

Application No: 18/2157N

Location: Dairygold, LANCASTER FIELDS, CREWE, CHESHIRE, CW1 6FU

Proposal: Proposed extensions to the existing production facility that includes the demolition of an existing extension.

Applicant: Mr Keith Stokes, Dairygold Foods

Expiry Date: 07-Sep-2018

SUMMARY

The application site lies entirely within the Crewe Settlement boundary as determined by the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Adopted Replacement Local Plan 2011. The application site also lies within an existing industrial estate. Policy PG 2 (Settlement Hierarchy) of the CELPS designates Crewe as a 'Principal Town' where there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Saved policy E.4 (Development on Existing Employment Areas) of the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Local Plan advises that within such locations proposals for new employment development for the intensification of the use of land within existing employment areas will be permitted.

The design is acceptable and the impact on the surrounding amenity, trees, ecology and the highway network will not be significant.

On the basis of the above, it is considered that the proposal represents sustainable development and is recommended for approval.

RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE subject to conditions

REASON FOR REFERRAL

This application is referred to Southern Planning Committee as the development relates to a small scale major planning application. The application site is 1.07 hectares.

PROPOSAL

This is a full planning application for proposed extensions to the existing production facility (that includes the demolition of an existing extension). The development would incorporate new build extensions to facilitate the installation of new ground floor process areas, goods in and out and new first floor offices.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site comprises an existing industrial unit located within an industrial estate on the western side of Lancaster Fields. The application site is characterised by buildings of varying heights and designs, all of a functional/industrial appearance.

RELEVANT HISTORY ON SITE

Various relating to the existing and established use, the most relevant/recent outlined below:

11/1580N - Present HGV entrance to loading bay is 9.5m. Propose to widen gateway to 13m for safe access to site. We will replace barrier with galvanised gates on the entrance for security. This will involve curving the public footpath – approved 21st September 2011

P07/0816 - Side extension to industrial building and alterations to access – approved with conditions 2008

LOCAL & NATIONAL POLICY

Development Plan:

Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (CELPS)

PG 2 – Settlement Hierarchy
SD 1 - Sustainable Development in Cheshire East
SD 2 - Sustainable Development Principles
SE 1 - Design
SE 2 - Efficient Use of Land
SE 5 - Trees, Hedgerows and Woodland
SE 9 - Energy Efficient Development
SE 12 - Pollution, Land Contamination and Land Instability
EG 1 - Economic Prosperity

Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan 2011 (Saved Policies)

BE.1 - Amenity
BE.3 - Access and Parking
BE.4 - Drainage, Utilities and Resources
E.4 - Development on Existing Employment Areas
NE.17 - Pollution Control
NE.20 - Flood Prevention

National Policy:

The National Planning Policy Framework establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

CONSULTATIONS:

Head of Strategic Infrastructure (HSI) – No objection subject to S106 contribution.

Environmental Protection – No objection subject to conditions and Informative.

Cadet Gas – No objection.

Flood Risk and Drainage – No objection subject to a condition relating to a detailed drainage strategy.

VIEWS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL:

Crewe Town Council – No comments received at the time of writing the report.

REPRESENTATIONS:

None received

APPRAISAL

The key issues to be considered in the determination of this application are set out below.

Principle of Development

The site lies in the Crewe Settlement Zone Line and within an established industrial estate, where there is the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Policy PG 2 (Settlement Hierarchy) of the CELPS designates Crewe as a 'Principal Town' where;

“significant development will be encouraged to support their revitalisation, recognising their roles as the most important settlements in the borough. Development will maximise the use of existing infrastructure and resources to allow jobs, homes and other facilities to be located close to each other and accessible by public transport.”

Policy EG1 (Economic Prosperity) of the CELPS states that;

‘Proposals for employment development (Use Classes B1, B2 or B8) will be supported in principle within the Principal Towns, Key Service Centres and Local Service Centres as well as on employment land allocated in the Development Plan’

Saved policy E.4 (Development on Existing Employment Areas) of the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Local Plan states that:

“proposals for new employment development, for the re-use, re-development or intensification of the use of land within existing employment areas will be permitted, (in accordance with policies BE.1 - BE.5).”

The proposal is for the extension/alteration of an existing employment use and the development is considered acceptable in principle subject to compliance with the other relevant planning policies.

Design and Context

Policy SE1 (Design) of the CELPS advises that development proposals should make a positive contribution to their surroundings.

The proposed extensions have been designed to be similar in form and appearance to the existing building, with a maximum height of 11.8 m. This is comparative to the existing height of the building

(11.0 m). The extensions are of a standard, commercial design that are considered acceptable and suitable for the use that the development will serve. Given the setting of the application site it is not considered that the extensions will have a significant impact on the character of the area.

It is advised within the application that the walls of the buildings would be clad in vertical profile cladding in a colour to match the existing building and that the roof will be profiled cladding in a colour to match the existing building.

