

Application No: 13/0616N

Location: Widdowson-dalebrook, BASFORD ROAD, CREWE, CW2 6ES

Proposal: Redevelopment of part of former Widdowson and Dalebrook factory site for storage and distribution purposes, including demolition of existing buildings, erection of new buildings, provision of loading/unloading area and improved junction of Basford Road with Gresty Road.

Applicant: Morning Foods Limited

Expiry Date: 09-Apr-2013

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION: Approve subject to conditions

MAIN ISSUES:

- Principle of the development
- Design, Siting and Scale
- Appearance
- Amenity

REASON FOR REFERRAL

The application is before Committee as it is for the creation of in excess of 1000sqm of commercial floorspace.

DESCRIPTION AND SITE CONTEXT

The application relates to an existing industrial site formerly used for the manufacture of machined metal components. The buildings have now been acquired by Morning Foods Limited and are currently used for the storage of surplus machinery and equipment.

The buildings to be demolished comprise an office building and engineering workshops that are in a poor state of repair and not fit for the purposes required by Morning Foods.

DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

The proposal is for a warehouse building of 1004sqm, which would take the form of an extension to existing adjacent buildings. The warehouse building would incorporate docking bays that would allow rear loading of delivery vehicles from within the warehouse. A second building of 520sqm is also proposed which will be used for the storage of empty pallets and machinery and equipment. The materials used for the construction of the buildings would match those on the existing Morning Foods site.

RELEVANT HISTORY

P96/0408 1996 Approval for industrial building for the manufacture of metal components

P97/0271 1997 Refusal for removal of conditions relating to the hours of operation

POLICIES

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework

Local Plan

BE.1 - Amenity

BE.2 - Design Standards

BE.3 - Access and Parking

E.4 – Development on Existing Employment Areas

CONSIDERATIONS (External to Planning)

Environmental Health:

Originally recommended refusal of the application due to lack of information relating to noise. This information has now been received and is considered to be acceptable. Conditions relating to hours of construction and lighting.

Highways:

The site is adjacent to the Morning Foods site and accessed from Gresty Road via Basford Lane, a cul-de-sac serving only commercial properties. The proposal is for demolition of buildings formerly in industrial use and their replacement with a warehouse/delivery building of approximately half the size. Basford Lane will be used for entry with traffic exiting by the main Morning Foods junction.

Highways do not consider the proposed use to generate undesirable levels of traffic or have a negative impact on the local road network. Accordingly they have no objection to the proposal.

As part of the proposal, the applicant seeks to improve the radius of the left turn from Gresty Road into Basford Lane. This is acceptable, subject to the maintenance of safe pedestrian crossing facilities and will require the applicant to enter into an Agreement under S278 of the Highways Act.

United Utilities:

No objection.

VIEWS OF TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL

None received at the time of report writing.

OTHER REPRESENTATIONS

Five objections have been received expressing concerns about HGV vehicle movements, loss of privacy, increased noise levels and lack of adequate screening.

OFFICER APPRAISAL

Principle of Development

The site is designated as being within the settlement boundary of Crewe and is on an existing business/industrial estate. Recent government guidance, in particular the Planning for Growth agenda, and the National Planning Policy Framework, all state that Local Planning Authorities should be supportive proposals involving economic development, except where these compromise key sustainability principles.

The NPPF states that, the purpose of planning is to help achieve sustainable development. *“Sustainable means ensuring that better lives for ourselves do not mean worse lives for future generations. Development means growth. We must accommodate the new ways by which we will earn our living in a competitive world.”* There are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles including, an economic role – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, as well as an environmental role – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment.

At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The document states that for decision taking this means, inter alia, approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay.

According to paragraph 17, within the overarching roles that the planning system ought to play, a set of core land-use planning principles should underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. According to the 12 principles planning should, inter alia, proactively drive and support sustainable economic development. The NPPF makes it clear that *“the Government is committed to securing economic growth in order to create jobs and prosperity, building on the country’s inherent strengths, and to meeting the twin challenges of global competition and of a low carbon future.”*

According to paragraphs 19 to 21, *“the Government is committed to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth. Planning should operate to encourage and not act as an impediment to sustainable growth. Therefore significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system. To help achieve economic growth, local planning authorities should plan proactively to meet the development needs of business and support an economy fit for the 21st century. Investment in business should not be overburdened by the combined requirements of planning policy expectations.”*

