

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

3 February 2016

AUTHOR/S: Planning and New Communities Director

Application Number / type of application:	S/0499/15/FL / Full application
Parish(es):	Bourn
Proposal:	Part change of use of runway for external storage, to include but not limited to, the siting of plant, machinery, storage containers and vehicles
Recommendation:	Approval subject to subject to conditions listed in committee report
Material considerations:	Principle of Development Impact on character of the surrounding landscape Residential Amenity Environmental Health Highway Safety
Site address:	Former Runway, Bourn Airfield
Applicant(s):	R Taylor and Sons
Date on which application received:	27 February 2015
Site Visit:	02 February 2016
Conservation Area:	No
Departure Application:	No
Presenting Officer:	David Thompson, Principal Planning Officer
Application brought to Committee because:	The officer recommendation is contrary to the views of the Parish Council
Date by which decision due:	20 November 2015

A. Further Information received after publication of the agenda report.

Residential amenity and Environmental Health

Bourn Parish Council commissioned an independent noise consultant to undertake an assessment of the Noise Impact Assessment submitted by Cundall, which has been submitted as part of the planning application. The report, produced by Acoustical Control Engineers and Consultants is appended to this report (Appendix

A). The report questions the assumed background noise level and the difference in the levels of background noise at the northern and southern ends of the site (referred to as MP1 and MP2). The author of the report contends that the background level at the southern end of the site should be assumed to be lower than at the northern end of the site, due to the reduction in noise from traffic the further the away from the A428 the noise level is measured.

The report also makes the point that, in the original version of the Noise Impact Assessment produced by Cundall, background noise levels at the location of MP2 were taken at a time when a grain drier was in operation and that this was not acknowledged as an exception to 'normal' circumstances.

The report indicates that the Noise Impact Assessment provides 'negligible' information regarding the character of sound and does not sufficiently address the potential impact of noise generated by activity on the site at night. The report also suggests that the Noise Impact Assessment does not fully explain how the assumptions made in the Initial Estimate of the Impact have been translated into an assessment of the site context. The report gives a specific example of the impact on Little Common Bungalow (closest property to the entrance to the site) – where the main source of noise would be the movement of vehicles entering and leaving the site and the main residual noise would be traffic on the road network, particularly the A428. The report concludes that the Noise Impact Assessment does not give sufficient evidence to support the level at which anticipated noise levels would exceed the background level.

In relation to the addendum to the Noise Impact Assessment submitted to address the concerns of the Environmental Health Officer (EHO), the report considers that this is also flawed as it continues to use the background noise level assumptions employed as the evidence base in the initial assessment. The use of an 'average' sound level within the dwelling is also considered to be insufficient to reach a reasoned conclusion on the impact of the noise levels on the inhabitants of Little Common Bungalow.

The EHO has been asked to respond to the report produced by Acoustical Control and his comments (sent via email) are attached to this report at Appendix B. Overall, the EHO is satisfied that the issues raised in respect of the original report have been adequately addressed in the addendum to the Noise Impact Assessment. In relation to the issue of the background noise measurements at the location of MP2 (adjacent to Little Common Bungalow), the EHO specifically raised concerns regarding the background noise level being affected by the operation of the grain drier in the initial Assessment and objected to the proposal on that basis. The addendum report however provides readings of the background noise levels in, from EHO's perspective, 'normal' conditions and therefore provides an accurate assumption from which to assess the potential noise impact.

In relation to the point regarding the character of the noise and the assessment of anticipated noise levels taking into account the context of the site and its surroundings, the EHO is satisfied that the addendum report addresses this issue satisfactorily. The Noise Impact Assessment includes within the calculations a 'penalty' of + 6dB, meeting the requirements of BS 4142 in assessing the character of noise on the acoustic environment, accurately accounting for the impulsivity of certain noise levels. The EHO considers that the background noise level assumptions at MP1 and MP2 are acceptable as they follow objective application of the guidelines, through the calculation of a 'Rating level' which is then compared to background noise levels.

The EHO considers that the report does contain sufficient information and assesses the findings with sufficient accuracy to reach reasoned conclusions.

In conclusion, it is considered that the report submitted by Acoustical Control raised valid concerns regarding the initial Noise Impact Assessment, the EHO is satisfied that the addendum to that report has addressed the initial concerns satisfactorily. The addendum to the noise report includes assessment of the noise impact on the closest properties during both daytime and night time hours.

Additional Background Papers: the following background papers (additional to those referred to in the agenda report) were used in the preparation of this update:

Acoustical Control Engineers and Consultants (Appendix A)
Response from Nick Atkins, Environmental Health Officer (Appendix B)

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