

## **SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee

1 February 2012

**AUTHOR/S:** Executive Director (Operational Services)/ Corporate Manager (Planning and New Communities)

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### **S/2273/11 – Lolworth**

**New workshop and production building with associated administrative office, staff facilities, car parking, service yard and landscaping, 21 Trafalgar Way, Bar Hill for Domino UK Ltd**

**Recommendation: Minded to Approve**

**Date for Determination: 2 March 2012**

#### **Notes:**

**This Application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination as the application is a Major Development and the officer recommendation of minded to approve is contrary to the recommendation of refusal from Lolworth Parish Meeting**

**Members will visit this site on 1 June 2011**

#### **Major Development**

#### **Application accompanied by an Environmental Statement**

##### **Site and Proposal**

1. The full application, received on 11 November 2011, proposes the erection of a new workshop and production building with associated administrative offices, staff facilities, car parking, service yard and landscaping, on a 6.67ha site, for Domino UK Ltd
2. Domino UK Ltd is located in the north west corner of the Trafalgar Way, Bar Hill. The Company was founded in 1987 and develops and manufactures coding, market and printing technologies and equipment. In addition the its main headquarters building it also occupiers another existing unit in Trafalgar Way. The current site is access from Trafalgar Way, off Saxon Way, with the main entrance being off the north spur of Trafalgar Way.
3. The site, the western part of which comprises agricultural land currently in arable use and eastern part the existing headquarters of Domino UK Ltd, is bounded by the A14, a gas pumping station, telecommunications tower, motel and petrol filling station to the north, agricultural land to the west and south and by Trafalgar Way and Bar Hill Business Park to the east.
4. There is a mature tree line and intermittent hedgerow on the west boundary of the existing Domino UK Ltd site. The site is relatively flat but the arable land rises gently in a south-westerly direction. It comprises part of a larger area of arable land which extends to the west and south, and rises more sharply further to the south west

5. A public bridleway runs along the western side of and through the existing site. There is a public footpath which links Lolworth to Bar Hill which runs east to west approximately 400 metres to the south west of the site. Open views across the site and A14 beyond are afforded from this footpath, and these are more elevated close to Lolworth. Another public footpath runs along the east edge of Lolworth to join the A14, 150m to the north west of the site boundary.
6. There is a substantial belt of mature woodland planting on the west boundary of the arable land, 80m west of the application site boundary. Screening on that part of the north boundary which abuts the A14 is currently limited, however there is greater planting where the site abuts the existing gas compound.
7. The existing premises is located with the parish of Bar Hill, however the proposed new building will in the parish of Lolworth.
8. The proposed development will consist of a new building of 16,772m<sup>2</sup>, a dedicated service yard for goods in and out on the north side of the proposed building, a new staff restaurant, a contemporary link to the existing headquarters building, architecturally designed gardens and water feature of several rectangular pools. New staff and visitor parking, and covered cycle and motorcycle parking spaces.
9. The proposed building measures 94m x 150m (at its longest point) and is designed with a curved roof, which is 13.7m at its highest point. The internal clear height requirement of 10m will create an eaves line of approximately 12m, however the curved eaves profile reduces this effect with an eaves height 7.2m at the east end, as a result of a deep overhang of the roof to form a colonnade. The majority of the building is full internal height, however, there is a narrow area of open plan office floorspace at first floor along the length of the east side of the building. There are openings at ground floor and first floor in the east elevation. Although there are first floor openings at the very ends of the north and south elevations all other openings are at ground floor level. A single storey projection on the east of the main building provides a covered link to the existing headquarters building and includes staff restaurant facilities.
10. In addition there is a proposed solvent stores building located in the new good yard to the north of the proposed main building. The proposed store building measures 14m x 18m.
11. Materials proposed are buff brick plinth with cladding above, largely neutral in colour. The roof material is to be grey standing seam aluminium. It is proposed to include photovoltaic cells, solar sun tubes and wind catchers in the roof.
12. Access to the site for employees and visitors will be via the existing northern access spur of Trafalgar Way. Access for service vehicles will be via the southern spur of Trafalgar Way and will involve the formation of a service road within the proposed landscaped area to the south and west of the proposed building, which will allow access to a 40m x 63m goods yard on the north end of the building. This area will be gated and secured by 2.5m high paladin weldmesh fencing.
13. At the current time there are a total of 325 car parking spaces provided at various locations within the site. The proposal will increase this number, over time, by an additional 325 spaces, the majority of which will be located to the south of existing headquarters building, with an area for future car parking shown between the existing and proposed buildings. 52 covered spaces will be provided for cycles, including 10

motorcycles to the south of the existing building, with safe pedestrian footpath access to both the new facility and headquarters building.

14. The Company currently employs 583 staff at the site. An additional 413 staff are anticipated by 2022 as a result of the proposed development, with 60 persons likely to be employed during the anticipated 10-month construction process.
15. Landscaping proposals comprise a native woodland belt to the perimeter of the application site. This area will also provide staff amenity in the form of a woodland walk and seating areas away from the main buildings. A more formal civic space has been designed to the front of the new building's main entrance, which incorporates a series of rectangular pools linked to an outdoor green space consisting of ornamental trees and shrubs, meadow and grass areas. A formal avenue of trees denotes the entrance to the new building and will also provide a shaded space for the outdoor seating to the front of the proposed café/restaurant. Throughout this space paths create links between the existing and new facilities and the car parking which will be screened by a combination of trees and hedge planting.
16. Surface water drainage will be controlled by Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) which will incorporate swales and infiltration systems, where required. Rainwater harvesting and the use of facilities that consume less water will be considered at the detailed design stage.
17. External lighting will be provided to cover the new car parks, roads, entrances and walkways. The car parks and access roads will be lit using bollards, while lighting to footpaths will be provided for safety.
18. It is proposed to divert the existing bridleway around the south, west and north sides of the extended site to link back with the existing route to the north of the application site. The overall length of the bridleway will be increased by approximately 500m as a result.
19. The existing site occupied by Domino UK Ltd is within the village framework of Bar Hill, however the area of land to the west, where the new building is proposed is outside the village framework of both Lolworth and Bar Hill. The majority of the site is within the Environment Agency Flood Zone 2.
20. The application is accompanied by a full Environmental Statement (ES) (including a non-technical summary), Planning Statement, Design and Access Statement, Energy Statement, Landscape and Biodiversity Management Plan, Sustainability Statement, and a Statement of Community Involvement. These documents, along with the application drawings, are available to view online or can be inspected as part of the background documents.
21. The ES includes chapters on Alternatives and Design Evolution, Construction Programme, Landscape and Visual Amenity, Ecology and Nature Conservation, Transport and Access, Air Quality, Noise and Vibration, Water Resources and Flood Risk, Agriculture and Soil Resource, Cultural Heritage, Economics, Lighting, Summary of Mitigation and Monitoring, and Statement of Significance.

