

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

4th July 2007

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

**S/0633/07/RM - PAPWORTH EVERARD
Reserved Matters for the Erection of Commercial Unit (B1/B2 Uses)
with Associated Wind Turbine, Car Parking and Landscaping
Plots 7 and 9, Papworth Business Park
for Wrenbridge (Papworth) 7 and 9 Ltd and PCDF Nominees 18 Ltd**

Recommendation: Approval

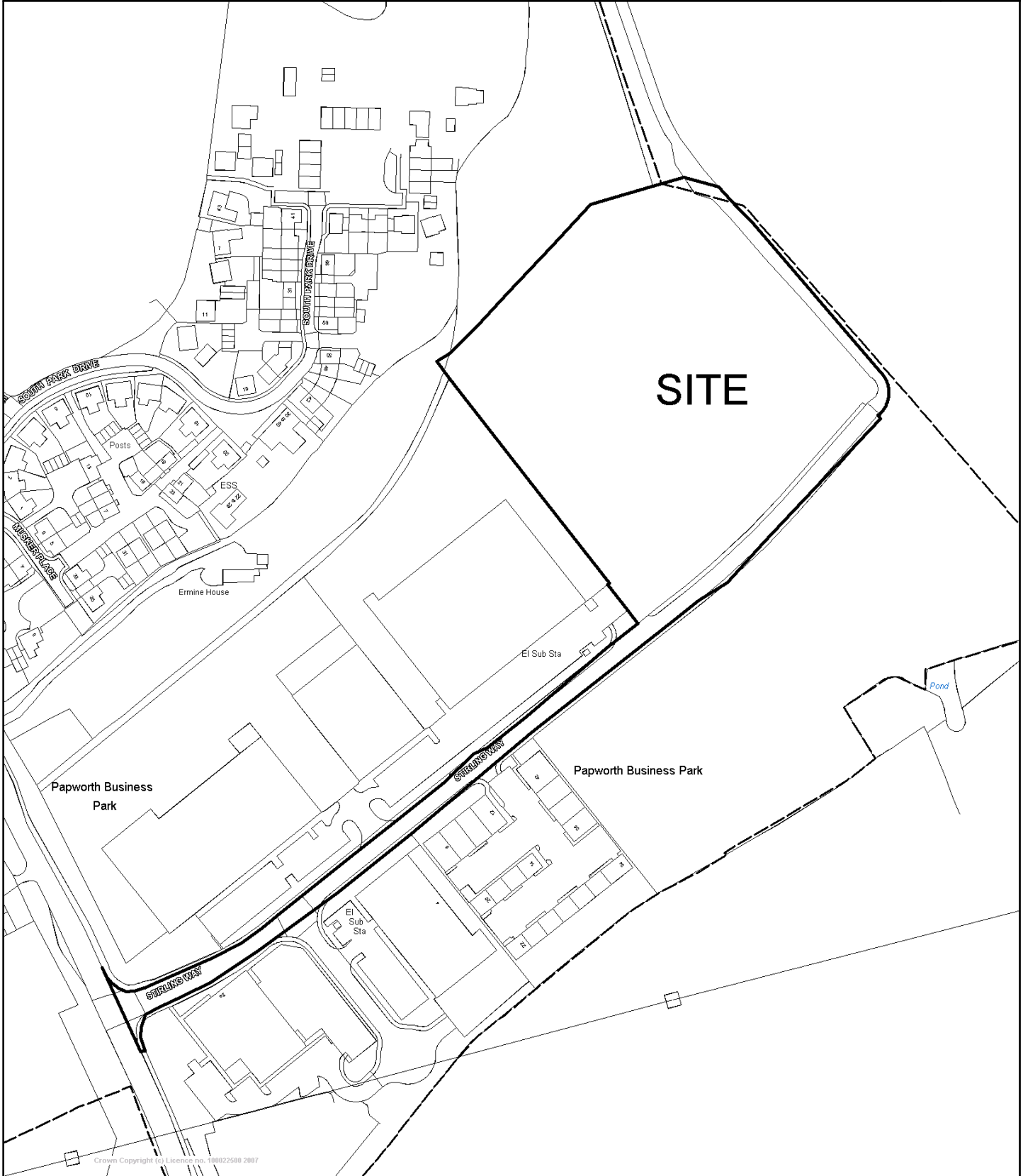
Date for Determination: 5th July 2007 (Major Application)

Notes:

This Application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination because the anticipated Parish Council objection to the amended plans does not accord with the Officer recommendation.

