

BRECKLAND COUNCIL

PLANNING COMMITTEE – 11TH JANUARY 2016

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF PLACE

(Author: Nick Moys, Principal Planner)

PROPOSED CREMATORIUM, LAND AT NORWICH ROAD, SCOULTON

Applicant: Thornalley Funeral Services Ltd

Reference: 3PL/2014/1204/F

Introduction

1. This report concerns a planning application for a crematorium at Scoulton. The application was considered by Planning Committee in August 2015, when it was resolved to grant permission subject to conditions. Planning permission was subsequently issued on 27 August 2015. The Council agreed to quash this decision following a judicial review challenge concerning the interpretation of Policy DC18, where it is now considered that this policy does not apply to the proposals subject to this application. The application has therefore been remitted back to the Council for re-determination.

Proposed development

2. Permission is sought for the erection of a crematorium and associated infrastructure. The proposed development includes a main crematorium building, separate buildings for workshop facilities and a remembrance room, memorial gardens, parking and access.
3. Vehicular access is proposed via Norwich Road, with the introduction of a ghost lane and widening of the highway proposed. The works would result in the removal of a preserved oak tree adjacent to the proposed access. A further preserved oak tree could be lost in order to provide visibility splays. The vehicle access includes a wrought iron access gate and associated brick piers set back from the road.
4. The application is supported by the following technical documentation: Design and Access Statement; Planning Statement; Arboricultural Assessment; Tree Plan; Tree Report; Landscaping Scheme; Phase I Geo Environmental Desk Study; Flood Risk Assessment; Biodiversity Report (including two Bat Roost Surveys); and an Air Quality Assessment.
5. During the course of the application material amendments have been made to the siting of the building, layout and parking arrangement of the site together with alterations to the proposed landscaping and access. These revisions were subject to re-consultation with interested parties.
6. The application has been screened under the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations. It has been concluded that the proposed development is not EIA development and is not likely to lead to likely significant effects on the environment.

Site & surrounding area

7. The application site is situated within an area of open countryside, around ½ mile from the village of Scoulton and 1½ miles from the small town of Hingham. The

site forms part of a larger field and is set within an agricultural landscape. The site adjoins the B1108 Norwich Road, but built development in the locality is sparse and dispersed. The nearest residential properties are located around 250-300 metres away. Scoulton Mere, a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), is located approximately 400 metres to the west.

8. The site extends to approximately 4.4 hectares, with a frontage of around 220 metres to Norwich Road. The site is under arable cultivation. The land is bounded by further farmland to the south and east, an area of woodland to the west, and by the Norwich Road to the north. The roadside boundary is delineated by an established hedgerow and trees, including two oak trees which are subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO).

Relevant site history

9. The planning application to which this report relates was registered in December 2014. The application was subsequently considered by Planning Committee on 24 August 2015, when it was resolved to grant permission. The planning permission was issued on 27 August 2015. This decision was quashed by the High Court on 20 November 2015, following a judicial review challenge.

Consultations

10. Scoulton Parish Council - Reiterate their comments that they have serious concerns about traffic management and whilst the ghost lane would seem to improve the junction the impact on road safety for the whole stretch of road is still of major concern.
11. Hingham Town Council - The site is only just over the border between Hingham and Scoulton and will have a big impact. Hingham Town Council have discussed the application and recommended that this be recommended for refusal. The development is in open countryside, is on a green field site, next to an SSSI and is against your development policy. The need for a crematorium has not been proved and the increased traffic through Hingham could cause additional traffic problems and even more accidents. There have been many accidents along the B1108 with one of the most recent being a fatal accident (the police signs are still in situ along the road, asking for information). A 40mph speed limit has only just been agreed for a stretch of the road but traffic following a slow moving funeral cortege may not be very patient and there could be more accidents. On considering the amended site plan, Hingham Town Council recommend refusal of the planning application. This would be on the grounds previously stated by the Town Council, and reinforcing the concerns regarding safety and the excessive speed of traffic along that stretch of road.
12. South Norfolk District Council - Wish to highlight those issues which could have implications for South Norfolk District and its residents. When assessing the proposal please ensure that thorough consideration is given to the traffic and highway safety implications of the development, particularly considering the high traffic speeds that occur along this stretch of road, and the likely initial and future traffic generation and vehicle turning movements. I understand that NCC Highways are engaged on this issue. I would also urge a critical assessment of the visual impact of the development in such a conspicuous rural location where parked vehicles, buildings and other structures (flue stack height not shown?), could significantly detract from the character and appearance of the area. Clearly a very high quality landscaping scheme would be required that is appropriate to the rural character of the area, if the development were approved. I note that an

Air Quality Report has been submitted which you will no doubt be giving careful scrutiny.

