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To The Chairman and Members of the
Development Control Committee

All other Members of the Council – for information

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Date 16 September 2008

AGENDA SUPPLEMENT

Dear Sir/Madam

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE - MONDAY 22 SEPTEMBER 2008

I refer to the agenda for the above-mentioned meeting and enclose the following items:

Item No	Report Title	Page Nos
11.	<u>Deferred Applications</u>	67 - 77
11a	Harling: Proposed residential development, Lopham Road Applicant: Mr A Taylor/Mr D Taylor Reference: 3PL/2008/0579/F	
11b	Snetterton: Proposed business park and alterations to motor racing circuit, Harling Road Applicant: Motorsport Vision Limited Reference: 3PL/2008/0600/0	

Yours faithfully

Helen McAleer

Member Services Officer

BRECKLAND COUNCIL

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE – 22ND SEPTEMBER 2008

REPORT OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES MANAGER

(Author: Nick Moys, Principal Planning Officer (Major Projects))

HARLING: PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT, LOPHAM ROAD

Applicant: Mr A Taylor/Mr D Taylor

Reference: 3PL/2008/0579/F

DEFERRED ITEM REPORT

This report concerns an application for full planning permission for residential development on land at Lopham Road, Harling. The proposal was considered by members on 1st September 2008, when it was resolved to defer the application to allow further consultation with the Parish Council.

Amended layout proposals have been sent to the Parish Council for further comment. The application has also been re-advertised in the local press. Details of any further comments received will be reported verbally.

Following the drafting of the previous Committee report, additional information was submitted by the applicant to address outstanding issues. In summary, this information included:

- confirmation of the availability of a local builder to undertake the development in the short term in order to ensure that the scheme is deliverable within a 5 year period
- confirmation of interest from a RSL in the proposed affordable housing
- all houses to be constructed to Code Level 3 or 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes
- design amendments to reduce impact of overlooking on neighbour
- additional landscaping to provide a buffer with adjacent industrial units

On the basis of this information it is considered that balance of issues raised is tipped in favour of the proposal.

RECOMMENDATION: That planning permission is granted subject to conditions and a section 106 agreement.

BRECKLAND COUNCIL

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE – 1st SEPTEMBER 2008

REPORT OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES MANAGER

(Author: Nick Moys, Principal Planning Officer (Major Projects))

HARLING: PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT, LOPHAM ROAD

Applicant: Mr A Taylor/Mr D Taylor

Reference: 3PL/2008/0579/F

Summary – This report concerns a planning application for residential development on the edge of Harling. It is recommended that the application is refused.

1. INTRODUCTION

This report concerns an application for full planning permission for residential development on land at Lopham Road, Harling. The development proposed would comprise the erection of 11 new dwellings, including 3 affordable dwellings, the demolition of existing commercial buildings, and the construction of a new access and estate road. The application is supported by a Design & Access Statement, Noise Assessment, Tree Report and Contamination Risk Assessment.

The application site is located on the south-eastern fringe of the village of Harling. The site was formerly used for commercial purposes and includes 2 vacant buildings. The land is irregular in shape and extends to 0.55 hectare. The site is adjoined on one side by residential development and on the other by a small industrial estate.

2. KEY DECISION

This is not a key decision.

3. COUNCIL PRIORITIES

The following Council priorities are relevant to this report:

- A safe and healthy environment
- A well planned place to live and work

4. CONSULTATIONS

Harling Parish Council has objected to the application on the grounds that the site lies outside the defined Settlement Boundary and that further land should not be released for development in advance of the LDF. Concerns have also been raised about the proximity of the site to the adjacent industrial estate.

The Highway Authority has raised no objection to the application subject to minor alterations to the design of the access road, the provision of visibility splays and the construction of new footway along Lopham Road. A financial contribution of £2,500 towards improved pedestrian facilities in the village has also been requested.

The Environment Agency has raised no objection to the application, subject to conditions relating to site investigation, surface water drainage and foundation design.

Natural England has raised no objection to the application.

The Council's Assistant Tree & Countryside Officer has raised concerns about the proposed removal of a preserved tree.

The Council's Environmental Health Officer has raised concerns about the relationship of the proposed housing development with the adjacent industrial estate. Conditions requiring acoustic fencing and glazing are recommended if permission is to be granted.