As a result of the above, it is considered that the layout, form, scale and appearance of the proposal would be acceptable and would adhere with Policy SE1 of the CELPS.

Landscape

The Council's Landscape Officer does not consider that the proposals would result in any adverse landscape or visual impacts and raises no objection to the proposed development.

Trees

The submitted Arboricultural Impact Assessment identifies 4 individual low (C) category trees (Silver/Himalayan Birch and Italian Alder) and two groups; G1 a linear group of Leyland Cypress of low arboricultural merit located close to an existing building and Group G2, a group of mixed species comprising of Oak, Willow, Red Oak, Ash, Cherry, Field Maple, Poplar and Scots Pine of moderate (B) category adjacent the north west and eastern edge of the site.

Group G2 provides a substantial landscaped buffer between the site and Tatton House to the North West and presents a significant visual backdrop to the existing development when viewed from Lancaster Fields. The trees are not protected by a TPO or lie within a designated Conservation Area.

The proposed demolition of the existing building to the south of the site and erection of three new extensions, new site entrance and alteration of two existing site entrances will not require the removal of any existing trees. The AIA has identified (para 5.1) that access facilitation pruning will be required along the south eastern aspect of Group G2 (incorrectly identified in the text and on the Tree Protection Plan as G1). The pruning proposals will comprise of reductions of overhanging branches by 2 metres to avoid encroachment onto the proposed structure. The report also proposes the removal of young self set trees within 2 metres of the fence line to avoid future damage, however it is unclear as to whether these trees are within the applicant's ownership for this to be effectively carried out.

The proposals present no significant impact on existing tree cover; should planning permission be granted and in the light of the irregularities in the submitted AIA a revised Tree Protection Scheme/ Method Statement shall be submitted by condition.

Ecology

There are some habitats around the industrial park including mature tree lines and ponds that could be attractive to bats and Quaker's coppice is located close to the application site. However none of the buildings on site are likely to have any potential for roosting bats due to their design and the materials used in their construction. There is one building that may have some low potential, but this is not affected by the proposed alterations/extensions.

The Council's Ecologist has confirmed that no protected species surveys are required to inform the determination of this application.

Drainage and Flood Risk

The Flood Risk and Drainage team have no objection to the principle of the development. The applicant has not submitted any information in relation to flood risk management on the site. Should the application be approved it is requested that a condition be imposed relating to a detailed drainage strategy. If the applicant is proposing to retain any of the existing drainage then a condition survey must be conducted to ensure effective drainage of the site.

Amenity

Policy BE.1 (Amenity) of the Local Plan requires that new development will be permitted provided that they are compatible with surrounding land uses, do not prejudice the amenity of future occupiers, do not generate such levels of traffic that they would prejudice the safe movement of traffic on surrounding roads and do not lead to an increase in air, noise or water pollution.

Given the location of the application site in an industrial / commercial area of Crewe, there are no nearby neighbouring dwellings that could be impacted. As such it is not envisaged that the development would create any amenity issues with regards to loss of privacy, light or visual intrusion.

In relation to environmental disturbance; the Council's Environmental Protection Team have advised that they have no objections, subject to a conditions and informatives. It is not considered that the development would cause any significant harm to the amenity of any surrounding land use over and above the existing use.

Highways

The submitted drawings show the proposed site access arrangements; using a combination of new accesses and reconfigurations of existing accesses.

Access

The existing and proposed access arrangements are summarised below:

- In the north-eastern end of the site, there would be a new 32-space car park (including 2 no. disabled bays) located on existing areas of hardstanding (which appear to be already in use for car parking). This area is served from a turning head at the northern end of Lancaster Fields, where dropped kerbs are already in place.
- Immediately south-west of this, an existing car park would be decommissioned, and a new loading/turning area would be provided, served from a reconfiguration of the existing car park access.
- Immediately south-west of this, a new 25-space staff car park would be provided, served from a new access. This area also provides 3 no. motorcycle parking spaces and 16 no. covered cycle spaces.
- Buildings in the most south-westerly end of the site would be demolished and an existing car park decommissioned, these areas providing a new loading/turning area, served from a reconfiguration of the existing car park access.

The existing layout provides zebra crossings within the site, and while there does not appear to be any proposal to retain these, it is considered that the new layout would provide an overall preferable layout for pedestrians given that the applicant has indicated dropped kerbs and tactile paving at appropriate points.

The applicant has provided Swept Path Analysis for a 16.5m articulated vehicle, which indicates that such a vehicle would be able to enter and egress the site in a forward gear, manoeuvring within both of the loading areas.

Subject to a Section 278 agreement for works to the public highway relating to the proposed access amendments, the proposed layout and access arrangements are acceptable.

Parking

There are currently 38 marked parking bays at the site, in addition to unmarked parking in the northern part of the site, providing circa 20 additional spaces. The applicant proposes a total 57 marked parking bays (some of which would be located on the existing unmarked parking area). The proposed 57 bays includes 2 no. disabled bays.

