

Development Control Committee

7th September 2018

Committee Update Report

Item 4 – DC/18/0721/FUL – Saxon House, 7 Hillside Road, Bury St. Edmunds

1. On reflection, and following further assessment and discussion, officers consider that the refusal reasons 1 and 2 on page 21 of the Committee Agenda should be merged and amended. As set out at para 28 on page 18 of the agenda the extant and now implemented planning permission for D1 use (Community Dental Services) is limited to a 'personal' use by Community Dental Services for special dentistry care. It is further limited to 6 treatment rooms with the remaining floor space of the building to be used ancillary only. This was to restrict the extent of the permission and enable the Local Planning Authority to keep the site under review having regard to the special circumstances under which permission has been granted.
2. However, the permission was granted on a permanent basis and has subsequently been implemented. The unit therefore at present has a D1 use and the proposed intensification by utilising the first floor for an additional D1 use (Community Healthcare Service) would as such not result in the *loss* of employment land as stated in refusal reason 1.
3. Refusal reason 3 on page 21 also requires amendment as the comments from Highways referred to 5 treatment rooms whereas in fact only 4 are proposed. The required additional parking spaces therefore need to be adjusted.
4. Officers therefore recommend the following amended refusal reasons:

Reason 1:

The proposal is for community healthcare service facilities, a D1 Use, intended for a geographically wider area than within walking distance. The application site lies 2.3km from the town centre, within an area designated as employment land for B1 and B8 Use Classes in policy BV14(e). The site does not benefit from good public transport and/or walking access nor would it benefit from possible linked trips. The proposal therefore fails to comply with policy CS7, which seeks to reduce the need to travel through spatial planning and design, and is contrary to policy in the NPPF, notably para 103, 108 and 110 which (inter alia) seek to actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of walking, cycling and public transport, and focus

significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes.

Moreover, the intensification of the existing D1 use at the application site, in an inaccessible location where most patients and staff are likely to arrive by car, together with the insufficient on-site parking means that it is considered likely that the use will in turn fetter the activities of existing neighbouring employment uses through additional traffic movements and insufficient on-site parking thus potentially preventing them from expanding or intensifying. As such the proposal will have likely adverse effects on employment generation and is contrary to policy DM30 and policy in the NPPF, particularly paragraph 80, which seeks to ensure that decisions help to create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt.

The provision of the service and the need for suitable premises are factors which weigh in favour of the proposal. However, the policy conflict and harm identified above together with the inaccessible location and adverse effect on highway safety significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the proposal.

Reason 2:

The proposal includes five additional parking spaces where in accordance with the Suffolk Parking Guidance 28 additional parking spaces would be required for the 12 (equivalent full time) staff members and four treatment rooms. There would therefore be a severe under-allocation of on-site parking. This is considered likely to lead to inappropriate on-street parking which can often be part or fully on the footway causing an obstruction to other road users and a danger to pedestrians.

Furthermore, the proposed additional five parking spaces would reduce the available space for manoeuvring for the existing parking spaces five to 12 from the required 6.0m to 4.0m. 4.0m is considered insufficient for safe reversing and turning of cars and would render spaces five to 12 inaccessible. Additionally, space 32 reduces the access width to 3.0m throughout, removing the small wider passing place which would allow vehicles entering the site a passing place when encountering vehicles leaving the site. Without this passing space the access would be too narrow to be acceptable for a shared use access.

The proposal therefore fails to provide adequate parking and safe and suitable access for all, contrary to policy DM2 (I) and DM46. And the proposal would have an unacceptable impact on highway safety as a result of significant under provision with parking. As such the proposal is contrary to policy in the NPPF, particularly 105, 108 to 110.