Site and Proposal

1. The 3.0ha site is located in the north eastern corner of Papworth Business Park. The site is overgrown former agricultural land and a temporary haul road to the South Park housing development runs across the western edge of the site.
2. To the west is an existing industrial unit; to the east agricultural land. To the north is a deciduous tree belt with housing under construction and recently completed beyond. To the south across the estate road is another development site, currently the subject of an application for 2 B1/B2 units submitted by the same applicants. The two sites are the last to be developed on the Business Park.
3. The reserved matters applications, received on 5th April 2007, and amended on 18th June 2007, proposes the erection of a speculative 9,456sq.m. B1/B2 unit comprising 8, 986sq.m. of ground floor space, which forms the B2 (General Industrial) element of the development and a further 470sq.m. of first floor offices forming the B1 element. As amended the building is sited gable end on to the estate road, with the H.G.V. loading/unloading bays and service yard on the eastern elevation. The yard is screened on its northern boundary by a 6m high acoustic wall. Car parking is to the front (including cycle parking), as with other units on the estate, and to the eastern side. The building is clad in profiled steel sheeting and has a ridge height of 13.4m. A 10m wide landscape belt is proposed along the western boundary, to be implemented once the haul road is no longer required. The front of the site will be landscaped in keeping with the rest of the estate, and the eastern, countryside, boundary will have a 10m wide belt of planting which is the subject of an extant planning permission. A 20m high wind turbine is proposed on the south western site frontage, the precise height to be agreed to suit local wind conditions.
4. Accompanying the application are a **design and access statement** and a **landscape statement**.



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5. The design rationale behind the project is the creation of a modern and versatile industrial unit, capable of meeting the requirements of a broad range of operator requirements. The site is within an existing industrial area and the proposed structural landscaping will provide screening and soften views into the site.
6. The building has been divided into 3 low pitch portal bays to reduce the height of the roofline. The required height and scale of the building is required to accommodate a range of industrial uses and associated plant and machinery.
7. The profiled steel and steel composite panelling repeat the approach used by the applicants elsewhere on the site and achieve the required 'high tech' aesthetic. The front elevation to Stirling Way will feature the office element and a prominent double height entrance space and glass canopy.
8. The Unit is designed to current Building Regulations regarding energy efficiency and a wind turbine will generate energy on site. The building has been designed for a "Solar Wall" solar air heating system to be installed in the future. A solar water heating system will also be installed.
9. Over 45% of the steel used in the construction is made directly from scrap. At the end of the building's life, all the steel is 100% recyclable.
10. Parking conforms to the Council's standards (192 spaces) and disabled parking is included close to the main entrance to the building. Level access from the bays to the surrounding pathways is provided. 72 covered and secure cycle spaces are proposed.
11. The landscape objectives include increasing biodiversity locally by providing a landscaped corridor along the western boundary, planted with native species.

Planning History

12. Outline planning permission for Phase 2 of the Business Park (B1/B2 uses) was originally granted in 2002 and renewed in 2005.
13. The temporary haul road which crosses the western boundary of the site was approved in 2004 subject to a Condition that a programme for its removal should be agreed with the Local Planning Authority. This is still outstanding.

Planning Policy

The following policies are relevant:

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan:

14. **Policy P1/3** requires a high standard of design and sustainability for all new development.
15. **Policy P2/6** encourages sensitive small-scale employment development in rural areas.

South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004:

16. **Policies EM2 and Papworth Everard 4** allocate Papworth Business Park for B1 and B2 uses (allowing for the relocation of existing B2 uses in the centre to the allocated site to the south of the village).
17. **Policy EM3** places limitations on the occupancy of new premises within Class B1 (offices, research and development and Light Industrial).

Emerging Local Development Framework (LDF)

18. **Policy DP/1** - Sustainable Development - states development will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that it is consistent with the principles of sustainable development.
19. **Policy DP/2** - Design of New Development - states all new development must be of high quality design.
20. **Policy NE/1** - Energy Efficiency - states development will be required to demonstrate that it would achieve a high degree of measures to increase the energy efficiency of new buildings.
21. **Policy NE/3** - Renewable Energy Technologies in New Development - states that development proposals greater than 1000m² will include technology for renewable energy to provide at least 10% of predicted energy requirements.
22. **Policy NE/6** - Biodiversity - states new development should aim to maintain, enhance, restore or add to biodiversity.

