

TAUNTON DEANE BOROUGH COUNCIL

**CHANGE OF USE OF LAND FOR USE AS STORAGE AND DEPOT FOR  
GROUNDS MAINTENANCE EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS AT TAUNTON  
DEANE NURSERY, STOKE ROAD, STOKE ST MARY**

Grid Reference: 324605.122782

Full Planning Permission

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**RECOMMENDATION AND REASON(S)**

Recommended Decision: Conditional Approval for the following reason:

The proposal is considered not to have a detrimental impact upon visual or residential amenity and is therefore considered acceptable and, accordingly, does not conflict with Taunton Deane Local Plan Policies S1 (General Requirements) and S2 (Design).

**RECOMMENDED CONDITION(S) (if applicable)**

1. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

(A4) Location Plan

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

2.
  - (i) Within one month of permission being granted details of infilling of boundary planting in the form of a landscaping scheme, which shall include details of the species, siting and numbers to be planted, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
  - (ii) The scheme shall be completely carried out within the first available planting season from the date of permission of the development, or as otherwise extended with the agreement in writing of the Local Planning Authority.
  - (iii) For a period of five years after the completion of each landscaping scheme, the trees and shrubs shall be protected and maintained in a healthy weed free condition and any trees or shrubs that cease to grow shall be replaced by trees or shrubs of similar size and species, or the appropriate trees or shrubs as may be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed development makes a satisfactory contribution to the preservation and enhancement of the local character and distinctiveness of the area in accordance with Taunton Deane Local Plan

#### Notes for compliance

1. Vegetation has grown throughout the summer months and now affects the visibility splay to the left when exiting the site (Stoke St Mary direction). Visibility splays should be maintained at all times, and it is recommended that this vegetation is removed.

### **PROPOSAL**

The proposal is for change of use of part of the land at Taunton Deane Nursery site for the storage and depot for grounds maintenance equipment and materials. The land area is approximately 30m x 70m and located on the southern part of the site.

### **SITE DESCRIPTION AND HISTORY**

The site consists of former agricultural land which had use as a commercial plant nursery for the Authority in October 2006 (ref.37/06/0006). Subsequent applications were submitted for the alteration of the access position (37/06/0010) and erection of greenhouses, polytunnels and an office building in July 2007(37/07/0002).

### **CONSULTATION AND REPRESENTATION RESPONSES**

#### **Consultees**

##### *SCC - TRANSPORT DEVELOPMENT GROUP -*

I refer to the above-mentioned planning application received on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2011 and following an inspection of the application and a site visit on the same day, I do not propose to make any highway observations unless specifically requested to do so.

If, however, you have concerns regarding sustainable transport issues and/or the access (and on-site arrangements) and whether they are adequate for the purpose proposed in order to secure the safety of the occupier and to avoid nuisance and danger to others, please contact me so that I can give observations on this proposal.

*STOKE ST MARY PARISH COUNCIL* - Objections raised and supported by photographic evidence from Mr Groves had been raised to PC by neighbouring residents. These objections include frequent use of site at unsocial hours, increased vehicular activity, traffic noise, dust, general environmental impact and nuisance and loss of amenity.

Currently there appears to be much increased traffic movements, unsuited to either the narrow lanes through Stoke St Mary or through Chestnut Drive - a densely populated residential estate. The further proposed expansion of the site would substantially increase traffic to and from the site.

The application would appear to be retrospective as the site is currently being used as a depot for non horticultural storage and tipping for forward transit. This is above and beyond the scope of the original application. We believe the site to be currently operating without the appropriate permissions being in place and therefore open to enforcement proceedings.

No environmental survey regarding the impact on flora and fauna has been offered, nor does the site appear to have been registered as an approved recycling depot (deposit of tarmacadam hard core). Taking into account the above it was unanimously agreed to oppose both applications.

*LANDSCAPE* - Subject to reinforcement of the southern boundary landscape the proposals are acceptable in terms of landscape impact.

## **Representations**

1 letter on behalf of neighbour objecting to the change of use of part of the site to a depot and claiming that parts of the site not within the red line of the application are also being used as a depot. This includes land to the west of the site used for external storage in bays of items such as sand and compost. The site entrance gate is close to the boundary and noise generated by vehicles entering and leaving the site, from headlights in winter and from the gate being open and closed causes disturbance. The 20 additional vehicle movements per week stated is not considered to reflect the unauthorised depot use and without an accurate assessment we cannot see how an assessment of its impact can be made. The use will only increase over time both in volume and in hours of access and the depot will no doubt use the "occasional" largesse in the hours of use, for early morning or late night access with commercial machinery and plant and deliveries in and out.

There is a dust nuisance caused by the depot use of the site caused by the external storage of materials and the commercial traffic bringing mud onto the road.

2 objections on basis the depot is an industrial use, haulage machinery on site is unrelated to the nursery operation, if accepted would set a precedent for possible housing or other industrial uses not in keeping with the area.

1 objection on basis of noise and dust.

## **PLANNING POLICIES**

PPS1 - Delivering Sustainable Development,  
PPS7 - Sustainable Development in Rural Areas,  
S&ENPP19 - S&ENP - Employment and Community Provision in Rural Areas,  
S&ENPP48 - S&ENP - Access and Parking,  
S&ENPP49 - S&ENP - Transport Requirements of New Development,  
S1 - TDBCLP - General Requirements,  
S2 - TDBCLP - Design,  
S7 - TDBCLP - Outside Settlement,  
STR6 - Development Outside Towns, Rural Centres and Villages,

## **DETERMINING ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS**

The main issues are the traffic and the landscape and amenity impact of the

proposal.

The storage of equipment and materials is intended for the southern end of the site and it is indicated that this will be no more than 20 additional journeys per week. The access to the site was approved with the original permission and it is not considered that the proposal would worsen any safety aspect of the use of the access. The use is not considered to result in significant transport movements over and above the existing commercial use of the site. The Highway Authority have commented and raise no specific objection to the proposal. Other than a note reminding of the need to maintain visibility there is not considered to be highway safety or traffic issue with the site and the application is considered acceptable.

The area of storage lies to the south of the site and the area is largely screened from views from the road to the south by hedging. There are small areas that require reinforcement and subject to additional landscaping in these areas the Landscape Officer considers the proposal acceptable and this view is agreed with.

The open storage areas for sand and compost are to the west of the site and are considered to relate to the approved horticultural use of the site and not the storage use of items such as fencing and play equipment that occurs to the south. There is a dust issue with this existing use and attempts are being made to lessen this, including dampening the area in dry conditions.

The concern over noise, nuisance and unsocial hours seem to relate to the existing commercial horticultural use of the site. It is not considered that this would be significantly altered by the change of use to a small part of the southern part of the site.

A wildlife survey was submitted with the original application and no protected species found. Given the relative area of land that is proposed and the nature of the application it is not considered that there would be any adverse wildlife impact from the proposal.

The proposed use modifies part of the use of the site allowing an alteration to the existing commercial use of the site. It is not considered that this alteration would have a significant adverse impact on the landscape or private amenity of local residents to warrant an objection to the proposal. The application is considered to comply with Development Plan policies for use of existing commercial sites and the proposal is supported.

**In preparing this report the Planning Officer has considered fully the implications and requirements of the Human Rights Act 1988.**

**CONTACT OFFICER: Mr G Clifford Tel: 01823 356398**