

SCDC Planning

Case Officer: Rebecca Ward

Proposal: Erection of two new Car Dealerships etc.

References: S/0350/19/FL

Location: Land south of A505 and west of SMT Great Britain Duxford CB22 4QX

Applicant: Jardine Motors Group

Please see the attached document that sets out Ickleton Parish Council's grounds for OBJECTING to this Application.

Terry Sadler

Parish Councillor

cc Parish Clerk

ICKLETON PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman: Mrs Sian Wombwell, Rectory Farm, Grange Road, Ickleton, Saffron Walden, Essex CB10 1TA. [REDACTED]. [REDACTED]

Address for correspondence: The Parish Clerk, Mrs Peta Stevens, 17 Mill Lane, Ickleton, Saffron Walden, Essex CB10 1SW.

Tel: [REDACTED]. E-mail: petastevens17@gmail.com

26 February 2019

Planning Team
South Cambridgeshire District Council

By email attachment to PlanningComments@scambs.gov.uk

Case Officer: Rebecca Ward

Dear Rebecca

Proposal: **Erection of two new Car Dealerships/Showrooms for Occupation by Lancaster Porsche & Aston Martin etc., etc.**

Ref: **S/0350/19/FL**

Location: **Land south of A505 & west of SMT Great Britain Duxford CB22 4QX**

Applicant: **Mike Newton, Jardine Motors Group**

Please note that Ickleton Parish Council voted unanimously to OBJECT to this Application and strongly recommends refusal.

This Application is not consistent with national and local policies on the natural environment, specifically those that seek to protect the countryside.

1. The site has not been allocated for development of any kind in the Adopted Local Plan 2018, and approval of the proposal would be contrary to the Development Strategy set out at Policy S/6, particularly point 4.
2. Policy S/7 is relevant, as the site is not within any development framework, neither is there a need for this business to be located in the countryside. The proposal is a glaring instance of ribbon development.
3. Section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Para. 170 says that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes....; b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land...
The site may not be in a designated landscape, but it is most definitely located in the wider countryside. This is emphatically a rural area, even though it is intersected by busy transport routes. We reject the numerous instances within the Application that attempt to

characterise the locality as having urban characteristics. It does not. The site does not have a surrounding built environment as claimed in the Application, and the proposed development would be anything but sympathetic to its surroundings.

The Local Plan 2018 follows the NPPF in having Policy NH/2 Protecting and enhancing Landscape Character. The site is part of an open area of Chalklands Landscape Character. This has been designated as an “Area of Best Landscape.” Development of this site would intrude into open countryside and would set a precedent for further development creep to the south of the A505 and on the site opposite.

That opposite site incidentally has been the subject of a planning application (Ref, S/277/17/OL) for housing. This was rejected by SCDC, the rejection being subsequently upheld on appeal. SCDC referred to the proposals as an alien feature in an otherwise open, gently undulating rural landscape having an adverse visual impact on the local rural character. The Appeal Inspector described the site as providing a significant contribution to the visual quality and the openness of the area, and an important contribution to the rural landscape setting of the village – to be largely lost by the development, which would significantly urbanise the open and undeveloped nature of the site. Precisely the same comments apply to the proposals now under consideration for this site to the south of the A505. The sites have in common that they are highly visible from a number of public vantage points. Both Applications featured earth bunds as attempts to mitigate impact on surrounding landscape; those bunds are in fact alien and incongruous introductions.

In 2016 Volvo Construction was refused permission (Ref S/2296/16/AD) to erect a stand-alone illuminated pylon sign on their site boundary adjacent to the A505 in the east corner. The sign would have been 7.25m high, 4.7m wide and 0.57m in depth. Planning Officer comments at the time were that the area is predominantly rural in nature, and the sign was refused because by virtue of its excessive height, siting, size, scale, mass and bulk it was considered to be excessively prominent in street scene views and would result in harm to the visual amenity and character of the area. It was considered to be inappropriate and detrimental to the visual character of the countryside.

Precisely the same could be said of the present proposals, which are obviously greater in size, etc. and would do proportionately more harm to the surrounding countryside.

Significant harm would result to the rural character and appearance of the area if the proposals are allowed contrary to Policy NH/2.

4. Policy HQ/1 Design Principles of the Local Plan 2018 would be breached by approving this application. Whatever the merits of the design of the Porsche and Aston Martin landmark buildings that are sought for the site, it cannot possibly be claimed that they preserve or enhance the character of the local rural landscape, or that they conserve or enhance important natural assets or their setting. They would achieve precisely the opposite. Local distinctiveness is not respected. The proposals are incompatible in terms of scale, mass, form, siting, design, texture and colour in relation to the surrounding area.

We reject any comparison with the Welch’s and Volvo sites and any contention that the proposals would be nothing more than a continuation of those developments. The former is set behind mature natural screening at a level below that of the surface of the A505. The latter, as well as having been a brownfield site, is set within a bend of Moorfield Road Duxford that enabled the development not to intrude into the open landscape as would the current proposal. In addition, with the Volvo site the buildings are set well back from the

A505 and there is a significant area of landscaping up to the highway. The buildings in the present Application by contrast are placed close to the front of the site, on the highest part of the field where it meets the A505.

We consider that, owing to the site's prominent position and the nature of the proposed activities (including the floodlit secure compound) approval would breach Policy SC/9 Lighting Proposals of the Local Plan.

5. Policy NH/3 Protecting Agricultural Land would be breached by approving this Application. The site has been farmed organically for several years, and is Best and Most Versatile agricultural land, an irreplaceable resource of national importance.
6. The Application relies heavily on Policy E/13 which permits new employment development on the edges of villages. However, none of the requirements of this Policy are met and the Applicant strains credulity beyond breaking point in saying they are. The site is neither adjoining or very close to any development framework. It is so remote from the development framework of Duxford that the Applicant must refer to the development framework of Whittlesford Bridge when invoking Policy E/13.

It is incorrectly claimed that the site directly to the north of the Application site is a residential area. It is an agricultural field in respect of which permission to develop for housing has been refused. An adjacent site to this field that is being developed for housing is not adjacent to the Application site and in any event the sites are separated by the A505.

The proposal would have an unacceptable adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area and is not in scale with the location (Policy E/13 f). 8.53 is not relevant as this proposal is neither small scale nor sensitive.

We find the criteria adopted in framing the search for other sites and the reasons for ruling out other locations in favour of this one to be so contrived as to invite ridicule. There are absolutely no reasons why this concern cannot relocate to a "respectable" business park site and continue to thrive. It does not need a site adjacent to a major highway for publicity purposes – Porsche and Aston Martin cars are hardly impulse buys, and potential customers will seek their local dealer out.

7. Traffic and Transport

- i. The objectives of Policies S/2 and S/3 of the Adopted Local Plan are clearly not met in relation to this site, which can only be accessed via the A505. This is a busy and dangerous highway with no footway or cycle path on the side where this development would be located. There is no direct public transport. In practice, all access with very few exceptions will be by car or commercial vehicles.
- ii. In the interests of highway safety, no vehicular access on and off the A505 at this point should be permitted. The A505 already operates beyond its design capacity, is subject to congestion particularly in peak periods, and journey delay is already at unacceptable levels. Increased vehicle movements on this road will result in more congestion and more rat running through the villages of Ickleton, Duxford and Sawston, and permission should not be granted for developments that will encourage this.
- iii. The proposed arrangements for a right-hand turn crossing the westbound carriageway at a gap in a traffic island would add to congestion and introduce a further element of risk on the highway. In addition, eastbound traffic leaving the site would be obliged to head

west initially, thus disproportionately adding to traffic movements on this already overburdened highway.

- iv. No major development should be permitted on this section of the A505 until the much-heralded full review of this highway has been carried out and there are firm commitments to implementing identified improvements and to the funding thereof. Granting permission for this proposal may constrain options for future improvements. This should be avoided.
- v. In the event of the District Council being minded to approve the Application, conditions should be attached preventing HCVs accessing or leaving the site from using unclassified rural roads in and connecting villages in the locality, and test drives of vehicles should also be prohibited from taking place on the same roads, so that local residents are protected from such activities that would be generated by this business.

8. Potential of cumulative Developments on IWM Activities

Ickleton Parish Council is concerned over the potential for cumulative developments in this locality to have an adverse impact upon the flying operations at Duxford Airfield, and in particular on the Air Shows at IWM Duxford. IWM Duxford is of national significance and is unique in providing static and dynamic exhibits.

We note that at Para. 36 of Chapter 8 of the Local Plan IWM Duxford is to be given special consideration within the context of protecting the quality of the surrounding landscape in this sensitive site on the edge of the Cambridge Green Belt. We assume such consideration will lead to refusal of this Application in addition to all the reasons cited above.

Yours sincerely

(Signed)

Terry Sadler
Parish Councillor
On behalf of Ickleton Parish Council