

MINUTES of a meeting of the PLANNING Committee held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Coalville on TUESDAY, 3 September 2019

Present: Councillor N Smith (Chairman)

Councillors R Boam, A J Bridgen, R Canny, J Clarke, J Hoult, J Legrys, M B Wyatt and J Geary (Substitute for Councillor D Everitt)

In Attendance: Councillors D Harrison, R Ashman, R D Bayliss, R Blunt, A C Saffell, C A Sewell, D E J Tebbutt and A C Woodman

Officers: Mr C Elston, Miss S Odedra, Mrs C Hammond, Mr J Knightley and Mr I Nelson

23. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors D Everitt and D Harrison.

24. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

All Councillors present declared that they had been lobbied without influence in respect of item A1, application number 18/01443 and had come to the meeting with an open mind.

In addition Councillors A Bridgen, J Bridges, R Canny, J Geary and J Legrys declared that they had attended presentations by the developer but had not been influenced

25. MINUTES

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 6 August 2019.

It was moved by Councillor N Smith, seconded by Councillor J Legrys and

RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 August 2019 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

26. PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND OTHER MATTERS

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Planning and Infrastructure, as amended by the update sheet circulated at the meeting.

27. A1

18/01443/ FULM: PART FULL / PART OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF LAND, INCLUDING THE DEMOLITION OF ALL EXISTING ON-SITE BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES AND LEVELLING AND RE-GRADING OF THE SITE. FULL CONSENT SOUGHT FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A DISTRIBUTION CAMPUS (USE CLASS B8), WITH ANCILLARY OFFICES (USE CLASS B1A), ASSOCIATED GATEHOUSE AND OTHER ANCILLARY USES, NEW ELECTRICITY SUB-STATION AND NEW PUMPING STATION, CREATION OF NEW ACCESSES FROM THE B5493, INTERNAL ROADWAYS, CYCLEWAYS AND FOOTPATHS, YARD SPACE, CAR PARKING AND CIRCULATION, ASSOCIATED LIGHTING AND SECURITY MEASURES, SURFACE WATER ATTENUATION AND LANDSCAPING. OUTLINE CONSENT (WITH ALL MATTERS RESERVED EXCEPT VEHICULAR ACCESS FROM THE B5493 AND RE-GRADING OF SITE) SOUGHT FOR ADDITIONAL

Chairman's initials

USE CLASS B1C, B2 AND B8 EMPLOYMENT, WITH ANCILLARY OFFICES (USE CLASS B1A) AND ASSOCIATED COMMERCIAL AND AMENITY USES

Land at M42, Junction 11, Stretton-en-le-Field, Leicestershire, DE12 8AA

Officer's Recommendation: PERMIT subject to S106 Agreement

The Principal Planning Officer presented the report to Members drawing their attention to the employment land need and demand assessment that was contained as an appendix within the report, and the update sheet, which contained a number of additional objections and further comments from the applicant.

Mr D Greally, on behalf of Stretton-en-le-Field Parish Meeting, addressed the committee. He highlighted that the site was a designated greenfield site within the Measham valley and was not a sustainable location due to no public transport, cycle paths or footpaths. He advised that he lived a mile from the junction 11 along the A444 and at peak times it could take him 10-15 minutes to get to the junction. He felt that there were more suitable locations in the district and should the application be permitted there would be a substantial loss of hedgerow that was home to unique species of wildlife.

Councillor E Bird, on behalf of Appleby Magna Parish Council, addressed the committee. She highlighted that the site had been identified as countryside and was outside the limits to development. She expressed concerns over the detrimental impact the development would have on the River Mease Special Area of Conservation, highway safety, landscape, noise and light pollution, and ecology due to the loss of trees, hedgerows and water pollution. She noted that the site was not sustainable due to lack of public transport and footpaths.

Ms C Chave, on behalf of Chilcote Parish Meeting, addressed the committee. She highlighted that the development would have a massive and irreversible impact on the surrounding areas and villages, and at the same time be contrary and conflict with the policy Ec2 of the Local Plan. She stated that a development of that size and nature should be considered through the Local Plan process that would allow for appropriate appraisal, consultation and debate on the site. On these grounds the application should be refused.

Councillor D Geldar, on behalf of the other Parishes, addressed the committee. He highlighted to the committee that the development would increase traffic along already busy highways where users already exceeded the speed limits. He noted that notification had been received from the local highways authority that they were looking at reducing the speed limit from 60 to 50mph however, increased traffic along a notorious accident black spot would make little difference. He also expressed concerns over the increase in pollution and the impact on the River Mease SAC.

