

Application No: 23/4130N

Location: Mornflake, THIRD AVENUE, CREWE

Proposal: Extension to existing warehouse to provide additional storage, loading and unloading facilities.

Applicant: Mr James Lea, Morning Foods Ltd

Expiry Date: 06-Mar-2024

SUMMARY:

The site is located within the Settlement Boundary for Crewe, as such Policy PG9 of the SADPD identifies that within the Settlement Boundary proposals 'will be supported where they are in keeping with the scale, role and function of that settlement and do not conflict with any other relevant policy in the local plan'.

The site is also located within the Strategic Employment Area (Crewe Gates Farm Industrial Estate) as per the Local Plan, within which Policy EMP1 of the SADPD advises will be protected for employment use as set out in LPS Policy EG 3 'Existing and allocated employment sites'. It also advises that proposals for further investment for employment uses in these areas will be supported, subject to other policies in the development plan.

As the proposal seeks to retain and extend the existing employment use it is acceptable from a pure land use perspective.

The benefits of the proposal would be the retention and enhancement use of the employment complying with Policy EG3.

The development will not have a detrimental impact upon residential amenity (including contaminated land) and would comply with Policy HOU12 of the SADPD.

The development would not have significant drainage/flood risk implications and would be comply with SE13 of the CELPS and ENV16 of the SADPD.

The full highway impacts are currently unknown but will be addressed in the update report.

No tree or ecological harm has been identified and the complies with Policies SE3 and SE5 of the CELPS & ENV1, ENV2 and ENV6 of the SADPD.

The development is considered to be acceptable in design terms. As a result, the proposal would accord with CELPS policy SE1 CELPS, GEN1 SADPD and the NPPF in relation to design quality and the requirements of the CEC Design Guide.

In conclusion the application would comply with the relevant policies of the Development Plan as a whole and is recommended for approval (subject to no objection being raised by the Head of Strategic Transport).

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve subject to conditions (Subject to the no objection being raised by the Head of Strategic Transport)

REASON FOR REFERRAL

The application is referred to Southern Planning Committee as the floor area of the development exceeds 5,000sqm.

PROPOSAL

This is a full application for the extension to an existing warehouse to provide additional storage, loading and unloading facilities.

The building totals 9355sqm gross internal floor space, a continuation of the vehicle and pedestrian access points off Third and Fourth Avenue to serve the development, 83 car parking spaces (including 4 accessible and 14 electrical), 8 loading docks, 17 HGV parking spaces and enhanced drainage features.

SITE DESCRIPTION

This application relates to an existing 2.64 hectare site in the centre of Crewe Gates Industrial Estate. Surrounding units in similar warehouse/industrial use.

The site is enclosed by Third Avenue to the northwest and Fourth Avenue to the southwest. The northeast boundary back onto industrial units and the southwest boundary is to other industrial buildings and an office building.

The site is a flat site which is currently accessed off Third and Fourth Avenue.

The site is designated as being within the Strategic Employment Area (Crewe Gates Farm Industrial Estate) as per the SADPD.

RELEVANT HISTORY

Various applications, most relevant to the current application

20/3996N – Prior approval of Demolition - Former Industrial site with warehouses and offices and ancillary equipment – approved 18th Jan 2021

P04/1612 – Erection of Manufacturing Facility & Ancillary Building for Storage of Raw Mate – approved 10-Feb-2005

NATIONAL & LOCAL POLICY

Development Plan:

Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy – Adopted Version (CELPS)

The following are considered relevant material considerations as indications of the emerging strategy:

MP1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
PG1 Overall Development Strategy
PG2 Settlement Hierarchy
PG7 Spatial Distribution of Development
SD1 Sustainable Development in Cheshire East
SD2 Sustainable Development Principles
SE1 Design
SE2 Efficient Use of Land
SE 3 Biodiversity and Geodiversity
SE5 Trees, Hedgerows and Woodlands
SE6 Green Infrastructure
SE9 Energy Efficient Development
SE12 Pollution, Land Contamination and Land Instability
SE13 Flood Risk and Water Management
EG1 Economic Prosperity
EG3 Existing and Allocated Employment Sites
IN1 Infrastructure
CO1 Sustainable Travel and Transport
CO4 Travel Plans and Transport Assessments
Appendix C Parking Standards
EG3 Existing and Allocated Employment Sites
CO 2 Enabling Business Growth Through Transport Infrastructure
Appendix C Parking Standards

