

Application Number: F/YR14/0717/F
Major
Parish/Ward: Medworth Wisbech South
Applicant: H L Hutchinson Ltd.
Agent: Steven Dunn Architects Limited.

Proposal: Erection of 2-storey office and single-storey warehouse building with sales counter and 2.4 metre high metal palisade fence.
Location: Land North East of 25, Cromwell Road, Wisbech.

Reason before Committee: The site falls within the South Wisbech Broad Location for Growth area.

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/RECOMMENDATION

This application seeks full planning permission for the erection of a 2-storey office and single-storey warehouse building with sales counter and 2.4m high metal palisade fencing at land north east of 25 Cromwell Road in Wisbech. The site is located within a broad location for growth as identified in the Local Plan (Policy LP8). The proposal seeks to introduce an office and warehouse development to the northern side of the site with parking and associated land.

The key issues to consider are:

- Principle and Policy Implications
- Layout and Design
- Access and Highway Safety
- Residential Amenity
- Flood Risk
- Health and Well-Being
- Economic Growth

The key issues have been considered along with current Local and National Planning Policies, and has been assessed in line with the wider South Wisbech Broad Concept Plan. The proposal is considered to be acceptable subject to the approval by Members of the Planning Committee of the South Wisbech Broad Concept Plan.

2. HISTORY

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|-----|---------------|---|---|
| 2.1 | F/YR01/0425/F | Variation of condition 02 of planning permission F/92/0801/O (mixed commercial development comprising hotel with restaurant and petrol filling facilities B1 (Business) B2 (General Industrial) B8 (Storage/Distribution) & showroom buildings. | Granted 22 nd June 2001. |
| 2.2 | F/98/0813/O | Erection of a cold store and farm shop. | Granted 24 th February 1999. |

2.3	F/98/0369/F	Variation of condition 02 of planning permission F/92/0801/O (mixed commercial development comprising hotel with restaurant and petrol filling facilities B1 (Business) B2 (General Industrial) B8 (Storage/Distribution) & showroom buildings.	Granted October 1998.	15 th
2.4	F/97/0783/F	Variation of condition 02 of planning permission F/92/0801/O (mixed commercial development comprising hotel with restaurant and petrol filling facilities B1 (Business) B2 (General Industrial) B8 (Storage/Distribution) & showroom buildings.	Granted 1998.	21 st May
2.5	F/96/0155/O	Erection of 4 no. workplace homes and formation of associated parking area.	Granted 1997.	14 th May
2.6	F/92/0801/O	Mixed commercial development comprising of hotel with restaurant and petrol filling facilities B1 (Business) B2 (General Industrial) B8 (Storage/Distribution) & showroom buildings.	Granted September 1993.	24 th
2.7	F/1444/88/O	Mixed commercial development comprising hotel with restaurant and petrol filling facilities B1 (business) B2 (general industrial) B8 (storage/distribution) and showroom buildings.	Approved March 1990.	22 nd

3. PLANNING POLICIES

3.1 National Planning Policy Framework:

Paragraph 2: Planning law requires that application for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan.

Paragraph 14: Presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Paragraph 17: Seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.

Paragraph 21: Building a strong, competitive economy.

Paragraphs 100 – 103: Flood Risk

Section 7: Requiring Good Design.

3.2 Fenland Local Plan 2014

LP1: A Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development.

LP2: Facilitating Health and Wellbeing of Fenland Residents.

LP6: Employment, Tourism, Community Facilities and Retail.

LP7: Urban Extensions.

LP8: Wisbech.

LP14: Responding to Climate Change and Managing the Risk of Flooding in Fenland.

LP16: Delivering and Protecting High Quality Environments across the District.

4. CONSULTATIONS

4.1 ***Town Council***

Application Supported.

4.2 ***Natural England***

No objection in relation to and Statutory Nature Conservation sites. Refer to their standing advice in relation to protected species.

4.3 ***Environment Agency***

The proposed development will only meet the requirements of the NPPF if the measures contained within the FRA are implemented and secured by way of a planning condition. Provides advice in relation to foul drainage.

4.4 ***Middle Level Commissioners***

Agreed in principle that they would be prepared to accept direct discharge from the Hutchinsons' site however improvement works would need to be undertaken since, at present, such flows could not be accepted. Require it to be demonstrated that the proposed surface water/treated effluent disposal systems will work efficiently and effectively.

4.5 ***Police Senior Architectural Liaison Officer***

Limited comments to make concerning crime prevention and fear of crime. Concerns that palisade fencing limits opportunity for surveillance and is a less secure option than other types of fencing. Requests inclusion of an external lighting condition.