The Council's Environmental Protection Assistant has raised no objection to the application subject to a condition requiring a site investigation.

A number of letters of objection have been received raising concerns about the development of land outside the Settlement Boundary, loss of residential amenity, harm to the character of the area and potential conflicts with the adjacent commercial units. Letters of support for the development have also been received, suggesting that the scheme would enhance the surrounding area and provide additional family housing for the village.

5. POLICY

The application site falls outside the Settlement Boundary for Harling, as defined in the Breckland District Local Plan. Relevant 'saved' Local Plan policies include Policies HOU.4, HOU.6 and TRA.5.

At a national level, policies set out in PPS 3 *Housing*, PPS 7 *Sustainable Development in Rural Areas*, and PPG 13 *Transport* are particularly relevant.

At the regional level, Policy ENG.1 of the Regional Spatial Strategy relating to on-site renewable energy is relevant.

6. ASSESSMENT

The principal issues raised by the application concern: i) the extent to which the development would accord with relevant planning policy, ii) the relationship of the development with the adjacent industrial estate and neighbouring dwellings, and iii) the impact of the development on the character of the area.

Policy

The application site lies outside the Settlement Boundary for Harling, as defined in the Local Plan, and accordingly the proposal would conflict with saved Local Plan HOU.6 which generally seeks to resist new housing developments outside towns and villages.

Notwithstanding this conflict with local policy, the proposed development must also be assessed against national planning policy for housing. PPS 3 states that where a 5 year supply of deliverable housing land cannot be demonstrated (there is currently a 2.8 year supply in Breckland), favourable consideration should be given to housing proposals if they address satisfactorily the criteria set out in PPS 3. These criteria relate to matters such as design quality, housing mix, environmental sustainability, the suitability of the site for housing and the effective use of land. The proposed development generally performs well when assessed against PPS 3 criteria, particularly taking into account its location on the edge of a village identified as a potential service centre, the mix of housing proposed and the design quality of the scheme. The proposal would not result in an intrusion of development into open countryside, but would allow for the re-use of a semi-derelict brownfield site. However, it is not clear from the information submitted to date whether the scheme is deliverable within a 5 year period. Further clarification is being sought on this point.

RSS Policy ENG.1 requires that for housing schemes of 10+ dwellings, 10% of energy requirements should be met by renewable or low carbon sources. Further information from the applicant on this matter is awaited.

Relationship with neighbouring development

The application site is sandwiched between existing residential development to the west and a small industrial estate to the east. Concerns have been expressed locally and by the Council's Environmental Health Officer about noise and disturbance affecting future residents. The Noise Assessment submitted in support of the applicant concludes that, having regard to the nature of existing commercial activity and the layout of the proposed development, significant levels of noise are not likely to be generated by uses accommodated in the industrial units or by associated traffic.

A degree of protection for future residents would be provided by conditions on the 1986 planning permission for the industrial estate, which limit the commercial units to B1 and B8 use only (light industrial/offices/storage). The layout of the industrial estate, with rows of units facing each other rather than directly towards the proposed housing, would also help, to an extent, to limit noise problems. However, given the close proximity of some of the proposed houses, and the absence of an hours of operation restriction, it is considered that there is some potential for disturbance from general activity and traffic, although given the mitigating factors referred to it is unlikely that a refusal of permission would be warranted on this ground alone.

As currently proposed, it is considered that the proposed housing would result in some loss of amenity to the immediately adjacent bungalow due to overlooking and visual impact. It is considered that these problems could be overcome by changes to the layout/design of the proposed housing scheme.

Local character

The application site occupies a relatively prominent position on the edge of the village of Harling. The proposed houses would be traditional in architectural style and arranged to create varied and attractive street scenes. However, the proposed new site access would result in the loss of mature Corsican pine tree on the Lopham Road. Whilst this tree is one of a number along the frontage, its removal would nevertheless detract from the appearance of the immediate area. It is also considered that the development would have a rather uneasy relationship with the adjacent industrial estate. The proposed high brick wall separating the housing and industrial units would be a rather dominant feature and somewhat at odds with the rural character of the area. Further landscaping proposals from the applicant are awaited.

