DELEGATED REPORT

Recommendation Made: 26 April 2011

Reference:- 11/00073/FUL **Parish:- Higham On The Hill Parish Council**

Applicant:- Mr Tony Wyatt
Oxford Science Park
Oxford
OX4 4GP

Location:- Mira Ltd Watling Street Lindley Higham On The Hill Nuneaton

Proposal:- ERECTION OF WELFARE CABIN

Introduction:-

Full planning permission is sought for the erection of a welfare cabin. The welfare cabin would measure approximately 8.5 by 3.05 metres with a maximum height of 2.55 metres.7.8 by 15.5 metres and to a maximum height of 3.4 metres creating a floor area of approximately 25 square metres. The application form states that the welfare cabin will be a portacabin type structure.

Planning permission (ref: 08/00720/FUL) was approved for the construction of city circuit and ancillary facilities including creation of pond and erection of mast and control centre with associated parking and access in 2008. A further application was approved (ref: 10/00887/CONDIT) for the variation of condition no.2 of planning permission 08/00720/FUL to amend the number of proposed gantries. This application relates to a modular building within the city test track site approved in the 2008 application.

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 city test track is located within MIRA proving ground, designated as the MIRA test area within the Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan (2001).

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 not accompanied by any technical documentation.

Planning History

There are numerous planning applications for this site, given MIRA's long and extensive history. There are also a number of applications for permanent and temporary portacabins and also the retention of portacabins.

Consultations:-

No comments:-

Director of Environment and Transport (Highways)
Head of Community Services (Land Drainage)
Environment Agency

No objections from:-

Highways Agency
Severn Trent
North Warwickshire Borough Council

Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council
Head of Community Services (Pollution)

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 (PPS7) 7: 'Sustainable Development in Rural Areas'

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 issues, and landscaping.

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.

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 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.

Given the small scale of the proposed welfare cabin, measuring a maximum height of 2.55 metres and therefore the proposed cabin would not be visible.

In summary, it is considered that the addition of the welfare cabin would not be visually prominent from outside of the site and as such 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 building, 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 addition of the modular 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.

Conclusion

The development represents and 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 welfare cabin, 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, 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: Location Plan PG/054/001 (Rev A); Street Furniture, Gantries and Bunding Layout PG/054/002 (Rev G); Drawing SL082 Foot Options FLD/400011499 (Rev B) received by the Local Planning Authority on 7 March 2011.

3 The materials to be used on the welfare cabin shall be in strict accordance with those listed within Drawing SL082 Foot Options FLD/400011499 (Rev B) received by the Local Planning Authority on 7 March 2011 unless otherwise agreed in writing by 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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