As noted within the applicant's Transport Statement (TS), this is significantly within CEC's recommended parking standards, which would indicate circa 118 bays in total.

The applicant's Design and Access Statement (DAS) and TS are inconsistent on existing staff numbers. Both documents state that the development would not increase staff numbers at the site.

The DAS states that the site currently employs 25 office staff, working 08:00 to 17:00 weekdays, and a further 15 operational staff working shifts 06.00 – 14.00 and 14.00 – 20.00, and a night shift working from Sunday – Thursday from 22.00 – 06.00.

The TS states that the site employs a total of 116 staff, with a total of 61 staff on site at any given time. The breakdown of staff shift patterns are given as follows:

- 30 no. Night Shift: Sunday-Thursday (22:00 > 06:00)
- 25 no. A Shift: Mon-Fri (06:00 > 14:00/14:00 > 20:00)
- 25 no. B Shift: Mon-Fri (06:00 > 14:00/14:00 > 20:00)
- 36 no. Days (Monday - Friday 08:00-17:00)

The applicant's TS contains details of observations which indicate a peak parking demand of 57 vehicles, this occurs during a 10-minute period preceding the 14:00 shift change, after which it is stated that parking reduces to 44 vehicles. The TS goes on to state that, *"during the site visit no vehicles were observed parking on-street in contravention of the no waiting restrictions"*.

A Travel Plan (TP) has also been submitted alongside the application. This provides travel survey results which suggest that 56% of staff travel to work as a car driver. Based on 116 staff, this would equate to an average of 65 staff, depending on the shift (for example, it might be expected that staff working night shifts are more likely to drive). This is in the same order of magnitude as the results of the site observations described in the TS, although nonetheless slightly higher than the proposed parking provision at the site.

The applicant's TP contains a commitment to undertake a travel survey within 3 months of occupation of the proposed development, with the results to be submitted to Cheshire East Council. The TP

further commits to undertaking such a survey and reporting on its results on an annual basis. The TP sets out an overarching target of to increasing the percentage of staff regularly travelling by sustainable modes (car sharing, walking, cycling or by public transport) by 10% over a three-year period (from existing baseline of 43.6% up to 53.6%).

In light of the potential for off-site parking generated by the development, and in order to minimise the operational and environment impacts associated with car travel, it is recommended that a S.106 agreement relating to the annual monitoring and reporting of Travel Plan survey should be included within any planning permission granted. A sum for monitoring by Cheshire East Council should be secured by Section 106 agreement.

Traffic Generation

Notwithstanding the additional floor space proposed, the development is unlikely to have a significant impact on traffic generated by the site. While there may be some additional delivery movements associated with the expansion, these are likely to be of a negligible volume, particularly given the industrial nature of surrounding land uses.

The Head of Strategic Infrastructure raises no objection to the proposed development, subject to the agreement of a S.106 sum for the monitoring of Travel Plan implementation.

Energy Efficient Development

Policy SE 9 (Energy Efficient Development) of the CELPS sets out that;

“non-residential development over 1,000 square metres will be expected to secure at least 10 per cent of its predicted energy requirements from decentralised and renewable or low carbon sources, unless the applicant can clearly demonstrate that having regard to the type of development and its design, this is not feasible or viable.”

The net additional floorspace proposed is 1,228 m². It is considered reasonable to impose a condition on any planning approval for the submission of energy saving requirements in line with the above.

CIL Compliance

In order to comply with the Community Infrastructure Regulations 2010 it is necessary for planning applications with planning obligations to consider the issue of whether the requirements within the S106 satisfy the following:

- (a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- (b) directly related to the development; and
- (c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

As stated within the report the development would incur a contribution of money for the ongoing monitoring and review of the travel plans and this contribution is necessary, directly related to the development and fair and reasonable.

Conclusion

The application site lies entirely within the Crewe Settlement boundary as determined by the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Adopted Replacement Local Plan 2011. The application site also lies within an existing industrial estate.

Policy E.4 advises that within such locations proposals for new employment development for the intensification of the use of land within existing employment areas will be permitted. As such, the principle of the development is considered to be acceptable.

The design is acceptable and the impact on the surrounding amenity, trees, ecology and the highway network will not be significant.

On the basis of the above, it is considered that the proposal represents sustainable development and is recommended for approval.

RECOMMENDATIONS

APPROVE subject to the following conditions

- 1. Time (3 years)**
- 2. Plans**
- 3. Materials as per application**
- 4. Prior approval of detailed design, management and maintenance of surface water drainage**
- 5. Land contamination**
- 6. Unidentified land contamination**
- 7. Tree retention**
- 8. Tree protection scheme**
- 9. Submission of energy saving requirements**

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.

Should the application be approved, the following Heads of Terms should be secured as part of any S106 Agreement or Unilateral Undertaking:

S106	Amount	Triggers
Highways Contribution	£5,000 (ongoing monitoring and review of travel plans)	Prior to the occupation of any part of the development hereby approved