Conclusion

Due to the current housing land supply situation and its implications for the consideration of housing developments, the issues relating to the development of this site are rather more finely balanced than otherwise would have been the case. The proposed development would satisfy a number of the policy criteria set out in PPS 3, notwithstanding its location outside the Settlement Boundary for Harling. However, at this stage, it is not considered that an exception to saved Local Plan policy would be justified due to the present uncertainties about the deliverability of the development, and the shortcomings of the current proposals in respect of relationships with neighbours, loss of trees and landscaping.

7. RECOMMENDATION

That planning permission is refused on the grounds of conflict with Local Plan Policy HOU.6, loss of amenity to the adjacent residential property, potential conflict with adjacent industrial uses and loss of a preserved tree.

BRECKLAND COUNCIL

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE – 22ND SEPTEMBER 2008

REPORT OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES MANAGER

(Author: Nick Moys, Principal Planning Officer (Major Projects))

SNETTERTON: PROPOSED BUSINESS PARK & ALTERATIONS TO MOTOR RACING CIRCUIT, HARLING ROAD

Applicant: MOTORSPORT VISION LIMITED Reference: 3PL/2008/0600/0

DEFERRED ITEM REPORT

This report concerns a planning application for a new business park and alterations to the existing motor racing circuit at Snetterton. The application was considered by Committee on 21st July 2008 when it was resolved to defer the application to allow further discussion with the applicant in relation to: i) noise from the extended circuit and ii) control over the proposed retail uses.

Noise

Following further discussions with the applicant, a revised Noise Management Plan (NMP) has been submitted for consideration. The NMP sets out the applicant's proposals to control noise from circuit activities in order to minimise disturbance to local residents. The NMP covers race events, trackdays and testing activities, and includes limits on noise levels, the frequency of events, maximum number of vehicles, hours of operation and noise testing regimes. Community liaison and complaints procedures are also included.

The Council's Environmental Health Officer has confirmed that he is generally content with the provisions of the revised Noise Management Plan, and for the purposes of this planning application, it is considered that the revised NMP strikes a reasonable balance between the needs of the circuit to operate as a viable business and the need to protect local residents from increased levels of noise and disturbance. It is recommended therefore that any permission granted should be subject to planning conditions requiring the circuit to be operated in accordance with the NMP in order to ensure that the proposed development does not result in significant harm to local amenities.

Following the last committee meeting a considerable volume of letters of objection to the application has been received, raising concerns about the impact of noise from the circuit on local residents. To date, more than 90 additional letters of objection have been received.

Retail uses

Further information has also been provided in respect of the proposed retail uses. On the basis of the information provided, planning conditions have been drafted which would limit the proposed retail units to the sale of motor sport related goods, including high performance cars and motorcycles, together with associated parts, accessories and other related products. Restrictions on the total amount of retail floorspace and limitations on the size of units are also proposed. Discussions with the applicants on this matter are on-going, the results of which will be reported verbally.

RECOMMENDATION: It is recommended that planning permission is granted subject to conditions (to include matters relating to detailed design, restriction of retail uses, noise, landscaping, wildlife mitigation, phasing, access/parking, travel plans, drainage, and sustainable construction).

BRECKLAND COUNCIL

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE – 21st JULY 2008

REPORT OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES MANAGER

(Author: Nick Moys, Principal Planning Officer (Major Projects))

SNETTERTON: PROPOSED BUSINESS PARK & ALTERATIONS TO MOTOR RACING CIRCUIT, HARLING ROAD

Applicant: MOTORSPORT VISION LIMITED

Reference: 3PL/2008/0600/0

Summary – This report concerns a planning application a new business park and alterations to the existing motor racing circuit at Snetterton. It is recommended that planning permission is granted subject to conditions.

1. INTRODUCTION

This report concerns a hybrid planning permission for development at the Snetterton Motor Racing Circuit. Full permission is sought for alterations to the existing track layout. These alterations include a new infield loop and alterations to two corners at the western end of the circuit. Outline planning permission is sought for a new business park that would include a 50 bedroom hotel, conference centre (1,950m²), retail showrooms (10,500m²), offices (2,050m²), light industrial/engineering units (8,100m²), racing team units (6,070m²) and a racing school (1,200m²).

The application is supported by a number of technical reports, including a Design & Access Statement, Flood Risk Assessment, Transport Assessment, Noise Assessment, Sustainability Report, Ecological Assessment, Reptile Survey and a Contamination Desk Study Report.

