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**MAIN CASE**

**Reference No:** 15/00478/FUM

**Proposal:** New purpose built marketing and training centre adjacent to the existing packaging factory with separate car parking and new hard and soft landscaping

**Site Address:** David S Smith Corrugated Limited Fordham Road, Fordham, Cambridgeshire, CB8 7TX

**Applicant:** David S Smith PLC

**Case Officer:** Andrew Phillips Senior Planning Officer

**Parish:** Fordham

**Ward:** Fordham Villages

**Ward Councillors:** Cllr Julia Huffer  
Cllr Joshua Schumann

**Date Received:** 29 April 2015                      **Expiry Date:** 4 September 2015

[Q60]

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**1.0**      **RECOMMENDATION**

1.1      Members are requested to delegate the APPROVAL of this application to the Planning Manager, subject to the following conditions, and subject to a S106 Agreement, should this be judged to be reasonable and that it would not prejudice the entering into S106 Agreements for other development proposals in the locality:

1. Time Limit
2. Approved Plans
3. Occupation link to the main D S Smith site
4. Surface Water Drainage
5. Energy Efficiency/BREEAM
6. Bird Nesting Season
7. Soft/Hard Landscaping
8. Landscape maintenance
9. Secure/covered cycle store provision
10. Hours of operation
11. No additional external lighting

1.2      Full details of these proposed Conditions will be tabled at the meeting.

## **2.0** SUMMARY OF APPLICATION

- 2.1 This application is being brought to Planning Committee as the proposal involves two lines of solar panels that measure 23 metres x 6 metres; under the scheme of delegation this is counted as a large scale renewable energy scheme and officers do not have authority to determine this type of development.
- 2.2 The proposal is for a single storey building with a roof that mixes mono-pitched and bow style roof styles. The proposed building is to provide training facilities tailored to the workforce of D S Smith and additional office space. Training centres are considered to be a D1 Use Class (Non-residential institution) and the office space is B1 Use Class (Business). The proposal should lead to 8 more permanent jobs.
- 2.3 The building measures 40 metres x 36 metres, with a maximum height of 8.2 metres.
- 2.4 The proposal also involves the construction of an access road that links onto D S Smith site's current car parking area and the addition of 45 spaces and 6 covered cycle spaces.
- 2.5 The developer has provided additional documentation that includes an updated Transport Addendum Report, revised application form (foul water will now be taken away by a main sewer), BREEAM report and clarifications to cover comments raised during the consultation period. These documents were out for consultation at the time of writing this report, however the expiry date for responses is 21 August 2015.

## **3.0** PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 Relevant planning history is considered to be:

95//00871/FUL – Erection of building for use as an integrated corrugating plant, including site works, landscaping and construction of a new access was approved.

## **4.0** THE SITE AND ITS ENVIRONMENT

- 4.1 The application site is located to the south of the existing two storey D S Smith building. The access to the site comes off Landwade Road. To the east of the site is the A142 and 75 metres to the west is the railway line.
- 4.2 The site is located outside of the village framework and is within a 2000 metre buffer zone of SSSI (A Site of Special Scientific Interest).
- 4.3 The site is on grassland and forms part of a wider area of grassland that is boarded by hedges and trees that form part of a transition between the industrial sites the open countryside.

## **5.0** RESPONSES FROM CONSULTEES

Consultees

- 5.1 Environmental Health – Notes that the site is close to residential properties but due to the current uses in the area and the requested times of operation does not raise any issues. It is recommended that a condition is used to limit the times of use to those requested.

External lighting should meet the requirements within the Institute of Lighting Professionals guidance to reduce obstructive light. Has no concerns over the submitted drawing E500 P1 'External Lighting Layout' dated 27<sup>th</sup> April 2015.

Additional comments will be provided regarding contaminated land.

- 5.2 Historic Environmental Team (County Council) – No objection, subject to a condition requiring the developer to undertake a programme of archaeological investigation as the site is within an area of high archaeological potential.

- 5.3 Transport Assessment Team (County Council) – Require additional information and place a holding objection.

