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Planning Department
South Holland District Council
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01 February 2021

Dear Sir / Madam

FULL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR EXTENSIONS TO THE ROOF OF THE BUILDING AND MINOR ALTERATIONS FOLLOWING PLANNING APPROVALS H02-0708-19 AND H02-0143-20 AT THE FORMER WYEVALE GARDEN CENTRE, POSTLAND ROAD, CROWLAND, PE6 0JB.

Please find enclosed a full planning application for the above proposed development. The purpose of this covering letter is to describe the site, set out a detailed description of the proposed development and an assessment against key planning policy and material considerations.

Please note that in addition to this covering letter, this application is accompanied by the following supporting documentation:

- Application forms and certificates
- Location Plan (drawing no CGL-XX-XX-DR-A-010XX1)
- Existing and proposed site plans (drawing nos CGL-XX-00-DR-A-010XX1 and CGL-XX-00-DR-A-060XX1)
- Existing and proposed ground floor plans (drawing nos CGL-XX-00-DR-A-010001 and CGL-XX-00-DR-A-060001)
- Existing and proposed elevations (drawing nos CGL-XX-EL-DR-A-020XX1 and CGL-XX-EL-DR-A-070XX1)
- Existing and proposed sections (drawing nos CGL-XX-SE-DR-A-020XX1 and CGL-XX-SE-DR-A-070XX1)
- Existing Mezzanine Floor Plan (drawing no CGL-XX-01-DR-A-010011)
- Existing and Proposed Roof Plans (drawing nos CGL-XX-XX-DR-A-010RF1 and CGL-XX-XX-DR-A-060RF1)

Background and Economic Justification

Planning permission was approved on 12th September 2019 under reference H02-0708-19 for the change of use from the former garden centre (A1 use class) to mixed (B1 & B8 uses) and associated building operations, car parking and infrastructure. The current garden centre use has since ceased and the landlord's intention is to convert the building to the approved commercial uses to enable a marketing campaign to commence and new tenants to be found.

Since the application was approved further advice from commercial agents has been sought. This advice has raised concerns about the restricted height of parts of the building and the negative impact this is likely to have on the marketability of some of the commercial units to be created with the building.

A subsequent planning application has already been approved for extensions to the roof of a smaller section of the building under application reference H02-0143-20. However, it has since become clear that further extensions to raise the roof height of the remainder of the building will be required in order to afford sufficient headroom for the future occupiers for the rest of the building.

The existing roof would also benefit from repair works and a reclad so the proposed development assists with the overall refurbishment to improve the standard of the building.

The new roof is proposed to be re-clad in Profiled Metal Cladding so that it matches the rest of the building and is more appropriate for the intended use.

Other changes include a small extension to infill the existing recess between proposed units 9 and 10 and to bring the wall flush with the remainder of the building, infilling the very slight recess between proposed units 7 and 8, the insertion of new external doors to serve each unit and some minor internal alterations, principally including the addition of small kitchen / canteen spaces within the units.

The proposed amendments all help to improve the uniformity of the appearance of the building and improve flexibility of its use and adaptability to meet occupier needs. The changes therefore should help to facilitate the successful marketing of the units, ongoing occupancy rates, which in turn should drive up the employment benefits of the proposed development.

Planning consent H02-0708-19 established the principle of using the building for B1 and B8 use. The Officer's Report acknowledged that use of the site for B1 and B8 uses would be a good reuse of this site and would have the potential to provide local employment opportunities. The subject planning application proposes uncontroversial and relatively minor changes to the approved building plans in order to give the best possible chance of future occupiers being found and new employment opportunities being created.

The Site

The application 'site' is denoted by the red line of the accompanying site location plan and comprises a large 5,282sqm (GIA) building which was formerly the Wyevale Garden Centre, along with goods yards to the north, south and west of the building and car parking areas to the east and south, providing approximately 99 spaces. Access is taken via an access road from Postland Road. In total, the wider site area extends to 2.28ha (although note the red line area is restricted to the floorspace of the building as proposed, which is approximately 4,964sqm).

