
MAIN CASE

Reference No: 19/01429/FUM

Proposal: Extension to existing nursery greenhouse

Site Address: G's Second Willow Nursery Ten Mile Bank Littleport Ely
Cambridgeshire CB6 1EE

Applicant: G's Group Holdings Limited

Case Officer: Catherine Looper, Senior Planning Officer

Parish: Littleport

Ward: Littleport
Ward Councillor/s: Christine Ambrose-Smith
David Ambrose-Smith
Jo Webber

Date Received: 7 October 2019 **Expiry Date:** 26/03/2020

[U190]

1.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

1.1 Members are recommended to Approve the application subject to the following conditions which can be read in full in appendix 1.

1. Approved Plans
2. Time Limit
3. Materials
4. Surface Water Drainage Scheme
5. Internal Lighting
6. External/Security Lighting
7. Noise limit

2.0 **SUMMARY OF APPLICATION**

2.1 The application seeks consent for an extension to the existing nursery development at the site. The built form would comprise a greenhouse style building to match the existing buildings on site. The proposed greenhouse area would cover 2,497m².

2.2 The full planning application, plans and documents submitted by the Applicant can be viewed online via East Cambridgeshire District Council's Public Access online service, via the following link <http://pa.eastcambs.gov.uk/online-applications/>.

Alternatively a paper copy is available to view at the East Cambridgeshire District Council offices, in the application file.

2.3 The application has been brought before Planning Committee due to the requirements of the Council's Constitution relating to the creation of major employment uses over 1,000m².

3.0 **PLANNING HISTORY**

3.1

| | | | |
|--------------|---|----------|------------|
| 04/00516/FUM | The erection of approx. 14 acres of greenhouses together with ancillary services, including reservoirs, roadways and landscaping | Approved | 20.07.2004 |
| 06/01307/FUL | Erection of Paraweb Windbreak | Approved | 20.12.2006 |
| 09/00727/FUL | To demolish part of the Paraweb windbreak and extend / erect in new location indicated to protect second phase of Green house building. | Approved | 26.10.2009 |
| 10/00775/FUL | Heating Boiler for existing agricultural business with bunded gas oil fuel tank | Approved | 03.12.2010 |

4.0 **THE SITE AND ITS ENVIRONMENT**

4.1 The site is located approximately 2km from the main settlement boundary of Littleport, in an area that is predominantly agricultural in nature. The existing built form is set back a significant distance from the public highway of Ten Mile Bank, and the land slopes away from the public highway. The site is within Flood Zone 3 and in close proximity to the River Great Ouse.

5.0 **RESPONSES FROM CONSULTEES**

5.1 Responses were received from the following consultees and these are summarised below. The full responses are available on the Council's web site.

Neighbours – Ten neighbouring properties were notified. No responses have been received.

Parish - 5 November 2019
No concerns

Ward Councillors - No Comments Received

Design Out Crime Officers - 31 October 2019

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this application. I have viewed the documents in relation to crime, disorder and the fear of crime and I have no comment or objection at this time.

Local Highways Authority - 24 October 2019

As far as can be determined from the submitted information this application if permitted would no impact on the highway.

Lead Local Flood Authority - 17 January 2020

"We have reviewed the following documents:

~ Flood Risk Assessment, Ellingham Consulting Ltd, Ref: ECL0093, Dated: September 2019

~ Surface Water Strategy, Ellingham Consulting Ltd, Ref: ECL0167, Dated: December 2019

Based on these, as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) we can remove our objection to the proposed development.

The above documents demonstrate that surface water from the proposed development can be managed by discharging surface water from the additional impermeable area on site to the existing irrigation lagoon on site."

Conditions are recommended.

Environmental Health - 15 October 2019

On the Application Form in Section 20 it states that there will not be any Industrial or Commercial Processes and Machinery. Taking this in to account and the fact that we don't appear to have ever received a complaint concerning this site means that I have no issues to raise at this time.

No other comments to make at this time but please send out the environmental notes.

Waste Strategy (ECDC) - No Comments Received

Environment Agency - 24 October 2019

The greenhouse would be at risk if a breach in the defences occurred but it is less vulnerable so low risk

General advice to the applicant

All surface water from roofs shall be piped direct to an approved surface water system using sealed downpipes Open gullies should not be uses.

Only clean, uncontaminated surface water should be discharged to any soakaway, watercourse or surface water sewer.

Site operators should ensure that there is no possibility of contaminated water entering and polluting surface or underground waters.

The Ely Group Of Internal Drainage Board - 24 October 2019

The Board is aware that surface water from this site is currently retained on site and is re-used for watering seedlings. If the extension uses this method of surface water disposal, then no further permission is required from the Board. However, if surface water is directly discharged to an existing watercourse, then the prior consent of the Board is required.

