Development Management - Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/1468/21 Recommendation – Approve

Site: Project Vehicle Compound, Shoreham Technical Centre, Old Shoreham Road, Lancing

Proposal: Construction of a blockwork and chainlink fence compound to accommodate two Hydrogen tanks on lorry trailers, plus 2no. 6.5m high light columns

Date of site visit: 9 September 2021

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

The application site is a 6.3ha site occupied by Ricardo UK Ltd, an engineering development and testing firm. The site is triangular in shape and is bounded by the A27 to the north, the River Adur to the east and Shoreham Airport to the south.

The application seeks to construct a compound for the storage of two hydrogen tanks on lorry trailers. The compound is to be constructed of blockwork and chainlink fence and is to be illuminated by 2no. 6.5m high light columns. The compound is to be located on the northern boundary of the site, adjacent to the A27.

Relevant Planning History

Various applications for buildings approved previously

Consultations

West Sussex County Council: The Highways Authority advises that the Application Form states that the compound will be utilised for the testing of hydrogen vehicle engines and will accommodate up to two hydrogen gas trailers. Considering this, the LHA does not anticipate that the proposed compound would give rise to a material intensification of movements to or from the site, when compared with the site as a whole.

From inspection of local mapping, there are no apparent visibility issues with the existing point of access onto the maintained highway. In addition, there have been no recorded injury accidents attributed to road layout within the vicinity of the site access in the last five years. Therefore, there is no evidence to suggest the existing access is operating unsafely or that the proposal would exacerbate an existing safety concern. In addition to the above, from inspection of the plans, the proposed compound appears to be suitably sized to accommodate two trailers, and there is space within the site to accommodate on-site turning.

In conclusion, the LHA does not consider that this proposal would have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or result in 'severe' cumulative impacts on the operation of the highway network, therefore is not contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 111), and that there are no transport grounds to resist the proposal.

Adur and Worthing Councils: Public Health: This application seeks to construct a blockwork and chainlink fence compound plus 2no. 6m high light columns. Considering the lighting columns, the application states that the lighting will be positioned to prevent spillage onto the A27 highway. As the location is remote from adjacent residential dwellings, light pollution is not considered to result in a disamenity to local residents. I have no objection to this application on environmental control grounds.

Representations

None received

Relevant Planning Policies

Adur Local Plan 2017 Policies 4, 13, 14
National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021)
WSCC Guidance on Parking at New Developments (Sept 2020).

Planning Assessment

Policy 4 supports economic growth and specifically states that "*Further economic development at the site to the north of the airport, currently occupied by Ricardo, will be supported subject to other policies in this Plan*."

The site lies within the countryside and Local Green Gap so care must also be taken to ensure that any development is consistent with the aims of those policies (13 and 14)

The proposed compound is to be located within an existing, established engineering site where there are numerous buildings within a large site. The compound will not therefore be an intrusive form of development, being largely screened from views outside the site by existing buildings to the south and east and by vegetation on the northern boundary with the A27. The site is also at a lower level than the A27. The proposed light columns will be directed towards the compound and not the road and it is not considered that any visual harm will be caused by this proposal. There are existing lights within the Ricardo complex and those now proposed will not therefore be introducing new lighting into a countryside area. They will not be illuminated permanently.

The amount of hydrogen to be stored is of a level below that which requires approval from the HSE.

The site is in flood zone 3 but the proposed use is open storage only and does not involve a new building.

Recommendation

APPROVE

Subject to Conditions:-

1. Approved Plans
2. Standard 3 year time limit
3. Lighting columns to be illuminated only when compound is in use.

Is recommendation contrary to letter(s) of representation? N

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Case Officer:	Peter Barnett	Date: 1 October 2021
Authorised by:	Gary Peck	Date: 1 October 2021