Policies of the Site Allocations and Development Policies Document (SADPD)

PG9 Settlement Boundaries
GEN 1 Design Principles
ENV1 & 2 Ecological
ENV5 Landscaping
ENV6 Trees, Hedgerows and Woodlands
ENV12 Air Quality
ENV15 New Development and Existing Uses
ENV16 Surface Water Management and Flood Risk
HOU12 Amenity
INF3 Highways Safety and Access
EMP1 Strategic employment areas
EMP2 Employment Allocations
INF7 Hazardous Installations

Other Material planning policy considerations

National Planning Policy Framework ('The Framework');

The relevant paragraphs include;

| | |
|---------|--|
| 11 | Presumption in favour of sustainable development |
| 85-87 | Building a strong, competitive economy |
| 124-132 | Achieving well-designed places |
| 170-183 | Conserving and enhancing the natural environment |
| 92-97 | Promoting healthy and safe communities |
| 19-123 | Making effective use of land |

CONSULTATIONS:

CEC Environmental Protection: No objections subject to informative regarding working hours for construction, piling, floor floating, contaminated land & dust.

CEC Highways: No comments received at the time of writing the report.

CEC Local Lead Flood Authority (LLFA): No objection as happy to accept infiltration on site is not feasible subject to condition requiring SUDS.

United Utilities: No objection subject to condition requiring a drainage strategy.

Cadent Gas: No objection

Crewe Town Council: No objection and proposal is welcomed given the continued investment in the town

REPRESENTATIONS:

1 letter of support has been received which states that this level of investment will benefit the industrial estate significantly with both visual and functional improvements.

APPRAISAL

Principle of Development

The site is located both within the Settlement Boundary for Crewe, as such Policy PG9 of the SADPD identifies that within the Settlement Boundary proposals 'will be supported where they are in keeping with the scale, role and function of that settlement and do not conflict with any other relevant policy in the local plan'.

The site is also located within the Strategic Employment Area (Crewe Gates Farm Industrial Estate) as per the Local Plan within which Policy EMP1 of the SADPD advises will be protected for employment use as set out in LPS Policy EG 3 'Existing and allocated employment sites'. It also advises that proposals for further investment for employment uses in these areas will be supported, subject to other policies in the development plan.

As the proposal seeks to retain and extend the existing employment use it is acceptable from a pure land use perspective.

The main issue therefore is whether there are any other material considerations such as design, amenity, living conditions etc. that outweigh the in-principle support for the proposal.

Economic Benefits

The site is located within strategic Employment Area (Crewe Gates Farm Industrial) Estate.

Policy EG3 requires existing employment sites to be protected for employment use. The proposal would protect the existing employment use.

This proposal would result in economic benefits in the form of creating 10 additional new jobs, investment in Crewe by a strategic employer, the redevelopment of an underused site within a sustainable location and further economic benefits during construction from employment and spending power from future employees.

As such the proposal complies with Policies EG3.

Highways

Policy INF3 advises proposal should comply with the relevant Highway Authority and other highway design guidance and provide safe access to and from the site for all highway users and incorporate safe internal movement in the site to meet the requirements of servicing and emergency vehicles.

The proposal seeks to utilise the existing access points of Third and Fourth Avenue.

Comments in the supporting statement suggest that vehicular movements to and from the site would not change as a result of the proposal. This has been questioned by the Councils Highways Engineer who has requested a Transport Statement be provided.

Whilst this has recently been received it is being assessed by the Councils Highways Engineer, so his comments are not ready for this committee report, however his full comments will be provided in the update report.

Cycle storage and shower facilities can be secured by condition.

As a result, the highway impacts are unknown at this stage, and an update will be provided.

Design

Policy SD1 states that wherever possible development should 'provide a locally distinct, high quality, sustainable, well designed and durable environment'.

Policy SD2 states that all development will be expected to contribute positively an area's character and identity, creating or reinforcing local distinctiveness in terms of;

- Height, scale, form and grouping

- Choice of materials
- External design features
- Massing of the development (the balance between built form and green/public spaces)
- Green infrastructure; and
- Relationship to neighbouring properties, street scene and the wider neighbourhood

SE1 requires proposal to ensure design solutions achieve a sense of place by protecting and enhancing the quality, distinctiveness and character of settlements.