Another important material consideration is the Written Ministerial Statement: Planning for Growth (23 March 2011) by The Minister of State for Decentralisation (Greg Clark). Inter alia, it states that, *“the Government’s top priority in reforming the planning system is to promote sustainable economic growth and jobs. Government’s clear expectation is that the answer to development and growth should wherever possible be ‘yes’, except where this would compromise the key sustainable development principles set out in national planning policy.*

Furthermore, it states that when deciding whether to grant planning permission, local planning authorities should support enterprise and facilitate economic development. Local Authorities should therefore, inter alia, consider fully the importance of national planning policies aimed at fostering economic growth and employment, given the need to ensure a return to robust growth after the recent recession; take into account the need to maintain a flexible and

responsive supply of land for key sectors; consider the range of likely economic, environmental and social benefits of proposals; including long term or indirect benefits and ensure that they do not impose unnecessary burdens on development.

According to the statement, *“in determining planning applications, local planning authorities are obliged to have regard to all relevant considerations. They should ensure that they give appropriate weight to the need to support economic recovery.”*

Policy E.4 allows for the re-use, re-development or intensification of the use of the land within existing employment areas, subject to compliance with Policies BE.1 to BE.5. The proposal is considered to be in compliance with Policy E.4 and acceptable in principle.

Design and Scale

The proposal is for an extension to the Morning Foods manufacturing facility, and the design of it would create a development that would reflect that of the existing buildings, including the use of matching materials. The warehouse building would have floor space of 1004sqm and the dry storage building 520sqm. The warehouse building would be approximately 12.m in height with the storage building being lower at approximately 7.2m. The materials would be Kingspan ‘Goosewing Grey’ micro rib sheeting with ocean blue flashing above red, smooth faced brickwork, to match the adjacent Morning Foods buildings. The scale of the building would be acceptable when viewed in the context of this industrial site.

This is an existing commercial area where there a variety of utilitarian buildings of differing sizes and designs and as such it is considered to be acceptable in terms of design and scale and in compliance with Policy BE.2 of the adopted local plan.

Amenity

Policy BE.1 requires that new development should be compatible with surrounding land uses, should not prejudice residential amenity, generate unacceptable levels of traffic or lead to an increase in pollution.

This is an existing industrial site, which has residential properties to the north and west and as such an assessment of the impact of noise generation was requested. This assessment has now been examined by Environmental Protection and they are satisfied that the levels of noise generated from the site would not unacceptably compromise the amenity of the neighbouring residential properties.

Should the application be approved, details of any external lighting and a Phase II Contaminated Land Site Investigation should be submitted for approval, this could be controlled by condition. In addition the hours of construction should be restricted to 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday, 9am to 2pm Saturday with no working on Sundays and Public House.

The height of the buildings and the proximity to residential properties are important issues. In terms of built form, following the removal of the existing dilapidated buildings, the new build would be further away from properties to the west and north of the site. Due to the design of the buildings there would be no overlooking of the neighbouring residential properties. The new build would be a minimum of 15m away from the boundaries with neighbouring properties meaning overshadowing would also not be an issue.

In order to ensure that the site is properly screened from the residential properties, it is considered that a condition should be imposed requiring submission of a scheme of landscaping for the site.

Highways

Access to the site would be from Basford Road or the main entrance to Morning Foods, with HGVs exiting the site using the main entrance to the Morning Foods site.

The approved use of the site and the existing Morning Foods operation already generate significant traffic including HGVs which use Basford Road already. Therefore it is not anticipated that the proposal would lead to any significant increase in this. In addition the proposals include the increase of the radius of the left turn from Gresty Road into Basford Road.

The Strategic Highways Manager has no objection to the proposal and considers that it would not generate undesirable levels of traffic or have a negative impact on the local road network. The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable and in compliance with Policy BE.3 of the adopted Local Plan.

CONCLUSIONS AND REASONS FOR THE DECISION

In conclusion, the proposal is acceptable in principle, of an appropriate scale and design; it would not have a significant adverse impact on residential amenity and is satisfactory in highway safety terms.

The application is therefore recommended for approval.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve subject to the following conditions:

1. Time limit
2. Approved plans
3. Materials as stated in the application
4. Submission of a Phase II Contaminated Land Site Investigation Report
5. Submission of details of any external lighting
6. Hours of construction/demolition restricted to 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday, 9am to 2pm Saturday, with no working on Sundays and Public Holidays
7. Submission of a landscaping scheme
8. Implementation of landscaping scheme

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