

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Development and Conservation Control Committee 5th October 2005
AUTHOR/S: Director of Development Services

S/1377/05/F – Pampisford
Erection of Building (Class B1) Together With New and Reconfigured Car Parking and Landscaping at London Road for Padrino Properties Ltd

Recommendation: Approval
Date for determination: 11th October 2005 (Major Application)

Site and Proposal

1. The site, which extends to 0.6 hectares/1.4 acres, is gently undulating, grassed and rises gently to the southwest. There is a 2m high hawthorn hedge on a low bank along the London Road/east frontage, 6-8m high conifers along the southern boundary with a two-storey house with a blank gable facing the site and a veterinary surgery beyond, a 1.2-1.5m high bank along the southwest/bypass boundary. The bypass to the west is set down below the level of the site. A single storey and two-storey business units lie to the north.
2. This full application, received on the 12th July 2005, proposes the erection of a 42m x 19m approx. x 9.5m high to top of roof/10.6m high to top of plant roof (1709 square metres of gross external floor area) B1 (Business) building together with new and reconfigured car parking (77 spaces in total, 57 spaces for the proposed building and 20 spaces for the adjacent existing building) and landscaping. Cycle parking is also proposed. The building would be faced with composite panels with feature terracotta panels and would have an aluminium standing seam roof. The proposed building would be 21m from the southern boundary and 15m from the site's west/bypass boundary. The existing access onto London Road would serve the development.

Recent Planning History

3. Outline planning permission for a B1(a) and (b) building on the site, conditioned to be no higher than the height of the adjacent two-storey building, was granted in 1997 under planning reference **S/0970/96/O** and renewed in 1999 under reference **S/1716/99/O**.
4. Planning permission was refused in January 2001 under planning reference **S/2188/00/F** for the erection of a 45m x 18.5m x 9m high to top of roof/10m to top of plant room B1 building on the site. The proposed building was 12m from the southern boundary and 8m from the bypass boundary. The application was refused for the following reason:

“The application site lies within the Pampisford village framework, on a narrow wedge of land that projects into the countryside and the Cambridge Green Belt and designated as an Area of Best Landscape.”

The proposed development, by reason of the size, height and mass of the building and its proximity to site boundaries, would be highly prominent and would have a detrimental impact on the rural and open character of the area, contrary to Policies SP12/10 of the Approved Structure Plan 1995 and H6 and E8 of the Approved South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 1993 (Policies SE14 and EM7 of the Deposit Local Plan)”

5. A subsequent application, submitted under reference **S/0490/01/F**, for the erection of a 36m x 19.5m x 8.6m to top of roof/9.7m to top of plant room B1 building located 27m from the site's southern boundary and 14m from the bypass boundary was approved in June 2001.

Planning Policy

6. Structure Plan 2003 **Policy P1/3** requires a high standard of design for all new development and requires new development to be integrated with adjoining landscapes.
7. Structure Plan 2003 **Policies P2/2, P2/6 and P9/7** relate to the general location of employment, the rural economy and the selective management of employment development respectively.
8. Local Plan 2004 **Policy SE9** requires development on the edge of villages to be sympathetically designed and landscaped to minimise the impact on the countryside.
9. Local Plan **Policy EM3** sets out the limitations on the occupancy of new business premises in the District.
10. Local Plan 2004 **Policy EM6** states that, within village frameworks, planning permission will be granted for small-scale development (small-scale being considered to be development for those who employ 25 people or less) in classes B1 – B8 provided that there would be no adverse impact on residential amenity, traffic conditions, village character and other environmental factors; and the development would contribute to a greater range of local employment opportunities, especially for the semi-skilled and unskilled, or where initial development is dependent on the use of locally-based skills and expertise.
11. Local Plan 2004 **Policy TP1** states that the Council will seek, through its decisions on planning applications, to promote more sustainable transport choices and to reduce the need to travel, especially by car, by amongst other things, requiring the preparation of Green Travel Plans and by restricting car parking to a maximum of 1 space per 25 square metres of gross floor space.

