

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

3 June 2015

AUTHOR/S: Planning and New Communities Director

Application Number: S/1013/15/FL

Parish(es): Cottenham

Proposal: Extension to Local Authority Depot to provide Additional Secure Vehicle Parking Area and Open Storage and Extension to Existing Office/ Welfare Building

Site address: Cambridge Waste Management Park, Ely Road, Waterbeach

Applicant(s): Alboro Development Limited

Recommendation: Approval

Key material considerations: Countryside
Highway Safety
Biodiversity
Flood Risk

Committee Site Visit: No.

Departure Application: Yes

Presenting Officer: Karen Pell-Coggins

Application brought to Committee because: The District Council rents the site from the applicants.

Date by which decision due: 14 July 2014

Planning History

1. **S/1306/12/FL** - Local Authority Depot including Secure Compound for Vehicle Parking Area with Associated Open Storage and Office Building - Approved

Planning Policies

2. **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012**
3. **South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF) Development Control Policies DPD, adopted July 2007**
DP/1 Sustainable Development
DP/2 Design of New Development

DP/3 Development Criteria
DP/7 Development Frameworks
ET/5 Development for the Expansion of Firms
NE/4 Landscape Character Areas
NE/6 Biodiversity
NE/7 Sites of Biodiversity or Geological Importance
NE/11 Flood Risk
NE/14 Lighting Proposals
NE/15 Noise Pollution
CH/2 Archaeological Sites
TR/1 Planning for More Sustainable Travel
TR/2 Car and Cycle Parking Standards
TR/3 Mitigating Travel Impact

4. **Submission Local Plan (March 2014)**

S/3 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
S/7 Development Frameworks
E/16 Expansion of Existing Businesses in the Countryside
HQ/1 Design Principles
NH/2 Protecting and Enhancing Landscape Character
NH/4 Biodiversity
NH/5 Sites of Biodiversity or Geological Importance
NH/14 Heritage Assets
CC/9 Managing Flood Risk
SC/10 Lighting Proposals
SC/11 Noise Pollution
SC/12 Contaminated Land
TI/2 Planning for Sustainable Travel
TI/3 Parking Provision

5. **South Cambridgeshire LDF Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD):**

Landscape in New Developments SPD - Adopted March 2010
Biodiversity SPD - Adopted July 2009
District Design Guide SPD - Adopted March 2010

6. **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy DPD 2011**

CS26 Mineral Safeguarding Areas

7. **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Site Specific Policies
DPD 2012**

M1A Cottenham (Sand and Gravel)
W1K Waterbeach (Waste Management Park)
W2B Cottenham (Landfill Site)

Consultations

8. **Cottenham Parish Council** - Comments are awaited.

9. **Landbeach Parish Council** - Has no objections.

10. **Waterbeach Parish Council** - Comments are awaited.

11. **Local Highways Authority** - Comments that the proposal would not have a significant impact upon the public highway provided a condition is attached to any consent to secure on-site parking and turning.

12. **County Council Transport Assessment Team** - Requests further information in relation to existing traffic movements and proposed trip generation details including modes of travel and times of arrival and departure from the site, capacity assessments of the roundabout and junction on the A10, levels of vehicle parking on the site and alternative means of travel to the site to be able to fully assess the transport impact of the development.
13. **Historic England** - Has no objections due to the bund screening and comments that the development is an area subject to development, quarrying and landscaping and the development is unlikely to have an adverse impact upon the significance of the Scheduled Ancient Monument.
14. **County Council Historic Environment Team** - Has no objections and comments that archaeological works are not necessary as the development would be located on previously disturbed ground and it is unlikely that significant archaeological features will survive.
15. **Environment Agency** - Comments are awaited.
16. **Waterbeach Level Internal Drainage Board** - Comments are awaited.
17. **Land Drainage Manager** - Comments are awaited.
18. **Contaminated Land Officer** - Has no objections but recommends a condition in relation to a contamination investigation due to the previous use of the site for landfill and factory works.
19. **Environmental Health Officer** - Has no objections.
20. **Ecology Officer** - Comments that the site is adjacent to an area that holds a Great Crested Newt population. However, a permanent amphibian fence has been erected to prevent animals from coming to harm within the wider area. Subject to the fence being retained and in a good condition, there is no reason to disagree with the ecology report submitted with the application. Welcomes the meadow planting and the specific seed mix that was previously agreed but is concerned that
21. **Landscape Design Officer** - Comments that the proposed development would not have a detrimental impact upon the landscape character, views and visual receptors. However, the proposed meadow planting enhancement measures are insufficient due to the proximity to the adjacent woodland. Suggests alternative landscape measures such as trees to expand the network of semi-natural habitats as a condition of any consent.
22. **Trees and Landscapes Officer** - Comments that the trees within the adjacent County Wildlife Site would not be affected by the floodlighting.
23. **County Council Minerals and Waste Team** - Comments are awaited.

Representations

24. None received.

Planning Comments

25. The key issues to consider in the determination of this application relate to the principle of the development and the impacts of the development upon the character and appearance of the countryside, highway safety, contamination, drainage, flood risk, ecology, landscaping and archaeology.