Consultation (Pre-amendment)

23. **Papworth Everard Parish Council** objects:

“1. **Scale.** The large floor area of this building, that at 9456m² (of which 8,813 m² is B2 space on the ground floor) is more than twice as large as any other building on Papworth Business Park, is considerably in excess of the 1850m² Permitted Use as specified in adopted Local Plan 2004 (LP4) Policy EM3 (3), and in Condition 7 of the Outline planning permission(s) for this site ref. S/1475/99/O as extended to 10th April 2007 by S/2292/04/F.

Local Development Framework (LDF) Development Control Policy ET/1 1d note 4, states that ‘other small-scale industries’ in use Classes B1c, B2 and B8, are restricted to a maximum size of occupation of any one user on a site to 1850m².

Policy P2/6 of the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 states that employment development should be of a ‘sensitive small-scale’.

[See Site Location Plan PO55/101 for the relative footprint sizes of existing units on the Business Park].

2. **Scale.** The excessive height of the building that at 15m is significantly higher than any other of the buildings in Papworth Business Park, the highest of which is only 10m high.

3. **Scale.** By combining two Business Park sites to provide for just one structure on this greenfield site, the resulting impact of the massive bulk of this proposal is particularly intrusive and alien to its environment in that:

It is significantly higher and covers a larger area than any other building on the Business Park;

It is unacceptably close to the 78 new residential properties to the north that are being developed by Hopkins Homes at Pendrill Park;

It will tower over all the other commercial units and will dwarf the nearby residential properties;

Its location on the exposed eastern edge of this rural area of South Cambridgeshire adjacent to open countryside that will make it readily visible for several miles.

4. **Scale.** LP4 Policy EM2 paragraph 5.24 indicates that the designation of the Business Park site for B2 use in Papworth Everard is specifically to allow for the relocation of **existing** B2 uses from elsewhere in the village. Such relocation has already taken place into new Business Park units with significantly lower roof heights and smaller footprints (see 1 above). It is clear that there was no intention to site massive new buildings for potential B2 Use in this location adjacent to a rural village. LDF Site Specific Policy SP/11 paragraph 3.1 indicates too that this LP4 policy is being rolled forward into the LDF period.

5. **Scale.** The application form states that this speculative proposal is for Industrial, Office or Commercial use, and not for Warehousing, Storage or Retail use. From the size, and particularly the height of the building, and the small amount of associated office space, it appears reasonable to assume that the eventual use of this building is aimed at an industrial, general manufacturing concern.

We welcome employment opportunities for the residents of Papworth but the sheer size of this proposal, with its 192 parking spaces and 72 cycle spaces, indicates a supply far in excess of what is likely to be required in this local area. The LDF Policy ET/1 Paragraph 5.2 reserves employment land for development that can demonstrate a clear need to be located in the area. Paragraph 5.3 states 'Large-scale manufacturing, distribution and warehousing, and office firms that could equally well locate in other areas of the county will not be permitted'.

The Parish Council would not need to object on the grounds of 'scale' to development on these two sites if the proposals were similar in scale to those already approved for the other sites in the Business Park.

6. **Scale and Access.** This particular location within the Business Park is the closest point to Papworth Wood, an Ancient Woodland SSSI and Nature Reserve. At their nearest points they appear to be less than 300m apart. The potential introduction of a larger than planned for industrial plant, plus numerous commercial vehicle movements, to this location risks polluting the atmosphere and adversely impacting the woodland. The associated noise would disturb the peace and quiet of the woodlands. Paragraph 1.19, last bullet point, of Policy P1/2 of the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Structure

Plan 2003 restricts development on environmental grounds where it is likely to adversely affect such sites of nationally important nature conservation.

