

Application No: 11/4222N

Location: PRG ENGINEERING, LIGHTWOOD GREEN AVENUE, AUDLEM

Proposal: Proposed Extension to Existing Industrial Building and Enlargement of Rear Parking and Vehicle Turning Area

Applicant: PRG Engineering

Expiry Date: 09-Jan-2012

### **SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION**

Approve with conditions

### **MAIN ISSUES**

- Principle of Development
- Impact on Character and Appearance of Streetscene and Open Countryside
- Impact on the Amenity of Neighbouring properties
- Impact on Highway Safety

### **REASON FOR REFERRAL**

This application was to be dealt with under the Council's scheme of delegation. However, the application has been called in by Cllr Rachel Bailey to ensure that Highways benefits are acceptable and to consider the impact of the loss of open countryside and the impact on the amenity of the neighbouring bungalow.

### **DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT**

The application site is an industrial unit which is located within the Open Countryside as defined by the Local Plan Proposals Map. The building is an L shaped structure of part brick and part metal cladded construction with a height of approximately 7m to ridge. Vehicular access is off Lightwood Green Avenue with an existing parking, turning and external storage area to the rear. The application property is an isolated industrial premises located on an otherwise residential cul de sac.

### **DETAILS OF PROPOSAL**

This application proposes the construction of an extension to the existing building which would be sited to the rear of the existing building. The extension would be 11.5m in width, 19.2m in length, 5m to eaves and 6.2m to ridge. The extension would be constructed from

part blockwork and part plastic coated steel cladding. The extension would be in General Industrial (B2) use.

The scheme also includes the change of use of paddock land to the rear of the property to allow additional land for HGV turning and parking. The scheme includes an extension of the curtilage into the paddock at a depth of between 8m and 14m at a length of 64m.

In addition to the above, proposals include the widening of the existing point of access by 2m.

## **RELEVANT HISTORY**

**P05/0437** – Planning permission approved for Single Storey Extension To Workshop on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2005.

**P99/0962** – Planning permission approved for Extension on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2000.

**P96/0952** – Planning permission approved for Workshop extension on 29<sup>th</sup> May 1997.

**P94/0881** – Positive certificate issued for Certificate of proposed lawful use for general industrial purpose for the manufacture of agricultural and vehicle transportation trailers on 9<sup>th</sup> March 1995.

**7/11498** – Planning permission approved for New spray shop for wood treatment on 18<sup>th</sup> October 1984.

## **POLICIES**

### **Local Plan Policy**

- NE.2 (Open Countryside)
- BE.1 (Amenity)
- BE.2 (Design Standards)
- BE.3 (Access and Parking)
- BE.4 (Drainage, Utilities and Resources)
- BE.5 (Infrastructure)
- E.6 (Employment Development with Open Countryside)
- TRAN.9 (Car Parking Standards)

### **Other Considerations**

PPS1 – Delivering Sustainable Development

PPS7 – Sustainable Development in Rural Areas

Draft National Planning Policy Framework (2011)

## **CONSULTATIONS (External to Planning)**

**Environmental Health** – No objection subject to conditions

**Strategic Highways Manager** – No comments received at the time of writing report

## **VIEWS OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**

Would like to raise concerns about access. Currently HGV's trying to enter/exit the site. Suggest a site meeting and a condition put into any approval to ensure that the applicant widens the access.

## **OTHER REPRESENTATIONS**

None received at time of writing report

## **APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

Design and Access Statement

## **OFFICER APPRAISAL**

### **Principle of development**

This application site is located within the Open Countryside. Policy NE.2 of the Local Plan only allows for appropriate development in such locations. However, Policy E.6, which relates to employment development in the Open Countryside states that employment development will be restricted to appropriate small industries and developments which are within or adjacent to existing employment areas.

The proposed development is of a relatively modest scale, in relation to the existing development on the site, and would be sited within/adjacent to an existing employment site. Therefore the proposed development is considered to be acceptable in principle. The main considerations therefore, are whether the proposed development is of acceptable design as to not cause any harm to the character and appearance of the open countryside/streetscene, and whether the proposals would result in any demonstrable harm on the amenities of nearby residential properties or highway safety issues.

Emerging Policy contained within The Draft National Planning Policy Framework states that a positive approach should be adopted towards economic growth within rural areas, through supporting the sustainable growth of rural businesses.

