DELEGATED REPORT

Recommendation Made:

Reference:- 11/00416/FUL **Parish:- Higham On The Hill Parish Council**

Applicant:- Mr David Brooks
Brooklands Drive
Weybridge
KT13 0SL
Surrey

Location:- Mira Ltd Watling Street Caldecote Nuneaton Warwickshire

Proposal:- ERECTION OF MERCEDES BENZ YOUNG DRIVERS ACADEMY PAVILION

Introduction:-

Full planning permission is sought for erection of a two storey pavilion building.

The pavilion building is to be used as a young drivers academy and would measure 16.5 by 13.6 metres to a maximum height of 7.1 metres. The materials proposed are silver metal cladding for the walls, metal panels for the roof and aluminium framed window and door units. For the avoidance of doubt this application does not seek consent for a pumping station.

The application site is located within the established Motor Industry Research Association (MIRA) site which is a unique and extensive motor industry testing facility.

The site of MIRA and its associated grounds are located on Watling Street (A5), between the villages of Higham on the Hill and Fenny Drayton, with the A5 running to the south. The MIRA site covers almost 3 square kilometres in the countryside and there are only a small number of residential properties in close proximity to the site. The site and its employment provision are specifically recognised within the Hinckley & Bosworth Adopted Local Plan (2001).

The application is accompanied by a Design and Access Statement which states that approximately 150 students will attend each day on Saturdays and Sundays only.

During the course of the application, the applicant has provided further details including a log book which will denote training sessions and activities and a driving training manual. The details confirms that MIRA has been conducting driver training on site for approximately 20 years and that generally students will be operating vehicles at around 15 – 20 mph.

Planning History

There are numerous planning applications for this site, given MIRA's long and extensive history.

Consultations:-

No comments/objections from:-

Highways Agency
Severn Trent Water
Environment Agency
Police Architectural Liaison Officer
Director of Environment and Transport (Highways)
Directorate of Chief Executive (Ecology)
Head of Community Services (Pollution)
Head of Community Services (Land Drainage)

Development Plan Policies:-

Central Government Guidance

Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS1): 'Delivering Sustainable Development'

Planning Policy Statement 4 (PPS4): 'Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth'

Planning Policy Statement 7(PPS7): 'Sustainable Development in Rural Areas'

Planning Policy Statement 9 (PPS9): 'Biodiversity and Geological Conservation'

Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council Local Development Framework: Core Strategy 2009

Spatial Objective 1: 'Strong and Diverse Economy'

Hinckley & Bosworth Local Plan 2001

Policy EMP1: 'Existing Employment Sites'

Policy EMP5: 'MIRA, Built Development for Employment Purposes'

Policy EMP6: 'Surface Test Facilities and Landscaping to Proving Ground'

Policy BE1: 'Design and Siting of Development'

Policy NE10: 'Local Landscape Improvement Area'

Policy NE12: 'Landscaping Schemes'

Policy T5: 'Highway Design and Vehicle Parking Standards'

Other Material Policy Documents

The Employment Land and Premises Study undertaken in May 2010 identifies MIRA as a key business that wants to improve its buildings to enhance its high-tech business image and recommends that the MIRA site is retained for employment uses.

Appraisal:-

The main considerations with regards to this application are the principle of development, visual intrusion, impact upon residential amenity, highway considerations, landscaping and ecology.

Principle of Development

MIRA is an established site, created following the closure of RAF Nuneaton in the late 1940s. MIRA is subject to its own planning policies in the Adopted Local Plan (2001) and the use of the site is recognised as playing an important role in the Borough's economy, particularly in terms of employment.

Policies EMP1, EMP5 and EMP6 of the Adopted Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan generally support development within the MIRA site, with Policy EMP5c setting out the potential for additional infill development. As such, there is a presumption in favour of development subject to all other planning matters in particular amenity, highways, visual intrusion and pollution, being appropriately addressed and controlled.

Following the submission of additional information it is acknowledged that the MIRA site has an extensive history of driver training on the site stemming some 20 years, and that this application proposes additional driver training over weekends only and to speeds of 20 miles per hour. As such it is considered that the level of additional driving and the noise associated with these speeds would not give rise to any significant

detrimental impacts.

In summary, there is no in-principle objection to the proposals subject to all other planning matters being adequately addressed.