Context

The site is previously developed (brownfield) land. It is located on the north eastern end of Crowland, off Postland Road, there is a caravan park located approximately 50m to the north east. Postland Road joins to James Road, running close to the southern boundary of the site and this links to the A16, providing convenient highways links to wider locations including Peterborough to the south and Spalding to the north. The built-up area of Crowland is located to the west of the site, albeit there is a separation distance of approximately 130m from the nearest residential areas. Further to the north, east and south of the site boundary lies open countryside, although mature vegetation surrounds the site boundaries and as such there is limited intervisibility between the site and views from the countryside beyond.

Environmental Designations

The Environment Agency's flood maps indicate that the site in its entirety falls within a flood zone 3, with a high probability of sea or river flooding (this is defined as land having a 1 in 100 or greater annual probability

of river flooding; or land having a 1 in 200 or greater annual probability of sea flooding). Flood risk and drainage is discussed in the assessment section below.

There are no designated heritage assets on the site or within close proximity and there are no other relevant environmental designations affecting the site.

Planning Policy Designations

The Proposal Maps of the adopted South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (March 2019) indicate that the site is located just outside of the settlement boundary, located west of the access point. It lies within a mineral safeguarding area for sand and gravel and there is a housing allocation (Cro050) located approximately 140m to the west of the site.

Planning History and Lawful Use

Planning permission was granted for the change of use of the former Welland Holiday Hire business to a garden centre and use of 2 buildings for B1 (business) purposes on 10th July 2001 under planning application reference H02-0218-01. This previously established the former lawful use of the site as a garden centre. The two buildings granted for B1 use are located within the adjacent Crowland Caravans and Camping site and are therefore outside of the subject application site and are not relevant to this application.

As discussed above, planning consent was granted on 12th September 2019 (under reference H02-0708-19) for the Change of use from garden centre (A1) to mixed (B1 & B8 uses) and associated building operations, car parking and infrastructure. This granted the proposed change of use to B1 and B8 uses and some minor building operations to facilitate the conversion.

A subsequent planning consent was then granted for alterations and roof extensions to the southern section of the building under application reference H02-0143-20.

There are no other relevant planning applications covering the site as registered on South Holland District Council's online planning application search facility.

Proposed Development

The description of the proposed development is as follows:

"Full planning application for extensions to the roof of the building and minor alterations following planning approvals H02-0708-19 and H02-0143-20".

More specifically, the proposed development involves the following:

- Raising the roof by 1050mm.
- Infill extension in the recess between proposed units 9 and 10
- Minor infill extension in the recess between proposed units 7 and 8
- New external staff access doors to each unit
- Internal alterations, including introduction of kitchenettes / canteen areas
- Reduction in the amount of glazing from the previous approved proposals

The plans which were approved under H02-0143-20 and are to be amended are as follows:

- Proposed Site Plan (approved drawing number P19-020_201 rev A) is substituted by CGL-XX-00-DR-A-060XX1
- Proposed Ground Floor Plan (approved drawing number P19-020_202 rev A) is substituted by CGL-XX-00-DR-A-060001

- Proposed Elevations (approved drawing number P19-020_210 rev A) is substituted by CGL-XX-EL-DR-A-070XX1

The gross internal area (GIA) of the submitted plans (4,964sqm) is slightly greater than the previous approved plans (4,928sqm). This 36sqm increase is due to the proposed infill extension between units 9 and 10 and the infilling of the slight recess between proposed units 7 and 8. The change in floorspace is therefore only very slight and will not significantly affect the external footprint of the building.

Planning Policy Context and Assessment

The statutory development plan comprises the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2011-2031), which was adopted in March 2019. Planning law dictates that planning applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The key policies of the Local Plan which are of relevance to the proposed development are as follows:

Policy 2 (Development Management)

Policy 3 (Design of New Development)

Policy 4 (Approach to Flood Risk)

Policy 7 (Improving South East Lincolnshire's Employment Land Portfolio)

Principle of Development.

The principle of the change of the use of the building to B1 and B8 uses has already been established under planning consent H02-0708-19 and is supported by Policy 7 of the Local Plan. Furthermore, the proposed development is supported by the National Planning Policy Framework which supports the efficient re-use of previously developed land and supports developments which meet the changing needs of businesses and generate investment and growth. The proposed development will result in the sustainable reuse of a vacant site to accommodate new employment uses.

The subject planning application involves some amendments to the building plans, which are explained in the 'proposed development' section above. Subject to the amendments being in accordance with the relevant policies of the Local Plan, the proposed development should be approved.

