

## **SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

---

**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee

4<sup>th</sup> July 2007

**AUTHOR/S:** Executive Director / Corporate Manager - Planning and Sustainable Communities

---

### **S/0804/07/F - FULBOURN**

**Change of Use From B8 to B2 at Queens Farm, Wilbraham Road  
for George Lister Engineering Ltd**

**Recommendation: Delegated Approval**

**Date for Determination: 26<sup>th</sup> July 2007 (Major Application)**

#### **Notes:**

**This Application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination because the Officer's recommendation conflicts with that of the Parish Council.**

#### **Site and Proposal**

1. Queens Farm lies to the north of Fulbourn, accessed off Wilbraham Road at the point where the road turns east towards Great Wilbraham. At the entrance to the farm drive is a relatively modern farmhouse to the west of the driveway with another farmhouse, on the eastern side, some 100.0m further on. 120.0m beyond this house is a large range of farm buildings at present/previously used as turkey sheds, machinery workshops, machinery stores and grains stores. Several of these buildings have already been converted and are used by an engineering company. The buildings that are the subject of this application remain in agricultural use at present, although they benefit from permission for B8 (Storage) use. Beyond these buildings is a well screened car-storage compound to the rear and another large range of farm buildings 200m to the north, including to the south of these a new grain store that is under construction. The farm is surrounded by open, arable fields.
2. This full planning application seeks permission for the widening of the farm access off Wilbraham Road and the change of use of three buildings, total floor area 2538m<sup>2</sup>, to general industrial, Use Class B2.

#### **Planning History**

3. Two houses approved in mid '70's and 1997. Original barns, grain stores, workshops built in the 1950's. Turkey buildings added 1976 and 1996. The Intervention Store built 1970's with two small additions in early 1980's.
4. Following difficulties in the turkey market, consent was granted in 2001 and 2003 to use some buildings for B1, B2 and B8 Use (light industrial, general industrial and warehousing.)
5. In 2004, consent was granted to use the 1950's building for B8/storage use (ref. **S/1154/04/F**). Whilst this latter use has not yet commenced, the former turkey buildings are used by an engineering company.



Reproduced from the 2006 Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the controller of Her Majesty's stationary office (c) Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings.

Scale 1/3000 Date 22/6/2007

Centre = 552546 E 257142 N

JULY PLANNING COMMITTEE 2007

6. In January 2006 a “grain store”, was refused on grounds of lack of justification for the need of such a building.
7. At the April 2006 Committee (Item 37) permission was granted for a grain dryer building. This was granted on the basis that the building was also a specialist grain drying facility and not just storage and that the redundant building (the subject of this application) would be removed from agricultural use. A further permission was granted at February 2007 Committee (Item 15) for the same building but on a slightly different siting, closer to the main complex of buildings.

### **Planning Policy**

8. The site lies in the Green Belt.

#### *Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003*

9. **P2/6** Rural economy supports re-use of farm buildings to encourage diversification and maintain/review the vitality of rural areas.
10. **P9/2a** Provision of Green Belt around Cambridge places limitations upon development and uses within the Green Belt.

#### *South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004*

11. **GB2** Green Belt; supports re-use of buildings within the Green Belt subject to no detrimental impact upon the openness and purpose of the Green Belt.
12. **EM10** Employment in the Countryside; supports the re-use of agricultural buildings. The buildings should be of permanent construction capable of re-use without alteration and with satisfactory access. Traffic flows should be able to be accommodated on the existing road system.
13. **TP1** Planning for More Sustainable Travel, requires a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan where a proposal is likely to have significant transport implications. In appropriate cases the content of the Travel Plan may be reflected in planning conditions or a planning obligation.

### **Consultation**

14. **Fulbourn Parish Council** makes no recommendation. However, it comments that the site is in the Green Belt and that the appropriateness of the use should be considered. It is also concerned about the increase in traffic movements proposed bearing in mind the poor access and Green Belt location.
15. **Great Wilbraham Parish Council** recommends that the application be refused commenting:

“The Parish Council members are concerned about the continued expansion of Queens Farm for Industrial use. When permission has been granted in the past, these were for Light Industrial use only.

This is a much larger enterprise, which is not just Light Industrial use. The implications for increased traffic, both private and commercial, means that this is different from previous applications. Some, if not a large percentage of these, would undoubtedly travel through our village. Does the proposed occupant have

a 'green travel plan'?

Although the application states 'no' to shift or weekend working, it actually states normal working hours to be 7am-6pm Monday to Saturday. This causes members some concern, as traffic is already heavy through our village in the morning and evening 'rush hours', without this additional traffic. We would prefer a restriction on Saturday working hours as this is a rural location –very different to a business located in the city.