4.6 ***CCC Highways (Transport Assessment Team)***

Provides comments in relation to pedestrian access, cycle access, bus access, existing traffic conditions, highway safety. Initially raised a holding objection however has now received all of the required information to remove this objection. Requests conditions relating to access provision, improvements to the pedestrian and cycle network and the inclusion of the Travel Plan as agreed, as well as Section 106 requirements for a contribution to cover improvements to, and the provision of new, local bus stops.

4.7 ***Transport Development Manager:***

Initially raised an objection that the application was contrary to Policy as a Broad Concept Plan was required before applications could come forward in this area. A Broad Concept Plan is being presented to Committee on 29 April and if approved the objection to this application can be removed. Should the Broad Concept Plan not be approved then the objection to this application would remain.

4.8 ***FDC Environmental Health***

Note and accept the submitted information. The development is unlikely to have a detrimental effect on local air quality or the noise climate. A contaminated land investigation has been undertaken which shows the site is suitable for a commercial end use however the unsuspected contamination condition is required.

4.9 **Local Residents:**

1 letter of objection received concerning (in summary):

- Whilst supportive of the applicants need to relocate their successful local business, have concerns about the proposal on the South Wisbech Growth Area and its conflict with LP7 and LP8.
- Concern that this development will preclude an access into the Growth area if the other proposed accesses were to be found too costly or unable to be implemented.
- LP7 and LP8 strongly indicate that the application should not be approved in this location ahead of the master planning of the South West Wisbech area. The application should instead look at other sites ahead of this one with extant B1, B2/B8 consents.

5. **SITE DESCRIPTION**

5.1 The application site is located off Cromwell Road in Wisbech. The site is located within the Broad Location for Growth identified to the South of Wisbech in the Fenland Local Plan. The site is currently occupied partly by car parking for the existing adjacent farm shop with the remainder being a vacant, former orchard. The site fronts onto Cromwell Road and to the north of the site lies an existing industrial premises with access and parking along the northern boundary of the site. To the south of the application site is an existing dwelling and farm shop. Opposite the site, on the other side of Cromwell Road, is an area of orchard. The predominant land use along Cromwell Road is industrial/commercial with car sales, industrial units and shops.

6. **PLANNING ASSESSMENT**

6.1 The key considerations for this application are:

- Principle and Policy Implications
- Layout and Design
- Access and Highway Safety
- Residential Amenity
- Flood Risk
- Health and Well-being
- Economic Growth

Principle and Policy Implications

The key policies for consideration in this application are as follows:

Policy LP6 is relevant in the consideration of applications for employment and retail premises and proposals. The proposal is located in an area which is considered acceptable for employment purposes.

Policy LP7 - Urban Extensions. Requires all urban extensions around the four market towns to be planned and implemented in a co-ordinated way through an agreed overarching Broad Concept Plan linked to the timely delivery of key infrastructure and to be approved by Planning Committee. All subsequent planning applications should accord with the Broad Concept Plan.

Policy LP13 – Seeks to support and manage the impact of a growing district in terms of securing infrastructure provision/improvement and the use of developer contributions.

Policy LP14 - Considers how the impact of climate change and flood risk can be properly managed in new developments.

Policy LP15 – seeks to facilitate the creation of a more sustainable transport network throughout the District.

Policy LP16 - Seeks to ensure that high quality environments are protected and provided in all new developments.

A key consideration for this proposal is the site's location within the South Wisbech Broad Location for Growth. This area is identified in Policy LP8 as an area for a major urban extension in Wisbech. In accordance with Policy LP7 a Broad Concept Plan (BCP) for the urban extension has been prepared which has included consideration of future infrastructure requirements. Therefore it is considered that this application can now be given full consideration subject to the approval of the Broad Concept Plan by Members' of the Planning Committee.

The BCP has considered the development of this area as a whole. A number of evidence reports have been carried out and completed to determine the best form of development for the area as a whole, including phasing. The BCP meets the requirements of Policy LP8 in the Local Plan for South Wisbech. This application site falls within the area identified as Phase 1 in the BCP. Concerns were raised initially about the location of this site resulting in the loss of a potential access from Cromwell Road into the wider BCP area. However for the BCP evidence, a study and traffic modelling was carried out by transport consultants Atkins. Their assessment modelled a number of access scenarios for the wider South Wisbech area and has demonstrated that other access opportunities are available. As such this site is unlikely to preclude the development of the wider BCP area in the future.

Overall the proposal is considered to accord acceptably with the Broad Concept Plan for the area. Accordingly, the proposal is acceptable in principle subject to meeting other Policy criteria detailed within the Local Plan.

