DELEGATED REPORT

Recommendation Made: 3 June 2011

Reference:- 11/00305/FUL **Parish:- Higham On The Hill Parish Council**

Applicant:-

Watling Street
Nuneaton
Warwickshire
CV10 0TU

Location:- Mira Ltd Watling Street Caldecote Nuneaton Warwickshire

Proposal:- ERECTION OF MODULAR BUILDING INCLUDING TWO ADDITIONAL CAR PARKS (RETROSPECTIVE)

Introduction:-

Retrospective planning permission is sought for the erection of a modular building and formation of two car parks. Works have commenced, but have not yet been completed.

The two storey modular building measures 15.7 metres by 12.4 metres to a height of 6.7 metres with an external staircase with a car park for 7 no. vehicular spaces within an additional car park proposing 21 no. spaces. The modular office building and car park A are site together, with car park B, located to the south of the site.

The materials proposes are dark grey (RAL 7016) and grey (RAL 7035) with double glazed window units. The car parks will be constructed from Bodpave to hold limestone chippings in place.

The application site is located within the proving ground areas of 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 as a result of the office building 16 spaces will be lost, resulting in the creation of the two additional car parks.

Planning History

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

Consultations:-

No comments from:-

Director of Environment and Transport (Highways)

No objections from:-

Highways Agency
Severn Trent Water
Head of Community Services (Pollution)
North Warwickshire Borough Council
Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council

Head of Community Services (Land Drainage) states that there are no adverse comments provided that the permeable paving solution is implemented.

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'

Planning Policy Statement 25 (PPS25): 'Development and Flood Risk'

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 proving ground area of 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 location of the building, which is surrounded by other workshops it is considered that the development would be screened by the existing on site buildings.

Given the surface nature of car parks, these would not be visible from outside of the site.

In summary, it is considered that the addition of the modular office building 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

Resultant of the scale and siting of the developments, they 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 and car parks 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. The proposal intends to overall increase the number of car parking spaces. 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.

Drainage

Head of Community Services (Land Drainage) states that there are no adverse comments provided that the permeable paving solution is implemented. The car parks are intending to incorporate Bodpave which are grass porous pavers. and as such this would not significantly increase surface water run off. It is considered that no increase in flood risk is anticipated and accordingly the development is considered acceptable in relation to guidance contained with PPS25.

Conclusion

In 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 modular buildings and car parks, together with existing landscaping, it is considered that there would not be any significant

material impacts upon visual or residential amenity, highway safety or floodrisk. 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, highway safety or flood risk.

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 not be carried out otherwise than in complete accordance with the details: Boundary Location Plan PG/061/002; Proposed Site Plan as built PG/061/004 A; Proposed Utilities as built PG/061/006C; Ground Floor Plan Layout 720007430-101J; First Floor Plan Layout 720007430-102J; External Elevations 720007430-301G; Pavement Details PG/061/007A received by the Local Planning Authority on 18 April 2011.

2 The materials on the modular office building shall be finished in dark grey (RAL 7016) and grey (RAL 7035) unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reasons :-

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

2 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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