### **Impact on the character and appearance of the streetscene and Open Countryside**

The proposals would include the construction of an extension to the rear of the existing building. The extension would be 11.5m in width, 19.2m in length, 5m to eaves and 6.2m to ridge. Its height would be the same as the adjacent building. As the proposed development would be sited to the rear of the property views would be limited, however there would be minor glimpses of the proposed development from Lightwood Green Avenue. Notwithstanding this, it would be seen in the context of the existing industrial development and would cause no demonstrable harm to the character and appearance of the streetscene.

The design of the proposed extension would be block work and plastic coated metal cladding. This would be of the same appearance as the existing building and is therefore considered to be of appropriate design.

The scheme also includes an increase of the overall curtilage of the industrial building. The curtilage would be extended into an existing paddock at a distance varying from 8m to 14m at a length of 64m. This would represent a significant incursion into the Open Countryside. Policy E.6 of the Local Plan does however allow for employment development adjacent to existing employment sites which this development would be. Furthermore, the proposals would not extend beyond an established boundary line further to the west and as such would not project into the wider open countryside. In addition to this, it is considered that there are other highways benefits brought by the scheme which would outweigh any harm caused to the open countryside through the loss of part of the paddock as explored below.

However, it is considered that further details would be required to ensure that the proposed change of use of land is acceptable. This includes details to be submitted to show what the new boundary treatment would be. Further conditions for details to be submitted of where any external storage and parking would be sited are also considered to be necessary.

### **Impact on the Amenity of Nearby Properties**

The proposed development would bring built form closer to an existing bungalow to the rear of the site. This dwelling is within the ownership of the applicants but understood to be privately rented out. The proposed building would be sited at a distance of 15m from windows at the front of the bungalow, however it would not be set immediately to its front. In terms of spacing standards (which are generally applied between dwellings) there is an accepted spacing standard of 13.5m between principal windows and blank elevations. This proposal would therefore satisfy that accepted spacing standard and would not result in any significant harm on the amenities of that property through loss of daylight.

The proposed development would be sited 5m from the boundary with the dwelling to the rear, between which would be an existing single storey structure. The proposed development is therefore unlikely to cause any demonstrable harm through overbearing.

No objections have been raised from Environmental Health and have not suggested noise mitigation measures. This is because this is an existing noise generating employment site. As this is only an extension to an existing premises it is considered that it would be unreasonable to alter the operations of the whole unit in terms of hours of operation or hours of deliveries.

### **Impact on Highway Safety**

The application proposals include the widening of the existing access to allow greater ease of access for HGV's visiting the site. The scheme also includes an increase in the level of turning space within the site so that HGV's can enter and exit the site in a forward gear. It is understood that at present HGV's when making deliveries often block Lightwood Green Avenue. This appears to be a significant benefit to the scheme and could be considered to provide weight against any harm that may be caused on the character and appearance of the Open Countryside. However, no comments have been received from the Strategic Highways

Manager and as such it is not clear at this time whether the proposals are fully practicable. A full update will be provided at Committee.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND REASON(S) FOR THE DECISION**

The proposed development forms employment development which is adjacent to an existing employment site within the Open Countryside. The scale of the proposed development is considered to be appropriate and is therefore acceptable. The design of the proposed extension is considered to be acceptable and there would not be any significant harm caused to the amenity of neighbouring properties. It is considered that any harm to the Open Countryside through an increase in curtilage would in this instance be balanced by the benefits which would arise from improvements to Highway safety. The proposal is therefore in compliance with Policies NE.2 (Open Countryside), BE.1 (Amenity), BE.2 (Design Standards), BE.3 (Access and Parking), BE.4 (Drainage, Utilities and Resources), BE.5 (Infrastructure), E.6 (Employment Development with Open Countryside) and TRAN.9 (Car Parking Standards) of the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan 2011.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Approve subjection to the following conditions:**

- 1) Standard Time Limit (3 years)**
- 2) Development to be carried out in accordance with the Approved Plans**
- 3) Materials to be submitted and approved by the Local Planning Authority**
- 4) Details of Surfacing Materials to be submitted**
- 5) Details of any areas of external storage to be submitted**
- 6) Details of Boundary treatment to be submitted and approved**
- 7) Details of Car Parking Layout to be submitted and approved**
- 8) Proposed access improvements to be carried out to an adoptable standard and implemented prior to first occupation of extension**
- 9) Details of any lighting to be submitted prior to implementation**

## Location Plan

