

9 December 2020

Report to: South Cambridgeshire Planning
Committee

Lead Officer: Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development

20/02568/FUL - Bourn (Former Gestamp Factory Site, Bourn Airfield)

Proposal: Hybrid planning application consisting of full planning permission for Phase 1 and outline planning permission with all matters reserved except access for Phase 2 of the redevelopment of the former Gestamp Factory site at Bourn Airfield for up to 26,757 sqm/288,000sqft of commercial floorspace purposes (Use Class B1c – light industry, B1b – research and development and B8 – warehouse and distribution with supplementary Use Class A3 – restaurant and café, D1 – day nursery/creche and D2 – gym), associated car parking and service yards, external earthworks, attenuation basins and landscaping. This application is subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment.

Applicant: Diageo Pension Trust Ltd

Key material considerations: The key material planning considerations relate to:

- the principle of the development in this location;
- whether the development meets the requirements of Policy SS/7 – New Village at Bourn Airfield and Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) – Bourne Airfield New Village.
- highway and transport matters;
- impact on landscape, design and appearance;
- sustainability and drainage;
- ecology,
- living conditions of local residents.

Date of Member site visit: -

Is it a Departure Application? No

Decision due by: An extension of time has been agreed until 15th December 2020.

Application brought to Committee because: This is a major application.

Officer Recommendation: Approval subject to conditions.

Presenting officer: Kate Poyser

Update

The Committee is advised of the following update:

1. The applicant withdraws their support for Condition 1, which is copied below.

Condition 1 - Footway

No units shall be occupied until such time as the footway on the west side of Highfields Caldecote, between Bosserts Way to Clare Drive has been widened to 2 metres wide, in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Local Highway Authority.

Reason – In the interests of highway safety and sustainable travel, as required by South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 Policies T1/2, T1/8 and HQ/1.

2. The reason they now object to the condition is explained below.

“...my Client’s position on this Condition has now changed and that they object to the imposition of this Condition in any form.

My Client commissioned a report to identify what utility infrastructure may be present below the footpath, which has revealed that there is power, gas, telecoms and 2 lots of statutory water utilities under the pavement. A copy of the Report is attached for your information.

As a consequence the costs associated with either the re-routing or disruption to the utility infrastructure will be such that the proposed works cannot be regarded as fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development, and as such fails to meet the statutory tests set out in Regulation 122 of the CIL Regulations.

As you know my Client’s considered that the Condition failed the statutory tests in any event given that the works are not necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms as there is already a footpath on both sides of the road, and that it is not directly related to the development being some 1.5km from the site.

For the reasons set out above, my Client no longer supports the imposition of Condition 1 which should be deleted.”

3. The County Highway Authority has been consulted on this matter and the following advice has been received.

“There are undoubtedly services under the existing footway and the verge where the new, widened footpath is proposed. Whether these utility services require lowering is debatable given the overall construction depth would only be 310m. In the last 20 years I have implemented countless footway improvement schemes, none of which have required any services to be lowered, let alone diverted.”

“Personally, I would like to see this commitment retained within any planning consent. If it does transpire that services are an issue at a later stage, say following a site survey that consists of a series of trial holes to determine the depth of any service, then this condition could be removed, or altered.”

Recommendation

4. The planning considerations is that the widening of the path would support the interests of more sustainable modes of transport and would be in the interest of providing connectivity of the site to the nearby village. A change to the wording of the condition may provide flexibility in the event that on implementation it is found to be impractical/ overly costly. The applicant has previously expressed concern relating to any delay to the implementation of the scheme that may occur from this work. It is suggested that some amendments to the wording of the condition could achieve the aim of supporting sustainable forms of transport, without undue delay being caused to the implementation of the scheme.

Revised wording to Condition 1

No units shall be occupied, other than Unit 3 by the named occupier, Cambridge Design Partnership, until such time as the footway on the west side of Highfields Caldecote, between Bosserts Way to Clare Drive has been widened to 2 metres, in accordance with details to first be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, in consultation with the Local Highway Authority, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason – In the interests of highway safety and sustainable travel, as required by South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 Policies T1/2, T1/8 and HQ/1.

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