

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

6th December 2006

AUTHOR/S: Executive Director / Head of Planning Services

S/2034/06/F - GRAVELEY

Workshop/Staff Welfare Building at Hillcrest Farm, Toseland Road for Intervet UK Ltd

Recommendation: Approval

Date for Determination: 15th December 2006

This application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination because, if approved, the development would be a Departure from the Development Plan.

Departure Application

Site and Proposal

1. The site lies within the rural area adjoining the south-west of the village. It comprises a group of single-storey buildings and a portable unit to the rear of the two-storey office that fronts Toseland Road. The applicant company is focused on research and development of veterinary products in the UK and abroad.
2. The full application, dated 3rd September 2006, proposes the demolition of outbuildings and the erection of a single-storey unit providing a welfare room and meeting room for on-site staff, together with a small general store and small workshop for occasional maintenance of small items of farm equipment. The unit will have dimensions of 7.0m x 17.3m x 3.1m high, which is approximately equivalent to the area of buildings to be removed. The external materials are to be facing brick to match the frontage office, dark-stained boarding to the gables, and dark grey fibre cement slates. Parking for an additional five vehicles will be made available adjacent to the building.

Planning History

3. Planning permission for a two-storey welfare building on the same site was refused planning permission on 17th May 2006 because it would have given rise to harm to the visual amenities of the area by virtue of its height and scale (**S/0592/06/F**). Planning permission was given for the erection of a single storey workshop/welfare building on the eastern side of Toseland Road on 12 May 2004 (**S/0361/04/F**). Temporary planning permission was given for two portacabins to be used as staff rest room and office in February 2002 (**S/0052/02/F**). This consent will expire on 31 December 2006.

Planning Policy

4. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003:
P1/2: Environmental Restrictions on Development
P1/3: Sustainable Design in Built Environment
P2/6: Rural Economy
P7/4: Landscape

5. South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
EM4: Research Establishments
EM7: Expansion of Existing Firms
EN1: Landscape Character Areas
EN3: Landscaping and Design Standards for New Development within the Countryside
EN5: Landscaping of New Development
ES6: Noise and Pollution

Consultations

6. **Graveley Parish Council** – comments awaited. These will be reported at the meeting if received.
7. **Chief Environmental Health Manager** – No objection in principle, but has recommended a construction-hours condition and informatives in order to control noise disturbance during demolition/ construction, and for details of mechanical extraction to be submitted for consideration.
8. **Highways Authority** – The Highway Authority has no comments on the proposal.
9. **Environment Agency** has no objection subject to comments, which can be included as informatives on the Decision Notice if the application is approved.

Representations

10. None received. The statutory consultation period expires on 4th December 2006.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

11. The site occupies a site that can be viewed from Toseland Road. However, as the height and floor area are equivalent to the buildings to be removed from the site, and the external materials are to be sympathetic to the main office which adjoins, I do not consider that any serious harm to the appearance of the countryside will result from the development.
12. The proposal is an alternative to that granted on a different site on the farm under reference S/0361/04/F, which will remain extant until 12th May 2009. In order to preserve the openness of the countryside, I recommend that a condition be attached to any consent issued to require the applicant to enter into a S106 legal obligation to prevent the future implementation of this planning permission. The applicant has agreed to this requirement in principle.
13. Having regard to the extant permission and the scale and nature of the proposal, I do not consider that the application need be referred to the Secretary of State as one which would significantly prejudice the implementation of the Development Plan's policies and proposals.

Recommendation

14. Approval subject to the following conditions
 1. Standard Condition A – Time limited permission (Reason A);
 2. Sc51 – Landscaping (Rc51);

3. Sc52 – Implementation of landscaping (Rc52);
4. Scheme for the provision of pollution control to the water environment to be submitted for approval (Reason – To prevent pollution of the water environment);
5. Withdrawal of permitted change of use rights (Reason – To prevent the establishment of an inappropriate use in the countryside);
6. Restriction of hours of use of power operated machinery during demolition/ construction (Reason – To prevent noise disturbance to occupiers of adjoining residential occupiers);
7. Details of power driven plant or equipment including mechanical ventilation to be submitted and approved (Reason – To prevent noise disturbance to occupiers of adjoining residential occupiers);
8. The development hereby permitted shall not commence until a binding undertaking prepared in accordance with the requirements of Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 shall have been entered into which requires the rescinding of planning permission reference S/0361/04/F at Hillcrest Farm, Toseland Road, Graveley. Reason- To prevent the proliferation of development and to safeguard the appearance of the countryside to the south-east of Graveley.

Informatives

Environment Agency surface water disposal informatives, and as recommended by the Chief Environmental Health Officer.

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, it will not adversely affect the visual amenities of the countryside or landscape character area, it will replace existing buildings already on the site and, subject to the completion of a Section 106 Agreement, will replace an extant consent for a workshop and welfare building.

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 File refs: S/2034/06/F; S/0592/06/F; S/0361/04/F; S/0052/02/F.

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