GEN1 requires proposal to create high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places, avoiding the imposition of standardised and/or generic design solutions where they do not establish and/or maintain a strong sense of quality and place.

The proposal seeks extensions totalling 9355sqm gross internal floor space, a continuation of the vehicle and pedestrian access points off Third and Fourth Avenue to serve the development, 83 car parking spaces (including 4 accessible and 14 electrical) 8 loading docks, 17 GHV parking spaces and enhanced drainage features.

The existing and proposed uses will continue to be B2/B8 General Industrial and Storage and Distribution with a 3-storey ancillary office/welfare element.

The existing/proposed dimensions are:

Existing gross internal floorspace (square metres): 5119m²

Gross internal floorspace to be lost by change of use or demolition (square metres): 1367m²

Net additional gross internal floorspace following development (square metres): 9355m²

The proposed warehouse building would have a maximum height internally of 29m with ridge height approx. 33m. This would result in the creation of a building taller than the immediate neighbouring buildings (average 15-20m high) and as such it would appear locally prominent. However, it would have a similar height to other buildings found elsewhere in the industrial estate and those slightly further beyond. Below is an extract of the building heights assessment showing heights and locations of other tall buildings in the locality:

The distances of the structures from the proposed development (nearest first) are:

- Proposed Development – 33m high
- JTI Warehouse – 32m (263m away)
- Brightstar Warehouse – 29m high (372m away)
- Basford Hall Sidings Light Tower 1 – 45m high (514m away)
- Basford Hall Sidings Light Tower 2 – 45m high (552m away)
- Basford Hall Sidings Light Tower 3 – 45m high (625m away)
- Crewe Alexandra Stadium – 29m high (774m away)
- Rail House – 48m high (842m away)
- Basford Hall Sidings Light Tower 4 – 45m high (917m away)
- Morning Foods Mill – 33m high (950m away)

- Basford Hall Sidings Light Tower 5 – 45m high (985m away)



Figure 3: Aerial image looking east over Crewe showing the proposed development and existing buildings of similar height

Therefore, as can be seen above, whilst the proposal would result in the creation of a tall building, it would be viewed in the context of the existing industrial area and would be similar in height to those other buildings found elsewhere on the industrial estate. Given the presence of building of similar heights and the context in the existing industrial area it is not considered that the proposed height increase would be significantly out of character.

The proposal consists of vertical and horizontal plastic-coated profiled metal sheeting walls and plastic coated profiled metal sheeting roof. It would be of a functional design that reflects its industrial context and would have a similar appearance to other surroundings buildings. Final material can be secured by condition.

Given the size of the building to those immediately surrounding, it is acknowledged that the scale/bulk would result in some localised visual harm to Fourth Avenue. However, this is considered to be weighed in context of its industrial setting and the benefits of the proposal.

Therefore, it is considered that the proposal could be accommodated without causing significant harm to the character/appearance of the area and complies with Policies SD1, SD2, SE1 CELPS & GEN1 SADPD.

Amenity

Policy HOU 12 (Amenity) of the SADPD, requires that new development should not have an unduly detrimental effect on the amenities of nearby residential properties from loss of privacy, loss of sunlight or daylight, the overbearing and dominating effect of new buildings, environmental disturbance or pollution and traffic generation access and parking.

The nearest properties are located over 600m away. Therefore, it is not expected that the proposal would result in any significant amenity concerns.

It is considered that the proposals could be accommodated without causing significant harm to living conditions of neighbouring properties. And complies with SADPD Policy HOU12.

Air Quality

Policy SE12 of the CELPS states that the Council will seek to ensure all development is located and designed so as not to result in a harmful or cumulative impact upon air quality.

The impact upon air quality could be mitigated with the imposition of a condition to require the provision of electric vehicle charging points.

Contaminated Land

Environmental Protection have considered the site and suggested a condition to address any unexpected contamination.

Trees

Some low-quality tree losses may arise however these appear to be adequately compensated for in terms of numbers as indicated on the proposed site plan.

