



St Edmundsbury
BOROUGH COUNCIL

DEV/SE/16/73

Development Control Committee

6 October 2016

Planning Application DC/16/1180/FUL

East Town Park, Coupal's Road, Haverhill

Date: 19 July 2016 **Expiry Date:** 13 September 2016
Registered:

Case Officer: Aaron Sands **Recommendation:** Grant

Parish: Haverhill **Ward:** Haverhill East

Proposal: Planning Application - Construction of agricultural storage barn

Site: East Town Park, Coupal's Road, Haverhill

Applicant: St. Edmundsbury Borough Council

Synopsis:

Application under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Associated matters.

CONTACT CASE OFFICER:

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Background:

This application is referred to the Committee because the applicant is the Parks Manager acting on behalf of the Local Authority and the proposal is sited within Council owned land.

Proposal:

1. Planning permission is sought for the erection of a single storey storage barn to provide storage for timber and coppice material generated from the harvesting of existing trees on the site.

Application Supporting Material:

2. Information submitted with the application as follows:
 - Application form
 - Ecological Appraisal
 - Arboricultural Impact Assessment
 - Block Plan
 - Proposed Site Plan
 - Proposed Roof Plan
 - Proposed Plans and Elevations

Site Details:

3. The site comprises an existing area of scrubland, located within designated countryside and sited alongside East Town Park. The site is served by an existing access that discharges onto Sturmer Road. The site is owned and maintained by St Edmundsbury Borough Council.

Planning History:

4. None relevant

Consultations:

5. Ecology, Tree and Landscape Officer: The planning application is supported by an ecological survey which concludes that the risk to protected species is low. Recommendations on site clearance have been made and replacement hazel planting within adjacent woodland is required and can be secured by condition. The impact of the proposals on trees will be minimal and acceptable. The proposal will be beneficial to the management of the park. The building appears to be set sufficiently back from the hedge to allow its retention and management which would be beneficial to the amenity of the lane.

Representations:

6. Parish Council: No objection

7. No other representations received

Policy: The following policies of the Joint Development Management Policies Document and the St Edmundsbury Core Strategy December 2010 have been taken into account in the consideration of this application:

8. Joint Development Management Policies Document:

- Policy DM1 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainability)
- Policy DM2 (Creating Places – Development Principles and Local Distinctiveness)
- Policy DM5 (Development in the Countryside)
- Policy DM10 (Impact of Development on Sites of Biodiversity and Geodiversity Importance)
- Policy DM11 (Protected Species)
- Policy DM12 (Mitigation, Enhancement, Management and Monitoring of Biodiversity)

9. St Edmundsbury Core Strategy December 2010

- Policy CS2 (Sustainable Development)
- Policy CS3 (Design and Local Distinctiveness)

Other Planning Policy:

10. National Planning Policy Framework (2012)

11. Haverhill Vision 2031

Officer Comment:

12. The issues to be considered in the determination of the application are:

- Principle of Development
- Design and Form
- Impacts on Amenity
- Impacts on Trees and Biodiversity

Principle of Development

13. The proposed building is located within an existing area of trees that are regularly coppiced. Though the site is not located within the Housing Settlement Boundary it is located in a reasonable proximity to existing built development, including the substantial industrial estate to the south of the site across Sturmer Road. The proposal provides storage for material generated from within the site, which is itself inherently sustainable. There is therefore a presumption in favour of development within such locations, as indicated in Policy DM1.

14. Policy DM2 requires that all development should recognise the key features of the area, and maintain the character of the area. Development should also be of a design that respects the scale, density and massing of the locality and ensure appropriate measures to mitigate impacts to residential amenity and the amenity of nearby public spaces.