Site and Surroundings

26. The site is located on the southern section of the Cambridge Waste Management Park that is situated outside of any village framework and within the countryside. It lies the north west of the A10 (Cambridge to Ely Road) and former Dickerson Industrial Estate, north of the Cambridge Research Park and villages of Waterbeach and Landbeach, east of the village of Cottenham and south west of the hamlet of Chittering.
27. The site measures approximately 1 hectare in area and currently comprises the existing District Council Environmental Services depot. It consists of a hard surfaced compound for the parking of refuse vehicles and open storage for associated plant and equipment along with a single storey office/welfare building and staff parking spaces. A 2.4 high metal palisade fence bounds the site. Six floodlights are situated on the perimeter. Access to the site is via the Amey Cespa roundabout on the A10 to the north for heavy vehicles and via the internal access road through the industrial estate to the east for light vehicles. The hours of operation are 06.00 to 18.00 Mondays to Saturdays.
28. The site is situated within Flood Zone 1 (low risk) and 2 (medium risk). A number of watercourses and water bodies surround the site. The Car Dyke Scheduled Ancient Monument is situated in close proximity to the west of the site and the Beach Ditch and Landbeach Pitts Willow Wood County Wildlife Sites are situated in close proximity to the south and south west of the site.

Proposal

29. This full planning application, received on 14 April 2014, proposes the extension of the existing District Council depot to accommodate the City Council Council's refuse vehicles to provide a shared waste service to serve both administrative areas within a single management team.
30. The plans seek an extension of 3500 square metres to the hard surfaced compound to provide an additional 20 parking spaces for refuse vehicles, 76 parking spaces for employees vehicles and an open storage area for equipment. The plans also include an extension of 95 square metres to the southern side of the existing office/welfare building to provide improved facilities for the additional drivers and crew, the repositioning of the existing boundary fence to enclose the new compound and the repositioning of one flood light and erection of two new floodlights to the new boundary. The access arrangements would remain as existing.

Principle of Development

31. The site is located outside of any village framework and in the countryside. It does not fall within an Established Employment Area in the Countryside and the proposed use is not related to agriculture, horticulture, forestry, outdoor recreation or other uses which need to be located in the countryside. The development would therefore be contrary to Policy DP/7 of the adopted LDF and Policy S/8 of the emerging Local Plan.

32. The development would represent the consolidation of a non-conforming use in terms of its location in the countryside a significant distance away from existing settlements. The development would not therefore comply with Policy ET/5 of the adopted LDF.
33. However, the proposal would comprise the expansion of an existing firm that has been in the Cambridge area for a significant period of time with a viable business, the user is named, the development is of scale appropriate to its location, there would be no adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the countryside and there would not be a significant increase in the amount or different nature of traffic generated. The development therefore meets the tests of Policy E/16 of the emerging Local Plan.
34. Two representations that support the emerging policy and two representations that object to the emerging policy have been received. The support for the policy is because it offers appropriate encouragement for the sustainable growth of existing businesses in rural areas. The objections to the policy is because it is weaker than the existing due to the original operation of the business for 5 years being reduced to 2 years and the removal of the restriction on the scales of development.
35. Given the current stage of the emerging Local Plan, the limited number and nature of the objections received in relation to this emerging policy and the good degree of consistency with the NPPF, some weight can be attached to Policy E/16.
36. Paragraph 28 of the NPPF supports economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development. It states that local plans should support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well designed new buildings.
37. The proposal would result in a shared refuse service between South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council. This would have significant financial benefits and operational benefits in the form of more efficient waste collection rounds that would reduce HGV miles and heavy traffic associated with the existing City Council depot in Mill Road being relocated away from the city centre so that all journeys would begin and end at the Cambridge Waste Management Park.
38. Due to the emerging Local Plan policy and NPPF being material considerations in the decision making process, that the adopted policy is out of date and the special circumstances above, no objections are therefore raised to the principle of the development. The application has been advertised as a departure.

Character and Appearance of the Countryside

39. Whilst it is acknowledged that the development would result in some loss of openness and rural character, this would have a minimal impact upon the landscape character of the area as the site is located within an existing industrial complex that is not visible from any public viewpoints surrounding the site. The development is not therefore considered to adversely affect the character and appearance of the countryside.

Setting of Scheduled Ancient Monument and Archaeology

40. The development would be located 200 metres to the east of the Car Dyke Scheduled Ancient Monument. As a result of the existing industrial complex and bund that screens the monument from the site, the development is not considered to

damage the setting of this designated historic asset. The proposal would not harm any significant features of archaeological interest.

Highway Safety

41. The Transport Assessment submitted with the application states that the proposal would not result in an increase in traffic generation from heavy vehicles accessing the site via the roundabout on the A10 as this already exists due to Cambridge City Council's refuse vehicles disposing of the waste collected upon the rounds at the Cambridge Waste Management Park before returning to the existing city depot for overnight storage. The only change would be the times of access to the Cambridge Waste Management Park which would alter from entry and exit in the afternoon to exit in the morning and entry in the afternoon. Further information is required to be able to make an assessment of the impact upon highway safety and the comments of the County Council Transport Assessment Team would be sought.
42. The proposal would, however, result in an increase in traffic generation from light vehicles accessing the site via the internal access road through the former Dickerson Industrial Estate and on to the A10 as a number of additional employees would be based at the depot. This would lead to additional traffic entering the site in the morning and exiting the site in the afternoon. Further information is required to be able to make an evaluation of the impact upon highway safety and the comments of the County Council Transport Assessment Team would be sought.