### **Planning History**

22. There have been no previous planning applications on the western part of the site, which currently comprises arable land, however there are a number of previous applications on the current site occupied by Domino UK Ltd, which include:

23. S/0600/01/F – Car park extension – Approved
24. S/1773/00/F – Canopy extension – Approved
25. S/1610/87/F – H.Q building for production of ink jet printers and associated administration – Approved
26. S/0468/87/F – New headquarters building for production of ink jet printers and associated administration – Approved

### **Planning Policy**

27. **National Planning Policy**  
PPS1 – Delivering Sustainable Development  
PPS4 – Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth  
PPS5 – Planning for the Historic Environment  
PPS7 – Sustainable Development in Rural Areas  
PPS9 – Biodiversity and Geological Conservation  
PPG13 – Transport  
PPS23 – Planning and Pollution Control  
PPG25 – Planning and Flood Risk
28. **South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Core Strategy**  
**Development Plan Document: ST/5 – Minor Rural Centres, ST/8 – Employment Provision**
29. **South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies adopted July 2007: DP/1 Sustainable Development, DP/2 Design of New Development, DP/3 Development Criteria, DP/4 Infrastructure and New Developments, DP/6 Construction Methods, DP/7 Development Frameworks, ET/5 Development for the Expansion of Existing Firms, SF/6 Public Art and New Development, NE/1 Energy Efficiency, NE/3 Renewable Energy Technologies in New Developments, NE/4 Landscape Character Areas, NE/6 Biodiversity, NE/10 Foul Drainage – Alternative Drainage Systems, NE/11 Flood Risk, NE/12 Water Conservation, NE/14 Lighting Proposals, NE/15 Noise Pollution, NE/16 – Emissions, NE/17 – Protecting High Quality Agricultural Land, CH/2 Archaeological Sites, CH/4 – Development within the Curtilage or Setting of a Listed Building, TR/1 Planning for More Sustainable Travel, TR/2 Car and Cycle Parking Standards, TR/3 Mitigating Travel Impact**
30. **South Cambridgeshire LDF Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) - Open Space in New Developments - adopted January 2009, Public Art - adopted January 2009, Trees and Development Sites - adopted January 2009, Biodiversity - adopted July 2009, Landscape in New Developments - adopted March 2010, District Design Guide - adopted March 2010, Health Impact Assessment - adopted March 2011**

### **Consultation**

31. **Lolworth Parish Meeting** recommends refusal.

‘Our first and major point is that although the applicant’s address is Trafalgar Way, Bar Hill, the proposed development would involve the acquisition of 10 acres of agricultural land in the Parish of Lolworth. Indeed, the entire development would be in Lolworth and as such would be major breach of the planning envelope of Bar Hill.

We appreciate this is an exceptional application but nevertheless there is extreme concern that, if approved, the application would set a precedent for future developments beyond the existing perimeter road.

We acknowledge the applicant has gone to considerable lengths to minimise the visual impact of the proposed building and the associated light pollution but believe further improvements could be made, particularly regarding its colour. Special consideration should be given to the roof section, both with respect to its colour and the material used. This large section of roof will have greatest impact when viewed from the village of Lolworth and the adjacent footpath to Bar Hill.

The tree planting will have some effect in breaking up the solid appearance of the structure, but will have little or no effect for at least ten to fifteen years.

We recognise the applicant is a respected employer within the local community and understand the need for expansion of the existing facilities. Nevertheless, with due respect, we believe the proposed arrangements to minimise the inevitable increase in traffic may be unenforceable. We appreciate the intention is not to add traffic during peak hours but this will require the goodwill of employer and employees. Over and above this, there will be an unavoidable increase in traffic on the A14.

In conclusion, we have no desire to discourage the expansion and development of a local successful company, we recognise the generally sympathetic design and would be happy to support the application if it did not breach the planning envelope of Bar Hill and set a precedent for future development in Lolworth. Such development would in all probability alter the character of the village irreparably.'

32. **Bar Hill Parish Council** recommends approval but comments. 'Although the Parish Council approve these plans, we have grave concerns about the traffic flow at peak times on to an already overcrowded road between Trafalgar Road and the A14.'
33. The **Environment Agency** has no objection subject to the inclusion of conditions and informatives in any consent. It confirms that the submitted Flood Risk Assessment is considered satisfactory. The conditions require the submission of schemes for surface water drainage and Flood Risk Mitigation Measures, along with details of their maintenance and management after completion, pollution control, and requiring the floor level of any new building to be set no lower than 21.4 metres above Ordnance Datum Newlyn.
34. **Anglian Water** comments that the foul drainage from this development is in the catchment of Uttons Drove STW that at present has available capacity for these flows. It advises that should the applicant wish to connect to its sewerage network notice under Section 106 of the Water Industry Act 1991 will be required. An informative should be included in any consent regarding the need for an application to be made to Anglian Water to discharge trade effluent to a public sewer. It recommends that petrol/oil interceptors be fitted to all car parking/washing/repair facilities, and the installation of a properly maintained fat traps on all catering establishments. It suggests that a condition is included in any consent requiring submission of a scheme for a surface water strategy/flood risk assessment.
35. The **Urban Design Team** comments as follows:

*Concept and Context*

The concept of developing a building design that would visually and physically link the new building with the existing building via a shared facility (restaurant) is supported:

the new building will accommodate warehouse, production and office accommodation and new staff restaurant and café will act as a link to the existing buildings. The proposals relate well to the existing buildings and the wider natural environment.