Cambridgeshire Fire And Rescue Service - No Comments Received

Cadent Gas Ltd - No Comments Received

Environment Agency - 24 December 2019

We are returning this planning application consultation without comment because it is not clear why we have been consulted.

6.0 The Planning Policy Context

6.1 *East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015*

ENV 1 Landscape and settlement character

ENV 2 Design

GROWTH 2 Locational strategy

EMP 2 Extensions to existing businesses in the countryside

ENV 8 Flood risk

6.2 *Supplementary Planning Documents*

Design Guide

Flood and Water

6.3 *National Planning Policy Framework 2019*

2 Achieving sustainable development

12 Achieving well-designed places

14 Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

15 Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

7.0 PLANNING COMMENTS

7.1 The main issues to consider in the determination of the application are the principle of development, the impact on the residential amenity of nearby occupiers, visual impact, and flood risk.

7.2 Principle of Development

7.3 The proposal seeks to extend the covered area on site in order to meet the demand for products from the horticultural business. The additional space would allow heated celery propagation and maintain the volume of lettuce plants from the site. The extension to the covered area provides shelter from the variable weather that

is now experienced during Spring and Summer seasons, and the Agent has advised that the heating systems installed cut fuel consumption by 45% compared to propagators elsewhere. The Agent has confirmed that the proposed extension would not create additional jobs; the purpose is to enable the existing business to continue to function at its current level. The expansion would reduce the business' reliance on other farms and also reduce the level of transport emissions from outsourcing. Although the increased floor space of 2,497m² is large, this is read against the existing horticultural operation at the site, which covers 179,000m².

- 7.4 Policy GROWTH2 of the Local Plan 2015 sets out that the majority of development will be focussed in the market towns of Ely, Soham and Littleport and that outside of the defined development envelopes, development will be strictly controlled. Extensions to existing businesses are included within this controlled list, as well as agriculture, horticulture and forestry.
- 7.5 The proposal seeks an extension to an existing business in the countryside for the purposes of horticulture, and therefore the principle of development is considered acceptable providing that all other material planning considerations are satisfied.
- 7.6 Residential Amenity
- 7.7 Policy ENV2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 requires proposals to ensure that there are no significantly detrimental effects on the residential amenity of nearby occupiers.
- 7.8 The site is located a significant distance from the nearest neighbouring dwellings (approximately 240m) and therefore the proposed extension is not considered to create any impacts in terms of overshadowing, overbearing, noise or light pollution. The nature of any lighting can be controlled by condition. Due to the agricultural nature of the building, this would not create impacts such as overlooking or loss of privacy.
- 7.9 Visual Amenity
- 7.10 In terms of visual amenity, policy ENV2 of the Local Plan 2015 requires proposals to ensure that location, layout, scale, form, massing, materials and colour relate sympathetically to the surrounding area and each other. Paragraphs 127 and 130 of the NPPF seek to secure visually attractive development which improves the overall quality of an area and is sympathetic to local character and history.
- 7.11 The proposed extension would provide a significant amount of floor space for the nursery (2,497m²) but would have a maximum height of 6.3m. The extension would match the existing nursery and therefore would not seem out of place within the landscape. Due to the transparent nature of the building materials and the distance set back from the public highway, the proposed extension would not be highly dominant or create any significant impact on the character of the area. Additionally, the extension would be read against backdrop of the existing glasshouses which cover an area of 179,000m². Furthermore, the site has benefitted from landscaping in the past which has established a mature hedgerow to the front of the site which reduces the visibility of the proposal. It is not considered that additional landscaping is required.

- 7.12 The proposal is considered to comply with policies ENV1 and ENV2 of the Local Plan 2015, as well as the NPPF.
- 7.13 Highways
- 7.14 The Local Highways Authority have reviewed the proposals and have raised no objection to the scheme. The applicant has advised that the extension would not create any net increase in vehicular movements to and from the site, and that the junction access with the public highway would not be altered by the proposal. The applicant expects the level of emissions from vehicle emissions to drop as the proposal would reduce the reliance on external sites. The application is therefore considered to be acceptable from a highway safety aspect and complies with policies COM7 and COM8 of the Local Plan 2015 which seek to ensure safe and convenient access to the highway network.
- 7.15 Flood Risk and Drainage
- 7.16 The site is located within Flood Zone 3 and the applicant has therefore submitted a Flood Risk Assessment. As it is not possible to raise the floor level of the proposal, the Flood Risk Assessment makes a number of flood risk mitigation recommendations including raising the services above floor level (such as electrical sockets and supplies), creating a plan for the event of receiving flood warnings, and creating suitable surface water drainage strategies.
- 7.17 The applicant has also submitted a Surface Water Strategy with the application. This document identifies that there are three methods of surface water disposal at the site, including siphoning into a reservoir for the purposes of irrigation, drainage to a drainage ditch to the south western boundary of the site, and a land drainage system beneath the site. The applicant proposes that any additional surface water is discharged into the reservoir for the purposes of irrigation. The Lead Local Flood Authority has reviewed the proposals and has confirmed that the proposal to discharge into the existing reservoir is acceptable. The Internal Drainage Board have also reviewed the proposals and have raised no objections.
- 7.18 It is recommended that conditions are placed on any grant of consent relating to the recommendations within the Flood Risk Assessment, and the condition recommended by the Lead Local Flood Authority which relates to a detailed drainage scheme.
- 7.19 Planning Balance
- 7.20 On balance, the application is considered to comply with planning policy and does not create any significantly harmful impacts in terms of residential or visual amenity, highway safety, or flood risk and drainage. The application is therefore recommended for approval.
- 8.0 COSTS
- 8.1 An appeal can be lodged against a refusal of planning permission or a condition imposed upon a planning permission. If a local planning authority is found to have

