
APPLICATION NO.	P13/S2409/FUL
APPLICATION TYPE	FULL APPLICATION
REGISTERED	30.7.2013
PARISH	GREAT HASELEY
WARD MEMBER(S)	Mr Stephen Harrod
APPLICANT	Ariens Properties Ltd
SITE	Former EFG Offices Stadhampton Road Great Haseley, OX44 7PF
PROPOSAL	Phase 1: Demolish existing Class B1(a) office building, make good gable of attached building and erect security fence and gates Phase 2: Demolish part of existing Class B2 workshop and erect new workshop and storage extension
AMENDMENTS	As amended by drawing nos 13040-P01A ,13040-P03A, DOC35 and DOC36 accompanying Agent's email dated 17 September 2013.
GRID REFERENCE	463281/202188
OFFICER	Ms S Crawford

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application has been referred to the Committee because the recommendation conflicts with the views of the Parish Council.
- 1.2 The site forms part of an industrial complex in a rural location on the edge Great Haseley. It is located adjacent to the A329 and has good transport links. There are a range of buildings across the site, some flat roofed and constructed in brick and others constructed in profiled metal under shall pitched roofs. Most buildings are two storey in height. The site has no special designation.
- 1.3 The site is identified on the Ordnance Survey Extract **attached** at Appendix 1.

2.0 PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The application seeks full planning permission for a two phased development comprising:
 - 1. the demolition of an existing two storey flat roof office building (class B1 use - 1050 square metres of floor space). This phase includes the making good of an exposed wall to a retained warehouse, and
 - 2. the demolition of 190 square metres of workshop floor space and the erection of a new warehouse building of 793 square metres of floor space (class B2). The new warehouse would be constructed in colour coated profile sheeting to match other buildings on the industrial estate.

Amended plans have been received to show the details of lighting and the provision of a field hedge in front of the proposed security fencing.

- 2.2 Countax, the company operating from the site are a subsidiary of the applicant company. They manufacture a wide range of garden tractors and mowers. Reduced copies of the plans accompanying the application are **attached** at Appendix 2. Full copies of the plans and consultation responses are available for inspection on the Council's website at www.southoxon.gov.uk.

3.0 **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

- 3.1 Great Haseley Parish Council Refuse. No objection to the principle of demolishing the existing office building and its replacement with an extension to the existing warehouse, but the introduction of the 2.4m palisade security fence is an un-necessary and un-warranted visual intrusion – it should be a hedge. Concerned that the site will be left during the dormant period prior to the new building being erected. Even with these concerns addressed the Parish Council recommends that planning permission is not granted unless and until the status of the adjacent highway (currently unlawfully block-up) and its use as open storage (with planning permission) have been resolved.

Finally, the existing buildings have a number of floodlights and we would like to see included in the application, details of the inevitable floodlighting proposed by the applicant both after the demolition of the office building and after the erection of the warehouse extension.

OCC (Highways) No objection subject to conditions

4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 [P06/W0923](#) - Approved (23/02/2007)
External refurbishment of an existing office block and erection of a lean to canopy. (As amplified by Agent's e-mail and Access and Design Statement received 19 October 2006).

[P04/W1234/RET](#) - Approved (16/12/2004)
Use of hardstanding area for the storage of returnable packaging, waste compactors and skips without compliance with condition 4 of planning permission P03/N0076 (Retrospective).

[P99/N0068](#) - Approved (20/12/1999)
Erection of warehouse unit. (As amplified by letter from the applicant dated 15 December 1999).

[P98/N0165/RET](#) - Approved (03/07/1998)
Erection of 2no. 5m high security cameras.

[P94/N0247](#) - Approved (20/06/1994)
Covered links between two existing units and covered link used for unloading materials. Including recladding of building.

[P92/N0365](#) - Approved (16/12/1992)
Warehouse extension to existing unit.

5.0 **POLICY & GUIDANCE**

5.1 South Oxfordshire Core Strategy policies

- CSEM1 - Supporting a successful economy
- CSEM4 - Supporting economic development
- CSQ3 - Design
- CSS1 - The Overall Strategy
- CSEN1 - Landscape protection

5.2 South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 policies;

- C8 - Adverse affect on protected species
- C9 - Loss of landscape features
- E5 - Business, industrial, warehousing and storage proposals
- G2 - Protect district from adverse development
- T1 - Safe, convenient and adequate highway network for all users
- T2 - Unloading, turning and parking for all highway users

South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2008

5.3 National Planning Policy Framework

6.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

6.1 The main issues in this case;

- Whether the principle of development is acceptable.
- Design, Scale and type of development
- Landscape impact
- Access and parking
- Other issues.

6.2i **Principle of development.** The National Planning Policy Framework (The NPPF) sets out the Government's policies in relation to planning. The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and the Government is committed to ensuring that sustainable development is not impeded.

6.2ii Paragraphs 18 – 22 of The NPPF set out the Government's commitment to securing economic growth in order to create jobs and prosperity and ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system.

6.2iii The South Oxfordshire Core Strategy acknowledges the need to plan for a strong and stable local economy to support our objectives. In a large rural district when businesses outgrow their existing premises or new businesses start up they will need premises locally. We aim to make sure that there are enough suitable locations, premises and infrastructure and to promote high quality sustainable development.