Parking

43. The depot currently has 134 employees and 74 vehicle parking spaces. The proposal would result in an additional 60 employees and 79 parking spaces. This would lead to a total of 194 employees and 149 parking spaces. Further information is required on the need for this level of vehicle parking on site and the comments of the County Council Transport Assessment Team would be sought.
44. The Cambridge City Council Employee Travel Plan 2008 has been submitted with the application to demonstrate that there is a package of measures in place to promote sustainable travel and decrease the method of travel by the private motor vehicle. However, it is not up-to-date and is not relevant to this application as it references sites in the city. Further information is required to make an evaluation on the alternative modes of transport available and the comments of the County Council Transport Assessment Team would be sought. A condition would need to be attached to any consent to secure a full travel plan related to this particular site.

Ecology

45. The development would not adversely affect nearby habitats for protected species such as Great Crested Newts due to the presence of an amphibian fence. The provision of meadow planting would enhance the biodiversity of the site.

Trees and Landscaping

46. The proposal would not result in the loss of any trees or landscaping that is important to the visual amenity of the area or the features of the adjacent County Wildlife Site. However, biodiversity enhancement measures above meadow planting are required to expand the range of semi-natural habitats on the site. This would be a condition of any consent.

Flood Risk and Drainage

47. The site lies within Flood Zone 1 (low risk). The Flood Risk Assessment submitted with the application states site levels would be above the 1 in 100 year flood level plus climate change and that that surface water would be discharged to the existing water treatment lagoon that has adequate capacity for the storage of run off. However, comments from the Environment Agency and Drainage Board are awaited to determine the impact of the development upon flood risk and drainage.

Contamination

48. An investigation into contamination is required as a result of the previous use of the site to ensure that the development would not cause a risk to human health or groundwater. This would be a condition of any consent unless the information is submitted prior to the determination of the application and agreed by the Contaminated Land Officer and Environment Agency.

Other Matters

49. The site lies close to allocated mineral and waste sites. The comments of the County Council Planning Team are awaited to determine the impact of the development upon these areas.
50. The development is not considered to harm the amenities of neighbours given the surrounding land uses.

Recommendation

51. It is recommended that the planning committee grant officer delegated powers to approve the application subject to the outstanding comments and any conditions required by statutory consultees together with the following conditions: -
- a) The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.
(Reason - To ensure that consideration of any future application for development in the area will not be prejudiced by permissions for development, which have not been acted upon.)
 - b) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: - Drawing numbers CP/ADL/WCVC/01, 15:021-2 Revision C, 15:021-4 Revision A and 15:021-5.
(Reason - To facilitate any future application to the Local Planning Authority under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
 - c) No development shall be occupied until full details of soft landscape works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include indications of all existing trees and hedgerows on the land and details of any to be retained, together with measures for their protection in the course of development. The details shall also include specification of all proposed trees, hedges and shrub planting, which shall include details of species, density and size of stock.
(Reason - To ensure the development is satisfactorily assimilated into the area and enhances biodiversity in accordance with Policies DP/2 and NE/6 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

- d) All soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. The works shall be carried out prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with a programme agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. If within a period of five years from the date of the planting, or replacement planting, any tree or plant is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies, another tree or plant of the same species and size as that originally planted shall be planted at the same place, unless the Local Planning Authority gives its written consent to any variation.

(Reason - To ensure the development is satisfactorily assimilated into the area and enhances biodiversity in accordance with Policies DP/2 and NE/6 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

- e) No development approved by this permission shall be commenced, unless otherwise agreed, until:

- i) The application site has been subject to a detailed scheme for the investigation and recording of contamination and remediation objectives have been determined through risk assessment and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- ii) Detailed proposals for the removal, containment or otherwise rendering harmless any contamination (the Remediation method statement) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- iii) The works specified in the remediation method statement have been completed, and a Verification report submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, in accordance with the approved scheme.
- iv) If, during remediation works, any contamination is identified that has not been considered in the remediation method statement, then remediation proposals for this material should be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- v) The application site has been subject to an appropriate scheme for the investigation and monitoring of ground gas.
- vi) Where required, detailed proposals for the mitigation or otherwise rendering harmless of any ground gas have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

(Reason - To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other offsite receptors in accordance with Policy DP/1 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

- f) The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until a full Travel Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Plan shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

(Reason - To reduce car dependency and to promote alternative modes of travel in accordance with Policy TR/3 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

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

- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies DPD 2007

- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan Submission March 2014
- South Cambridgeshire Supplementary Planning Documents
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy DPD 2011
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Site Specific Proposals 2012
- National Planning Policy Framework 2012
- Planning File References S/1013/15/FL and S/1306/12/FL

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