Layout and Design

The proposed development seeks to introduce an office and linked warehouse building off Cromwell Road in Wisbech. The proposed buildings will be sited along the northern boundary of the site. The office premises are to be sited closest to Cromwell Road with the warehouse element extending back into the site. The layout includes parking areas to the front and side of the office building. Access into the site will be to the south western corner of the site and will allow access for lorries and cars alike. Lorries will be directed along the access road into the site where there will be loading bays in the warehouse building. To the southern side of the site is a service yard area and the site will be bounded by 2.4m high metal palisade fencing.

The layout of the site is consistent with other industrial/office site layouts in the wider area and as such the layout is considered to be acceptable in accordance with Policy LP16.

The design of the proposed offices is a two-storey building with contrasting brickwork and a linear form of windows along both the ground and first floor. The office building will adjoin the warehouse building which is slightly higher than the roof line of the office building. The warehouse is of a typical industrial design with cladding and lorry loading bay doors to the southern elevation. Both the designs of the office building and warehouse are in keeping with the building designs in the surrounding area and raise no objections in terms of visual impacts upon the surrounding area. The design of the proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable in accordance with Policy LP16 of the Local Plan.

Access and Highway Safety

The proposed development involves the formation of a vehicular access off Cromwell Road to serve both cars and commercial vehicles/HGVs. The access will serve a number of parking spaces to the front and side of the office building and a service yard and lorry loading bays further into the site. The access will be gated with the gates to be set back approximately 25 metres back from the back edge of the highway.

Cambridgeshire County Council's Transport Assessment Team have reviewed the transport details submitted with the application and have provided a number of comments. Initially they placed a holding objection on the application pending further information/clarification from the applicant's. They have since confirmed that they have received all of the additional information required and as such have been able to withdraw their holding objection. Should the development be approved they have requested conditions relating to provision of site access, design and provision of improvements to the local cycle and pedestrian network and the agreements of the submitted Travel Plan, as well as S106 requirements relating to contributions to cover improvements to the existing bus stops on Cromwell Road adjacent to Weasenham Lane and the provision of new stops closer to the proposed access. The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable in terms of highway safety and the submitted Travel Plan and therefore complies with Policies LP13 and LP15 of the Local Plan.

Residential Amenity

The site is located adjacent to an existing dwelling, 25 Cromwell Road, which comprises a detached 2-storey dwelling and associated commercial activity (farm shop). No concerns are raised in relation to the B2 office use proposed within this application however to ensure that no adverse noise impacts arise from the B8 warehousing use it is proposed to include a condition relating to noise mitigation for the development and also restrict the hours of operation. It is noted that the application site is currently in the ownership of the occupants of this dwelling.

Flood Risk

The site is located within Flood Zones 1, 2 and 3 and a Flood Risk Assessment has been submitted with the application. As the site is located within the Broad Area for Growth a strategic flood risk assessment has been carried out for this area as part of the strategic site allocation and therefore the site is acceptable in terms of the sequential and exceptions tests.

The Environment Agency have assessed the FRA and have requested a condition to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with this. As such the proposal is acceptable in terms of flood risk and is in accordance with the provisions of Policy LP14 of the Local Plan.

Health and Well-being

In accordance with Policy LP2 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014 development proposals should positively contribute to creating a healthy, safe and equitable living environment. The site is located within an area of existing industrial and commercial premises and should not adversely impact on surrounding uses. The long term employment opportunities that will arise should contribute to the health and well-being of local residents. As such the proposal is in accordance with Policy LP2 of the Local Plan.

Economic Growth

The provision of this development for an existing established local business will ensure that the business has the potential to continue to expand in an area easily accessible to businesses and potential customers. As such the proposal complies with Policy LP1 of the Local Plan.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The proposal has been considered along with the relevant local and national planning policies, as well as the Broad Concept Plan for South Wisbech, of which this site forms part of. The proposal is considered to comply with the wider vision for this part of Wisbech and as such the proposal is recommended for approval subject to the approval of the Broad Concept Plan and resolution of outstanding highway issues.

8. RECOMMENDATION

Grant Subject to:

- i) The approval of the South Wisbech Broad Concept Plan**
- ii) Resolution of highway issues**
- iii) Section 106 for infrastructure requirements in line with the Broad Location requirements.**

1. **The development shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.**

Reason – To ensure compliance with Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. **Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved the permanent space shown on the plans hereby approved to be reserved on the site to enable vehicles to:**
- 1. enter, turn and leave the site in forward gear**
 - 2. park clear of the public highway, shall be levelled, surfaced and drained and thereafter retained for no other purpose in perpetuity.**

Reason - In the interests of highway safety and residential amenity in accordance with Policy LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014.