6.2iv Employment should be in accessible locations that are, or will be, well served by a choice of means of transport in order to improve sustainability. Our distribution strategy is consistent with our overall settlement strategy and is to:

- provide for most development to be in the four towns as our strategy is to support the towns;
- allow for the allocation of some small sites in some of the larger villages, and
- for reasonable expansion on existing sites.

- 6.2v The site is an existing industrial area and has good road connections. The building to be demolished was previously occupied by the Economic Forestry Group and has been vacant for some time. Countax who own the remainder of the industrial area have bought the site and are seeking to expand. The existing building does not meet their requirements, as offices are not needed, and it is in a poor state of repair. The new warehouse building would allow the company to grow and diversify into other forms of equipment manufacture. The existing industrial area is a well established and well serviced. The industrial area as a whole provides important job opportunities for Great Haseley and surrounding villages. It is well served by road connections but has the benefit of not being prominent in the landscape due to the flat nature of the area and the dense tree belt to the A329.
- 6.2vi In my view the proposal represents the reasonable extension of an existing company and accords with the policies in the Core Strategy and Local Plan. It would also meet with the council's strategic objective of supporting a vibrant local economy.
- 6.3i **Design, scale and type of development.** The proposed scheme seeks to replace an existing brick office building comprising approximately 1050m² of floor space over 2 floors together with a section of adjacent workshop space and to erect a new industrial shed creating approximately 793m² of floor space on one level. Overall there is a reduction of 447 square metres of floor space but the footprint of buildings is slightly increased because the new floor space is on one floor only.
- 6.3ii The unit height is approximately 9.8m to the ridge and 6.05m to the eaves. The walls and roof would be of steel profile sheet construction to match the existing adjacent buildings in all respects.
- 6.3iv The general form of the building would be simple with a long ridge spanning between gables all to replicate the general form of the adjoining buildings and is acceptable in your officer's view.
- 6.4i **Landscape impact.** The South Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment identifies the landscape characteristics of the district and gives guidelines for landscape enhancement, planning and development. The site falls within the Clay Vale character area; an area of lowland agricultural landscape of undulating semi-enclosed vale. It is an area of medium scenic quality with moderate sensitivity to change. It is a landscape identified to restore in order to strengthen the landscape structure which has been lost as a result of intensive arable farming (the loss of hedges etc).
- 6.4ii In this case there is an existing tree belt onto the A329 which provides a very effective and important screen and provides a strong boundary between the rural and developed land. The existing tree belt and the trees on the frontage of the site will be retained to preserve the screening between the development and the highway and to help assimilate the building into its context. The new warehouse will be read against the back drop of other industrial buildings and the overall impact of development will not be significant in the landscape. Conditions are recommended to control lighting, landscaping and to ensure that no external storage is allowed on the areas to the front of the site.
- 6.4iii The application includes the provision of palisade fencing to 2.4 m in height to provide security for the site following the demolition. Whilst palisade fencing is very industrial in character it would allow views into the site and is set well back from the road. In addition the applicant has agreed to the planting of a hedge along the frontage of the fencing to grow to height of not less than 1.5 metres. The existing grass verge and

trees are also to be retained. The verge, existing trees and new hedge would help to soften the fencing in the long term once established.

6.5 **Access and Parking.** The access to the site and the parking area will be largely unaffected. In addition the amount of commercial floor space will be reduced by some 444 square metres. The Highway Engineer has no objection to the development subject to condition.

6.6i **Other issues.** The Parish Council have objected to the scheme on a number of grounds although they have no objection to the principle of development per se. Their main objection relates to the reference on the plans to 2.4m high palisade security fencing on the site frontage; which they consider will be a visual intrusion. Your officer's have sought clarification on the security fencing as it is not in situ at present. The agent has clarified that the fence is required to secure the site once the demolition takes place because access would then be available into the interior of the site. However, the applicant has agreed to plant an indigenous hedge on the outer side of the fence to help to soften its appearance. See paragraph 6.4iii above.

6.6ii The Parish Council consider that planning permission should not be granted unless and until the status of the adjacent highway, (which they consider is unlawfully blocked up) is clarified and the open storage upon the highway has obtained planning permission. The road junction onto the A329 has been realigned in the past and has created a cul-de-sac spur that provides access to the rear units on the existing industrial estate. The area is not however part of the current application area and the use of the spur is not related to the current proposal. It is not therefore reasonable to withhold planning permission until any perceived issues in relation to the spur road are resolved.

6.6iii The third concern of the Parish Council relates to the provision of floodlighting. Details of the floodlighting have now been provided. Three 3 metre high poles are proposed with lighting design to face away from the road to light the parking area.

7.0 **CONCLUSION**

7.1 Your officers recommend that planning permission is granted for the demolition of offices and their replacement with a warehouse building because this is an existing industrial site with good transport links and, subject to the recommended conditions, will not have a significant or adverse impact on the landscape or character of the area. The proposal accords with Development Plan policies.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

8.1 **Planning Permission**

1. **Commencement 3 yrs - Full Planning Permission**
2. **Approved plans**
3. **Demolition of specified buildings**
4. **Sample materials required (walls and roof)**
5. **UNIQUE - Materials**
6. **Parking & Manoeuvring Areas Retained**
7. **Landscaping Scheme (trees and shrubs only)**
8. **No external storage**

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