Policy 2 of the Local Plan (Development Management) states that proposals will be permitted provided that sustainable development considerations are met. The proposals are assessed (in bold) against the criteria of Policy 2 as follows:

Proposals requiring planning permission for development will be permitted provided that sustainable development considerations are met, specifically in relation to:

1. *size, scale, layout, density and impact on the amenity, trees, character and appearance of the area and the relationship to existing development and land uses; **The proposals are to raise the roof of the existing building by 1050mm. This increase in height is modest and does not raise the building significantly. The building is also well screened from view being enclosed and surrounding by woodland and dense vegetation and therefore would result in adverse impacts upon the character and appearance of the local area.***
2. *quality of design and orientation; **The proposed development utilises materials and finishes which are consistent with the existing building and appropriate for the use.***
3. *maximising the use of sustainable materials and resources; **The proposed materials are high quality and durable and assist with building insulation to conserve energy use. The***

replacement roof should also improve the thermal insulation of the building as it will be replaced with materials which meet the latest standards.

4. access and vehicle generation levels; **The proposals are only for minor building operations and will not affect vehicle generation. This is discussed further in the relevant section below.**
5. *the capacity of existing community services and infrastructure;* **The proposals are only for minor building operations and will not affect demand for existing community services and infrastructure.**
6. *impact upon neighbouring land uses by reason of noise, odour, disturbance or visual intrusion;* **The proposals are only for minor building operations and will not affect neighbouring amenity.**
7. *sustainable drainage and flood risk;* **The proposals are only for minor building operations; they do not introduce any additional significant hard surfaces and therefore are not expected to increase flood risk.**
8. *impact or enhancement for areas of natural habitats and historical buildings and heritage assets;* **The proposed works will not in any way impact natural habitats, there are no heritage assets on the site or nearby which may be affected; and**
9. *impact on the potential loss of sand and gravel mineral resources.* **The site already hosts a building and is not available for mineral extraction.**

Design

The building comprises a relatively large steel frame structure, with brick and steel-clad walls, and has the utilitarian appearance of a typical warehouse. The proposed development will simply raise the roof by 1050mm to increase headroom, refurbish the roof in the process and make it appropriate for the proposed use. The proposed development is therefore acceptable in terms of its design and is in accordance with policy 3.

Transport and Parking

The proposed development was fully assessed under planning application reference H02-0708-19 to be acceptable in terms of highways and transport impacts. The amendments under the current application do not materially affect the overall floor space of approved B1 and B8 uses. Therefore, the predicted highway impacts remain unchanged.

A Transport Statement (TPA Associates) supported the previous application reference H02-0708-19. Whilst this statement was prepared for the previous application and has not been updated, the proposed floorspace has not materially changed (the GIA has increased by 31sqm only due to small infill extensions between units 9 and 10 and 7 and 8, which would just form a small entrance lobby area and to bring the external envelope flush with the rest of the building) and therefore the assessment of the highways impacts remains relevant and up to date. The Transport Statement provided an assessment of the site access and the predicted trip rates on local highways and these are found to be acceptable, a view clearly endorsed by the approval of the 2019 application.

The proposed development is therefore in accordance with Policies 33 and 36 of the Local Plan.

Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage

The Environment Agency maps indicate that the application site is located in a Flood Zone 3. However, the previous application (H02-0708-19) was supported by a flood risk assessment and assessed to be acceptable through the application process. The relatively minor changes proposed within the subject application do not increase in any way the susceptibility of the proposed development to flood risk; furthermore, the proposed uses are categorised as less sensitive to flood risk.

Drainage

The site will continue to drain to the surrounding land drainage system as it does at present. The proposed development does not involve introducing any significant impermeable surfaces and there are no anticipated changes to surface water impacts than exist at present.

Conclusion

This covering letter has provided a detailed description of the site and the proposed development, along with an assessment against the development plan and material planning considerations.

The acceptability of the change of use of the building has already been established under planning approval H02-0708-19. The proposed development simply involves some relatively minor and uncontroversial amendments to the building plans so that the development meets market demands and to help to ensure occupation of the units without delay. The economic and employment benefits will be significant, and the proposals constitute sustainable development.

The planning assessment within this letter explains how the proposals are in accordance with the development plan and we would therefore respectfully request for the planning application to be supported and for a determination to be issued as soon as possible.

Yours faithfully

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