The proposed building has been designed to accommodate alternative uses to meet future changing design and production methods and this is welcome as this would help ensure the longevity of the building.

#### *Site Planning*

The siting of the proposed building is considered appropriate. Its location takes advantage of the existing dual access arrangements from Trafalgar Way to segregate staff and visitor traffic from heavy good vehicles. Its location would minimise visual impact to the surroundings of onsite car parking, vehicle access roads and goods yard.

The layout of building is well designed and would help improve legibility of the site. The rationale of creating different types of spaces within the outdoor area (e.g. outdoor café and quiet sitting area) is supported as this would accommodate different user needs and help generate activities and thereby supporting the vitality of the outdoor area surrounding the proposed building.

#### *Access and Parking*

The siting of the parking area is considered appropriate: the visitor and main car parking area will be located to the south of the formal landscaped avenue while the Blue-badge parking bays will be located close to the entrance of the proposed building to provide easy access for visitors with mobility problems.

The rationale of using trees and formal hedges to divide the rows of car parking spaces is supported as this would help soften the appearance of the parking area.

The location of the covered cycle and motorcycle parking facility is considered appropriate: it will be located to the south of the existing building with safe pedestrian footpath access to both the new and existing buildings.

#### *Massing and Scale*

Whilst the massing is considered appropriate to the intended uses and the locality, it is disappointing that the initial idea of a green roof to soften the perceived impact of the proposed building was dismissed towards the end of the pre-application stage.

Due to internal clear height requirement of 10m for a modern warehouse facility, the proposed building would create an eaves line of approximately 12m. The impact of the eaves line is reduced by the use of a curved eaves profile, creating a concealed gutter before the main curved roof. To the offices and entrance façade, a deep overhang to form the colonnade would reduce the eaves height to approximately 7.2m to help relate the scale of the proposed building to that of the existing.

#### *Architecture, Elevations and Materials*

At pre-application stage concerns were raised in relation to the design of front elevation (lack of active frontages) and the location of the reception area (fail to aid legibility). The architect has since revised the elevational treatment to include openings to the front elevation and improved the building's internal layout. The current design is high quality and is commended: the scheme proposes an appealing

contemporary design, which reflects the materiality and form of the existing building, and so positively relates to the public realm and the landscaping scheme.

A deep covered colonnade viewed across a linear water feature would provide shade to the glazed offices and entrance to the reception.

The palette of materials proposed for the scheme is satisfactory: external materials include glazing and curtain walling to identify features or functions within the building structure. The west elevation will be articulated by grey curved eaves profiled cladding, which will continue down the façade to a horizontal window band. The proposed buff brickwork plinth would help relate the proposals to the existing building. The proposed glazing module is well composed: the glazing projects and turns the corner onto the south and north elevation and would create a clean and minimalist appearance. At the corners onto the east elevation the change of function is expressed on the north elevation with a band of louvers to the plant room and curtain walling to the offices on the south elevation.

### *Landscaping*

At pre-application stage concerns were raised in relation to the lack of integration between the proposed building and the landscaping scheme. The landscape architect has since followed officers' advice and made significant improvements to the layout of the landscaping scheme. The current landscaping scheme is of a good quality and complements the form and style of the proposed building.

The size of the amenity area (located at the front of the proposed building) has been substantially enlarged to provide a large outdoor green space with ornamental trees, shrubs, meadow and grass areas with seating for both staff and visitors.

A formal avenue of trees will denote the entrance to the proposed building and will provide a shaded space for the outdoor seating area to the front of the proposed café. A formal civic space has been designed to the front of the proposed building's main entrance area which will incorporate a series of well designed water features to reflect the proposed building.

A swale has also been incorporated into the landscaping scheme to run along the southern, western and northern boundaries which will be planted to encourage wildlife and provide new habitats for local ecology.

The rationale of including a native woodland belt to the perimeter of the site as part of the landscape proposals is supported as this would help increase biodiversity of the area.

### *Visual impact*

Following our advice at pre-application stage the applicant has submitted a *Landscape and Visual Amenity Assessment Document* and visualizations to demonstrate the impact of the proposed development on its immediate surroundings and its wider landscape setting. Whilst the illustrations demonstrate that the upper part of the proposed building will be partially visible above the tree line as one travels along the A14 eastwards or views the site from the Lolworth to Bar Hill footpath, the colour of the proposed elevations (various shades of grey) would help blend the proposed building into the wider landscape. The visual impacts of the proposed building on its wider landscape setting are therefore considered minimal and are not considered to detract from the character and or appearance of the area.

In terms of the impact of the proposed building on its immediate surroundings such as the nearby bridleway and Trafalgar Way, the illustrations show that the proposed building and its landscaping scheme would have a positive impact on the appearance and image of the area.

#### *Recommendations*

The proposals respond positively to the constraints of the site and make efficient use of available land. The proposed building is well designed and relates well to the existing building. Issues raised at pre-application stage have now been adequately addressed and the current design proposals are in general conformity with Policy DP/2 of the South Cambridgeshire District Council Development Plan (Adopted July 2007) and the design principles set out in the South Cambridgeshire District Council District Design Guide (Adopted March 2010). It is therefore recommended that planning permission be granted subject to conditions regarding external cladding material and brickwork.

36. The **Landscapes Officer** is generally supportive of the landscape proposals, although various revisions are suggested.