The application site is located to the south of the A11 Snetterton Interchange and forms part of the established Snetterton Heath employment area. The site of the business park extends to 12.5 hectares and comprises mainly undeveloped grassland. The site is adjoined by the Sunday Market, the Motor Racing Circuit and other industrial/warehousing uses.

2. KEY DECISION

This is not a key decision.

3. COUNCIL PRIORITIES

The following Council priorities are relevant to this report:

- A safe and healthy environment
- A well planned place to live and work

4. CONSULTATIONS

Snetterton Parish Council has raised no objection to the application. Comments have been made about the mix of proposed uses, traffic generation and employment creation.

Quidenham Parish Council has raised no objection to the application. Comments have been made about noise, traffic and power supply issues.

The Highway Authority has raised no objection to the application, subject to conditions requiring off-site highway improvements and the implementation of travel plan initiatives.

The Highways Agency has requested additional information in relation to traffic generation and sustainable transport options. Further comments are awaited in response to the additional information provided by the applicant.

The Environment Agency has raised no objection subject to conditions relating to drainage, pollution control, landscape management and wildlife protection.

Natural England has requested information about wildlife mitigation proposals.

Comments are awaited from the East of England Regional Assembly.

The Council's Environmental Health Officer has requested that further information in respect of noise be provided.

At the time of writing, one letter of objection had been received from a local resident, raising concerns about noise problems associated with the racing circuit.

Prior to the submission of the application, consultation with local residents was undertaken by the applicant through a series of public meetings and exhibitions.

5. POLICY

Relevant national planning policies are set out in PPS 1 *Delivering Sustainable Development*, PPS 6 *Planning for Town Centres*, PPS 7 *Sustainable Development in Rural Areas*, PPS 9 *Biodiversity & Geological Conservation*, PPG 4 *Industrial, commercial development and small firms*, PPG 13 *Transport*, and PPG 24 *Planning and Noise*.

At a regional level, the recently adopted East of England Plan (RSS) sets an employment growth target to 2021 for Breckland of 6,000 new jobs. Thetford and Norwich are identified as key centres for change, and the importance of the motor sport cluster focussed on Hethel is acknowledged.

Saved Local Plan Policy ECO.2 is directly relevant to the proposed development. Policy ECO.2 allocates land at Snetterton Heath for B1 light industrial, B2 business and B8 storage/distribution uses subject to criteria relating to landscape impact, access and traffic. The application site falls within the Snetterton Heath Employment Area, as defined in the Local Plan. Emerging policy in the draft Core Strategy identifies Snetterton as a strategic location for employment development.

6. ASSESSMENT

The principal issues raised by the application concern: i) the extent to which the proposals would accord with relevant local and national planning policy, ii) noise, iii) traffic generation, and iv) the likely impact of the development on the rural landscape and local ecology.

Policy

The proposed development would be generally consistent with RSS, saved Local Plan and emerging LDF policies relating to employment development at Snetterton Heath. The development would represent a significant investment in economic development in the area, and would create an estimated 500 new jobs. The

application site is the last significant area of underdeveloped land with the current employment allocation.

The proposed light industrial/engineering units, offices, motor racing team bases and racing school would accord with saved Local Plan Policy ECO.2, which allocates land at Snetterton for such business uses. The proposed hotel/conference centre and retail showrooms fall outside the remit of Policy ECO.2 and need to be considered in the context of national planning policy, principally as set out in PPS 6. National policy requires justification to be provided where 'town centre' uses, like hotels and retailing, are proposed outside established centres.

In support of the proposed hotel reference is made to the need for additional hotel accommodation in the locality, particularly for those attending race meetings at the adjacent circuit. It is considered that the proposed hotel would better meet this specific need than a similar facility located in any nearby centre, and would complement the enhanced circuit facilities and business park. Accordingly it is considered that the proposal is justified on the grounds of need and that the requirements of policy would be met.

The proposed retail showrooms are intended to be occupied by a range of specialist car and motorcycle dealerships from the high performance and motor sport related sectors. The intention is to offer an experience not available elsewhere in the UK by concentrating such uses in one place and by providing opportunities for potential customers to test drive vehicles on the adjacent motor racing circuit. Whilst retailing in this location would normally conflict with planning policy, given the specialist nature of the proposal and the synergy with the motor racing circuit and associated racing school and advanced engineering units, it is considered that a case can be made for the proposed showrooms, provided that adequate controls can be attached to the planning permission to regulate their use. Discussions with the applicant on this last point are on-going.

