





CONSULTANTS LTD



MSC1643/JH

Planning Department
South Cambridgeshire District Council
South Cambridgeshire Hall
Cambourne Business Park
Cambridge
CB23 6EA

Via The Planning Portal only

12 October 2023

Dear Sir or Madam

**Town and Country Planning Act 1990
Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
Oakington Garden Centre, Dry Drayton Road, Oakington CB24 3BD
Planning Portal Reference: PP-12392529**

On 12 October 2023 we submitted a planning application in respect of the above site.

The planning application comprises the following documents:

- Completed application form and certificates
- This covering letter
- Location plan, drawing reference MSC1643-30A
- Block plan as existing, drawing reference MSC1643-31B
- Block plan as proposed, drawing reference MSC1643-32B
- Floor plan and roof plans, drawing reference MSC1643-32B
- Elevations, drawing reference MSC1643-34A

The planning application is a full planning application and proposes the following:

Replacement of existing canopy with canopy and enclosed canopy

The application site

The application site is Oakington Garden Centre, Dry Drayton Road which is located outside of the village framework and within the Green Belt and open countryside.

The application site is 809 sqm in area. The garden centre is a well-established site in retail and horticultural use. The centre contains a number of structures in retail use or ancillary storage and offices.

Design

Under The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure (England) (Amendment) Order 2013 a Design and Access Statement is not required for proposal. However, we note that the proposed structures will be readily accessible by foot and from the existing car park at the centre, and also by delivery vehicles and staff from within the site. Access is on level ground.

No issue in terms of foul drainage is presented by the application proposal. Any surface water will drain into the existing soakaway.

As shown on the submitted application plans, the proposed materials will provide an attractive, high quality finish and appearance which respects the appearance of the existing structures at the centre.

Planning history

Recladding and re-roofing of existing garden centre building

Ref. No: 22/03642/FUL | Status: Application Permitted

Installation of horticultural growing tunnels and service area

Ref. No: 20/01357/FUL | Status: Application Permitted

The demolition of 42m² of existing development the non-implementation of 349m² of approved covered walkway and the erection of 366m² of open sided canopy

Ref. No: S/0152/18/FL | Status: Application Permitted

Erection of canopies over existing sales area and storage area removal of section of security fence and alterations to walkway

Ref. No: S/2611/13/FL | Status: Application Permitted

Extension to car park Laying out service yard Erection of entrance canopy & covered walkway Installation of septic tank Recladding of existing glasshouse for use as sales office & coffee shop Landscaping and variation to conditions 4 & 5 on planning permission S/0995/81/O.

Ref. No: S/0333/08/F | Status: Application Permitted

Replacement of glasshouse with coffee shop and toilet facilities extension to open sided canopies and new balancing pond

Ref. No: S/1503/09/F | Status: Application Permitted

The Development Plan

The statutory Development Plan is the starting point for the determination of planning applications as is set out in S38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (The 2004 Act), Section 38(c) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and paragraph 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework "The Framework", 2021.

In this case the Development Plan comprises The South Cambridgeshire Local Plan, adopted in September 2018. The relevant policies of the plan are as follows:



 CONSULTANTS LTD

S/1 Vision
 S/2 Objectives of the Local Plan
 S/3 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
 S/4 Green Belt
 NH/9 Redevelopment of Previously Developed Sites and Infilling in the Green Belt
 CC/8 Sustainable Drainage Systems
 E/16 Expansion of Existing Businesses in the Countryside
 HQ/1 Design Principles
 NH/4 Biodiversity

The Framework is also an important material consideration in the determination of the planning application. The Framework explains that the purpose of the planning system is to facilitate sustainable development. The Framework identifies three dimensions to sustainable development, an economic role, a social role and an environmental role:

An economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improve productivity;

A social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs;

An environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

Paragraph 11 of The Framework advises that for decision making (unless material considerations indicate otherwise) the presumption in favour of sustainable development means:

Approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date Development Plan without delay;

Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

The application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or

Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

The Framework requires decisions on proposed developments to be undertaken in a positive and creative way. Decision makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

The document also contains other policies which are relevant to the determination of the application proposal. The principal issues to be considered are as follows.

■

Malcolm Scott

CONSULTANTS LTD

■

Paragraph 119 of The Framework states that planning policies and decisions:

... should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, whilst safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Policies of the development plan should set out a clear strategy for both accommodating objectively assessed needs in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously developed or “brownfield land.”

Paragraph 120 promotes and supports the development of under-utilised land and buildings.

Section 12 of The Framework sets out policies regarding design quality, which need to be considered when assessing specific proposals.

Section 15 of The Framework sets out policies relating to the natural environment. They deal with issues such as landscape, biodiversity, air quality, noise pollution and land instability amongst other matters.

The policies of The Framework seek to protect and enhance valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and to recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services, including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland.

Paragraph 180 states that the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) unless an appropriate assessment has concluded that the plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site.

Assessment

The main issues to be considered are the principle of development in this location and the impact on the character of the area.

The proposed development comprises the replacement of an existing structures within a well-established garden centre site.

There will be no significant impact on the surrounding area.

Policy S/4 and NH/9 Green Belt

The proposal is for the replacement of existing structures and will not have an impact on the openness of the Green Belt. Notwithstanding this, the application site is well screened from view and visually forms part of the overall garden centre site.

Policy CC/8 Sustainable Drainage Systems

Roof water will be connected to the existing surface water drainage system.

Policy HQ/1 Design Principles

In accordance with national policy, the proposed development respects the character, appearance and environmental quality of the local area.

The design of the proposed development reflects the character and form of the existing garden centre and its surroundings.

The proposed development will have no adverse impact upon the amenity of residential properties.

Policy NH/4 Biodiversity

The construction of the existing building does not provide a suitable habitat for protected species. The application site does not lie within a biodiversity area.

Policy E/16 Expansion of Existing Businesses in the Countryside

This policy refers to the expansion of existing businesses in the countryside. The proposed development will help to secure the continued success of an existing business in the countryside. term.

Conclusion

The application proposal is for the replacement of an existing structure at the garden centre. It is considered that the development is fully in accordance with the policies of the adopted local plan.

The application proposal is in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework. As such, a decision to grant planning permission will be in accordance with the requirements of Section 38(6) which states that applications for planning permission should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The proposal makes use of brownfield land in and does not present any unacceptable impacts in terms of highways or access, amenity or biodiversity. There is no detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the countryside or the existing buildings at the centre.

The proposal supports an existing rural business and the rural economy more generally.

Given the above, the proposed development is considered to accord with the requirements of all relevant local plan policies and the Framework.

We conclude that the proposed development is compliant with the policies of the Development Plan when considered in overall terms and that material considerations also exist which tell in favour in the grant of planning permission.

Accordingly, we respectfully request that planning permission is granted.

Yours faithfully
for MALCOLM SCOTT CONSULTANTS LIMITED