Public spaces access routes and planting schemes will need to take account of the scale of the development, the needs of the users of the site and the effects on the well used public rights of way adjacent to the site. This is a large site.

Generally the landscape should seek to replicate the existing established native hedgerows and bands of woodland to the east and west of the site. The south and west boundary and car park area planting will be particularly important.

Planted areas will need to be extensive to assimilate the building into they existing landscape.

The need for a mound to prevent 'overland' flows (given the proposed development and drainage arrangements). The Michael Thomas and Hannah Brown drawings both show a mound to prevent overland flows, but on opposite sides of the swale. In the view of the Landscape Officer the mound could only have any benefit on the south side of the swale.

Native planting areas need to be a minimum of 4.0 meters wide (consider the spread of a semi-mature Hawthorn for example). The area west of the pavilion is far too thin to accommodate native planting. This should be adjusted to accommodate native planting.

The areas of native planting around the perimeter of the site are not extensive or wide enough to accommodate a 'Woodland Walk' (again consider the size of the plants and the character and screening desired). It is suggested that any amenity paths are run along the north side of the native planting strip, with any enclosing standard tree planting to the north.

The boundary post and rail fence should mark the extent of the planting and should clearly show the extent of the planting and bridleway. If pubic access is desired to areas of amenity space on the development site then this should be visible and accessed over the fence via a gate or stile.

The bridleway will need a minimum of 2.0 metres clearance from the planting. The exterior edge of the bridleway should be marked by occasional stakes to show the



division between the bridleway and farmland. The boundary fences should be adjusted to remove sharp 90° angles on the bridleway.

Detailed revisions are suggested to the proposed Landscape and Biodiversity Management Plan.

There are concerns relating to existing condition of the banks of Lolworth Brook where it fronts and passes through the development site and the possibility of remedial work being undertaken is suggested. This is highlighted in more detail in the Ecology Officers comments below.

Queries are raised regarding the need to clarify the permeability of the proposed paving and the substrates beneath it where underground surface water storage is indicated. The drainage falls across the car park areas are likely to be around 1 in 185 – is this sufficient in paved areas? Drawings show the proposed swale to have only a fall of 1:400 to its low point at the north east corner, and from there the pipe takes a tortuous route, including several sharp bends, to discharge into Lolworth Brook. It is questioned whether there is sufficient fall and whether the height of the outlet at only 150mm above the bed of the stream (probably below water in normal flows)) is acceptable.

It is noted that the Drainage Strategy notes that the ditch along the northern boundary will be used, but this has been filled in. Will a replacement drainage route/feature be needed? Details should be provided of the proposed treatment of the goods yard drainage. The traps and interceptors and the proposed areas of the reed beds in the swale. Will the new workshop and production building (and its foundations) affect field drainage from Lolworth towards Lolworth Brook?

37. The **Ecology Officer** is supportive of the proposal overall but is concerned that an opportunity has been missed in respect of the stream (Lolworth Brook) at the eastern end of the existing site. The stream is currently in a very poor state and it would appear that the banks have been subject to herbicide in order to control plant growth, however the lack of plant roots is leading to the erosion of the banks, which in places is resulting in their slumping.

These issues can be addressed through sensitive bank re-profiling, vegetation management and sensitive bank strengthening. The re-profiling of banks could also increase local flood storage capacity and channel conveyance, reduce the erosive force of water and provide opportunities for attractive streamside planting. It would give benefits to the applicant in terms of reducing flood risk, address poor habitat and improve the setting of the main entrance.

There is also concern about the proposal to place a further three car parking spaces on the stream bank. Given the unstable nature of the banks the stream should be given space to allow it to reach a position of natural stability.

These matter have been taken up with the applicant.

38. **Cambridgeshire Archaeology** comments that the site is located in an area of high archaeological potential, being located adjacent to the road linking the Roman settlements at Godmanchester and Cambridge. Settlements and enclosures of Iron Age date are known to the east and a possible Saxon cemetery is recorded to the south. The medieval moat and post medieval landscape of Lolworth Grange is located to the west. It is likely that significant archaeological remains will survive in

the area and that these would be severely damaged or destroyed by the proposed development.

It is strongly recommended that the site is subject to an archaeological evaluation, to be commissioned and undertaken at the expense of the developer, and carried out prior to the granting of planning permission. The evaluation results should allow for the fuller consideration of the presence/absence, nature, extent, quality and survival of archaeological remains within the development area. An informed judgement can then be made as to whether planning consent will need to include provisions for the recording, and more importantly, the preservation of important archaeological remains in situ. Cambridgeshire Archaeology states that it is standard practice for it to provide a design brief for such evaluation.

The applicant has been made aware of this requirement.

39. The **Local Highway Authority** has no objection but requests that two conditions are included in any planning consent, firstly requiring a method statement to be submitted and agreed for the physical control of access to the additional car parking spaces to ensue that it is not accessible until needed and, secondly that a phased plan be submitted for the release of the additional car spaces to ensure that a suitable number of spaces, relative to the number of employees are available, but are not in excess of the requirements of the development.
40. The **Highways Agency** has directed that a condition be attached to any consent requiring the measures within the agreed travel plan to be implemented and monitored in accordance with the relevant schedules in the plan. Where targets are not being achieved at the milestone points in the plan the company's travel plan coordinator is to be notified by the Local Planning Authority and relevant remedial actions invokes as set out in the travel plan.
41. The **Trees and Landscapes Officer** comments that she met the applicant on site to discuss the hawthorn 'hedge' to the rear, which has a TPIO served on it. A hedge cannot be TPO'd and for that reason the TPO is ambiguous and could be challenged – the proposed landscaping scheme creates new mixed species hedging around the boundary creating a more diverse habitat that links to existing features, whereas the hedge is dissected by the A14. There are no objections to the proposal.
42. The **Environmental Health – Contaminated Land Officer** is satisfied that a condition relating to contaminated land is not required.
43. The **Rights of Way and Access Team, Cambridgeshire County Council** points out that Public Bridleway No.1, Bar Hill runs through the site to the rear of the existing building and will pass through the proposed new car park to the south east of the site. The intention of the applicant to apply to divert the bridleway as part of the development is noted and the following comments are made.

If consent is granted there must be a condition included stating that no part of the development should commence until a suitable diversion has come into effect. It is important to note that there is no guarantee that an application to divert the bridleway will be successful, and without such a legal diversion it would remain in its current location on the Definitive Map.

Early contact should be made with the area rights of way officer however his initial view is that it would be preferable for the proposed diverted bridleway to curve round more in line with the proposed grass swale instead of the proposed sharp 90 degree

corners. Hedges and vegetation must be planted at least 2m away from the bridleway to ensure that future growth does not obstruct the path.

As both Public Bridleway no.1, Bar Hill and Public Footpath No.5, Lolworth are essentially dead-end paths because they exit onto the A14 it is asked whether the developer would consider working with adjacent landowners to create a pedestrian link between the two to create a circular route and also creating a link between Public Bridleway No.1 Bar Hill and Saxon Way, Bar Hill. If successful, the diversion of Public Bridleway No.1 Bar Hill would leave a small gap between this bridleway and the Public Footpath No.5, Lolworth and it seems an obvious mitigation for the development and the increased inconvenience users of the bridleway will suffer. Government policies encourage the use and development of routes promoting physical and mental wellbeing through exercise and the County Council's Rights of Way Improvement Plan states that where appropriate new development should contribute to the provision of new links and/or improvement of the existing rights of way network (Guiding Principle GP3).

If consent is granted informatives should be included in any permission advising that no alteration to the surface of the bridleway as permitted without the consent of the Rights of Way team, and that it should remain open and unobstructed at all times, with no building materials stored, or contractors vehicles parked on it. Landowners should be reminded that they are responsible for maintaining hedges and fences adjacent to public rights of way, and that any transfer of land should take account for any such boundaries.

These comments have been forwarded to the applicant.

The comments of the **Corporate Manager – Health and Environmental Services, Sustainability Officer, Conservation Manager, Arts Development Officer, Natural England and Drainage Manager** will be reported

### **Representations**

- 44.. The occupier of **68 Hollytrees, Bar Hill** objects to the application. There is concern that the proposed development will add to the existing traffic congestion in the area. There will be even more cars at the Bar Hill roundabout when Northstowe is built. 18 months of development will cause traffic mayhem in the area.

The development will strip away the countryside on the boundary of Bar Hill, resulting in a view of new warehousing on what is in fact a large area of land. Although it will create 400 jobs the proposal does not do anything for Bar Hill, and will result in a loss of a country view for the 5,000 people of the village. A previous suggestion to build houses on this site was averted.

45. The occupiers of **Elmwood, Cuckoo Lane, Lolworth** object commenting that it is to the credit of the District Council that development has been kept within villages has been kept within prescribed villages envelopes by in-filling only, leaving most of the new building to be concentrated in new towns such as Cambourne and Northstowe. This has avoided ribbon development across the countryside between villages, and there are strong objections to this development, which breaches that important District Council principle. It would also make it very difficult to prevent the gradual industrialisation of the Cambridgeshire countryside.

## **Planning Comments – Key Issues**

46. The key issues to be considered in the determination of this application are the principle of development, sustainability, highway safety, visual impact and design, drainage and flood risk, ecology and biodiversity, archaeology, loss of agricultural land, lighting, amenity of adjacent land users (including residential amenity).

- **Principle of Development**

47. The site is outside the village framework. Although Policy ET/5 allows for the expansion of existing firms on previously developed sites next to or very close to village frameworks of Minor Rural Centres, the proposed building will be on greenfield land. The proposal therefore represents a departure from existing policy and has been advertised as such.
48. Should Members be minded to approve the application as a departure it will need to be referred to the National Planning Casework Unit in accordance with the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2009.
49. The erection of a building of the scale proposed on the area of arable land to the west of the existing Domino building will visually intrude into and erode the current open landscape between Bar Hill and Lolworth. Members will therefore need to consider this impact and the mitigation measures proposed, along with the other material planning considerations, alongside the case put forward by the applicant outlining the need for the Company to expand its existing premises onto this site.
50. Planning Policy Statement 4 – Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth re-iterates the Government's view that its overarching objective is sustainable economic growth, and emphasises that rural areas have an important contribution to make to both the regional and national economy. It states that local planning authorities should ensure that the countryside is protected for the sake of its intrinsic character and beauty, the diversity of its landscapes, heritage and wildlife, the wealth of its natural resources and to ensure that it may be enjoyed by all. It states that local planning authorities should strictly control economic development in open countryside, away from existing settlements. It also encourages local planning authorities to adopt a constructive approach towards planning applications for economic development and that planning applications that secure sustainable economic growth should be treated favourably.
51. When determining planning applications for economic development which are not in accordance with an up to date development plan PPS4 states that local planning authorities should weigh market and other economic information alongside environmental and other social information; take full account of any longer term benefits, as well as the costs of the development, such as job creation or improved productivity including any wider benefits to national, regional and local economies and; consider whether the those proposals help the wider objectives of the development plan.
52. As part of the Council's Vision Values and the Three A's it aims to work closely with existing businesses and promote economic development (Aim D) and protect existing communities, villages and the countryside (Aim E).
53. The Council's Economic Development Strategy, highlights that there was a reduction in jobs between 2008 and 2010 of around 5,000, although anticipates that there will be a recovery to 2014, although accepts that this is highly dependant on the government's policy stance and the levels of business confidence. It states that the

Council will seek to support the growth of existing business. In Autumn 2011 the Office for Budget Responsibility produced new forecasts that see the downturn in the economy being deeper and longer. Economic growth is now the government's top priority.