7. **Access. Policy P2/5** of the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 requires that manufacturing be located on sites that are accessible to a 'range of transport methods'. That is clearly not the case in Papworth.
8. **Access.** The scale of the proposal implies that it is expected that there will be numerous large HGV/HCV traffic movements into and out of the site by delivery and collection vehicles. Given that the proposal incorporates eight loading bays, two loading doors and seemingly no 'spare' HGV parking places, and that the timing of arrivals/departures can be unpredictable, it is not stated what other location(s) would be made available as HGV holding area(s).
9. **Access.** In the first paragraph of part B to the Design & Access Statement, the precise location of the proposed new 15m radius bellmouth access to Stirling Way is unclear, in that the Site Location Plan PO55/101 shows the 'site' (as marked by the red line) extending from Plots 7 & 9 down to the junction of Stirling Way with the A1198, Ermine Street South. Why is the site boundary extended in this way? If it implies that the junction of Stirling Way with the A1198 will need enlarging then this is another indication that the proposed scale of this speculative development is totally at odds with the original intentions for the occupation of this village Business Park. If it is only that the existing entrance from Stirling Way into the site will need enlarging, this still indicates that the use to which the development will be put is contrary to what was originally intended.
10. **Access.** There is no indication that commercial traffic would be required to use the bypass to access the site. The noise and disruption these additional vehicle movements would create - even if they were restricted to only using the new village by-pass - are unacceptable in this rural location.
11. **Access.** Green Travel Plan for the village. As there are intended to be 72 cycle parking spaces, many of which are aimed at minimising vehicular access and attracting a local workforce, we would wish also for the District Council to ensure the provision of the proposed footpath/cycleway link from the SW edge of this site ('proposed internal landscaping belt'), through the Countryside/Hopkins Homes development, to the eastern side of the village (see S/1603/03/F), or an agreed alternative, as part of any further development on the Business Park.
12. **Access.** The Site Plan appears to indicate that in the NE corner of the site the applicant controls part of the roadway extension of Stirling Way (along the eastern Edge of Plot 9) that we understand is to be the access route towards the proposed new hospital car park. Clarification needs to be obtained from the owners of the Business Park, the Varrier-Jones Foundation.
13. **Access.** There is no mention of any contractual limit on the hours of operation of this speculative development, and as it is conceivable that the eventual occupants might seek round-the-clock 24-hour operational use, any development here would require a clear policy on the permitted working hours.

14. **Layout.** The unacceptable close proximity of the tall building with its eight high loading bays at the rear of the building to the nearby housing development on South Park Drive. The Site Location plan does not indicate just how close the houses are as the applicants have chosen not to show any of the Hopkins Homes development on their plan, but by checking planning application S/1468/04/RM it is clear that the nearest homes are adjacent to the curved path and ditch marked immediately to the north west of sites 7 & 9 on the applicant's site plan. Far too close for comfort, especially as the intervening 'scrub' is not adequate to segregate the activities and provide effective visual and aural screening.

The application states that the *front of the site* is 202m from the dwellings, but this disguises the fact that the rear of the building itself is little more than 60m, and the rear of the service yard only about 25m from the dwellings. This is most certainly not a 'remote location' as stated in Section 5 of the Design and Access statement. As the new Hopkins Homes development is already nearing completion the homes there will be occupied before this building is constructed.
15. **Layout.** During working hours loading bays are inevitably busy, noisy places and the activities there are not appropriately located close to a residential area where residents have a right to the peaceful enjoyment of their property. It would not be acceptable to consider the relocation of the loading bays to the front of the site and, as a consequence, moving the building itself closer to the rear of the site, as manufacturing noise from the plant and machinery within the echoing metal structure would still be intrusive for the adjacent residential dwellings.
16. **Layout.** There is no indication what, if any, fencing will be provided around the boundaries of the site.
17. **Design.** We are disappointed at the limited number of truly eco-friendly proposals in relation to this development. Although it is being designed to meet 'current Building Regulations' and will have a solar water heating system, there is no actual commitment to providing the solar air heating and ventilation system that is described at length in Section 4 of the Design & Access Statement. Also, given the proposed large roof area, there is no indication of the use of natural roof lighting or of a rain or grey-water harvesting facility.
18. **Materials.** The proposal (see legend on elevation drawings) that the external micro-rib cladding panels be coloured 'Blue' will make the building even more visually intrusive across the open countryside to the east.
19. **Landscaping.** This application appears to be relying for the provision of a 10m wide screening landscape belt along its 'open' eastern edge on an unspecified 'a. n. other'. This is totally unacceptable in that no guarantee can be given that screening suited to the height of this massive building would ever be provided. This is a very important countryside frontage that requires a significant commitment on behalf of the provider, and as such it would need to be the responsibility of this application."
24. **The Local Highway Authority** states the proposed increase in traffic from the application site will inevitably have an impact on the functioning of the traffic signal controlled junction at Ermine Street South. Further survey information is requested.