Visual Intrusion

The MIRA site, because of the highly competitive and therefore because of the confidential nature of the testing that takes place within the site, it is already well landscaped which results in a site that from the outside offers very limited visual viewpoints. Accordingly, any development within the site is unlikely to be easily seen from outside the site. There are obviously seasonal changes to the landscape cover which allow greater views into the site but generally these views are only partial glimpses of activity rather than key open views.

The pavilion is set to be located well within the site, and given the two storey nature it is not considered that it would be visually prominent from outside of the site.

In summary, it is considered that the pavilion would not be significantly detrimental to the character and appearance of the wider landscape. Accordingly, the scheme is considered to be in accordance with Saved Policies BE1 and NE5 of the adopted Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan.

Residential Amenity

Consideration has been given to the impact of the development on surrounding residential properties despite receiving no letter of representations during the course of the application.

Resultant of the scale and siting of the pavilion, it would not be visible from surrounding residential properties and as such it is not considered that the building would give rise to any material impacts upon neighbouring dwellings.

In summary, it is considered that the additional of the pavilion building would not result in any adverse impacts upon the occupiers of nearby residential properties. Accordingly, the scheme is considered to be in accordance with Saved Policy BE1 of the Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan.

Highway Considerations

There are no alterations proposed to be existing road network or car parking arrangements.

The development has been considered by both the Highways Agency and the Director of Environment and Transport (Highways) whom raises no objection to the development on highway grounds. Accordingly, the scheme is considered to be in accordance with Saved Policy T5 of the adopted Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan.

Landscaping

The scheme does not propose any landscaping to be carried out. It is considered that the MIRA site already benefits from existing landscaping and is characterised my mature hedgerows to the east of the site and as such it is not considered necessary to ensure additional substantial landscaping on the site in accordance with Policies NE10 and NE12 of the Local Plan.

Ecology

The Directorate of Chief Executive, (Ecology) stares that the development would not have any impacts upon any designated sites of ecological importance or protected species. Accordingly, it can be concluded that the proposal will not have any adverse impacts upon sites of ecological importance or protected species and as such is considered acceptable in relation to guidance contained in PPS9.

Conclusion

The proposed pavilion represents an acceptable form of development that conforms to the adopted planning

policy for this protected employment site. As a result of the siting and scale of the pavilion building, together with existing landscaping, it is considered that there would not be any significant material impacts upon visual or residential amenity or highway safety. `Accordingly, the application is recommended for approval subject to the imposition of planning conditions.

RECOMMENDATION:- Permit subject to the following conditions:-

Summary of Reasons for Recommendation and Relevant Development Plan Policies :

Having regard to the pattern of existing development in the area, representations received and relevant provisions of the development plan, as summarised below, it is considered that subject to compliance with the conditions attached to this permission, the proposed development would be in accordance with the development plan as it relates to a development on an established employment site for economic development purposes and would not have significant material impacts upon visual or residential amenity or highway safety.

Hinckley & Bosworth Local Plan (2001):- Policies EMP1, EMP5, EMP6, BE1, NE10, NE12, T5.

Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council Local Development Framework: Core Strategy (2009): - Spatial Objective 1.

1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

2 The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out otherwise than in complete accordance with the details: Boundary Location Plan PG/063/001 Rev A; Site Plan PG/063/002 Rev B; Pavilion Plans and Elevations PG/063/003; PG/063/006 Rev B; MaPG/063/009 received by the Local Planning Authority on 17 June 2011.

3 The external materials to be used in the development hereby permitted shall be in strict accordance with those specified in the application, unless alternative materials are first agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reasons :-

1 To comply with the requirements of Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2 For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3 To ensure that the development has a satisfactory external appearance to accord with Policy BE1 of the Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan.

Notes to Applicant:-

1 Bats, nesting birds, great crested newts and certain other species are protected by law. If any such species are discovered before or during the works the works must be suspended and the local office of Natural England contacted for advice.

2 This permission does not grant approval under the Building Act 1984 and the Building Regulations 2000 (as amended) for which a separate application may be required. You are advised to contact the Building Control Section.

3 As from 6 April 2008 this Authority are charging for the discharge of conditions in accordance with revised fee regulations which came into force on that date. Application forms to discharge conditions and further information can be found on the planning portal web site www.planningportal.gov.uk.

4 All works within the limits of the Highway with regard to the access shall be carried out to the satisfaction of the Southern Area Manager (0116 3052202).

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