54. The applicant is a significant local employer, with 583 people currently employed at the site. This application offers the potential to increase this by 400 in the period to 2022. The Company has assessed a number of alternative sites for the development (Section 5 of the Environmental Statement). The criteria with which any site would need to comply were identified, including the need to be able to accommodate a modern building of the size proposed, or existing equivalent building, with sufficient parking, a location within a few minutes drive of Bar Hill on the A14 to the north west of Bar Hill as a greater number of staff live in that area, and a location with minimal traffic movements for staff and lorries/vans.
55. 11 sites were examined, including the land with planning consent for employment development at Home Farm, Longstanton, the proposed new town of Northstowe, Buckingham Way, Business Park, Swavesey and Alconbury Airfield Enterprise Zone. The report concludes that expansion of the Bar Hill premises is stated as the preferred option as it is adjacent to the existing facilities enabling movement between the existing and new facilities without undue vehicular movements; the size of the land is appropriate for the proposed development and includes space for effective landscaping to minimise adverse visual effects while providing benefits to ecology and nature conservation; it will enable full retention of existing staff and will ensure a competitive business environment for the foreseeable future by maintaining quality communications across the company and retaining a global hub for the Company's rapidly expanding operation.
56. Lolworth Parish Meeting has expressed its concern that approval of this scheme would set a precedent for future developments beyond the existing perimeter road. Members should note that the 1987 planning application, for development of Domino's current headquarters building, was onto land that was outside the original western perimeter of Bar Hill.
57. Having considered the case made by the applicant for expansion at the existing Bar Hill site officers accept that this is the most appropriate and sustainable option from the Company's perspective, and accords with the overall aim of the Council to support existing firms and encourage employment opportunities and growth in the District. In considering whether to support this proposal as a departure Members will need to balance this against site-specific issues, which are considered in details below.
58. It is officer's view that provided there are no site specific issues that would dictate that this area of land is not appropriate for development that the principle should be supported. Whilst officers cannot give a guarantee to Lolworth Parish Meeting that there will not be future expansion onto the land west of the existing perimeter of Bar Hill, as was the case with the 1987 application for Domino UK Ltd, it is considered that limited further opportunity exists and that it is unlikely that a comparable case could be made.

- **Transport and Access**

59. The proposed development clearly has the potential to add considerable to existing traffic generation on the Trafalgar Way estate, which will then feed to Saxon Way and then in the majority of cases to the A14 roundabout. Transport and access is

therefore a major consideration in the determination of this application and the applicant has held discussions at the pre-application stage with both the Highways Agency and Local Highway Authority.

60. The application is accompanied by a Traffic Assessment and Travel Plan, as part of the Environmental Statement. It states that the key mitigation in terms of transport and access provided is a Travel Plan, which seeks to maintain peak hour traffic generation following the development at or close to 2011 levels. The assessment also considers the impact of traffic during the construction period.
61. The information submitted with the application accepts that the local road network and key junctions within the study area are operating at around or close to capacity during peak hours, but that queues are only evident for short periods lasting 15-20 minutes and there is some spare capacity in the earlier and later periods. Similarly the A14 is recognised as operating at close to capacity during peak periods. The proposed development will increase traffic flows onto the road system.
62. Under the proposed Travel Plan restrictions will be imposed on all manufacturing and new staff working hours to prevent these employees from travelling during the peak highway hours of 8am-9am and 5pm-6pm. It is anticipated therefore that the majority of traffic effects will occur during the time periods 7am-8am and 4pm to 5pm. It also aims to secure a reduction on single occupancy car travel from 80% to 65% by 2022, include a car sharing database and provide a shuttle service connecting to the Guided Busway park and ride at Longstanton, and aims for a 10% target of employees coming to work by bus (currently 3%).
63. Both the Highways Agency and Local Highway Authority have considered the application, both in terms of the potential impact for increase in traffic on the A14 and on the existing road network with Bar Hill, and have not raised objection. Conditions have been suggested to ensure compliance with the Travel Plan and the phasing/use of additional parking within the site.
64. Whilst appreciating the local concern regarding additional traffic generation, officers are of the view that given the detailed consideration and lack of objection from either the Highways Agency or Local Highway Authority there is no reason to oppose the application on highway grounds, subject to the imposition of the suggested conditions. Officers are also of the view that conditions will be required controlling traffic during the construction period.

- **Sustainability**

65. The applicant has produced a Sustainability Statement which concludes that the principles of sustainable development are integral to the business model of Domino ensuring that the new development will be sustainable in terms of construction, operation, local community, environment and users. It identifies the key strengths of the proposal as including waste reduction and recycling in use and during construction, provision of recycling facilities at the site, materials sources from sustainable resources, retention of existing jobs in the UK, profitability of Domino increased due to efficiencies realised by moving all operations on one site, maintenance of path/bridleway around the site offers the potential to link to a sustainable transport network, new jobs created by the scheme, additional jobs during building construction and benefit to local economy during construction, retention and enhancement of wildlife.

- **Landscape Impact and Design**

66. Officers have been involved in the evolution of the design of the building and the landscaping of the site and there have been a series of pre-application meetings which have helped to lead to the form of the development as currently submitted.
67. It has been accepted that the proposed building is of significant scale and the overall bulk and height will exceed that of existing buildings in the vicinity. The proposed building will be visible from the surrounding countryside, and in particular from the A14 and the footpath to the south west linking Lolworth and Bar Hill.
68. The curved roof design approach adopted for the building design results in a visually pleasing built form and along with the use of an appropriate palette of materials will help to reduce the impact. Draft versions of the building included a green roof, the retention of which was encouraged by officers, as it was felt that this approach would help to assimilate the building, especially when viewed from the higher ground of the footpath to the south west of the site, and for the additional environmental benefits this would bring. However, the additional cost of the provision of a green roof, notably due to the increased construction specifications required for structure of the building to support such an approach, proved to be prohibitive for the applicant. Whilst the loss of the green roof is regrettable officers are of the view that the use of a suitable neutral palette of materials as suggested will help mitigate the impact of the proposed building. It is noted that Lolworth Parish Council has queried the materials and colour to be used and officers have suggested that contact is made with the Parish to discuss this further.
69. Although the application proposes extensive additional landscaping this will take a number of years before it becomes fully effective, and whilst this will help to assimilate the building it will remain visible from the footpath and countryside to the south and the A14.
70. The Landscapes Officer and Urban Design Team are supportive of the overall landscape and design approach and the detailed comments outlined earlier in this report have not been repeated here. A meeting has been arranged to discuss the detailed comments raised by these officers.

