subject to conditions, and has previously visited the applicant's current premises to undertake an assessment of any processes that will be carried out. He is therefore of the view that the proposed use is acceptable on this site having regard to the proximity of residential properties. I have asked the Chief Environmental Health Officer to comment on the local concern about the storage and use of Methylene Chloride on the site and will report his response.
37. The application states that there will be four persons employed on the site which it has been pointed out is double that of the previous consent. The previous consent contained a condition which restricted the number of persons employed on the site to 2 to reflect that sought by the then applicant and in order that control was retained over any expansion of the site. It cannot be inferred from that condition that an additional two persons employed on the site would be unacceptable. In my view given the location of Building 4 and its parking, away from the boundaries with residential properties, this number is acceptable.
38. The Local Highway Authority has raised no objection to the application provided that access improvements in line with those previously required are carried out. The applicant states that there will be an average of two vehicles visiting the site per day, in addition to employees. In my view this level of vehicular movement will prejudice neither highway safety nor residential amenity.
39. I have asked the applicant to supply additional information in respect of the proposed hobby uses in buildings 6 and 7. As the buildings are not within the residential curtilage of Moat House the use proposed requires consent. This would not be the case for buildings within a residential curtilage.

40. The Environment Agency has raised no objection in principle but requires a condition to be attached to any consent requiring a scheme in respect of surface and foul water drainage and pollution control.
41. Subject to the receipt of amended drawings deleting the proposed extensions to Building 4, further information in respect of the proposed hobby uses of Buildings 6 and 7, and confirmation that, in the light of the concerns expressed locally, that the Chief Environmental Health Officer remains of the view that the use is acceptable that delegated powers of approval are granted.

#### Recommendations

42. Subject to the comments in the above paragraph that delegated powers of approval are given subject to restrictive conditions.

#### Reasons for Approval

1. The approved development is considered generally to accord with the Development Plan and particularly the following policies:
  - **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003: P2/6**
  - **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004: EM10 and ES6**
2. The proposal conditionally approved is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations which have been raised during the consultation exercise:
  - Residential amenity including noise disturbance and overlooking issues
  - Highway safety
  - Visual impact on the locality
3. All other material planning considerations have been taken into account. None is of such significance as to outweigh the reason for the decision to approve the planning application.

**Background Papers:** the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- County Structure Plan 2003
- South Cambridgeshire District Council Local Plan 2004
- Planning Application File S/0273/04/F

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