- 5.4 Local Highways Authority – No objection.

- 5.5 East Cambridgeshire Access Group – Requests that accessible WC's are laid out to Part M, automated/push buttons to access training rooms as well as principle elevation, directional signs from entrance to site and decoration to BS8300:2009.

- 5.6 Natural England – Made the following comments in relation to the application as submitted:

The consultation documents provided do not include information to demonstrate that the requirements of Regulation 61 and 62 of the Habitats Regulations have been considered by your authority. Natural England does not object to the development in principle but there is currently not enough information.

However, it does state there are concerns over the proposed foul drainage arrangement via a septic tank and soakaway system. It provides details of how the foul drainage could detrimentally harm biodiversity within the local area (including specific species of flora).

The Local Planning Authority should consider securing improvements to enhance biodiversity within the area.

Following confirmation that drainage is to be to the public sewer system they have confirmed that the proposal is unlikely to have a significant effect on the environment, including designated sites and that an Appropriate Assessment is not required.

- 5.7 Environment Agency – Made the following comments in relation to the application as submitted:

Objects to the proposal as it involves the use of a non-mains foul drainage system in area with public sewers and recommends refusal on this basis as the proposal will lead to an unacceptable risk to the water environment.

It provides guidance for the developer on how to overcome this objection.

Following confirmation that drainage is to be to the public sewer system they have confirmed orally that they have no objection to the proposal.

Neighbours/representations

5.8 Turners (Soham) Ltd – No objection.

5.9 216 Fordham Road, Newmarket – Objects to the proposed development on the loss of view and additional traffic on the A142.

## 6.0 The Planning Policy Context

6.1 East Cambridgeshire

GROWTH 2	Locational strategy
GROWTH 3	Infrastructure requirements
ENV 1	Landscape and settlement character
ENV 2	Design
ENV 4	Energy and water efficiency and renewable energy in construction
ENV 7	Biodiversity and geology
ENV 8	Flood Risk
ENV 9	Pollution
ENV 12	Sites of archaeological interest
COM 4	New community facilities
COM 7	Transport impact
COM 8	Parking provision
FRD 8	Employment allocation, land south of Landwade Road.

6.2 National Planning Policy Framework 2012

## 7.0 PLANNING COMMENTS

7.1 The key concerns are the principle of the development, impact on the highway network, parking provision, surface water drainage, protection of the water environment, sustainability, design/layout and residential amenity.

### **Principle**

7.2 The proposed development is supported by Policy FRD 8 that seeks employment related development on this site. While approximately half the space of the proposal is for training, it is being designed specifically for the employees of D S Smith PLC. So while this use is not specifically B1, B2 or B8 it is to provide specific support to the existing business on site. It is considered reasonable to add a condition tying this unit to the existing D S Smith building, so that they cannot be sold separately.

- 7.3 The developer has provided a sketch master plan on the 7 August 2015 that shows that additional buildings could be brought forward under Policy FRD 8.

### **Highways and Accessibility**

- 7.4 The proposed access will link onto the existing car park/driveway of the D S Smith site that will connect onto Landwade Road.
- 7.5 The comments of the Local Highways Authority are noted and accepted. It is, therefore, considered that the proposed entrance onto Landwade Road does not pose an unacceptable risk in highway safety terms and is acceptable.
- 7.6 The Transport Addendum Report (July 2015) states that the proposal will create an additional 6 vehicular trips per day. This is considered to be very low increase in traffic movements but Cambridgeshire County Council Transport Assessment Team has been consulted in order to confirm the impact on the wider transport network of the area.
- 7.7 Policies FRD4, FRD5, FRD6, FRD7 and FRD8 of the adopted Local Plan all require contributions towards improvements (bus stops and pedestrian crossing) to Newmarket Road. It is currently being explored if this development should contribute, as any contribution must be reasonable to the proposal and there cannot be more than five contributions to any specific piece of infrastructure. The developer is supportive of this contribution in principle but wishes to discuss this further. An update will be provided to members during the committee meeting.
- 7.8 The development would require a maximum of 43 spaces, so the creation of 45 spaces is considered to be slightly high. However, some flexibility is considered to be useful as the 43 space calculation does not include potential training staff.
- 7.9 It is considered that approximately 40 secure and covered cycle spaces are required for this size of development. A condition is recommended to ensure that an appropriate level of cycle provision is provided on site.