- **Drainage and Flood Risk**

71. As the site is within Flood Zone 2 the application is accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy, which has been considered and accepted by the Environment Agency, subject to conditions. The proposed development will increase the impermeable area on the application site by 2.8ha. The proposed drainage strategy will ensure that there is no increase in on-site and downstream flood risk as a result of the proposed development. Surface water currently drains to Lolworth Brook.
72. It is proposed to discharge surface water through swales, pipes and storage areas under the porous areas of the car parks, incorporating sufficient attenuation to allow discharge at a controlled rate not exceeding 3 litres per second per hectare of development during a 1:100 year rainfall event with an allowance for climate change.
73. All piped discharges from high risk areas such as the service yard will be passed through petrol interceptors and/or trapped gullies prior to discharge to the swale. The swale will incorporate a reed bed to further filter any remaining pollution and sediment and reduce the risk of any pollution entering into Lolworth Brook.

74. The report summarises the main components of the proposed surface water drainage strategy which will be dealt with using SuDS.
75. The floor level of the proposed building will be set at 21.4m, which is the same as the adjacent building and well above any modelled or predicted flood level. The development will provide a swale along the southern, western and northern boundaries to provide both flood storage for the development and, if required, provide a flow path from any overflow from the Lolworth Brook around the development.
76. The Landscapes Officer has queried whether the fall to allow the surface water drainage scheme to work satisfactorily and this will be discussed further with the applicant.
77. Anglian Water has advised that foul water flows can be accommodated at the Uttons Drove STW.

- **Archaeology**

78. Planning Policy Statement 5 – Planning for the Historic Environment states at Policy HE6 that where an application site includes, or is considered to have the potential to include, heritage assessments with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where desk-based assessment is inadequate to properly assess the interest, a field evaluation.
79. The documentation submitted with the application includes an archaeological assessment of the site, based on a desk top study carried out by Archaeological Solutions Ltd. It concludes that there is potential for archaeological remains at the site but considers overall that the potential is low to moderate. It anticipates that archaeological trench evaluation will be required by the County Archaeologist, either for pre-determination or as part of a planning condition.
80. Cambridgeshire Archaeology has also outlined in its comments what it considers to be the archaeological potential for the site, given its location and previous finds in the area. In this case it has recommended that an archaeological investigation be carried out in advance of the determination of the application in order for fuller consideration of the presence/absence, nature, extent, quality and survival of archaeological remains within the development area. An informed judgement can then be made as to whether planning consent will need to include provisions for the recording, and more importantly, the preservation of important archaeological remains in situ. It has confirmed that in the absence of such an investigation it would recommend refusal of the application, and that it would support that position at appeal.
81. I have passed this request to the applicant, and whilst recognising the need to carry out further on site investigation prior to any work commencing on site, concern has been expressed that the need for this work to be carried out prior to the determination of the planning application was not identified earlier, when its archaeological consultant sought advice from Cambridgeshire Archaeology during the preparation of the ES. Given the expense additional expense involved, in advance of knowing whether the principle of the proposed development will be supported by Members the applicants suggests that this work is not undertaken unless planning consent is to be granted and accepts that the risk of uncovering something during the elevation might put the project in doubt.



82. Members will need to take a view on this point, however officers are of the view that given that any resolution of Members can only be minded to approve at this stage, and the formal period for determination of the application does not expire until 2 March, that the extent of the further archaeological investigation work should be ascertained by the applicant at this stage, so that the work can commence after the date of the meeting if Members are minded to approve. I will discuss further with the applicant and Cambridgeshire Archaeology whether the work could be carried out to allow a decision to be issued by 2 March.

#### Ecology and Biodiversity

83. The applicant has carried out an Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey as part of the ES. It concluded that while the biodiversity of the area within the application site was considered to be relatively low, it was recognised that certain protected species, namely badgers and breeding birds were present in the study area. With the mitigation measures proposed during construction the ES concludes that it is unlikely that any effects will be significant, and that in respect of the completed development, there will be significant positive effects as a result of habitat creation, which will include up to 500m<sup>2</sup> of grassland planted, linear features 600m long of new species rich hedgerows and 400m long swale type habitats.
84. The Ecology Officer is content with the work carried out in respect of the arable land comprising the west part of the site but has highlighted the potential to improve the existing stream located on the east side of the Company's existing site. This is currently being discussed with the applicant and can, along with other ecology and biodiversity matters, be covered by suitable conditions.

#### **• Public Rights of Way**

85. As part of the development it is proposed to divert the Public Bridleway No.1 Bar Hill, which currently runs through the site, around the boundaries of the extended site to link to the route of the existing bridleway to the north east of the site.
86. In officer view this offers to enhance the bridleway by providing a longer route for users, on the edge of a landscaped area/edge of countryside location. Detailed revisions to the proposal have been suggested, including the omission of the 90° bends currently indicated in the corners of the site.
87. Officers support the suggestion of the Rights of Way and Access Team, Cambridgeshire County Council that the applicant is involved in discussions with adjoining landowners to see if a link can be provided from the bridleway to the existing Public Footpath No.5 Lolworth, which currently comes to an end adjacent the A14. The opportunity to create a circular route exists which will provide greater opportunity for users. This comment has been passed to the applicant for consideration, however, as it will require the agreement of other landowners I do not consider that it should be a requirement of the planning consent, although it is to be strongly encouraged.
88. It is pointed out by the Rights of Way and Access Team that a formal diversion of the bridleway will need to be sought and obtained prior to the commencement of development and that the granting of planning consent does not prejudice this procedure. Conditions and informatives can be included in any consent to deal with these matters.