25. **The Environment Agency** has no objections subject to an informative.
26. **The County Council (Strategic Planning)** has no objections. The archaeological condition on the outline planning permission is referred to.
27. **The Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service** has no objections subject to a fire hydrant condition.

28. **The Chief Environmental Health Officer** comments:

"I appreciate that the proposed final use of the building is for B1/B2 activities but that the precise nature of activities that will be conducted there is not finalised in so much as the applicant does not have a specific client in mind.

I am aware that the building will be taller and more spacious than the similar commercial units in the vicinity and that the building is close to the site of proposed residential properties.

In view of the aforementioned matters, I have concerns about the potential for noise and disturbance from activities at the proposed unit for the occupiers of nearby residential properties. Consequently, I recommend that if the application is successful, the following conditions be applied to any consent granted:

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.

Before the use, hereby permitted, commences, the building shall be acoustically insulated in accordance with a scheme to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Details of any external lighting including flood lighting shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority before construction commences.

During the course of our discussion about the application, I suggested placing a condition on the application to restrict delivery times. You explained that such a condition was not recommended in respect of similar commercial units close to the building. I suggested that a condition could be incorporated into the acoustic insulation scheme to which SC 28 above refers that would restrict deliveries between the hours of 08.00-18.00 on weekdays and 08.00-13.00 on Saturdays (but not at anytime on Sundays and Bank Holidays) unless otherwise previously agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority."

29. **The Council's Ecologist** has no objections. He recommends replacing elder with spindle shrubs. The landscape statement needs to reflect the plan proposed that states that the wild flower seed mix of EM4 will be used. It is requested that native bluebells are also planted along with the cowslips and primroses (bluebells occur in the nearby woods so this is locally distinctive). The Varrier Jones Foundation may be able to allow some limited stock to be moved, but not from the SSSI. The proposal to use bat boxes on poles is welcomed, but these must avoid areas of lighting.

30. **The Landscape Design Officer** comments that he had previous discussions with the consultants on Plot 10 opposite and this landscape scheme is very similar. No objection to species or general layout.

Representations (pre-amendment)

31. No representations have been received.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

32. Members are reminded this is a reserved matters application, the principle of B1/B2 use having been granted. The outline planning permission places restrictions upon the scale and occupancy of buildings used for offices, research and development and Light Industry but not upon buildings to be used for B2 (General Industrial) use.
33. There are two key issues: the likely impact of the use of the building, particularly H.G.V. vehicle movements, on the partly completed housing development to the north; and the appropriateness of the height of the building given the character of the Business Park and the edge of village location of the Plot. These are points of concern to the Parish Council.
34. Discussions have taken place with the applicant concerning these issues, resulting in the submission of amended plans on 18th June 2007. A verbal report will be made of the consultation responses/representations received.

Noise impact on neighbouring residential development

35. The site layout submitted with the application proposed a rear service yard behind the building with 10 loading doors for H.G.V.s in its rear elevation. The building would have been 65 metres from the nearest proposed house with an intervening existing plantation of trees, but the Environmental Services Officer was concerned noise disturbance could occur from vehicle movements/loading/unloading. Reversing beepers were seen as a particular problem. As a result of discussions with officers a revised siting has been proposed, with the vehicular access to the site being moved from the west to the eastern side, and the building rotated through 90° so that the HGV loading doors are on the eastern elevation facing the countryside. Other measures include a 6m high acoustic wall along the northern boundary of the service yard to further reduce H.G.V. noise and the relocation of the doors themselves away from the sensitive boundary, enabling car parking to be interposed as a buffer. The proposed resiting will bring the gable of the unit to within 32m of the proposed house to the north but the gable will be blank and there will be no vehicle movements in the vicinity. I understand the Chief Environmental Health Officer is likely to support the revised scheme subject to conditions. A verbal report will be made.