While the Councils Forestry Officer raises no objections to the proposal as submitted, she considers that an opportunity exists to introduce more species diversity in the tree planting scheme submitted as opposed to 10 same species silver birch trees. This can be secured by condition.

As a result, it is considered that the impact upon trees on the site would be acceptable and complies with Policy SE5 of the CELPS & ENV6 of the SADPD.

Flood Risk

Policy SE13 CELPS advises developments must integrate measures for sustainable water management to reduce flood risk, avoid an adverse impact on water quality and quantity within the borough and provide opportunities to enhance biodiversity, health and recreation,

Policy ENV16 SADPD advises it should be demonstrated how surface water runoff can be appropriately managed.

The site is located in flood zone 1. This means it has a low probability of flooding from rivers and the sea. The site area is above 1 hectare therefore a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) is required and has been provided.

This has considered flood risk from sources of rivers, sea, surface and ground water flooding and other areas and deems there to be very low to negligible impacts.

The Councils drainage/flood risk team have been consulted who initially required further information about the drainage hierarchy. This has since been provided which suggests that

infiltration. The LLFA has assessed the information provided and agree that infiltration on site is not feasible and therefore they raise no objection subject to implementation of Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS).

United Utilities have also been consulted who raise no objection subject to condition requiring details of a sustainable surface water drainage scheme and a foul water drainage scheme.

The drainage scheme can be secured by condition.

As such subject to condition, it is not considered that the proposal would pose any significant drainage/flood risk concerns. The proposal therefore complies with Policy SE13 CELPS & ENV16 SADPD.

Ecology

The Councils Ecologist has been consulted who advises that he does not anticipate there being any significant ecological issues associated with the proposed development. Therefore, raises no objection.

As such the proposal can be accommodated without significant ecological impacts and complies with Policy SE3 of the CELPS, ENV1, ENV2 of the SADPD.

Renewable Energy

Point 2 of Policy SE9 requires non-residential development over 1,000 square metres to secure at least 10 per cent of its predicted energy requirements from decentralised and renewable or low carbon sources. This can be secured by the imposition of a planning condition.

Conclusion

The site is located within the Settlement Boundary for Crewe, as such Policy PG9 of the SADPD identifies that within the Settlement Boundary proposals 'will be supported where they are in keeping with the scale, role and function of that settlement and do not conflict with any other relevant policy in the local plan'.

The site is also located within the Strategic Employment Area (Crewe Gates Farm Industrial Estate) as per the Local Plan, within which Policy EMP1 of the SADPD advises will be protected for employment use as set out in LPS Policy EG 3 'Existing and allocated employment sites'. It also advises that proposals for further investment for employment uses in these areas will be supported, subject to other policies in the development plan.

As the proposal seeks to retain and extend the existing employment use it is acceptable from a pure land use perspective.

The benefits of the proposal would be the retention and enhancement use of the employment complying with Policy EG3.

The development will not have a detrimental impact upon residential amenity (including contaminated land) and would comply with Policy HOU12 of the SADPD.

The development would not have significant drainage/flood risk implications and would be comply with SE13 of the CELPS and ENV16 of the SADPD.

The full highway impacts are currently unknown but will be addressed in the update report.

No tree or ecological harm has been identified and the complies with Policies SE3 and SE5 of the CELPS & ENV1, ENV2 and ENV6 of the SADPD.

The development is considered to be acceptable in design terms. As a result, the proposal would accord with CELPS policy SE1 CELPS, GEN1 SADPD and the NPPF in relation to design quality and the requirements of the CEC Design Guide.

