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Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: ADC/0272/07 **Recommendation - Application Permitted**

Site: **Ricardo Engineers Ltd Old Shoreham Road Lancing West Sussex**

Proposal: **2 prefabricated steel garage buildings on north side of site**

The Application

The proposal is to erect two steel garage buildings within the existing Ricardo engineering site. These would be located where there are currently temporary stores, portacabins and containers (generally in a poor state of repair), which would be removed to make way for the new structures. The proposed purpose is for the secure and confidential storage of vehicles as part of the automotive design activities and engineering consultancy work as Ricardo.

The garages would be located in the north-west corner of the site adjacent to larger existing test shop buildings and the boundary with the A27 to the north. The garages would be pre-fabricated with dimensions of 10m x 10m (building 1) and 12m xx 12m (building 2). Both would be approximately 4.7m high to the ridge and therefore not as tall as other nearby buildings on the site. Both buildings would have one roller shutter door and one pedestrian door to the front.

Consultations and Representations

Environment Agency: - No objection subject to conditions.

Lancing Parish Council: - No objection.

Third Parties: - No third party representations received.

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

West Sussex Structure Plan 2001-16: LOC2, NE1, NE5-6, CH1, CH3, ERA1, ERA4-5, DEV1, DEV4-5
Adur District Local Plan: AG1, AP3, AP7, AC1, AC2-4, AE18, AT12
Adur Development Plan Submission Core Strategy: ENV6, E1
PPS1 "Delivering Sustainable Development"
PPG4 "Industrial and Commercial Development and Small Firms"
PPS23 "Planning and Pollution Control"
PPG25 "Development and Flood Risk"

Planning Assessment

Policies

The site is outside the defined built-up area in the Local Plan and within the strategic gap separating Shoreham from Lancing. It is also within the boundary of the Sussex Downs AONB but is now separated from the main area of the AONB by the A27 to the north (it is not within the proposed South Downs National Park boundary).

As a major employment site within the District, the site is subject to a specific policy AE18 of the Local Plan. This states:-

"AE18 - In respect of the land shown subject to this policy on the Proposals Map, the Local Planning Authority will permit business or industrial development as an exception to policies AC1, AC2 & AC4 if it is demonstrated to their satisfaction that:-

(a) the development is essential to the economic viability of the occupier of the entire site;
(b) the proposal does not conflict with the requirements for safeguarding the runway flightpath at Shoreham Airport;
(c) the development is of a design and construction appropriate to the locality and is unobtrusive in the landscape, and
(d) on-site car parking arrangements and access to the public highway are acceptable under policy AT12."

Structure Plan policy NE5 states that business development should be permitted with priority given to re-use of previously developed land in built-up areas.

The Local Plan recognises that the Ricardo site plays an important part in the local economy, being a significant source of employment, and that this is a factor in considering planning applications notwithstanding the location in an area where development would normally be resisted.

In this case, the proposals involve replacing existing temporary buildings and storage within the boundaries of the overall complex of buildings. Consequently, there is no impact on the integrity of strategic gap in respect of the proposed office and workshop buildings.

Access

The Ricardo site is accessible by public transport, the nearest bus routes being along the A283 (across the footbridge over the river) and A27T, although the services are not frequent. As a site close to the edge of the urban area, it is easily reached by bicycle from residential areas.

There would be no increase in staff numbers as a direct result of the proposed development. The proposed development would have no significant impact on access and parking arrangements, which will remain as existing.

Visual impact

The site is relatively well screened from the A27 to the north and west by trees, shrubs and bushes both within the site and on the highway verge. Existing buildings on the site will shield the proposed garages from public view from the south and east.

It is considered that the proposals would have no significant visual amenity impact on the AONB.

Flood risk

The site lies within Flood Zone 3 as defined in PPS25. However the Environment Agency consider it unreasonable to require a flood risk assessment because the proposed development is classified as being a 'Less Vulnerable' and minor development in terms of PPS25.

Ground contamination

The Environment Agency initially had concerns about potential pollution of groundwater because the construction of the proposed development would be on ground that, at least in part, is likely to be contaminated by its historic usage. However, they have withdrawn their initial objection subject to imposition of conditions following discussions with the applicant about the construction method required for the proposals.

Airport safeguarding

The buildings would not be as high as adjacent buildings within the Ricardo site.

Recommendation

APPROVE for reason that :-

The proposed development would help meet the need for economic and environmental regeneration without detracting to an unacceptable degree from the local environment. It can take place without resulting in unacceptable detriment to the landscape of the Sussex Downs AONB or to the open character of the strategic gap of countryside within which the premises are located, without generating additional vehicular traffic, and without compromising airport safety. It consequently does not conflict with the relevant policies of the Adur District Local Plan (AG1, AP3, AP7, AC1-4, AE18, AT12) and West Sussex Structure Plan (LOC2, NE1, NE5-6, CH1, CH3, ERA1, ERA4-5, DEV1, DEV4).

Subject to: -

1. C1Ci (standard time limit)
~~2. C14C (no external floodlighting without approval)~~
2 Clean, uncontaminated rock, subsoil, brick rubble, crushed concrete and ceramic only shall be used as fill/leveling material.
Reason: To prevent pollution of controlled waters and to accord with Policy AP7 of the Adur District Local Plan and West Sussex Structure Plan 2001-2016 Policy ERA5.
3 If during development any visibly contaminated or odourous material not previously identified is found to be present at the site it must be investigated. The Local Planning Authority must be informed immediately of the nature and degree of contamination present. The developer shall submit a method statement which must detail how this unsuspected contamination shall be dealt with.
Reason: To prevent pollution of controlled waters and to accord with Policy AP7 of the Adur District Local Plan and West Sussex Structure Plan 2001-2016 Policy ERA5.
4. C18N (drainage details)

Case Officer .....

Date.....22/6/07.....

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