

APPLICATION NO.	P18/S3093/FUL
APPLICATION TYPE	FULL APPLICATION
REGISTERED	26.9.2018
PARISH	THAME
WARD MEMBER(S)	David Dodds Caroline Newton Nigel Champken-Woods Jeannette Matelot
APPLICANT	Mr H Gleed
SITE	Land To The Rear Of Unit 1 Christmas Lane Thame Oxfordshire, OX9 2BY
PROPOSAL	Proposed contractors storage yard B8 and associated office B1
OFFICER	Tom Wyatt

1.0 **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The application is referred to Planning Committee due to an objection from Great Haseley Parish Council.
- 1.2 The site, which is shown on the OS extract **attached** at Appendix A, lies to the rear of a main Ford car dealership, and to the north and west are open fields although the former railway line does continue to the west. To the south there is an extensive range of industrial buildings which are constructed in a variety of materials but mostly utilitarian. It includes a large transport company and a car breakers/scrap yard. These are well established buildings and uses.
- 1.3 Planning permission has been granted under applications P15/S3769/FUL and P17/S0702/FUL for the use of the adjoining land immediately to the east as a contractor's yard. This has been implemented and the site is fully operational and includes the majority of the land now subject to this planning application.

2.0 **PROPOSAL**

- 2.1 The application seeks planning permission for the creation of a contractor's yard. The yard would be used by a mobile concrete company. The site measures approximately 2400 square metres in area, and the majority of the site would be used for plant storage. The submitted plans also indicate that a modest single storey office building would be sited in the north west corner of the site along with staff parking for six cars. The site would be bounded by 2 metre high security fencing.
- 2.2 Two thirds of the site already benefits from planning permission under application P17/S0702/FUL and it is only the rearmost third of the site (approximately 800 square metres), which falls outside of the site area of this earlier planning permission. This area also falls within Great Haseley Parish whilst the remainder of the site falls within Thame Parish. Access to the site would be via the existing access from Rycote Lane to the east.
- 2.3 A copy of the plans accompanying the application are **attached** at Appendix B and other documentation and representations associated with the application can be viewed on the council's website, www.southoxon.gov.uk.

3.0 **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

3.1 **Thame Town Council** - No objections subject to there being no objections from the Highway Authority.

Great Haseley Parish Council – Objects for the following reasons:

- The application encroaches onto open greenfield space
- Further incremental growth on a site which has already been the subject of incremental growth over recent years
- Increased traffic movement entering and leaving Rycote Lane
- Insufficient information supplied related to hours of operation and number of employees

Highways Liaison Officer (Oxfordshire County Council) - No objections

Contaminated Land Officer – No comments. The applicant should be asked to submit a contaminated land preliminary risk assessment consultants report, which will establish the potential for land contamination to impact the application site.

Scotia Gas Networks Plant Protection Team – Guidance provided regarding works near gas pipelines.

4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

4.1 [P17/S0702/FUL](#) - Approved (08/05/2017)

Change of use from agricultural to space for further open storage and parking.

[P16/S2997/FUL](#) - Approved (08/11/2016)

Variation of condition 8 (Open Storage) on application P15/S3769/FUL .

'Erection of a new office and warehouse. Alterations to vehicular access'

[P15/S3769/FUL](#) - Approved (14/01/2016)

Variation of condition 2 on application ref. P12/S1230/FUL - revised building layout, appearance and location

Erection of a new office and warehouse. Alterations to vehicular access.

5.0 **POLICY & GUIDANCE**

5.1 South Oxfordshire Core Strategy (SOCS) Policies;

CS1 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development

CSEM1 - Supporting a successful economy

CSEM2 - The amount and distribution of employment

CSEM4 - Supporting economic development

CSEN1 - Landscape protection

CSQ3 - Design

CSS1 - The Overall Strategy

CSTHA1 - The Strategy for Thame

5.2 South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (SOLP 2011) Policies;

C4 - Landscape setting of settlements

C8 - Adverse affect on protected species

D1 - Principles of good design

E5 - Business, industrial, warehousing and storage proposals

EP1 - Adverse affect on people and environment

EP6 - Sustainable drainage

EP7 - Impact on ground water resources

- EP8 - Contaminated land
- G2 - Protect district from adverse development
- G4 - Protection of Countryside
- T1 - Safe, convenient and adequate highway network for all users
- T2 - Unloading, turning and parking for all highway users

