

## SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

---

**REPORT TO:** Development and Conservation Control Committee 13<sup>th</sup> May 2005  
**AUTHOR/S:** Director of Development Services

---

**S/0393/05/F - Sawston**  
**Use of Building for Car Showroom at Units 7-9 South Cambridge Business Park (Part of Dales Manor Business Park) for Calne Vehicle Management Ltd**

**Recommendation: Approval**  
**Date for determination: 26<sup>th</sup> April 2005**

### Site and Proposal

1. The application relates to a vacant row of 3 newly completed business units (totalling 441 square metres) on the South Cambridge Business Park (Part of Dales Manor Business Park) on the north side of Babraham Road. The surrounding newly constructed units are also currently vacant.
2. This full application, registered on the 1<sup>st</sup> March 2005, proposes the use of the units as a car showroom. No external alterations to the building are proposed.
3. Letters submitted in support of the application state that:
  - The reason for the application is the aspiration of the applicant, who currently has premises on the Copley Hill Business Park near Wandlebury, to expand his successful vehicle sales and repair business;
  - Sales are through word of mouth, advertisements and through the internet rather than by attracting passing trade or by having a road frontage presence;
  - 3 to 4 people would be employed;
  - The external appearance of the unit would remain as existing and the applicant would accept conditions to ensure that no car repairs are undertaken on the site; no vehicles are displayed for sale outside the unit; no HGV/low-loaders deliver vehicles to the site at any time; and no deliveries to, or despatches from, the site take place outside the hours of 0730-1930 Monday to Saturday; and
  - The nature of the business coupled with such conditions is likely to mean that there is likely to be less activity within this unit than others on the Business Park.

### Planning History

4. Planning permission and reserved matters consent for the erection of, and B1 (Business) use of, the units was granted under references **S/0945/99/O**, **S/1711/03/RM** and **S/1961/04/F**.

### Planning Policy

5. Local Plan 2004 **Policy SH7** states that proposals involving the sale of motor vehicles will not be permitted in villages where they would create environmental problems by

virtue of traffic generation, noise, smell or vehicle parking. **Paragraph 6.21** of the Local Plan 2004 states where such a use is already creating such difficulties which can't be resolved by development/redevelopment proposals, they will be encouraged to move to designated or established industrial estates.

6. Local Plan 2004 **Policy Sawston 3** reflects local concerns about the use of Babraham Road by industrial traffic by stating that, within the Babraham Road Industrial Estates, the expansion of existing firms within their existing sites, and the change of use of existing premises to office and/or research use will be permitted where no significant increase in heavy vehicle traffic will arise as a result. **Paragraph 81.21** states that retail uses will not be permitted on the Babraham Road Industrial Estate.

### **Consultation**

7. **Sawston Parish Council** recommends refusal stating:
  - Site not designated for retail.
  - More large vehicles and more staff along already busy roads.
8. **Chief Environmental Health Officer** recommends conditions to be attached to any approval.

### **Representations**

9. None received.

### **Planning Comments – Key Issues**

10. The main issue in relation to this application is whether this site is suitable for the proposed use having regard to the Local Plan.
11. Whilst it is a retail use of sorts, because of their particular characteristics, car showrooms are categorised as a sui generis use rather than an A1 (retail) use. The agent has also sought to make it clear that the applicant does not operate like many of the large car showroom operators and would not seek to attract passing trade. Externally, the units would also continue to look like any other unit on the estate. Paragraph 81.21 of the Local Plan seeks to resist retail outlets and retail warehouses on the estate that are more appropriately located on High Streets/within the centre of villages, rather than the proposed type of use. Indeed, paragraph 6.21 of the Local Plan acknowledges that car showrooms are sometimes most appropriately located on industrial estates.
12. Subject to safeguarding conditions (to reflect those attached to the B1 permission of the site as amended to reflect the particulars of the proposal) and the receipt of a unilateral undertaking to ensure that no deliveries of vehicles to, and collection of vehicles from, the site are made by HGVs or low-loaders, I consider that the Parish Council's concerns would be largely overcome and consider that this is an appropriate location for the proposed use.
13. With regard to the Parish Council's concern about more staff using already busy roads, it is likely that the proposed use would in fact employ less people than the previously approved B1 (Business) use of the units. If anything, I might be concerned that the proposed use would not provide enough employment opportunities.

However, as Sawston is relatively well provided for in terms of employment opportunities, I do not consider that this would be reason to refuse the application.

### **Recommendation**

14. Approval, subject to the prior receipt of a unilateral undertaking to ensure that no deliveries of vehicles to, and collection of vehicles from, the site are made by HGVs or low-loaders and the following conditions:
  1. Standard Condition A – Time limited permission (RCA);
  2. No cars shall be displayed for sale on the site outside of the building (RC To protect the character of the area);
  3. No MOTs, repairs to or servicing of vehicles shall be carried out on the site (RC To protect the character of the area and the amenity of occupiers of neighbouring units);
  4. Details of the location, type, noise characteristics and attenuation proposals for 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 buildings but excluding office equipment and vehicles and the location of the outlet from the buildings 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 (RC To ensure that plant and equipment is not visually intrusive and to protect the amenities of occupiers of neighbouring properties);
  5. No deliveries shall be taken at or dispatched from the site outside the hours of 07.30 to 19.30 Mondays to Saturdays (RC To protect the amenity of local residents in respect to noise and disturbance)

### **Informatives**

#### **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: None
  - South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004: SH7 (Vehicle Sales)
2. The development proposal is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations which have been raised during the consultation exercise: designation of the site; and use of local roads.

**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
- Planning file Ref: S/0945/99/O, S/1711/03/RM, S/1961/04/F and S/0393/05/F.

**Contact Officer:** Andrew Moffat – Area Planning Officer  
Telephone: (01954) 713169