- **Energy Efficiency**

89. The application is accompanied by an Energy Statement and a Sustainability Statement, which demonstrates that a strategy has been produced to achieve a 10% reduction in energy consumption with the use of renewable technology, required to meet the Council's requirements. The measures include the use of wind catcher natural ventilation terminals on the roof, a roof mounted photovoltaic array (800m panel array), and low U-values and passive design measures.
90. The submitted information indicates that the built elements of the proposal will limit the company's carbon footprint through the implementation of a number of energy reducing technologies. The proposed development has the potential to be very energy efficient by being heavily insulated, using energy efficient management and efficient lighting controls
91. The comments of the Council's Sustainability Officer will be reported however given the scale of the development officers would encourage the introduction of measures which go beyond the 10% minimum reduction. The details of these measures can be controlled through condition.

- **Lighting**

92. Given the nature and scale of the development, the incorporation of a service road along the south and west sides of the site, and the service yard on the north side, which will all need to be lit, the potential impact of external lighting is something which need careful consideration to ensure that, regardless of any impact of the building itself. The application indicates that there will be a need for 48 lighting columns need to be used these may be around 6m high although 8m is referred to in one section of the ES, but will be designed to prevent any upward light and concentrate all light energy downwards.
93. The ES also deals with lighting required during the construction phase and puts forward mitigation measures for both this phase and the completed development designed to minimise the impact and use of external lighting.
94. If the development is approved a condition will be required for the submission of a detailed scheme of external lighting for approval.

- **Loss of Agricultural Land**

95. That part of the site which is currently arable land is classified as Grade 3a. Policy NE/17 states that the Council will not grant planning permission for development which would lead to the irreversible loss of Grades 1, 2 or 3a agricultural land unless land is allocated for development in the LDF or, sustainability considerations and the need for the development are sufficient to override the need to protect the agricultural value of the land.
96. In this case the land is not allocated and the loss is irreversible, however the agricultural land is part of a larger area, the continued use of the remainder of which for agriculture will not be prejudiced by the development, and the applicant has demonstrated the need for the development.
97. The area of land lost, at 6ha falls below the 20ha threshold where notification to DEFRA is required.

98. In officers view the demonstrated need for the development outweighs the loss of the area of agricultural land required.

- **Impact on Amenity of adjoining land users**

99. The ES includes sections on Air Quality and Noise and Vibration, and deals with the construction phase and the completed development.
100. In respect of Air Quality it concludes that this is mainly influenced from emissions from road transport from traffic using the A14 and B1050. The report shows that during the construction phase release of dust and particulate matter are likely to occur, but that through good site management and the implementation of suitable mitigation measures such releases will be reduced and excessive releases prevented. The ES considers the residual effects of the construction phase on air quality to be minor adverse to negligible. In respect of the completed development it is anticipated that the impact will be negligible to neutral.
101. In terms of noise and vibration the ES indicates that a Construction Environmental Management Plan will be developed to control the noise and vibration levels and working hours of activities to reduce any effect to acceptable levels. Construction techniques are to be considered such that noise and vibration is controlled using best practicable means approach. In respect of the completed development it is anticipated that the primary noise sources generated will be from road traffic using the site and from service. Due to the existing traffic noise in the area it is anticipated that there will be no significant noise effect and existing housing is located well away from the site entrance. Plant noise will be controlled by selecting and installing appropriate plant and attenuation and again no significant adverse effect is anticipated.
102. The comments of the Corporate Manager – Health and Environmental Services will be reported but it is anticipated that any matters can be adequately dealt with by condition.

- **Public Art**

103. Policy SF/6 encourages the provision and commissioning of publicly assessable art craft and design works in scheme of this scale and this has been discussed with the applicant at the pre-application stage. There is potential to include such works outdoor areas for staff around the building, in the landscaped areas around the building in the landscape buffers, possibly in association with the diverted bridleway, or at an alternative location that might result from discussions with Lolworth Parish Meeting and Bar Hill Parish Council.
104. The appropriate sum required for public art will need to be agreed. The comments of the Development Officer will be reported at the meeting

### **Conclusion**

105. This application represents a departure from policy which will involve the development of a significant area of land beyond the existing western edge of development into part of the open land between it and Lolworth village, within which Parish the new development will be located. The building is of a significant scale, but is well designed and with substantial proposed landscaping which, over time, will help to mitigate the impact of development on the adjacent countryside.

106. The proposal represents a significant expansion opportunity for an established existing company, which is a significant local employer, and will provide the opportunity for the creation of an additional 400 jobs in the period up to 2022. In officers view that company has demonstrated why the proposed expansion needs to be on this site.
107. The concerns of Lolworth Parish Council are issues which need careful consideration and Bar Hill Parish Council, whilst not objecting to the application, has raised concerns about potential traffic generation. No objection has been raised to the application by the highway authorities and issues raised by other consultees can be addressed by condition. The matter of archaeological investigation will be updated at the meeting. Other matters have been considered in detail in this report.
108. Having balanced the various matters associated with this application officers are of the view that it should receive support as a departure.

### **Recommendation**

109. That the application be referred to the National Planning Casework Unit advising that having considered all matters that Members are minded to approve subject to satisfactory resolution of outstanding matters, including archaeology, subject to safeguarding conditions.
110. Detailed suggested conditions will be included as part of the update report, but will include conditions covering the following:

- Time limit
- Approved plans
- First occupier
- Materials
- Environment Agency conditions
- Highway conditions
- Travel Plan
- Landscaping
- Control of construction works
- Lighting
- Rights of way
- Ecology and Biodiversity
- Public Art
- Renewable energy technology

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

- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Core Strategy (adopted January 2007)
- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies (adopted July 2007)
- Planning File Ref: S/2273/11

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