

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Development and Conservation Control Committee 5th October 2005

AUTHOR/S: Director of Development Services

**S/6309/05/F - Cambourne
Temporary Haul Road and Excavation of Subsoil for Use Off-Site at Land East of Lake
4, Cambourne, for MCA Developments Ltd**

**Recommendation: Approval
Date for Determination: 28th October 2005**

Site and Proposal

1. The land is an area 40 metres by 200 metres on rising land being used for spoil disposal south of Lake 4, Cambourne. The extension to the permitted haul road runs between Lake 4 and Oakdene and turns south across the spoil disposal area to the application site. The area has already been stripped of topsoil which is stored nearby in accordance with the Cambourne construction code in the Design Guide.
2. The application, received 19th August 2005, proposes to excavate clay subsoil from an area 30 metres by 195 metres. The material would be transported by an approved contractor working for Cambridgeshire County Council to extend the slip roads from the A14 into the Cambridge Science Park. The applicant states that this operation will provide a supply of acceptable material for use within this area of Cambridgeshire and will avoid importing material from elsewhere. The excavation will be filled using spoil derived from the Cambourne development and this will begin as soon as the excavation works are completed. The contractor estimates that the extraction will take a total of approximately 10 weeks depending on the weather conditions.
3. In order to transport the material to the established haul road skirting Great Cambourne, an extension of the haul road over the permitted spoil disposal area would be routed to the south of Oakdene, a residential property set in an extensive garden.
4. The proposed area for extraction has been chosen to coincide with the area where archaeological investigation has already taken place. An area around the quarry would be used to store the topsoil, acting as a buffer to the nearby archaeologically sensitive areas and the structural landscape woodland which has been planted to the south of this application site.
5. The excavation would vary between 2 and 3 metres deep, averaging 2.5 metres. The sides would slope at 1 in 2.5. Part of the site is already fenced to protect the new woodland, and all of it lies within works areas from which the public are excluded by fencing and warning signs.
6. The excavation will begin at the lowest point allowing rainwater to run off to the west, assisted by the digging of shallow grips (ditches) to disperse any water onto the scrubland east of the lake, filtering it into the ground. The water-table has been found to be well below the depth of the proposed excavation and therefore would not be affected; thus no impact on the supply of water to the new trees would result.

7. The export of the projected 20,000 cubic metres of material would be effected in 35-40 loads per day over the ten week period, in accordance with a method statement regarding health and safety, hours of work to comply with the Cambourne construction code, speed limits, avoidance and clearance of spillages, and grading of slopes at the end of the working day.

Planning History

8. **S/1371/92/O** Outline permission for the new settlement of Cambourne granted in 1994, followed by the Master Plan and Design Guide in 1995.
9. **S/6169/02/RM** Reserved matters approval for spoil disposal in the area east of Crow Hill and south and east of Lake 4.
10. **S/6236/04/RM** Reserved matters approval for the temporary haul road south and east of Great Cambourne.
11. **S/6258/04/RM** Alteration in landform involving 36.75 hectares. Refused on the basis of the incongruous landform, lack of flood risk analysis, and impact on archaeology. This was an application for a greater height and extent of spoil disposal than the 2002 approval. An appeal has been submitted, with arguments relating to the lack of capacity for spoil disposal from the projected development of Cambourne, and the preference for retaining the spoil on site.

Planning Policy

12. **Cambourne 1 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 – Development in accordance with Cambourne Masterplan**
13. **Cambourne 2 – Development in accordance with Cambourne Design Guide**
14. **SE7 of the Local Plan – Development in accordance with Cambourne Masterplan and Design Guide**
15. **SE2 of the Local Plan – Development in Rural Growth Settlements**
16. **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003: P1/3 – Sustainable Design in Built Development**

Consultations

17. **Cambourne Parish Council** recommended refusal on the following grounds:
 - “1. Extent of traffic movements additional to the normal construction traffic associated with site construction.
 2. Inadequate provision to safeguard roads. Lorries departing site should have passed through a wheel washing facility to minimise mud being deposited on roads.
 3. Contrary to Master Plan which stated no soil should be removed from site.
 4. Inconsistency between submitted documentation. Drawing No 85cl.55 shows an excavation depth of up to 2m deep but the detail attached to CJ Pryor Contracts Method statement shows an excavation depth totalling 3.3m deep considerably

deeper increasing the volume of soil to be excavated and therefore increasing the number of traffic movements.”

18. **English Nature** – does not believe that the application will have an adverse impact upon wildlife.
19. **County Archaeologist** – comments will be reported verbally.
20. **County Countryside Services** – the public footpath No 2 Bourn must be safeguarded at the haul road crossing.
21. **Landscape Design Officer** – requested assurance regarding protection of the tree belt to the south.

Representations

22. None received

Planning considerations.

23. The principle of exporting spoil is not precluded by the planning permission for Cambourne, or the associated masterplanning documents. It has, however, been avoided up to this point in the interests of sustainability and to reduce the impact of the Cambourne development on the surrounding area.
24. An urgent local need for this material has now been identified for the limited project of the Science Park slip road. It would not be in the interests of environmental sustainability to import the material from a more remote source.
25. The quarry will have capacity to accommodate Cambourne spoil, thus reducing future impact on local landforms by deposit of spoil, which has been controversial for this area of the proposed golf course.
26. The impact of the transport of material on residential amenity, safety and local roads would be marginal in this area which already has planning permission for spoil disposal, and is in daily use as such with operational safeguards in place. The nearest occupied properties are 450 metres from the quarry.
27. The impact on the environment, including drainage, trees, ecology, and archaeology will be minimised by the concentration in this area which has already been investigated, and subsequently protected, for the purposes of works already permitted and commenced.
28. It is therefore concluded that the proposal complies with the Local Plan policies for Cambourne which require development in accordance with the Master Plan and Design Guide, and guided by the issues of sustainability embraced by government guidance.

Recommendation

29. Approve, subject to the following conditions
 1. Standard Condition A – Time limited permission (Reason A).

Reasons for Approval

1. The development is considered generally to accord with the Development Plan and particularly the following policies:
 - a) Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003: **P1/3 – Sustainable Design in Built Development,**
 - b) South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004: **Cambourne 1 and Cambourne 2.**

2. The proposal is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material considerations, which have been raised during the consultation exercise: **the principle of exporting subsoil, local need for the material, increased future capacity for retention of Cambourne construction spoil on site, and impact on local amenity and environment.**

Informative

Comments of County Council regarding Public Footpath No. 2 Bourn.

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 Files Ref: **S/1371/92/O, S/6169/02/RM, S/6236/04/RM, S/6258/04/RM**

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