

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Development and Conservation Control Committee 2nd November 2005
AUTHOR/S: Director of Development Services

**S/1732/05/F - Dry Drayton
Extension at Unit 16, Dry Drayton Industrial Estate, Scotland Road
for Bushel and Co Ltd**

Recommendation: Approval

Departure Application

Site and Proposal

1. The site is located on the south-east corner of the Dry Drayton Industries estate. The site comprises of a single storey semi-detached workshop and office unit of 54.4sq.m. floorspace at the end of a row of linked business units. Adjacent to the building, to the east, is a steel container unit located on an area of grassland. A densely planted landscape area, measuring approximately 15 metres in depth consisting of mature trees and hedgerow is located to the south and east. The outer edge of the landscape area forms the boundary of the Cambridge Green Belt, with relatively flat, open agricultural fields beyond. To the north of the application site is a row of single storey business units which run at a right angle to the application site, with an area of hardstanding to the rear (east), which serves as a car park for the estate. Beyond these units is another row of single storey business units that run parallel to the application site, along the northern boundary of the industrial estate.
2. The application, received on 8th September 2005, proposes the erection of a single-storey extension to the east of the existing unit, to provide a new office area with an internal lobby, disabled toilet and shower facility. The proposed gross floor area comprises 99sq.m.

Planning History

3. **S/1021/02/F** - Application approved for an extension to the office unit at Unit 5. The consented structure is located on the north side of the Dry Drayton Industries site. It is identical in design, scale and form to the current proposal. Conditions imposed related to the prior approval of materials for the external walls and roofs for the approved development.
4. **S/1244/92/F** - Application approved for the change of use of units 6-8 and 16-22 for Class B1 (to allow use as offices and for research and development, as well as light industrial). This effectively relaxed condition 1 of consents S/1913/81/F and S/0139/84/F that had stipulated that the units were to only be used for light industrial purposes. Conditions imposed related to parking and turning and the operation of equipment within the relevant units.
5. **S/2314/89/F** - Application withdrawn which proposed the erection of 7 industrial units on part of the land currently serving as car parking to the north of the application site.

6. **S/0139/84/F** - Application approved for the conversion of sheds along the southern boundary of the Dry Drayton Industries site into small units for light industry. This application included unit 16, the subject of the current application. Conditions imposed related to the use for light industrial purposes only (subsequently removed under the terms of **S/1244/92/F**), the use of power operated machinery, prevention of storage of materials outside, parking and turning facilities and noise restrictions related to the use.
7. **S/1913/81/F** - Application approved for the conversion of farm buildings into light industrial. This application appears to relate to the other units on the Dry Drayton Industries site not included under the terms of **S/0139/84/F**. Conditions imposed were the same as those imposed on the later application, save for the condition related to storage of materials.

Planning Policy

8. The site is located approximately 1 mile outside of the development framework for the village of Dry Drayton and approximately 25 metres outside of the Cambridge Green Belt on an existing industrial/business estate.
9. **Policy EM3** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 states that development, including change of use, within Class B1 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1995 will only be permitted if it is subject to a condition or Section 106 Agreement of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 which, for a period of 10 years from the first date of occupation, limits: (1) offices over 300 sq.m. to the provision of a local or subregional service or administrative facility principally for persons resident or organisations situated in the Cambridge Area excluding national or regional headquarters offices; or (2) research and development to those firms which can show a special need to be closely related to the universities or other research facilities established in the Cambridge Area is essential, in order to share staff, equipment or data, or to undertake joint collaborative projects with such organizations necessary for the investigation, design, and development of an idea, concept, instrument, product or process, up to and including production for testing, but excluding manufacture; (3) light industry to a maximum of 1,850 square metres (20,000 sq.ft.) of floorspace; large scale expansion of such firms will not be permitted.
10. **Policy EM6** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 states that within village frameworks, and on suitable brownfield sites next to or very close to the village frameworks of RGS and LRGS, planning permission will be granted for smallscale development in classes B1 - B8 provided that: there would be no adverse impact on residential amenity, traffic conditions, village character and other environmental factors, and (b) 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. **Policy EM7** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 states that development for the expansion of existing firms within village frameworks or on suitable brownfield sites next to or very close to the village frameworks will be permitted subject to the provisions of **EM3** and **EM6**. A firm or business will be considered as "existing" if a significant element of its operations has been based in the Cambridge Area for a minimum of two years prior to the date of any planning application for development.
12. **Policy P2/6** of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 states that sensitive small-scale employment development in rural areas will be facilitated where it contributes to supporting new and existing business and research and technology clusters.