Consultations

12. **Pampisford Parish Council** recommends refusal stating “This is a speculative application so planning policy EM3 cannot apply as we don't know the occupant. The conclusions in the applicant's letter can only be statements of opinion, not fact. This is a resubmission of an earlier plan S/0490/01/F. We note the applicant has complied with the request to consider landscaping. However, a green commuter plan does not appear to be submitted. More importantly, the building size for the new application is 24% larger than the earlier application (previous height 8.64m, now projected as 10.52m). This will have a detrimental effect on the rural character of the area and the residential amenity of Mill Farm House and the veterinary surgery. We consider the additional size out of keeping with the village.”

13. **Landscape Design Officer** states that it would be preferable if the long lines of car parking were broken up and states that the leylandii along the southern boundary, whilst not the most desirable screen, is effective. She is concerned about the lack of high screening and requests that an element of large stock trees be included (e.g. 12-14 ash and cherry trees).
14. **Chief Environmental Health Officer** recommends conditions and informatives to be attached to any approval.
15. **Environment Agency** raises no objections subject to the imposition of conditions relating to ground contamination investigation, assessment and remediation, surface water drainage, pollution control and foul water drainage. It also makes advisory comments.
16. **County Archaeology Office** consider it unlikely that advancement of this proposal would result in any significant impact upon the archaeological record and has no further comment to make.
17. **Cambs Fire & Rescue Service** asks that adequate provision be made for fire hydrants by way of S.106 Agreement or condition attached to any permission.
18. **Local Highway Authority** was consulted but no comments had been received at the time this report was compiled. Any comments received will be reported verbally.

Representations

19. Occupiers of Mill Farm House, Mill Lane, object on the grounds of the prominence of the development in the landscape due to its height and length.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

20. The main issues in relation to this application are the affect of the development on the character and appearance of the area/surrounding countryside; highway matters/parking; and the amenity of neighbours.
21. Permission has been granted for a 1432 square metre, 8.6m high to top of roof/9.7m high to top of plant room B1 building on the site under reference S/0490/01/F.
22. The currently proposed building is 6 metres longer, 0.5 metres narrower and 0.9 metres higher than the approved scheme. I have no objections to the increase in length of the building in terms of its visual impact. However, whilst the submitted 'Visual Impact Assessment' concludes that the development would not significantly affect the character and quality of the local landscape setting or cause significant disturbance to any identified visual receptors, I consider that the 0.9 metre high increase in height of the building would make it unduly conspicuous. In response to the comments of the Landscape Design Officer, I also consider that the line of parking spaces along the eastern boundary should be broken up by trees and some large stock trees should be planted, particularly along the western boundary. I conveyed these views to the agent who, having discussed the issues with the applicant, will be submitting amended plans showing the height of the building reduced to no higher than the scheme approved under reference 0490/01/F and the layout and landscaping amended to take account of the Landscape Design Officer's comments. Subject to the receipt of such plans, I consider the proposal to be acceptable in terms of the visual impact on the area and surrounding countryside.

23. Subject to no objections being raised to the proposal by the Local Highway Authority, the existing access is considered to be capable of accommodating the additional traffic that would be generated by the development and the proposed parking provision, which equates to 1 space per 25 square metres of floorspace, is acceptable. Conditions relating to a Green Commuter Plan and details of the covered secure cycle storage are recommended.
24. Subject to safeguarding conditions to reflect those attached to planning permission S/0490/01/F, I do not consider that the proposal would unduly affect the amenity of neighbours.
25. The Parish Council states that this is a speculative application so planning policy EM3 cannot apply. Local Plan Policy EM3 covers occasions when first occupiers are known and when they are not, particularly as the Local Planning Authority can rarely stipulate that a particular company occupies a building and then can only stipulate the first occupier. A condition to reflect the local user limitations set out in Policy EM3 is recommended.

