

Application No: 12/4295M

Location: LES HALMAN NURSERIES, PARKSIDE FARM, CROWN LANE, LOWER PEOVER, KNUTSFORD, WA16 9QA

Proposal: Joint authority application with Cheshire West - New glasshouse

Applicant: Mr L Halman

Expiry Date: 22-Feb-2013

Date Report Prepared: 1 February 2013

REASON FOR REPORT

This is an application is for a small scale major development and as such under the Council's terms of delegation is a Committee item.

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION	Refuse
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MAIN ISSUES

- Impact on the Green Belt
- Visual impact
- Impact on residential amenity
- Impact on protected species

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT

The application site comprises an agricultural field located to the north east of the existing complex of buildings at Parkside Farm. The field is currently used to graze cattle. Residential properties are located on Crown Lane to the west of the site with other residential properties and Lower Peover Primary School located on The Cobbles to the north. A public footpath runs along the eastern boundary of the site.

The site is located in the Green Belt and is split between Cheshire East and Cheshire West and Chester. As such, applications have been submitted to both authorities.

DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

Planning permission is sought for the erection of a 24 bay glasshouse in 8 spans of 9.6m, measuring 76.8m x 72m and providing 5529.6 sq metres of floorpsace. It would measure 5.1m to the ridge. The glasshouse would be constructed to the northern end of the existing complex within 3m of an existing glasshouse and is designed to match the most recent glasshouses built on site in terms of its height and appearance. It would be constructed on part of an adjoining field. It is proposed to re-position the existing timber post and rail fence which separates the field from the working area of the nursery and plant native trees and hedgerows around the northern and western elevation of the glasshouse to connect the eastern hedgerow with the field boundary to the west to provide replacement screening for the glass house complex when viewed from the north.

Shared use would be made of the existing access off Crown Lane and other existing infrastructure e.g. internal access roads and parking would be used.

The additional glasshouse would be used in association with, and as an extension of, the existing commercial horticultural enterprise which currently operates at Parkside Farm.

RELEVANT HISTORY

12/04517/FUL - Erection of glasshouse (Cheshire West and Chester application). Not yet determined.

POLICIES

Regional Spatial Strategy

DP1 Spatial Principles
DP7 Promote Environmental Quality
RDF4 Green Belt

Local Plan Policy

NE11 Nature Conservation
GC1 Green Belt
DC1 New Build
DC3 Amenity
DC6 Circulation and Access
DC8 Landscaping
DC28 Agricultural Buildings

Other Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework

CONSULTATIONS (External to Planning)

Highways: no objection.

Environmental Health: no objection.

Jodrell Bank: no comment.

VIEWS OF THE PARISH / TOWN COUNCIL

Lower Peover Parish Council: no objection provided full neighbour consultation is carried out.

OTHER REPRESENTATIONS

None received.

APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING INFORMATION

A supporting letter with photographs and a Phase I Habitat Survey have been submitted in support of the application. Full copies of these documents are available to view on the Council's web site.

OFFICER APPRAISAL

Background to the application

As stated, the proposed development straddles the boundary between Cheshire East and Cheshire West and Chester. As such, planning applications are required to be submitted to both authorities for determination.

Principle of Development

The proposal is for a horticultural glasshouse which is classed as an agricultural building. The construction of such buildings is acceptable in principle in the Green Belt in accordance with Local Plan policy GC1 and NPPF paragraph 89.

Green Belt

The proposed glasshouse is required in connection with the applicant's long established horticultural business which grows bedding plants. Whilst the proposed building is large (76.8m x 72m), it is designed for purpose and replicates the design of other buildings on site and on similar horticultural sites. It is considered to be an acceptable form of development in the Green Belt.

With regard to impact on openness, as a result of its sheer size, the building would impact on openness. However its impact would be limited due its relatively modest height and the fact that it is to be constructed wholly from glass.

Design/Visual Impact

As stated, the building is designed for purpose and is similar in appearance to other glasshouses on site, in particular the glasshouse which lies immediately to the south of the

application site. It would have a maximum height of 5.1m. The glasshouse is to be sited at the northern end of the existing complex of buildings and structures on the site, partially on a landscape area of the nursery and partially on an agricultural field. The field boundaries are marked by a combination of timber post and rail fencing and hedging. There is existing mature landscaping to the rear of residential properties fronting Crown Lane.

The proposed building would be visible from public vantage points along The Cobbles to the north of the site, from Lower Peover Primary School and from the public footpath. However, it is not considered that the proposed building would appear incongruous or out of character with the immediate surrounding area. Additional landscaping is proposed to the northern and western elevations and this will help to minimise the visual impact of the building meaning that its impact on the character and appearance of the area would be acceptable.

The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Local Plan policies BE1, DC1 and DC28.

Highways

Vehicular access to the site would remain as existing off Crown Lane. There are no highways objections to the proposal.

Amenity

There are a number of residential properties located along Crown Lane and The Cobbles. However, these are located some distance from the proposed glasshouse and whilst the glasshouse may be visible from these properties, it is not considered that the proposed building would result in a significant detrimental impact on the residential amenity of nearby occupiers. No objections have been raised by environmental health to the proposal.

Letters were sent to nearby neighbours by Cheshire West and Chester and no responses have been received in relation to the application. Similarly, no response has been received in response to the site notice posted in relation to this application.

The proposal is considered to comply with Local Plan policy DC3.

Ecology

A Phase I Habitat Survey was submitted during the course of the application and the Council's Nature Conservation Officer has been consulted. The survey found that there are a number of ponds located in the vicinity of the site and as such recommends that further survey work is required to establish whether the proposal would impact upon Great Crested Newts, a European protected species. In the absence of this further survey work, there is insufficient information to demonstrate that Great Crested Newts would be unaffected by the proposal. The application is therefore recommended for refusal on the grounds of insufficient information.

CONCLUSIONS AND REASON(S) FOR THE DECISION

The proposal represents an appropriate form of development in the Green Belt though it would have some impact on openness. The visual impact of the proposal on the character

and appearance of the area is considered to be acceptable and there would be no significant adverse impact on the amenity of nearby properties. Access and parking arrangements are acceptable. However, further survey work is required in order to ensure that the proposal would not adversely impact on Great Crested Newts, a European protected species. In the absence of this information, it has not been possible to demonstrate that the proposal would not have an unacceptable impact on protected species. The application is therefore recommended for refusal.

Application for Full Planning

RECOMMENDATION: Refuse for the following reasons

1. R04MS - Insufficient information

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