

38/2005/552

SUMMERFIELD DEVELOPMENTS LTD

ERECTION OF 4 B1 OFFICE UNITS WITH CAR PARKING (THE QUAD) BLACKBROOK BUSINESS PARK, TAUNTON AS AMENDED BY LETTER AND PLAN 3858-7C RECEIVED 13TH JANUARY 2006 AS AMENDED BY LETTER, DETAILS AND PLAN 3858-22 RECEIVED 25TH JANUARY 2006 WITH REVISED CAR PARK LAYOUT AND NEW LIGHTING LAYOUT.

25163/24249

FULL

PROPOSAL

The proposal is to erect 4 B1 office units approximately 18.5 m x 18.5 m each x 8 m high in a quadrangle design to the south of the existing office development on the Blackbrook Business Park. Parking is provided to the north and south of the units with 60 spaces on each side. The design philosophy has been developed to avoid further isolated buildings and provide a unified block of 4 with a single identity, each closely related to the others and providing usable internal landscaped pedestrian courts for the occupants. Entry to the central spaces are softened by splayed glazed corners, accentuating the entrances and integrated signage and also providing enhanced peripheral views from within. The design is an architectural progression from previous designs and relates to a demand for more modern hi-tech sustainable solutions, the materials reflecting and complementing the new fire control centre, where possible to achieve grade A ratings in the Green Guide Specification. They retain the brick and glass fenestration of the previous family of buildings.

CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

HIGHWAYS AGENCY on the assumption that the site is part of the outline of Phase 2 of the Blackbrook Business Park we do not intend to raise any objection to this application on the grounds of traffic generation and impact on the Trunk Road Network, namely Junction 25 of the M5 motorway. Notwithstanding this we have some observations concerning the scale and position of the car parking. PPG13 standards which the Local Plan incorporates would require that for a development of this total size there should be only 99 parking spaces plus approximately 4 or 5 disabled spaces, giving a total of 103-104 spaces. Undoubtedly the applicant is suggesting that that as each individual unit is below the floorspace threshold, PPG13 standards should not apply. However we consider that this is contrary to the spirit of PPG13, where the thresholds are intended to apply to isolated, small developments rather than this 'business park' form where it might be expected that there would be opportunities for shared parking facilities. The layout on drawing 3858-6 apart from tending to preclude any sharing of spaces means that some disabled spaces would be remote from the buildings. We would suggest that this layout does not conform with 'best practice' as regards the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 nor with the latest revisions to the Building Regulations. The alternative layout suggested by drawing 3858-8A would be preferable. ENVIRONMENT AGENCY no objections in principle to the proposed development but recommends that if permission is granted conditions are imposed re surface water drainage, site levels, fuel storage, oil

interceptor, no discharge of contaminated drainage and notes re oil storage regulations and flood resilient construction. WESSEX WATER there is a public sewers and a public water main in the assumed site area. If within the site boundary a 3 metre easement will be required on either side of the apparatus for the purpose of maintenance and repair. Details of drainage and water supply have not been fully disclosed. The development is located in a sewerred area with both foul and surface water sewers available. It will be necessary for the developer to agree an arrangement for the satisfactory disposal of foul flows and surface water flows generated by the proposal. The connection can be agreed at the detailed design stage. Water supply connection can also be agreed at detailed stage. The Council should be satisfied with any arrangement for the disposal of drainage if alternative methods of drainage are proposed. It is recommended the developer agree a point of connection onto Wessex systems prior to commencement on site. A condition is recommended to protect the integrity of Wessex systems crossing the site.

LANDSCAPE OFFICER the site is not well screened from the motorway and requires substantial tree and shrub planting to provide adequate mitigation. The 'spine' access road side of the proposals also require careful landscaping. Given the size of the development I recommend that landscape masterplan details should be agreed before approval. DRAINAGE OFFICER I understand the Environment Agency is happy with the latest Flood Risk Assessment carried out for this proposal. I also note the protection offered by way of the bunds being installed by part of the protection measures to the Fire Control Centre up to the 1:1000 year event also protect this proposal. Subject to the EA confirming acceptance of the proposed details I can confirm I have no objection to this proposal.

POLICY CONTEXT

RPG10 - Regional Planning Guidance for the South West

Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review Policies STR1 - Sustainable Development, STR4 - Development in Towns, POLICY 18 - Location of Land for Industrial & Business Development, POLICY 48 - Access and Parking POLICY 60 - Floodplain Protection.

Taunton Deane Local Plan Policies S1 - General Requirements, S2 - Design, EC1 - Employment Development, M1 - Transport, Access and Circulation Requirements M2- Transport, Access and Circulation Requirements, M3 - Transport, Access and Circulation Requirements, EN9 - Tree Planting, EN28 - Development and Flood Risk.

ASSESSMENT

The proposal is to erect four B1 office units with car parking on land to the south of the existing built development at Blackbrook Business Park. This land has previously had outline permission for development which has been renewed a number of times and the site lies within the settlement limits of the town. The issues here are the design of the buildings, the adequacy of the landscaping and parking and the provisions to ensure no flood risk as a result of the sites development.

The buildings proposed are two storey office buildings in brick with an aluminum roof which is recyclable. The buildings are based around a landscaped quadrangle and have parking set to either side of the units. The design of the buildings and general layout is considered an acceptable one. The site is prominent from the motorway and it considered that adequate landscape planting along this boundary is required.

The parking layout has initially been revised to address the issues of suitable access to the disabled spaces. There are 120 parking spaces initially proposed. This is above the maximum figure specified in government guidance within PPG13 which would be 99. The Local Plan requires 60-80% of PPG13 maxima for Class B employment uses. This would equate to approximately 80 spaces being required. The Business Park site as a whole has had a parking level in excess of this level in the past, given that the original outline for the site dates back to the late eighties. Previous permissions on this part of the site reflect this and the impact of the parking provision on the use of the site in relation to those surrounding sites is an issue. The provision of adequate landscaping on the eastern boundary will be required and the provision of a 5m landscape belt will mean that around a dozen spaces will need to be removed. This will reduce the parking numbers more akin to the level quoted by the Highways Agency. While this is still in excess of the figure quoted above it does relate to the parking levels in respect of the remainder of the site and on this basis, the parking level is considered not to be refusable subject to the submission of a revised layout to reflect adequate landscaping.

The site is within an area at potential flood risk and a Flood Risk Assessment has been submitted with the application. The Environment Agency has raised no objections and recommended a number of conditions and the proposals are considered acceptable.

RECOMMENDATION

Subject to a landscape plan and revision of the parking layout before 15th March, 2006 the Development Control Manager in consultation with the Chair/Vice Chair be authorised to determine and permission be GRANTED subject to conditions of time limit, materials, landscaping, parking layout, external lighting details, surface water drainage, site levels, fuel storage, oil interceptor, no discharge of contaminated drainage. Notes re oil storage regulations and flood resilient construction.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION:- The proposed building is considered to comply with Taunton Deane Local Plan Policies S1, S2, EC1, M3, EN9 and EN28 and material considerations do not indicate otherwise.

In preparing this report the Planning Officer has considered fully the implications and requirements of the Human Rights Act 1998.

CONTACT OFFICER: 2456 MR G CLIFFORD

NOTES: