

## SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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

12 May 2004

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

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**S/0361/04/F – GRAVELEY  
ERECTION OF WORKSHOP/WELFARE BUILDING AT HILLCREST FARM, TOSELAND  
ROAD, FOR INTERVET UK LTD.**

**Recommendation: Approval**

Departure Application

Site and Proposal

1. Hillcrest Farm comprises land and a collection of buildings and structures on two sites on either side of Toseland Road, to the south-west of the village of Graveley. It is occupied by Intervet UK Ltd, a company involved in research into animal vaccines. This company has occupied this site for the past two decades.
2. Along the southern boundary of the site is public footpath No. 11 Graveley. Along the front property boundary is a roadside hedge, with tree screening along the north-east property boundary. Fields adjoin the site to the south and west.
3. This full application received on 25 February 2004 proposes the erection of a workshop/welfare building measuring 5.4m in width, 19.7m in length and with a ridge height of 4.6m. The proposed building will be clad in dark green metal sheeting, with pale green metal sheeting used on the roof. The building will be sited on a grassed area in proximity to other buildings of similar appearance on the site. The building is setback some 26m from Toseland Road and to the north of an existing vehicular track on the site.

Planning History

4. Members may recall that at the Development and Conservation Control Committee on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2004 a proposed amendment for a research building, standby generator and sub-station enclosure on the same site was approved.
5. Several applications for the erection of animal buildings for use in connection with Intervet have been permitted over the years. In 1997 a retrospective application for the erection of a barn for housing animals with a ridge height of approximately 6m was refused because of its adverse impact on the landscape (Ref: S/0464/97/F) (Please note: the site was identified as an Area of Best Landscape in the 1993 Local Plan). This building was subsequently approved at appeal, with the Inspector considering that landscaping could adequately screen the building.

Planning Policy

6. The site lies within the countryside, where new development is restricted by Policy 1/2 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003, unless it can be demonstrated to be essential to a particular rural location.

7. **Policy 1/3** of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 requires a high standard of design and sustainability for all new developments.
8. **Policy 2/6** of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 states small scale employment development in rural areas will be facilitated where it supports new and existing business and research and technology clusters and helps maintain the vitality of rural areas.
9. **Policy 7/4** of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 outlines that development must relate sensitively to the local environment and contribute to a sense of place, identity and diversity of landscape character areas.
10. **Policy EM4** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan: Adopted 2004 outlines that proposals for the expansion of existing research establishments will normally be permitted, providing the development is occupied by organisations whose primary purpose is research, and that these organisations are required in the national interest to be located close to existing major establishments in related fields. This policy adds that where there is any conflict between such proposals and policies in the Local Plan, this conflict needs to be outweighed by evidence of need in the national interest.
11. **Policy EN1** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan: Adopted 2004 specifies that planning permission will not be granted for development which would have an adverse effect on the character and local distinctiveness of Landscape Character Areas.
12. **Policy EN3** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan: Adopted 2004 requires new development within the Countryside to be of appropriate scale, design and layout; materials; and landscaping works to the particular 'Landscape Character Area' and reinforce local distinctiveness wherever possible.
13. **Policy EN6** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan: Adopted 2004 requires trees to be retained wherever possible in proposals for new built development.
14. **Policy ES6** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan: Adopted 2004 specifies that the District Council will seek, by means of appropriate planning conditions, to minimise the impact of noise and pollution on noise-sensitive development arising from any new industrial, commercial or recreational activities.

#### Consultation

15. **Graveley Parish Council** – Recommendation of refusal.
  - a) “No screening proposed. On previous application screening has been recommended but not carried out successfully.
  - b) Concern over increased encroachment further into village.
  - c) Transport – damage to grass verges on entrances.”
16. **Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service** – No objection. The Fire Authority is of the opinion that additional water supplies for firefighting are not required.
17. **Environment Agency** – No objection, subject to a recommended condition of consent requiring a scheme of pollution control.

18. **Chief Environmental Health Officer** – No objection from an environmental health stand point, subject to a recommended condition of consent requiring details of the location and type of any power driven plant or equipment.

19. **Local Highways** – No comment

#### Representations

20. None received

#### Planning Comments – Key Issues

21. The key issues for consideration in this application are:

- whether the proposal is essential to this rural location and if not whether there are material considerations which justify a departure from this policy;
- the visual impact of the proposed building on the visual amenities of the Countryside and local landscape;
- potential impacts on the amenity of adjacent land users; and
- increased employment in a rural location resulting from an additional building on a site currently used for animal vaccine research.

22. Although the application has been advertised as a Departure from the Development Plan this proposal represents the expansion of an existing operation which is located within the countryside. The function and appearance of the building is appropriate in the countryside and I have no objections in principle, particularly as other buildings of similar or higher height have been approved on this site in 1997 and 2001.

23. The proposal will not adversely affect the visual amenities of the Countryside and local landscape as a result of its setback of approximately 26m from Toseland Road, its position adjacent two existing buildings of similar appearance, and tree/hedgerow screening along the front, north and west property boundary. The building will be viewed from Toseland Road and High Street, as part of a cluster of buildings associated with existing use of the site for vaccine research. The proposed building does not increase the spread of built structures on the site, and will be further set-back from the village of Graveley than the existing building on the site approved on appeal in 1997.

24. The proposal is situated approximately 90m from the nearest residential dwelling. Subject to recommended conditions of consent the proposal would not adversely affect the amenity of adjacent land users.

25. Subject to recommended conditions of consent, the proposal will allow for adequate access to the site and area for the parking, turning, loading and unloading of vehicles on site.

26. Having regard to the nature and scale of the proposal, together with the relationship with the existing use, I do not consider it to be necessary to refer the application to the Secretary of State.

#### Recommendations

27. Approval, subject to the following conditions:

#### Conditions

1. SCA (RCA) – Time Limit
2. Prior to the commencement of any development, a scheme for the provision and implementation of pollution control to the water environment 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/specifications at such time(s) as may be specified in the approved scheme.  
Reason: to prevent the increased risk of pollution to the water environment.
3. Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 3 and Schedule 2 of the Town and Country (General Development) Order 1995 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that order), the premises shall be used for Class B1(b) and for no other purpose (including any other purposes in Class B1 of the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking or re-enacting that order).
4. No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority a scheme of landscaping, which shall include indications of all existing trees and hedgerows on the land, and details of any to be retained, together with measures for their protection in the course of development.  
(Reason – To enhance the quality of the development and to assimilate it within the area.)
5. All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the occupation of the buildings or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner; and any trees or plants which within a period of five years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.  
(Reason – To enhance the quality of the development and to assimilate it within the area.)
6. 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 but excluding office equipment and vehicles and the location of the outlet from the building 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 protect the occupiers of adjoining buildings from the effect of odour, dust or fumes.)

### Informatives

### Reasons For Approval

1. Although the proposal is contrary to policies in the Development Plan restricting new development within the Countryside, it is considered that there are material considerations in this case which warrant a departure from the provisions of this plan. The proposal allows for the expansion of an existing operation which has been located on this site, within the countryside for approximately 20 years. The function

and appearance of the building is appropriate in the countryside, and will not adversely affect the visual amenities of the Countryside or landscape character area.

Other

Environment Agency's comments from letter of 16 April 2004.

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

- County Structure Plan 2003
- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
- Planning Application File S/0361/04/F

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