

2127: Proposed Change-of-use to builders merchants premises (with trade counter and showroom) with associated alterations to existing building and construction of new storage warehouse building.

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

- **The Proposed Development:** The development in hand on this occasion can be summarised as follows:
 - Change-of-use of the existing premises at the application site to builders merchants, including builders merchants storage/merchandising yard area and trade counter/showroom.
 - Construction of aggregate storage bays.
 - Construction of portal framed builders merchants storage building.
 - Erection of racking in yard area.
 - Erection of 2.4m high metal palisade security fence to site perimeter (with gates).
 - Alterations (internal and external) to existing buildings within this site perimeter.

Upon completion the premises will be utilised as a builders merchants premises for a small chain of builders merchants.

The applicant company (under the agents name, Parkland Developments) was established in 1895 as a timber and builders merchanting company. The applicant is today Lincolnshire's largest independent multi branch building and plumbing merchant operating from six depots across Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire, the nearest of which lies in Boston. The Spalding area is currently serviced by the Boston branch, but these arrangements are not satisfactory and the applicant has identified an ideal opportunity to expand their business activities into the Spalding area.

The applicant employs 130 staff across all branches. The applicant has a policy of employing local people wherever possible to encourage trade support and important links with the local community whilst lessening the impact of their development in terms of travel time and travel movements. The applicants ethos is to support only local family businesses like their own, which they find creates a unique bond of mutual support and loyalty whilst ensuring that the local economy benefits from this strategy.

- **Use:** As identified in the extensive description given above, the use of the premises and site upon granting of planning consent shall revert to that of a builders merchants premises.
- **Amount of Development:** The amount of development proposed can be easily identified from the application drawings to which the readers attention is drawn. The majority of the buildings which make up the application are existing buildings which are to receive minor internal and external modifications and alterations to make them fit for the proposed purpose. Details of the proposed alterations are portrayed within the application drawings to which the readers attention is drawn.

The proposal also includes the construction of a general purpose storage warehouse (36m x 11.5m, (414m²) 6m to the eaves) which shall be used as general storage of builders materials.

In addition to the above, there are various areas of hard surface (concrete) to be formed within the application site area to improve the existing yard surface to a stage where this can be utilised for general purpose storage of builders merchants/materials. These elements are shown in the application drawings.

- **Scale and Proportion of the Proposal:** The scale and proportion of the main elements of the proposal (existing buildings) are dictated by the format of the existing building which is not physically altered in any substantial way to achieve the required aims.

In terms of the new warehouse proposed, this is in-keeping in general with similar industrial/commercial buildings within the area and is felt of an appropriate format in general. The overall height of this building (6m to the eaves) is dictated by basic/standard internal storage height requirements for a building of this type.

- **Landscaping:** As the vast majority of the existing site is laid to hard standing (concrete) and as it is proposed to extend this surface over the entire site area, no formal landscaping proposals are made as part of this scheme. It is perhaps worth pointing out that the western site boundary (Benner Road) does contain a small number of attractive trees and a grass margin which will remain, unaffected by this proposal.
- **Appearance:** The appearance of the existing buildings within the site will be substantially improved by the alterations proposed as set out in the application drawings. The proposed new building (profiled steel clad in roof and wall elements) will be in-keeping in general with the industrial estate appearance of the area.

- **Access:** Access to the application site itself will remain unchanged from the existing although improved to provide heavy goods vehicle access to the storage yard area.

Customer access to the sales and display building will be from the southern aspect of Benner Road as indicated within the site location and block plan drawings.

Heavy goods vehicle access will be gained from the northern end of the application site (again abutting Benner Road) all as indicated in the site layout plan (drawing 2332/A1/04) to which the reader's attention is drawn.

It is expected that the change of use of the site to a builders merchants operation will not create any additional vehicular flow, or particularly significant change in nature in traffic in comparison to the previous use of the site.

- **Transportation:** The new builders merchant branch which will be created by this proposal will create 12 new jobs including drivers, fork lift operatives, yard hands, trade counter staff, sales traders, office administrators and management positions.

The applicant operates a car-sharing policy and (as the first section of this document) has a policy of employing local people in order to minimise travel time and travel journeys wherever feasible. Staff parking (shown within the application drawings) will be provided within the application site curtilage, although staff use of public transport, car-sharing, and cycle-to-work are all encouraged by the applicant.

- **Summary:** In summary, the proposal for the change-of-use of the existing (disused) Benner Road site to a builders merchants premises is in line with Local Plan Policy. The application contents raise no matters of particular concern, and the proposal will generate significant business and employment within the Benner Road estate/employment areas.

Statement Ends.