- 3. Adequate temporary facilities shall be provided clear of the public highway for the parking, turning, loading and unloading of all vehicles visiting the site during the period of construction in accordance with detail to be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA.**

Reason: In the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policy LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014.

- 4. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, details of the design and provision of improvements to the local pedestrian and cycle networks shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The submitted details shall include phasing of the works and a timetable for implementation. The works shall thereafter be implemented as approved.**

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and the sustainability of the development in accordance with Policies LP13 and LP15 of the Fenland Local Plan, 2014.

- 5. Prior to the occupation of the development hereby approved the site access shall be constructed and provided in accordance with the approved details and shall thereafter be maintained.**

Reason: In the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policy LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014.

- 6. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted a Travel Plan shall be produced and submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved plan and the arrangements retained in perpetuity.**

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and the sustainability of the development in accordance with Policies LP13 and LP15 of the Fenland Local Plan, 2014.

- 7. Prior to the commencement of development details of existing ground levels (in relation to an existing datum point), proposed finished floor levels and floor slab levels of the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.**

The development shall be carried out and thereafter retained in accordance with the approved details.

Reason - In the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policy LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014.

8. If during development, contamination not previously identified, is found to be present at the site then no further development (unless otherwise agreed in writing with the LPA) shall be carried out until the developer has submitted, and obtained written approval from the LPA, a Method Statement detailing how this unsuspected contamination shall be dealt with.

Reason: To ensure that the development complies with approved details in the interests of the protection of human health and the environment in accordance with Policy LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan, 2014.

9. The development permitted by this planning permission shall be carried out in accordance with the approved Flood Risk Assessment for proposed commercial development at land to the rear of 25 Cromwell Road, Wisbech by Geoff Beel Consultancy ref GCB/Dunn dated August 2014 and the following mitigation measures detailed within the FRA:

1. The owners of the site will sign on to the Environment Agency's Floodline Warnings Direct Service
2. Finished floor levels of proposed dwelling will be set a minimum of 400mm above existing ground level.
3. Flood resilient and resistant measures will be incorporated into the buildings.
4. Safe refuge will be provided at first floor level
5. Surface water runoff shall discharge unrestricted into the Hundred of Wisbech Internal Drainage Board as agreed in their letter to Geoff Beel dated 18 June 2014
6. Maintenance of any surface water elements on site will be the responsibility of the occupiers of the development site.

The mitigation measures shall be fully implemented prior to occupation and subsequently in accordance with the timing/phasing arrangements embodied within the scheme, or within any other period as may subsequently be agreed, in writing, by the local planning authority.

Reason: To reduce the risk of flooding to the proposed development and future occupants in accordance with Policy LP14 of the Fenland Local Plan, 2014.

10. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted, a scheme and timetable for the provision and implementation of foul and surface water drainage shall be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works/scheme shall be constructed and completed in accordance with the approved plans/specification at such time(s) as may be specified in the approved scheme and thereafter retained in perpetuity.

Reason – To ensure a satisfactory method of foul and surface water drainage in accordance with Policies LP14 and LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan, 2014.

11. Prior to the commencement of the development, full details of both hard and soft landscape works shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Subsequently these works shall be carried out as approved. The landscaping details to be submitted shall include:
- a) hard surfacing and other hard landscape features and materials;
 - b) existing trees, hedges or other soft features to be retained;
 - c) planting plans, including specifications of species, sizes, planting centres and percentage mix;

Reason: To enhance the visual amenities of the surrounding area and to reduce the visual impact of the development hereby approved in accordance with Policy LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan, 2014.

12. Prior the commencement of the development hereby approved, a scheme for the provision of external lighting shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such approved details shall be installed prior to the commencement of the use and retained thereafter in perpetuity.

Reason: In order to ensure this site meets crime prevention guidelines in accordance with Policies LP2 and LP17 of the Fenland Local Plan, 2014.

13. Notwithstanding the submitted details, full details of the proposed boundary treatments to all boundaries of the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved details shall be installed prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted.

Reason – In the interests of crime prevention in accordance with Policies LP2 and LP17 of the Fenland Local Plan, 2014.

14. Prior to the occupation of the development hereby approved, a noise mitigation strategy shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved strategy shall be implemented prior to the first occupation of the development and shall be maintained in perpetuity.

Reason: In the interests of protecting residential amenity in accordance with Policy LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan, 2014.

15. The use hereby permitted shall only operate between the hours of 0700 and 1730 Mondays to Fridays, 0700 and 1100 Saturdays and not at all on Sundays and Bank Holidays.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of the occupants of the adjoining dwelling in accordance with Policy LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan, 2014.

16. Approved Plans.



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