acted unreasonably and this has incurred costs for the applicant (referred to as appellant through the appeal process) then a cost award can be made against the Council.

8.2 Unreasonable behaviour can be either procedural ie relating to the way a matter has been dealt with or substantive ie relating to the issues at appeal and whether a local planning authority has been able to provide evidence to justify a refusal reason or a condition.

8.3 Members do not have to follow an officer recommendation indeed they can legitimately decide to give a different weight to a material consideration than officers. However, it is often these cases where an appellant submits a claim for costs. The Committee therefore needs to consider and document its reasons for going against an officer recommendation very carefully.

9.0 APPENDIX 1

9.1 Recommended Conditions:

1 Development shall be carried out in accordance with the drawings and documents listed below

| <u>Plan Reference</u> | <u>Version No</u> | <u>Date Received</u> |
|-----------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| 19-657 3 01 | | 7th October 2019 |
| 19-657 3 02 | | 7th October 2019 |
| 19-657 3 03 | | 7th October 2019 |
| 19-657 3 04 | | 7th October 2019 |
| 19-657 3 10 | | 7th October 2019 |
| 19-657 3 13 | | 7th October 2019 |
| 19-657 3 11 | | 7th October 2019 |
| 19-657 3 12 | | 7th October 2019 |

1 Reason: To define the scope and extent of this permission.

2 The development hereby permitted shall be commenced within 3 years of the date of this permission.

2 Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended.

3 The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces shall be as specified on the approved plans. All works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

3 Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance of the area, in accordance with policy ENV2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015.

4 No above ground works shall commence until a surface water drainage scheme for the site, based on sustainable drainage principles, has been submitted to and approved in

writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall subsequently be implemented in accordance with the approved details before development is completed. The scheme shall be based upon the principles within the agreed Surface Water Strategy prepared by Ellingham Consulting Ltd (ref: ECL0167) dated December 2019 and shall also include:

- a) Full calculations detailing the existing surface water runoff rates for the QBAR, 3.3% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) (1 in 30) and 1% AEP (1 in 100) storm events;
- b) Full results of the proposed drainage system modelling in the above-referenced storm events (as well as 1% AEP plus climate change) , inclusive of all collection, conveyance, storage, flow control and disposal elements and including an allowance for urban creep, together with an assessment of system performance;
- c) Detailed drawings of the entire proposed surface water drainage system, including levels, gradients, dimensions and pipe reference numbers;
- d) Full details of the proposed attenuation and flow control measures;
- e) Details of overland flood flow routes in the event of system exceedance, with demonstration that such flows can be appropriately managed on site without increasing flood risk to occupants;
- f) Full details of the maintenance/adoption of the surface water drainage system;

The drainage scheme must adhere to the hierarchy of drainage options as outlined in the NPPF PPG.

- 4 Reason: To ensure that the proposed development can be adequately drained and to ensure that there is no increased flood risk on or off site resulting from the proposed development in accordance with policy ENV8 of the Local Plan 2015.
- 5 Details of the internal lighting of the greenhouses shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- 5 Reason: To safeguard the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers, in accordance with policy ENV2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015.
- 6 No security or floodlights shall be erected on the site without the submission of full details to, and written approval from the Local Planning Authority.
- 6 Reason: To safeguard the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers, in accordance with policy ENV2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015.
- 7 Any noise emitted from the premises must not result in the background noise level (L90) being exceeded by more than 5 dBA when measured and corrected in accordance with BS 4142:2014.
- 7 Reason: To safeguard the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers, in accordance with policy ENV2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015.

| Background Documents | Location | Contact Officer(s) |
|--|---|--|
| 19/01429/FUM 04/00516/FUM 06/01307/FUL 09/00727/FUL 10/00775/FUL | Catherine Looper Room No. 011 The Grange Ely | Catherine Looper Senior Planning Officer 01353 665555 catherine.looper@eastcambs.gov.uk |

National Planning Policy Framework -

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf

East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 -

<http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Local%20Plan%20April%202015%20-%20front%20cover%20and%20inside%20front%20cover.pdf>