Consultations

13. **Dry Drayton Parish Council** - no comments received to date.
14. **Chief Environmental Health Officer** - has raised concerns regarding potential noise problems that could arise from the development and has suggested a condition to be attached to any consent in order to minimise the effects of the development to nearby residents or occupiers.
15. **Environment Agency** - has recommended an informative to highlight that “existing” systems should be proven to be adequate.

Representations

16. None.

Planning Comments - Key Issues

17. The key issues in relation to this application are:
 - a) Impact on the Character and Setting of the Countryside
 - b) Residential Amenity

Impact on the Character and Setting of the Countryside

18. Although the site is designated as within the countryside in the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004, the development would be contained within the confines of the existing industrial estate and would be screened from the surrounding countryside by the mature landscaping belt that runs along the length of the eastern boundary of the site as a whole, and part of the southern boundary of the estate.
19. The proposed extension is a mirror image of the office unit that has been erected to the east of unit 5 on the northern boundary of the industrial estate, immediately opposite the application site and would result in an increase in floor area of approximately 88m² (net). It is proposed to be single storey, measuring 5.9m to the ridge, using a design in keeping with the existing structure and neighbouring units with windows and other openings designed to continue the existing theme in the units. The materials are also proposed to match the existing buildings.
20. Under the terms of policy EM7 of the Local Plan development for the expansion of existing firms on suitable brownfield sites next to or very close to the village frameworks will be permitted subject to the provisions of Policy EM3 and EM6.
21. Although the site is not next to or very close to the village framework for Dry Drayton, the industrial estate is a relatively large scale operation, with 30 units with consent for Class B1 (Business) uses. The proposed extension would represent a minor increase when viewed as part of the whole estate and by virtue of its design and scale, located against a well established landscape belt it would not lead to an adverse impact on the character or openness of the countryside. Furthermore the occupier of the unit is a specialist engineering company who have continually operated from a number of units on the industrial estate since 1987. The extension is required as the business currently employs 16 members of staff but is looking to expand due to an increased workload and additional long-term contracts. The business would therefore be considered as “existing” under the terms of policy EM7.

22. According to the details of the consents to allow the conversion of the former agricultural buildings, applications reference S/1913/81/F; S/0139/84/F; and S/1244/92/F the existing unit is not currently, and has not been, the subject of a condition or legal agreement to restrict the use of the building to local use only. Given that the application proposes the extension to an existing unit of less than 100m² to serve a long standing existing business there does not appear to be any reasonable need to impose such a condition in this instance.

Residential Amenity

23. The proposed extension is located approximately 90 metres away from the nearest residential dwelling. A number of high level windows are proposed in the elevation facing towards those dwellings. Although the existing units along the southern boundary adjacent to the neighbouring dwellings currently have some industrial operations contained within, given the design of the unit, the proximity of the dwellings and the nature of the business operating from the site it would be wise to impose a condition to control any power operated plant or equipment, in line with the Chief Environmental Health Officer's recommendations.
24. In the light of my comments in Paragraph 21 above, I do not consider it necessary to refer this application to the Secretary of State.

Recommendation

25. Approval
1. SCA - RCA - 3 years.
 2. No development shall commence until details of the materials to be used for the external walls and roofs; materials to be used for hard surfaced areas within the site including roads, driveways and car parking areas; and car parking provision in accordance with the Local Authority standards have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority; the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
(Reason - To ensure that visually the development accords with neighbouring buildings; to ensure that the development is not incongruous and to ensure adequate car parking provision is provided and suitably laid out.)
 3. 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 building (s) but excluding office equipment and vehicles and the location of the outlet from the building (s) 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 - In order to minimise the effects of the development to nearby residents or occupiers.)

Reasons for Approval

1. Although the proposal is located in the countryside it is considered that the proposal would represent small scale development on brownfield land within

an established industrial estate and would represent an expansion of an existing business.

2. In other respects, the development is considered generally to accord with the following policies of the Development Plan:
 - **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003: P2/6** (Rural economy)
 - **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004: EM3** (Limitations on the occupancy of new premises in South Cambridgeshire) **EM7** (Expansion of existing firms at villages)
3. The proposal is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations which have been raised during the consultation exercise:
 - Impact on the Character and Setting of the Countryside
 - Residential Amenity

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 Refs: S/1021/02/F; S/1244/92/F; S/2314/89/F; S/0139/84/F, S/1913/81/F and S/1732/05/F

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