### **Surface Water and the Water Environment**

- 7.10 The developer has confirmed that the development will connect onto the main sewer network; the concerns raised regarding the use of septic tank to biodiversity/water environment are no longer relevant to the determination of this application. The relevant consultees have been re-consulted to confirm this is the case.
- 7.11 A balancing pond exists to the west of the current D S Smith site, which is outside of the site area of this proposal. The application includes details of water drainage and is proposing to use Aquacells (underground storage) but further information is required to ensure that development maintains a 'green field run off'. A condition therefore recommended.

## **Sustainability**

- 7.12 The proposal is required to meet BREEAM 'Very Good' under policy ENV 4. To get BREEAM 'Very Good' a score of above 55% is required. However, it is noted that the developer has lost points by not undertaking pre-application work in connection with the BREEAM assessment and that additional points cannot be achieved by virtue of this being a business site outside of the village framework.
- 7.13 The case officer has sought to provide a practical way forward in ensuring that the proposal meets with the spirit of the policy of ensuring sustainable development, while bringing forward an employment site. The design of the development should achieve 55.26%, while this meets 'Very Good' the construction of the building usually leads to the loss of some points.
- 7.14 The developer is proposing to use a Coefficient of Performance Variable Refrigerant Flow in order to heat and cool the building (similar to an air source heat pump) and 90m<sup>2</sup> of solar panels. It is considered that in total there will be a reduction of 33% reduction in the energy demand of the building.
- 7.15 Conditions relating to soft landscaping, no removal of vegetation during bird nesting season and bird/bat boxes should be added to ensure that the proposal enhances biodiversity within the local area.
- 7.16 The proposal is considered to comply with policies ENV 4 and ENV 7 if suitable conditions are added.
- 7.17 The provision of this building will strengthen the existing business on site, as well as provide 8 additional jobs. The proposal is considered to be economically sustainable.

## **Design and Layout**

- 7.18 This proposal is a single storey building that follows the design principles of the main D S Smith building with similar materials and bow shaped roof.
- 7.19 There is no right under planning legislation to a view and the proposal must be consider on whether it preserves or enhances the current design/character of the area.
- 7.20 With the site being allocated under the Local Plan for employment it would be envisaged that the site would be built upon. The weighting of the character of the area is therefore on the existing employment buildings and not the rural character. It is for this reason that the proposal is considered to preserve the visual appearance of the local area, though soft landscaping condition will be used to help minimise the impact of the building.

## **Residential Amenity**

- 7.21 The developer has requested hours of operation of 7am – 8pm Mondays to Saturdays, as requested by the Environmental Health Officer. It is recommended

that this be conditioned to prevent additional disturbance to nearby residential properties.

7.22 A condition is also recommended to prevent additional external lighting be added without the consent of the Local Planning Authority in order to protect residential amenity and prevent undue light pollution in this rural location.

## 8.0 SUMMARY

8.1 This application will strengthen the employment on site and subject to conditions it is considered that the proposal will not cause any specific harm that is detrimental enough to warrant the refusal of this development.

8.2 It is, therefore, requested that Members grant delegated powers to officers to approve this application.

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<b><u>Background Documents</u></b>	<b><u>Location</u></b>	<b><u>Contact Officer(s)</u></b>
Application and supporting documents.	Andrew Phillips Room No. 011 The Grange Ely	Andrew Phillips Senior Planning Officer 01353 665555 andrew.phillips@eastcambs.gov.uk
		<a href="http://planning.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/swift/apas/run/wphappcriteria.display">http://planning.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/swift/apas/run/wphappcriteria.display</a>
Adopted Local Plan	<a href="http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk">www.eastcambs.gov.uk</a>	
NPPF	<a href="http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/">http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/</a>	