

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Development and Conservation Control Committee

6th July 2005

AUTHOR/S: Director of Development Services

S/1004/05/F - Oakington

Use of Land and Building for Food Preparation (Class B1(c)) and Storage and Distribution (Class B8) (Part Retrospective) at Fareacres Farm, Dry Drayton Road for J.P. Nash, T.J. Nash and E. Nash

Recommendation: Approval

Date for Determination: 18th July 2005

Site and Proposal

1. The site, measuring approximately 0.26 hectares (0.65 acres), comprises of a small group of former agricultural buildings, partially converted and used by a builders firm (storage), catering business (preparing food) and the owners business (storage and distribution of pre-prepared food). The buildings are single storey and have been re-clad with timber boarding and re-roofed with corrugated sheeting. The site has its access from off Dry Drayton Road. The built area of the site is well screened from the surrounding area by hedges to the southwest boundary with an adjacent field and to the frontage and a row of mature trees to the northeast boundary with the Avicentre (a pet and accessories supplies centre) at Glenthorne Farm. The site lies in an area identified by the Environment Agency as falling within Flood Zone 2, having a low to medium flood risk.
2. This full planning application, received on 23rd May 2005, seeks permission for the change of use of the barns. The buildings comprise four units, plus three stores at the southern-most end of the building, which already benefit from planning permission for storage in association with a builders yard. The remainder of the floorspace, for which planning permission is now sought, is divided as follows:
 - Unit 1 - 226m² (B1(c)) (retrospective)
 - Unit 2 - 112 m² (B1(c))
 - Unit 3 - 120 m² (B8) (retrospective)
 - Unit 4 - 105 (B1(c)) (retrospective)

Planning History

3. **S/1178/82/F** gave planning permission for a residential caravan and intensive calf rearing building on the site. Subsequent planning applications have renewed the temporary permission for a mobile home to the front of the site.
4. A number of planning applications for a permanent dwelling to the front of the site have been refused.
5. Relevant to this planning application is the approval of **S/1519/02/F** for change of use site and buildings from agricultural to contractors yard (Classes B1(c) and B8) (part retrospective).

6. Planning application **S/0377/05/F** was an earlier submission of the current proposals for use of land and buildings for food preparation (Class B1(c)) and storage and distribution (Class B8) (part retrospective), which was withdrawn in order for the applicant to prepare a Flood Risk Assessment.

Planning Policy

7. **Policy P1/2 ‘Environmental Restrictions on Development’** of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 (“Structure Plan”) states development in the countryside will be restricted unless the proposals can be demonstrated to be essential in a particular rural location; where there is an unacceptable risk to the quality of ground or surface water and; where there could be damage, destruction or loss to areas that should be retained for their biodiversity, historic, archaeological, architectural and recreational value.
8. **Policies 9/2a** of the Structure Plan and **Policy GB2** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 (“Local Plan”) identify the purpose of the Green Belt and limits change of use in rural areas to those ‘appropriate to a rural area’. ‘Appropriate development’ includes uses of land that ‘preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with Green Belt purposes’.
9. **Policy EM10 ‘Conversions of Rural Buildings and Future Extensions’** of the Local Plan, allows the change of use of rural buildings outside of village frameworks where the use will not materially change the existing character or impact of the building, safe and satisfactory vehicular access with car parking and turning within the site can be provided and the scale and frequency of traffic generated can be accommodated within the road system without undue adverse effects.
10. **Policy TP1 ‘Planning for More Sustainable Travel’** of the Local Plan seeks to promote sustainable travel and as such planning permission will only be granted where small-scale increases in travel demands will result, unless satisfactory measures to increase accessibility are included.
11. **Policy CS5 (Flood Protection)** of the Local Plan restricts development where it is likely to increase the risk of flooding unless it can be demonstrated that the effects can be overcome by appropriate alleviation and mitigation measures. This requirement is also found in **Policy 6/3 (Flood Defence)** of the Structure Plan.

Consultations

12. **Oakington Parish Council** recommends refusal of the proposals, commenting:

“The Parish is strongly opposed to this development and certainly does not accept that it can be classified as “brownfield”. The fact of the matter is that the land is in the Green Belt and surely that means only activities (such as agricultural, horticultural, schools, hospitals) are permitted, and since none of these is involved that should mean that this application should be rejected, automatically.

We would also re-iterate that the Parish Council has fought long and hard for many years to prevent the inappropriate development of this site on Green Belt land, and it was us who drew the attention of SCDC to the fact that there appeared to be business activity on this site that did not have the necessary planning permission.”

13. The **Environment Agency** is satisfied with the Flood Risk Assessment and recommends conditioning a scheme of pollution control and informatives.
14. The comments of the **Local Highway Authority** will be reported verbally to the Committee.

Representations

15. No representations on this application have been received. The date by which representations should be submitted expires on 26th June 2005.

Planning Comments - Key Issues

16. The key issues in considering this application are the impact on the Green Belt, flood risk and highways.

Green Belt

17. The proposed change of use is appropriate development, as defined by policy GB2 of the Local Plan. The proposal is to re-use existing buildings that are no longer required for agricultural purposes. The proposed uses will not require extensions to the buildings and car parking and turning areas are contained within the main area of the site without impacting on the openness or purpose of the Green Belt. The buildings are in good structural condition. The applicant has re-clad most of the buildings with timber. However this is in keeping with the rural character of the area. The proposals provide small business units that are appropriate rural diversification activities. No harm to the Green Belt will result from the change of use.

Flood Risk

18. The Environment Agency is satisfied that the change of use will not increase flood risk and seek only a condition in relation to pollution control.

Highways

19. The previous planning permission for use of the site as a building contractor's yard has led to the access junction with Dry Drayton Road being upgraded. There is ample car parking and turning within the main built area of the site, without impacting on the surroundings.

Recommendation

20. Subject to no objections being received from the Local Highways Authority, it is recommended that the application be approved with the following conditions:
 1. Standard Condition A - Time limited permission (Reason A);
 2. Sc5a - Details of materials for external walls and roofs (Rc5a(ii));
 3. Prior to the commencement of any development, a scheme for the provision and implementation of pollution control, which shall include foul and surface water drainage, shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. The works/scheme shall be constructed and completed in accordance with the approved plans.
Reason: To prevent the increased risk of pollution to the water environment.

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: Policy 1/2** (Environmental Restrictions on Development), **Policy 6/3** (Flood Defence) and **Policy 9/2a** (Green Belt).
- **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004: GB2** (Green Belt), **EM10** (Conversions of Rural Buildings and Future Extensions), **TP1** (Planning for More Sustainable Travel) and **CS5** (Flood Protection).

2. The development is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations which have been raised during the consultation exercise:

- Green Belt
- Flood risk
- Pollution
- Highway safety

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 Refs. S/1004/05/F, S/1178/02/F, S/1519/02/F and S/0377/05/F

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