15. The site is of a size that could comfortably accommodate the proposal without appearing as an overdevelopment. Additionally, there is a range of forms and character in the area, with residential properties to the west, the large open space and tree belts to the north and the industrial estate to the south, such that the proposal does not appear incongruous with the character of the area.
16. Policy DM5 seeks to restrict development within the countryside unless it meets the tests set out within the policy for development appropriate within the countryside. Proposals must be related to forestry and will be required to ensure that there is no loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land. Such development will also be required to ensure that there are no significant detrimental impacts to the historic environment, visual character and amenity of the landscape and biodiversity, nor significant impacts to the local highway network.
17. The proposed development is a forestry development, seeking a store to house the produce resulting from the coppiced trees within the site. The site is served by an existing access from Sturmer Road. The existing use of the site is to be continued and would not, therefore, result in the alteration of the agricultural land, other than the erection of the building which would support the business. As noted above, the development is not considered to be out of character with the surroundings and would not present as a significant visually dominant structure in the context of the area.
18. The principle of development is considered to be acceptable, and the determining factors are the design and form, the impacts on amenity and the impacts on trees and biodiversity.

Design and Form

19. Policy CS3 of the Core Strategy expects development to address the locality, landscape and the local context in order to contribute high quality, safe and sustainable environments. Development must also take account of the natural and historic environment and access and transport considerations. Policy DM2 and the NPPF echo these design requirements, seeking to preserve and enhance localities.
20. The proposed building presents as a typical agricultural building, being of standard steel panels along a steel framed building. It is sited to the rear of a dense tree belt along Sturmer Road that would provide substantial screening while in leaf, though it is noted this screening would only be partially effective when the leaves have fallen. That said, the building is of a low scale, at approximately 3.1 metres at the ridge and 2.5 metres at the eaves.
21. The set back from the roadside will further serve to limit view of the proposed building, further mitigating any impacts that might arise to the street scene.

22. It is considered that the proposal is of a design and form to respect the character of the area and is well screened from public view. The development is considered to accord with the provisions of Policies DM2 and CS3 that seek to ensure a good standard of design, as well as the relevant section of the NPPF.

Impact on Amenity

23. The proposed development is largely screened from public areas and views by the existing tree belt. To the west, across the access track, lie a number of residential properties. An existing garage is located between these residential properties and the application site, providing some screening from the garden areas nearby, which compounds upon the low overall height of the outbuildings to substantially limit view from private residential property. The distance from the residential gardens is considered sufficient to limit impacts of noise. It is considered that the proposal would not give rise to an adverse material impact to residential amenity.

Impact on Trees and Biodiversity

24. The trees within the site are subject to a routine Council management plan but are not otherwise formally protected. There are a small number of trees within the site that are proposed for removal in order to accommodate the store. These trees are of low amenity value, being small trees set back from the road, and largely screened from the wider area. Assessments of their potential use by protected species have indicated that they are of low value. An existing hedgerow located along the boundary will provide some low level screening and the building is located at a sufficient distance to allow for maintenance of this hedge. It is considered that the loss of the trees is acceptable, also noting that no protection is currently in place that would prevent their removal.

25. Policies DM10, DM11 and DM12 seek to protect and enhance biodiversity within and around development sites, particularly where there are features of biodiversity that are protected sites, such as the County Wildlife Site and Local Nature Reserve that covers areas to the north of the site. Policy CS2 seeks the protection and enhancement of natural resources, specifically identifying designated sites, wildlife and ecological networks.

26. Protected species have been identified in the surrounding areas, and though none have been noted as specifically using the site, a number of features have presented as potentially appropriate habitat, particularly with regards to reptiles. The ecological report notes the wider ecological status of the park, which appears to have been previously used as a reptile receptor site for other sites within Haverhill, and which is of a reasonable ecological value in any event. The applicant has undertaken to erect a reptile fence around the perimeter of the site, in order to prevent harm to such species during the development process.

27. The ecological report recommends limited works, more by way of avoidance than specific mitigation requirements and, noting that the applicant as the local authority is bound by the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2004) that requires public bodies to have regard to conserving biodiversity. It is considered that the proposal takes suitable account of the biodiversity features of the site, and has implemented appropriate mitigation to prevent harm arising to those species that could potentially utilise the site.

Conclusion:

28. In conclusion, the principle and detail of the development is considered to be acceptable and in compliance with relevant development plan policies and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Recommendation:

It is **RECOMMENDED** that planning permission be **Granted** subject to the following conditions:

1. 01A – 3 year time limit
2. 14FP – Accordance within approved plans

Documents:

All background documents including application forms, drawings and other supporting documentation relating to this application can be viewed online.

<https://planning.westsuffolk.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=O872ZKPD05M00>

Case Officer: Aaron Sands

Date: 16 August 2016