

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Development and Conservation
Control Committee

6th October 2004

AUTHOR/S: Director of Development Services

S/1367/04/F - Foxton
Erection of Light Industrial and Storage Units, 27 Royston Road, for J Welch

Recommendation: Approval

Departure Application

Site and Proposal

1. This full application, registered on 1st July 2004, proposes the erection of 608sq m of light industrial and storage floor space on a 0.48ha area of land to the east of the A10, south of the Foxton crossing. In the front of the site is an existing car showroom and workshop, which are not affected by the proposed scheme
2. The rear part of the site currently contains a 380sq m workshop building along part of the south east boundary and a 58sq m nissen style building in the north east corner. In addition to these buildings there is a line of metal storage containers along the north east and south west boundary. The remainder of the site is hard-surfaced.
3. The application proposes the removal of the two existing buildings and metal containers and the erection of a block of five single storey light industrial and storage units, measuring in total 40m x 15.2m adjacent to the north east boundary of the site. Although no car parking plan is submitted adequate space exists on site.

History

4. At the April 2004 meeting (Item 17) planning permission for a larger replacement building (1046sq m) was refused on the grounds that the site was in the countryside and that the additional traffic likely to be generated by the proposal would have an adverse effect on highway safety.

Policy

5. The site is outside the village framework. The application has been advertised as a departure.
6. **Policy P1/2** of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 states that development will be restricted in the countryside unless the proposals can be demonstrated to be essential in a particular rural location.
7. There are no policies in the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 that support new employment development in the countryside other than the change of use or conversion of rural buildings, or development on suitable brownfield sites next to or very close to the village frameworks of Rural Growth or Limited Rural Growth Settlements (Policy EM6). Foxton is not such a settlement.

8. The Government's Planning Policy 7, "Sustainable development in Rural Areas" (2004), is supportive of replacement of suitably located existing buildings of permanent design and construction for economic development purposes. The criteria that will apply to the replacement of countryside buildings should be set out in Local Development documents.

Consultations

9. **Foxton Parish Council** recommends approval. "Although there is some concern over the visual impact of the rear of the premises on the village, and a possible increase in traffic movement, on balance we wish to support the application subject to the condition that the work is completed within four years. Our reasons for support are:
 - The development will improve the look of the site and generally "tidy it up."
 - The development may increase services and amenities of the village.
 - The development will increase the number of tenancies on the site and may therefore increase employment in the area."
10. The **Local Highway Authority** notes that the total floor space after development is stated as being some 72m² less than existing. It would be difficult to sustain an objection to replacement buildings comprising floor area no greater than exists at the present time. Suitable facilities for parking and turning should be provided for all vehicles likely to be generated by the proposal.
11. The **Chief Environmental Health Officer** has considered the implications of the proposal in terms of noise, environmental pollution and concludes that there are no significant impacts from an Environmental Health point of view.
12. The **Environment Agency** originally objected to the application as insufficient information had been submitted in respect of foul and surface water disposal and pollution prevention, to allow the Agency to fully assess the application. A flood risk assessment was requested. Following discussions with the applicant's agent it has agreed that these matters can be dealt with by means of conditions attached to any consent.
13. The **Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service** states that additional water supplies for firefighting are not required.
14. The comments of the **Trees and Landscapes Officer** will be reported verbally

Representations

15. None received.

Planning Comments

16. The key issues to be considered here are Structure Plan Policy P1/2 which restricts development in the countryside to those which can be demonstrated to be essential in a particular rural location, and the comments of the Local Highway Authority.
17. The proposal involves the erection of a new light industrial and storage building on the site to replace existing buildings and containers. The proposed building is considerably smaller than that refused earlier this year and, although the floor area is still greater than that of the buildings it will replace, I consider it acceptable given that

it will also result in the removal a number of metal storage containers that are currently in use on the site.

18. **The Local Highway Authority** has raised no objection to the application, although its comments that the proposal represents a reduction in floor space is only true if the existing storage containers are counted as floor space. I have not included these containers as floor space in my calculations, however they are used for commercial purposes and would therefore generate traffic movements to and from the site. It is not unreasonable for the Highway Authority to take these into account in assessing the highway implications of the proposal.
19. There are a number of trees close to the north east boundary of the site where the proposed building is to be located. The comments of the **Trees and Landscapes Officer** will be reported verbally but should concerns be raised there is potential to re-site the proposed building.
20. The matters raised by the **Environment Agency** can be dealt with by condition.
21. There have been no representations made in response to the departure advert and I do not consider that the application needs to be referred to the Secretary of State.

Recommendation

22. That, subject to the comments of the Trees and Landscapes Officer, the application is approved with the following conditions.
 1. SCA RCA
 2. SC5 Details a) & e) RC5 a)i) & ii) & e)
 3. Prior to the commencement of any development, a scheme for the provision and implementation of pollution control, including foul and surface water drainage, shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. The works/scheme shall be constructed and completed in accordance with the approved plans/specification at such time(s) as may be specified in the approved scheme.
 4. SC51 Landscaping RC51
 5. SC52 Implementation of Landscaping. RC52
 6. The existing buildings on the site shall be demolished, and the existing storage containers removed, and all materials removed from the site within 3 months of the building hereby permitted being occupied. RC To safeguard the character of the area.
 7. The development shall not be occupied until space has been laid out within the site, in accordance with a plan which has previously been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, for cars and cycles to be parked in accordance with the standards set out in Appendix 7/1 and 7/2 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004, and for the loading and unloading of vehicles and for vehicles to turn so that they may enter and leave the site in forward gear, and that area shall not thereafter be used for any purpose other than parking/loading and unloading/turning of vehicles. RC20

Informatives

Reasons for Approval

1. In considering this application regard has been had to policies in the Development Plan. Although the application proposes the erection of a new building in the countryside it replaces existing buildings and storage containers on the site and the Local Planning Authority is of the view that application can be approved as a departure from the Development Plan
2. The proposal conditionally approved is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations which have been raised during the consultation exercise:
 - Drainage
 - Visual impact on the locality
 - Highway Safety
3. All other material planning considerations have been taken into account. None is of such significance as to outweigh the reason for the decision to approve the planning application.

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

Application files S/1367/04/F and S/0292/04/F
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004

Contact Officer: Paul Sexton – Area Planning Officer
Telephone: (01954) 713255