The height of the building

36. As originally proposed the building had a ridge height of 15m - this has been reduced to 13.4m in the amended plans. The applicant has stated that this is the minimum height to allow sufficient internal clearance appropriate to accommodate a range of industrial users and their associated plant and machinery. The existing buildings on the Business Park range from about 9.5-10m, but I do not consider 13m to be excessive on an industrial estate. By comparison, three terraces of housing on the recently developed housing in South Park to the north are 12 metres high. 10m wide landscaping belts are proposed on the eastern and western boundaries of the site,

which will, in time, reduce the impact of the building from within the Business Park and the countryside. The northern boundary to the residential development is screened by an existing deciduous plantation which will not obscure the gable of the building but will filter views of it.

Other issues

The comments of the Local Highway Authority will be reported verbally but it is understood the request for additional survey information will be withdrawn.

The amended plans include a wind turbine which addresses the Parish Council's concerns about the limited number of eco-friendly aspects to the design.

Both the Parish Council and the Environmental Health Officer are concerned about the possibility of 24 hours working and suggest delivery times should be restricted. There are no restrictions of this nature on other B2 industrial users on the estate, including the units on the northern side of the estate road. Similarly there are no restrictions on the outline planning permission for the estate itself. I do not consider it would be appropriate to attach such a condition to this reserved matters application, but conditions can be imposed requiring a scheme of acoustic insulation to be agreed. The applicant for his part has expressed concerns that unduly restrictive conditions will affect the Company's ability to let the building.

Recommendation

37. The Council hereby approves details of reserved matters for the siting, design of buildings and landscaping of the site.

Plots 7 and 9, Papworth Business Park, Papworth Everard.

In accordance with your application dated 5th April 2007, (as amended by plans and documents franked 18th June 2007), and the plans, drawings and documents which form part of the application, and in accordance with outline planning permission dated 24th February 2005, reference S/2292/04/F.

All of the conditions, including standard Condition B contained in the above mentioned outline planning permission, continue to apply so far as the same are capable of taking effect but subject to the additional conditions set out below:

Conditions

1. With the exception of the planting belt on the western boundary of the site, 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. The planting belt on the western boundary of the site shall be completed in the first planting season following the cessation of the use of the haul road, and shall also be subject to the above requirements.
(Reason - To enhance the quality of the development and to assimilate it within the area.)

2. No development shall commence 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 other than in accordance with the approved scheme.
(Reason - To ensure adequate water supply is available for emergency use.)
3. The wind turbine shall not be erected until its precise height has been agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
(Reason - To ensure the details of the turbine are satisfactory.)
4. 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 restriction.
(Reason - To minimise disturbance to neighbouring residential properties.)
5. Before the use, hereby permitted, commences, the building shall be acoustically insulated in accordance with a scheme to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
(Reason - To minimise disturbance to neighbouring residential properties.)
6. No external lighting, including floodlighting, shall be provided or installed on the site other than in accordance with details which have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
(Reason - To minimise the disturbance to neighbouring residential properties.)

Informatives

1. Once the occupier of the building is known, a Green Travel Plan should be submitted and approved by the Local Planning Authority.
2. The Environment Agency states:

“Any culverting or works affecting the flow of a watercourse requires the prior written Consent of the Environment Agency under the terms of the Land Drainage Act 1991/Water Resources Act 1991. The Environment Agency seeks to avoid culverting, and its Consent for such works will not normally be granted except as a means of access.
3. The Council's Ecologist recommends replacing the proposed elder with spindle shrubs. The landscape statement should reflect the plan proposal that states that the wild flower seed mix of EM4 will be used. It is requested that native bluebells are also planted along with the cowslips and primroses (bluebells occur in the nearby woods so this is locally distinctive. The Varrier Jones Foundation may be able to allow some limited local stock to be moved, but not from the SSSI). Bat boxes on poles must avoid areas of lighting.

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:**
P1/3 (Sustainable Design in Built Development)
 - **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004:**
Policy Papworth Everard 4 (Allocates site for B1 and B2 Uses)
Policy EM2 (Allocations for Class B1 and B2 Employment Uses)
2. The reserved matters conditionally approved are not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations which have been raised during the consultation exercise:
 - The impact of the use of the building on neighbouring residential properties.
 - The appropriateness of the scale of the building given the character of the area.

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

- Emerging Local Development Framework (LDF)
- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
- Planning Files Ref: S/0633/07/RM, S/1475/99/O, S/2292/04/O and S/1602/03/F
- Documents referred to in the report including appendices on the website only and reports to previous meetings

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