Noise

Noise from racing and testing activities at Snetterton Circuit have given rise to significant local concerns in recent times. In response to a Noise Abatement Notice served by the Council in 2007, a Best Practical Means (BPM) statement was drawn up in order to control noise emissions to reasonable levels. This statement includes a number of controls on the hours and frequency of activities involving unsilenced vehicles and requires liaison with local residents. A further Abatement Notice served in January 2008 requires adherence to the BPM statement and the construction of noise bund at the eastern end of the circuit (for which planning permission was granted in May). Following further discussions with Environmental Health Officers, a draft Noise Management Plan for the Circuit has been produced by the applicant. The Plan proposes various measures to control noise from the Circuit.

A Noise Assessment submitted in support of the planning application considers the likely impact of the proposed circuit alterations on noise. The report concludes that, provided the current limit on the number of vehicles permitted to use the circuit at any one time is maintained, the proposals would not result in additional disturbance to local residents and may result in some beneficial effects. Following consultation with Environmental Health Officers, additional information about anticipated noise emissions has been requested. At the time of writing, this information was still awaited.

Highway safety

Access to the proposed development would be gained off the A11 via the Snetterton Interchange and the Harling Road. A new roundabout access into the site is proposed onto Harling Road. The Transport Assessment submitted in support of the application concludes that the surrounding road network is adequate to cater for the traffic likely to be generated by the proposed development. Due to the relatively remote location of the site, opportunities for travel other by car are limited. However, it is considered that the potential for sustainable transport options should be explored further through the preparation of travel plans for the various elements of the proposal. Norfolk County Council, as local highway authority, has raised no objection to the application subject to conditions requiring the proposed junction improvements and the preparation/implementation of travel plans. Further comments are awaited from the Highways Agency.

Landscape impact/local ecology

The application site, which is located within a gently undulating rural landscape, has many of the characteristics associated with former airfields, being flat, open and rather windswept. The site is not generally prominent in long or medium distance views, and it is not anticipated that the proposed development will have a significant visual impact on the wider landscape. Much of the development would be low and linear in form, echoing the character of the landscape, with only the hotel rising above two storeys to create a landmark building close to the site entrance. New landscaping around the perimeter of the site would further help to assimilate the development into its landscape setting. Although only in outline form the application is supported by indicative designs which demonstrate a commitment to high quality design.

Wildlife surveys undertaken have identified a population of common lizards within part of the area proposed for commercial developments. In order to mitigate the impact of the development it is proposed to translocate the lizard population to another part of the site which would be managed for its wildlife value. In response to concerns raised by the Environment Agency, additional information has been submitted to elaborate the proposed mitigation measures and to identify opportunities for further enhancement of biodiversity.

Other issues

Information submitted in support of the application identifies a number of opportunities to incorporate sustainable construction measures, including on-site renewables, passive solar design, green building materials and sustainable drainage options. For developments of this sort, Policy ENG.1 of the East of England Plan requires 10 per cent of energy needs to be met on site. Discussions are on-going to establish how the applicant's stated aspirations may be translated into measurable environmental performance standards, such as BREEAM ratings.

Conclusions

The proposed development would represent a significant investment into the local economy and would be consistent with the general policy objective of promoting Snetterton as a strategic location for employment growth. The proposed business park would not result in any material harm to the character of the area or to local amenity. Adequate measures can be incorporated into the development to mitigate its likely impact on wildlife. Subject to further comments from the Highways Agency, it is considered that the development would be adequately served by the existing road network, whilst measures to improve the site entrance and to promote sustainable transport could be required by condition. The impact of noise from the existing motor racing circuit remains an issue of concern and further information is

currently awaited in order to enable the impact of the proposed business park and circuit alterations. It is currently anticipated that these matters are capable of satisfactory resolution subject to appropriate controls and restrictions being agreed.

7. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that planning permission is granted subject to conditions (to include matters relating to detailed design, noise, landscaping, wildlife mitigation, phasing, access/parking, travel plans, drainage, and sustainable construction).