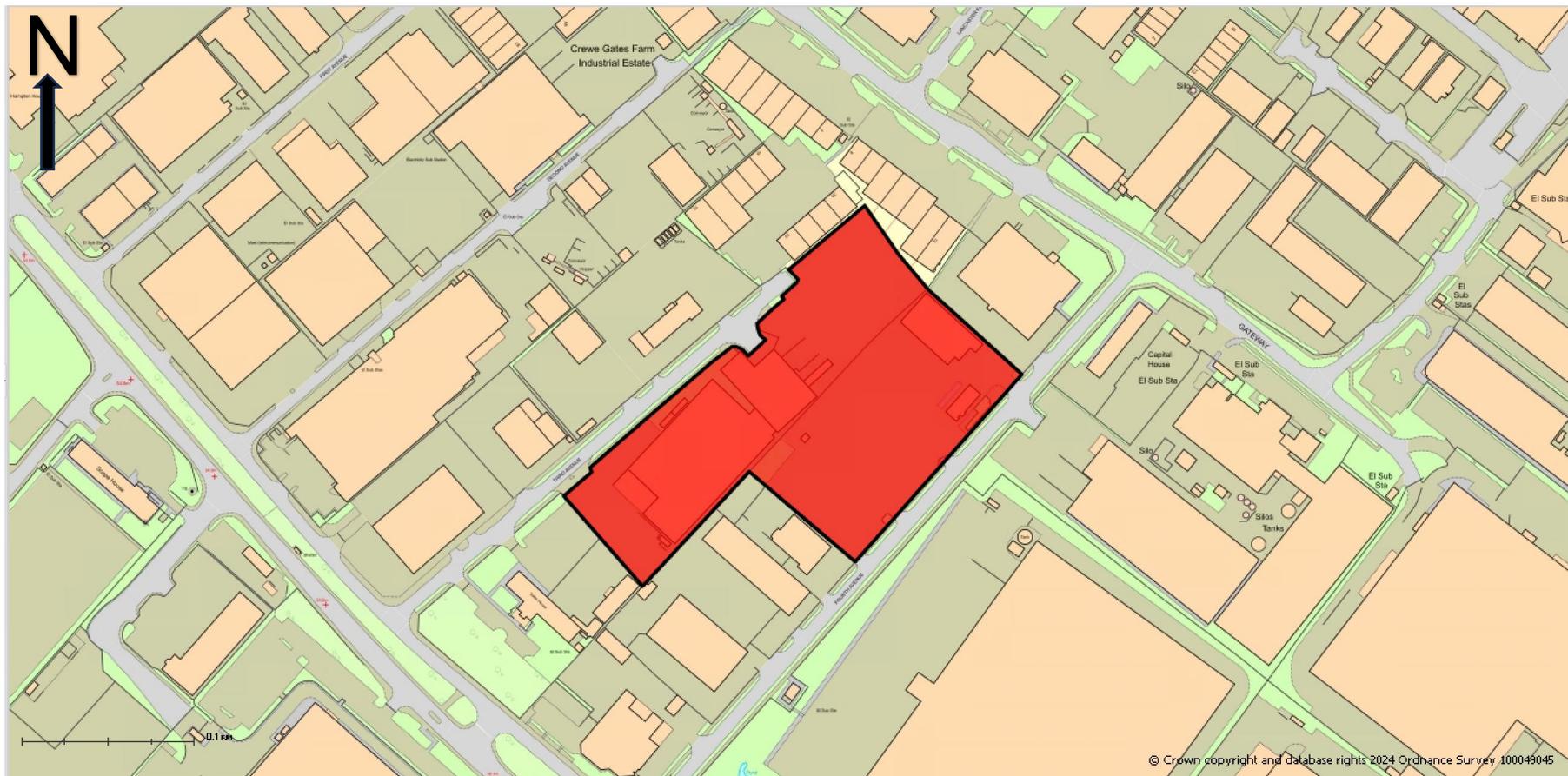
In conclusion the application would comply with the relevant policies of the Development Plan as a whole and is recommended for approval (subject to no objection being raised by the Head of Strategic Transport).

RECOMMENDATION

Subject to the no objection being raised by the Head of Strategic Transport - APPROVE subject to the following conditions:

- 1) **3-year time limit**
- 2) **Development in accordance with the approved plans**
- 3) **Details of proposed materials**
Sustainable surface water drainage scheme and a foul water drainage scheme/SUDS
- 4) **Unexpected contamination**
- 5) **EVC**
Landscaping scheme submission to include more species diversity in the tree planting scheme
- 6) **Landscaping implementation**
- 7) **Cycle Parking provision**
- 8) **Shower facilities for staff**
- 9) **10% renewable energy**

In order to give proper effect to the Board`s/Committee`s intent and without changing the substance of its decision, authority is delegated to the Head of Planning (Regulation) in consultation with the Chair (or in their absence the Vice Chair) to correct any technical slip or omission in the resolution, before issue of the decision notice.



OFFICIAL