- 5.3 Thame Neighbourhood Plan (TNP) Policies;
- WS12 - Retain existing employment land in employment use
 - WS13 - Support improvements to existing employment areas
 - ESDQ16 - Development must relate well to its site and its surroundings
 - ESDQ22 - The visual impact of new development on views from the countryside must be minimised
 - ESDQ29 - Design car parking so that it fits in with the character of the proposed development
- 5.4 Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents
- South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2016 (SODG 2016)
- 5.5 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- National Planning Policy Framework Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

6.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

- 6.1 The main planning issues in relation to this application are:
1. The principle of the development
 2. The impact on the character and appearance of the site and surrounding area
 3. Other material considerations

The Principle of the Development

- 6.2 As stated above approximately two thirds of the site already benefits from planning permission for storage associated with the use of the wider site by David Einig Contracting. The principle of redeploying this employment land and the relatively modest extension of employment land proposed falls to be considered against the relevant development plan policies.
- 6.3 Government guidance contained within the NPPF places a strong emphasis on building the local economy and states at Para. 80 that 'Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development'.
- 6.4 The site is located in the area of countryside outside of the main settlement of Thame, and in relation to employment uses in the countryside Para. 84 of the NPPF states that, 'Planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport). The use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist.'

- 6.5 In the context of local development plan policies, Policy WS13 of the TNP supports the principle of improvements to existing employment areas. This is consistent with Policy CSEM4 of the SOCS, which is supportive of economic development, and specifically allows for the redevelopment of employment sites and for the reasonable extension of premises on existing sites.
- 6.6 The principle of the development is considered acceptable having regard to the nature of the commercial use already carried out on the majority of the application site and within the wider area, and the supportive policy framework in respect of new employment generating development. Furthermore, the proposal would represent a modest increase in employment generating activity in an established employment area with good local transport links and accessibility to and from Thames. Officers are also mindful of recent applications for economic development on land to the south and west, including the recent resolution to grant permission for the relocation of the cattle market under application P17/S4415/FUL.

The Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Site and Surrounding Area

- 6.7 The site is located to the west of the existing car dealership and north of a range of other industrial buildings and uses. The application site is set back a significant distance from the public highway (Rycote Lane) and the nearest public rights of way are located over 500 metres away to the south and west. The site and proposed office building would not be readily visible from Rycote Lane and from this road and the public rights of way the development would be viewed in context with the surrounding commercial development. Furthermore, the majority of the site would remain open whilst the proposed building is a modest structure of approximately 4.5 metres in height that would be dwarfed by adjacent buildings.

Other Material Considerations

- 6.8 The proposed development is compatible with the adjacent land uses and would not cause any detriment to the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.
- 6.9 The proposal would utilise the existing access, which is suitable for commercial traffic. Having regard to the existing use of this access, the proposed use is very unlikely to materially increase the level of traffic on the local highway network. There is sufficient space within the site for staff and visitor parking.
- 6.10 The site has already been levelled and is largely clear of vegetation, and the development would have no significant impact on natural landscape features or biodiversity. The site lies on the route of a dismantled railway line and the Contaminated Land Officer has suggested that further information is required to investigate potential contamination of the site. A condition is recommended to this effect.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The application proposal is in accordance with the relevant development plan policies and national planning policy as, subject to conditions, the development would respect the character and appearance of the site and the surrounding area and would not cause any harm to the amenities of neighbouring occupiers or be prejudicial to highway safety.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

8.1 **To delegate authority to the head of planning to grant planning permission subject to the following conditions:**

1. **Commencement of development within three years.**
2. **Development in accordance with the approved plans.**
3. **Storage on the site shall be limited to a height of 3.5 metres above ground level unless it relates to the storage of vehicles, plant, or machinery..**
4. **Existing hedging on the boundaries of the site to be retained.**
5. **Contaminated land investigation and remediation to be carried out.**

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