Recommendation

26. Subject to the receipt of amended plans showing the height of the building reduced to no higher than the scheme approved under reference 0490/01/F, the layout amended to show the line of parking spaces along the eastern boundary broken up by trees and confirmation that some larger stock trees than indicated on the submitted Landscape Details Plan would be used:

Approval

1. Standard Condition A – Time limited permission (Reason A)
2. SC5a – Samples of materials for external walls and roofs (Rc5aii)
3. SC51 – Landscaping (Rc51)
4. SC52 – Implementation of landscaping (Rc52)
5. Sc60 – Details of boundary treatment (Rc60)
6. Standard fire hydrants condition and reason
7. Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 3 and Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any order revoking or re-enacting that order with or without modification) – for a period of ten years from the date of first occupation of the hereby permitted building, it shall only be used and occupied as follows:
 - (a) Offices
 - (i) normally to the provision of a local or sub-regional service or administrative facility principally for persons resident or organisations situated in the Cambridge area excluding national or regional headquarters offices: or
 - (ii) to a maximum floorspace of normally 300 square metres;

and/or

(b) Research and Development

- (i) to the provision for high technology research and development firms, or organisations, which can show a special need to be closely related to the Universities, or other established facilities or associated services in the Cambridge area;

and/or

- (c) Light Industry to a maximum planning unit size of 1,850 square metres of floorspace.

(Reason – To safeguard the policies of the Cambridgeshire Structure Plan 2003 and the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004, and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 Policy EM3 in particular, which limit employment development in the Cambridge area to uses that need to be located close to Cambridge)

6. Prior to the commencement of any development, a scheme for the provision and implementation of ground contamination investigation, assessment and remediation 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/specification at such time(s) as may be specified in the approved scheme (RC To prevent the increased risk of pollution to the water environment)
7. Prior to the commencement of any development, a scheme for the provision and implementation of foul 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/specification at such time(s) as may be specified in the approved scheme (RC To prevent the increased risk of pollution to the water environment)
8. Prior to the commencement of any development, a scheme for the provision and implementation of 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/specification at such time(s) as may be specified in the approved scheme (RC To ensure a satisfactory method of surface water drainage)
9. Prior to the commencement of any development, a scheme for the provision and implementation of pollution control to the water environment 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/specification at such time(s) as may be specified in the approved scheme (RC To prevent the increased risk of pollution to the water environment)
10. SC5 - Details of the covered secure cycle parking. (Reason – To encourage alternative means of travel to the site.)

11. The building shall not be occupied until a Green Commuter Plan has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority; implementation of the Plan shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details of the Plan (Reason – To encourage car sharing and the use of alternative means of travel to the site.)
12. Details of the location and type of 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 restrictions. (Reason - To protect the occupiers of adjoining buildings from the effect of odour, dust or fumes.)
13. Noise emitted from the use of plant, machinery on the site shall not exceed 50 dB (A) Laeq (fast) (one minute) between 08.00 and 18.00 hours Monday to Friday and 50 dB (A) Laeq (fast) (one minute) between 08.00 and 13.00 hours on Saturdays as measured adjacent to the south-east boundary. (Reason - To protect occupiers of adjoining buildings from noise.)
14. No power operated machinery shall be operated on the premises before 08.00 hours on weekdays and 08.00 hours on Saturdays nor after 18.00 hours on weekdays and 13.00 hours on Saturdays (nor at any time on Sundays or Bank Holidays) unless otherwise previously agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority in accordance with any agreed noise restrictions. (Reason - To protect occupiers of adjoining buildings from noise.)

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:** P1/3 (Sustainable Design in Built Development), P2/2 (General Location of Employment), P2/6 (Rural Economy) and P9/7 (Selective Management of Employment Development)
 - **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004:** SE9 (Village Edges), EM3 (Limitations on the Occupancy of New Premises in South Cambridgeshire), EM6 (New Employment Within Rural Growth Settlements) and TP1 (Planning for More Sustainable Travel)
2. The development is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations which have been raised during the consultation exercise: user(s) of the building; visual impact; need for green commuter plan; ground contamination investigation, assessment and remediation; surface water drainage; pollution control; foul water drainage; archaeology; and water for firefighting.

Informative

The applicant's attention is drawn to the contents of Cambs Fire & Rescue Service's 5.8.05 letter and the Environment Agency's 15.9.05 letter.

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/1377/05/F, S/0490/01/F, S/2188/00/F, S/1716/99/O & S/0970/96/O

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