Ms S Liff, Appleby Environment Group, in objection, addressed the committee. She highlighted that the an application such as the one before them should only be permitted for use if there were no environmental impacts, and as there were no rail links and most employees would need to use a car the application was contrary to policy Ec2. She noted that 16 Parishes and 5 District authorities had objected to the application and the development as a whole would have a permanent impact on the character of the surrounding villages and the gateway to the National Forest.

Ms G Speakman, Residents Against Project Mercia, in objection, addressed the committee. She highlighted that the area of the proposed development fell within the River Mease SAC and that the development would have major and permanent effects. She informed the committee that Natural England advised that there was an increased need for farmland, that there would be a major loss of habitat that homed many different species, TPOs were being ignored and it would have an adverse effect on the environment and life of neighbouring residents.

Chairman's initials

The committee adjourned at 6.23pm and reconvened at 6.35pm.

Mr D Smith, IM Properties, applicant, addressed the committee. He highlighted that the application was for a high quality employment site that would conform with the Local Plan policies as there was an immediate need for the development. He informed that the site would safeguard and provide jobs, funding towards training, agreed access through a transport plan, agreed environment mitigation and landscaping. He advised that a fund would be set up to benefit local communities and that there were no objections from technical consultees as all felt it was the right location for the development.

Mr T Byrne, JLR, addressed the committee. He highlighted that the new site would help the company grow so that it could continue to serve its UK customers. He advised that the proposed unit would allow them to remain sustainable with good transportation connections but at the same time, by combining the sites, reducing the number of vehicle movements by 25%. He stated that the location would allow current employees with the required skill set to transfer and the company had shown its commitment to the area by signing a twenty year lease.

Mr S Tucker, DTA, addressed the committee. He highlighted that access to the site for staff was critical, therefore included in the travel plan was provision to fund a site bus services and encouragement to car share, which had worked well at another location. He advised that provision had been made for 2350 car parking spaces and scope for cycling provision. He noted that there were no objections from any of the five highway authorities, and that the traffic modelling had been carried out in line with the requirements of the Local Plan. He stated that the traffic plan included proposed improvements to the junction and surrounding area, and a steering group to look at the impact on the area and considered funding for further improvements.

Councillor D Harrison, County Division Member, addressed the committee. He highlighted that the application would have a detrimental effect on thousands of people both near and far as the development would vastly increase the traffic in the area. He stated that at times of shift changes there could be up to 2000 people entering and exiting the site at the same time along with any HGV movements. He advised that the A444 was already congested and that the slip roads at the junction were inadequate.

Councillor R Blunt, District Ward Member, addressed the committee. He thanked the applicant for working together with officers and communities on the application however, he felt that it was a lazy application with much more suitable sites in and around the district. He advised that the application was contrary to the approved Local Plan as it did not meet its policies, that the site was not sustainable as the goods would need to be moved by lorry and staff would need to travel to the site by car and that there were many other brownfield sites that could meet the need. He reminded Members that the Council was pro-development however they should not ignore the Local Plan and therefore refuse the application.

In determining the application, Members acknowledged the number of objections that had been received and thanked officers for a very detailed report. Concerns were expressed about the increase in traffic on the already busy highways around the site, due to lack of public transport and cycle paths, but it was noted that there were no objections from any of the highway authorities consulted. Members also expressed concerns over the loss of countryside and the development being on rich farming land and a Greenfield site, adding that there were several other distribution sites in the District, all of which was contrary to the Local Plan. Members noted the requirement in making a decision, to read the Local Plan and that some policies would be contrary to the proposal but others would support the proposed development when considered together. Members were pleased to see the bunding and landscaping that had been included in the proposals to support the visual and ecological impact.

Chairman's initials

A motion to permit the application in accordance with the officer's recommendation was moved by Councillor N Smith and seconded by Councillor J Bridges.

The Chairman then put the motion to the vote. A recorded vote being required, the voting was as detailed below.

RESOLVED THAT:

The application be permitted in accordance with the recommendation of the Interim Head of Planning and Infrastructure.

Motion to permit the application in accordance with the officer recommendation (Motion)	
Councillor Nigel Smith	For
Councillor Russell Boam	For
Councillor Alexander Bridgen	For
Councillor Rachel Canny	For
Councillor John Clarke	For
Councillor Jim Hault	For
Councillor John Legrys	Against
Councillor Michael Wyatt	Against
Councillor John Bridges	For
Councillor John Geary	Against
Carried	

The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.48 pm

Chairman's initials