Members are extremely concerned that this is 'the thin end of the wedge' for increased use of Queens Farm, away from agricultural use. What restrictions are in place to retain the agricultural nature of the farm? Whilst we recognise the necessity for some farmers to diversify the use of some of their land, we are concerned about the number of companies that use the site already.

Therefore Great Wilbraham Parish Council recommend REFUSAL of this application until further questions are answered".

16. **Local Highways Authority** comments that B2 development generates significantly different traffic patterns to those of B8, generating both larger vehicle numbers, and generation profiles. The developer must submit a transport assessment detailing the likely effect of these changes upon the local network.

### **Representations**

17. No representations have been received.

### **Planning Comments – Key Issues**

18. The key issues in determining this planning application are the impact on the Green Belt, Traffic implications and the impact upon the agricultural nature of the farm.
19. There is an extant planning permission for the use of these buildings for storage purposes. The proposed general industrial use will not alter the visual impact of the building on the Green Belt and it is noted that no external changes to the buildings have been proposed. The adjoining buildings have been used for some time by an engineering firm and have not caused any noticeable visual harm. Car parking is proposed on land used for storage and vehicle parking. There will be no greater impact on openness of the Green Belt. The proposal will not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt.
20. The change of use of buildings in the countryside is limited to those that will not require significant extensions to the building. Policy EM10 notes that the incidental activities such as car parking and outside storage do however also need to be considered. In this location the site is well screened by neighbouring farm buildings and existing landscaping. Car parking is proposed within existing areas of hardstanding and also benefit from the screening described above. There is not likely to be any significant visual impacts from this change of use.
21. The farm itself remains the focus of activity on the farm. This is demonstrated by the recent permission for a grain drying building, which is currently being constructed at the farm. This application relates to several barns, which the farmer is no longer able to utilise usefully for agricultural purposes.

22. The key area of concern in relation to this application is therefore the traffic implications. While the Local Highway Authority has not raised an objection in principle to the proposed change of use, there is likely to be a significant increase in traffic levels and in the type of vehicles that visit the site beyond that which might be expected with a storage use. A Traffic Assessment (TA) is required in order to be able fully assess the implications of the use. This has been requested and the agent has agreed to submit this. The comments of the Local Highway Authority will be sought on the Assessment. If necessary a Travel Plan can be required by planning condition.

### **Recommendation**

23. Subject to the receipt of a TA and the comments on that of the Local Highway Authority, delegated approval is recommended.

### **Conditions**

1. Standard Condition A - Time limited permission (Reason A);
2. SC51 - Landscape Scheme (RC51);
3. SC52 - Implementation of landscaping scheme (RC52);
4. No external alterations to the building shall be made without the prior written approval of the Local Planning Authority following the submission of such details. (RC - To ensure that the character of these former agricultural buildings is retained);
5. Para C3b - Parking (RC Para RC10);
6. No development shall be commenced until the junction improvements and road widening shown on Drawing No. 07:044-4 have been satisfactorily completed. (RC - para - RC10 safety);
7. No development shall be commenced until a scheme for the provision and location of fire hydrants to serve the development to a standard recommended by the Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority; no development shall take place otherwise than in accordance with the approved scheme. (RC - To ensure adequate provision is made for fire fighting.)
8. Prior to the commencement of any development, a scheme for the provision and implementation of pollution control, which shall include foul and surface water drainage, shall be submitted and agreed in writing with the Local Authority. The works/scheme shall be constructed and completed in accordance with the approved plans.  
(Reason - To ensure a satisfactory method of surface/foul water drainage and to prevent the increased risk of pollution to the water environment.)
9. Details of the location and type of any power driven plant or equipment, including equipment for heating, ventilation and for the control or extraction of any odour, dust or fumes from the building(s) but excluding office equipment and vehicles and the location of the outlet from the building(s) of such plant or equipment, shall be submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority before such plant or equipment is installed; the said plant

or equipment shall be installed in accordance with the approved details and with any agreed noise restrictions.

(Reason - To minimise noise nuisance to nearby residents.)

### **Informatives**

1. A reservoir or elevated private tank may be considered as an alternative to fire hydrants.

### **Reasons for Approval**

1. The development is considered generally to accord with the Development Plan and particularly the following policies:
  - **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003:**  
**P2/6** (Rural Economy)  
**P9/2a** (Green Belt)
  - **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004:**  
**GB2** (Green Belt)  
**EM10** (Employment in the Countryside)  
**TP1** (Planning for More Sustainable Travel)
2. The development is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations which have been raised during the consultation exercise:
  - Green Belt
  - Traffic
  - Agriculture

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

- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
- Planning Files Ref: S/1154/04/F and S/0804/07/F
- Documents referred to in the report including appendices on the website only and reports to previous meetings

**Contact Officer:** Melissa Reynolds - Area Planning Officer  
Telephone: (01954) 713237