

## **SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

---

**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee  
**AUTHOR/S:** Planning and New Communities Director

---

6 June 2012

### **S/2509/11 - STAPLEFORD**

**Change of use of existing buildings from agricultural use to a community study centre for arts and business (use class D1 & D2) in association with the previously consented office use, together with the erection of a single-storey extensions, external fire escape and associated works – Bury Farm, Bury Road for The Ace Foundation**

**Recommendation: Approval**

**Date for Determination: 13 February 2012**

#### **A. Update to the report**

##### **Agenda report paragraph number 16 – Ecology**

The Ecology Officer visited the site in July 2010 with the applicant's ecologist and accepts the findings of the submitted report, which states that 3 species of bats were active in the site but not believed to be roosting in the building. The applicants are already working to enhance the site for swifts and are restoring old orchard land. A condition seeking ecological enhancement should be added to any consent in order to formalise some of the applicant's intentions towards biodiversity conservation at the site.

##### **Agenda report paragraph number 27 - Representations**

An additional letter of objection has been received that raises the following comments:

- Traffic calming in Bury Road is not required, as there was no problem till work started on the site.
- The train station is a long way from the site and buses do not run late in the evenings, Sundays or bank holidays.
- Concern regarding disturbance to residents as a result of intended opening hours.
- The number of movements and noise levels would be vastly different to the former agricultural/industrial use.
- The comments made by Cambridge Past, Present & Future are correct – the site would be run as a commercial operation not as a charity venture benefitting the village.
- Where will the smoking area be?
- Will a liquor licence be applied for?

#### **Representation from the applicant's agent**

- The description of the application refers to use as a community study centre for arts and business, but it has been suggested/requested that this be changed to a community study centre for arts and music (use class D1). Can this be altered?

- The notes at the top of the report refer to the contrary response of the Parish Council but this implies the Parish Council recommended refusal, which is not understood to be the case. Can this be clarified to Members?
- With regards to paragraph 13, the use of amplified sound has perhaps been misunderstood. This is likely to be required to support an electronic piano or for other sound balancing purposes. This will not become a rock concert venue. A noise dB limitation on amplified sound would be acceptable to the applicant if deemed necessary.
- The disabled parking to the front of the building was removed as an amendment as it was implied there was a covenant in place that prevented it. However, it has been proven that no such covenant exists and disabled parking could occur in the locations previously shown.
- The owner of the surrounding land has indicated that overflow parking for the 12 concert events could occur on land to the north of the access, between Bury Road and the farm building, if deemed necessary.
- Paragraph 20 fails to advise that the County Council's objection to the scheme has now been removed.
- Paragraph 44 refers to the workshop use. This is occupied by the Cambridge Woodwind Makers Trust (a charity that rents space from the ACE Foundation) in order to provide courses that help fulfil ACE's objectives. Both parties work closely together on the courses and events calendar and there would therefore be no competing requirements for parking space. The workshop use would also occur during the day when the parking demand for the ACE building will be more limited.
- It has been requested that the description be amended to a community study centre for arts and music (use class D1) together with the use of the identified performance spaces for concert use for no more than 12 times a year. Proposed condition 18 suggests the performance spaces can only be used 12 times a year, rather than be used for these bigger events only 12 times a year. Can this be amended?
- Condition 18 seems to limit the use of the centre to a study centre. While there will be some educational courses where people are studying, there are also to be practical courses where people are playing music or preparing art. Can the word study be removed from this condition?

## **Planning Comments**

With regards to the Ecology Officer's comments, proposed condition no. 20 of the recommendation covers this issue.

With regards to the agent's query regarding the description, it is recommended in paragraph 36 of the report that this be altered to 'community study centre for arts and music (use class D1)' as proposed by the applicant's agent.

Officers can confirm that the Parish Council has recommended approval, as set out in paragraph 13 of the report. However, it was considered that there were sufficient concerns expressed in the Parish Council's response that the application should be

referred to Committee as requested. Additionally, with regards to the wording of paragraph 20, it is confirmed that the Local Highways Authority has removed its objection to the scheme, as advised elsewhere in the report.

With regards to the issue of parking to the front of the building, the intention has always been to ensure parking is contained within the courtyard area in order to minimise the impact of the development upon the openness of the Green Belt. Officers would not wish to encourage any change that would bring parking back to more a more visible and prominent location at the front of the buildings.

The applicant's agent has expressed concern regarding the wording of proposed condition 18. The intention of this condition is to restrict concert events to no more than 12 per year, and it is therefore recommended that the wording of this condition be amended accordingly.

Officers recommend that an additional condition be applied should planning permission be granted. Condition 2 of the permission for the conversion of the granary to offices required first floor windows in the west elevation to be obscure glazed in order to protect the amenities of adjoining residents. As the current application seeks to use the first floor of this building as performance space, rather than the previously consented offices, this condition would no longer be enforceable against the new use. It is therefore recommended that the requirement for these windows to be obscure glazed be added should permission be granted for the proposal.

**Contact Officer:** Lorraine Casey – Senior Planning Officer  
Telephone: (01954) 713251