

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Development and Conservation
Control Committee

AUTHOR/S: Director of Development Services

1st December 2004

**S/1977/04/F - Fulbourn
Portable Building for Temporary Office Accommodation
at Heron Court, Ida Darwin Hospital
for South Cambridgeshire Primary Care Trust**

Recommendation: Approval

Site and Proposal

1. The Ida Darwin Hospital site comprises mainly separate single storey buildings in landscaped grounds. It is sited between the older Fulbourn Hospital and Fulbourn village. The site is within the countryside and is designated as a major developed site within the Green Belt. Landscaping within the site helps to reduce the visual impact when viewed from the surrounding countryside. Heron Court is the first building north of Fulbourn Old Drift, on the eastern side of the access road that runs through the hospital site. It is a single storey building with an overgrown, formerly landscaped garden area to the north and east of the building. This area is enclosed by a timber post and rail fence. A mature hedge to the boundary with Fulbourn Old Drift screens the site beyond this.
2. This full planning application, received on the 24th September 2004 proposes the siting of a portable building south east of the Heron Court building within an area of overgrown garden. The building measures 4m by 18m, with a height of 2.97m. A temporary permission of 3 years is sought, while the Primary Care Trust prepares an estates strategy in association with two other trusts who occupy the site.

Planning History

3. **S/1452/00/F** - Change of use of Heron Court to offices was permitted retrospectively with ancillary car parking. This had a condition limiting the use of the building for offices related to human health care or for National Health Service office use.

Planning Policy

4. **P1/3 'Sustainable Design in Built Development'** of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 ("Structure Plan") states that a high standard of design and sustainability should be adopted for all new forms of development.
5. **P9/2a 'Green Belt'** of the Structure Plan sets out the purpose and limitations on development within the area designated as the Cambridge Green Belt.
6. **Development Brief for Fulbourn and Ida Darwin Hospitals Site (Revised), May 1996** has been adopted as supplementary planning guidance. It sets out the criteria that the Council will take into account when determining planning applications for redevelopment. These include a requirement that any new building should have no greater impact on the Green Belt than currently exists. There should be no increase

in the overall floorspace on the site. The floor space of the Ida Darwin site is recorded at 20,100m². Minor increases in floor space will only be permitted where it can be clearly demonstrated that there is significant environmental gain that reduced the overall impact on the Green Belt. Other criteria relevant to this application are the potential impact upon archaeology and the protection of public water supply through a requirement for details of foul and surface water drainage to be approved by the Environment Agency.

7. **GB2 ‘Principles of Development’** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan, 2004 (“Local Plan”) sets out forms of development considered to be appropriate in the Green Belt. No 7 comprises development of Major Developed Sites in accordance with Policy GB4. Fulbourn and Ida Darwin Hospital is one such site.
8. **GB3 ‘The Location of Development’** of the Local Plan requires appropriate Green Belt Development to be located within or adjoining existing complexes in order to protect the rural nature and openness of the Green Belt.
9. **GB4 ‘ Major Developed Sites’** of the Local Plan permits limited infilling on identified sites and limits redevelopment to the existing built form. Temporary buildings and hardstandings are excluded from the footprint.
10. **Policy Fulbourn 1 ‘Fulbourn and Ida Darwin Hospitals’** of the Local Plan identifies the site as a major developed site in the Green Belt and sets out considerations that will be made in determining proposals for change of use, conversion or re-development of the site.

Consultations

11. **Fulbourn Parish Council** recommended refusal. It objects to the application unless there is a reduction of overall footprint elsewhere on the Master Plan to accommodate this increase in footprint on the site. It also believes there are empty offices on both sites.

Representations

12. No representations were received in response to site and press notices.
13. The applicant has supplied a statement of need in support of the application (attached at appendix A) and has written in response to the comments of Fulbourn Parish Council:
 - They are planning to decrease the overall footprint of Fulbourn Hospital by the demolition of the Kent House building as agreed in the original plan for the two sites.
 - No planned date for this work can be given at this time but they confirm that the building is empty and out of use.
 - There are no empty offices on the Ida Darwin site at present other than within two empty areas that are to undergo refurbishment, these being Marlowe House, a former ward and Medical Entomology, a former laboratory.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

14. The key issues to consider in respects of this application are the impact upon the Green Belt, and whether the use accords with the Master Plan for the site.

15. The portacabin proposed is low in height and of a modest size. It can be screened through existing and additional landscaping to the garden area. It will seen against a backdrop of single storey buildings and subject to condition on the colour of any external finishes will not be harmful to the openness, appearance or character of the Green belt in this area.
16. The additional floorspace of this temporary building would not be included in any proposals to redevelop the site, as the Development Brief, adopted as supplementary planning guidance, is quite clear that temporary floorspace and hardstandings are to be excluded. The siting of a temporary building for office use will therefore not result in the long-term increase in the floorspace of the site if it is re-developed.

Recommendation

17. Approval is recommended subject to the conditions set out below:
 1. Sc3 – Temporary permission worded ‘on or before 1st January 2007’ (Rc3/4a).
 2. The premises shall not be used for any purpose other for human health care or for the National Health Service office use (including any other purpose 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 and re-enacting that Order with or without modification). Reason – To ensure that the use is consistent with the overall Master Plan for Fulbourn and Ida Darwin Hospitals (December 1997) which proposes that the site be utilised as fully as possible for healthcare and related purposes.
 3. Sc5a – Details of materials for external walls and roofs worded to include ‘the colour of any external finishing’ (Rc5aii add wording ‘and is not detrimental to the appearance of the Green Belt);
 4. Sc51 – Landscaping (Rc51);
 5. Sc52 – Implementation of landscaping (Rc52);

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) and **P9/2a** (Green Belt);
 - **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004: GB2** (Principles of Development), **GB3** (The Location of Development) and **GB4** (Major Developed Sites) and Fulbourn 1 (Fulbourn and Ida Darwin Hospitals).
2. The development is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations which have been raised during the consultation exercise:
 - **Increase in footprint**
 - **Overall use of the site**

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
- Development Brief for Fulbourn and Ida Darwin Hospitals Site (Revised), May 1996.
- Planning file Ref: S/1977/04/F

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