13. Norfolk County Council Highways - No objection subject to conditions.
14. Environment Agency – No objection.
15. East Harling IDB – No objection.
16. Natural England – No objection.
17. Norfolk Wildlife Trust - No decision should be made regarding this application until the ecology survey has been updated to take account of results of the tree survey and any potential impact on bats. The Ecology Survey should also be assessed by the Breckland planning biodiversity officer.
18. Tree consultant - As per my previous comments made on the 24th March the proposed scheme would certainly result in the loss of a BS5837 category A tree which is subject to a Tree Preservation Order and is likely to result in the loss a second TPO tree which is currently shown to be retained if possible subject to agreement with Highways. These are high value tree the removal of which I do not support, particularly as one mature Oak has recently been removed. With reference to the proposed layout changes and supplied landscaping schemes, I agree that the screening provided will reduce the impact of the built structure on the wider landscape and whilst elements of the proposed landscaping are in keeping I do have concerns that some of the planting is more suited to a more urban area and not entirely suitable for a rural/ countryside setting. I would be happy to see the Oaks and native hedging along the road frontage but would consider that the Beech will just draw attention to the site as they are not a species currently seen along this section of road. If the proposed development is to go ahead I would like to see a revised planting scheme, using predominately native species which are presently found growing in the area.
19. Ecological and Biodiversity Consultant - No objections with respect to the ecology and bat report and have no comments on the amended plan. We suggest that further data on Great Crested Newts be provided.
20. Environmental Health Officer – No objection.
21. Contaminated Land Officer – No objection subject to conditions.
22. Air Quality Officer – No objection.

Representations

23. Objections have been received to the proposed crematorium from more than 39 third party addresses. The following planning concerns have been raised: the proposal would result in an unwanted intrusion into an open rural landscape; - the site is subject to limited natural screening to mitigate the impact of the proposal upon the character of the area; the site is in an unsustainable location; highway safety issues resulting from the increased vehicular movements along Norwich Road; highway safety issues resulting from the unacceptable access; - loss of agricultural land; loss of trees; loss of a TPO tree; noise disturbance; light pollution; possible emission of pollutants; ecological impacts; insufficient need; and more appropriate brownfield sites.
24. Representations of support to the proposed crematorium have been received from 18 third party addresses. The following points have been raised: the proposal would provide benefits to the local economy; the crematorium would address an identified need for such facilities within the District; for occupants of the district, the proposal would reduce distances of travel to the nearest

crematoria facility; and the site is effectively screened, mitigating the impacts of the proposal upon the surrounding area .

Assessment

25. The application is referred to Planning Committee as it is a major development and has generated significant community interest.

Principle of development in the countryside

26. Policy SS1 of the Breckland Core Strategy & Development Control Policies DPD sets out the overall approach to development in the District, and indicates that the open countryside is not considered generally to represent a sustainable option for development. Accordingly, Policy SS1 makes provision only for minimal development in the countryside outside defined settlements, predominantly comprising the diversification of rural enterprises. Provision is also made for some other employment uses to be accommodated, where a rural location is necessary for the functioning of the business or it utilises a particular attribute and is a sustainable solution to the identified need.
27. Core Strategy Policy DC7 permits employment development outside allocated areas only where it can be shown no suitable sites are available on allocated employment areas and there are particular reasons for development not being located on established or allocated areas.
28. Core Strategy Policy DC18 permits the development of community facilities in market towns, local service centre villages and other rural settlements, subject to need and sustainability criteria. It does not however refer, and therefore relate, to developments in the open countryside.
29. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) promotes economic growth in the countryside, stating in paragraph 28 that the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business should be supported in rural areas. It is also a core principle of the NPPF to recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. However, the support for rural economic development applies to development in the open countryside as well as rural settlements. Additionally, the NPPF states as a core principle that planning should deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs.
30. Whilst the proposal would provide a public service, it would be operated on a commercial basis and would generate some employment. Given the application site's location in the countryside, Policies SS1 and DC7 are engaged by the proposal. However, these policies adopt a more restrictive approach to rural economic development than the NPPF, and cannot therefore be considered to be fully consistent with it. Consequently, these policies carry diminished weight having regard to paragraph 215 of the NPPF. Policy DC18 is not engaged as it refers only to development in defined settlements and not the open countryside in which the proposed development would be situated.
31. As far as the need for a countryside location is concerned, the requirements of the Cremation Act 1902 are directly relevant insofar as they stipulate that a crematorium should be a least 200 yards (around 183 metres) from the any dwelling and at least 50 yards (43 metres) from a public highway. Published Government guidance entitled 'The Siting and Planning of Crematoria' (DoE, 1978) is also of relevance. This says that sufficient land should be available to provide an appropriate setting for a crematorium, adequate internal access roads, car parking and space for the disposal of ashes. Reference is made to sites of 2 to 4 hectares in size and larger, although no minimum is stated. The reasonable

expectation of mourners and visitors to gardens of remembrance for a place of quiet contemplation is also an important consideration in relation to site selection.

32. Given these particular site selection and locational requirements, it is considered to be most unlikely that suitable land would be found within a defined settlement boundary. This is due to the more or less continuously built up nature of towns and villages in the District. Larger sites that are remote from housing are perhaps more likely to be found within existing and allocated employment areas, but such sites can be discounted due to the busy commercial nature of such areas and the likelihood of conflicting activities. It can reasonably be concluded therefore that a rural location outside a defined settlement is likely to be required for the development of a crematorium.
33. On this basis, it is considered that the proposal would not conflict with Policy SS1, subject to it being demonstrated that it would represent a sustainable solution to an identified need. This is considered further below.
34. The proposal is not entirely consistent with Policy DC7: the proposed use does not fit readily into the categories of rural businesses which Policy DC7 seeks to accommodate; nor does it comply fully with this policy's stipulations. However, the requirements in Policy DC7 to demonstrate that other suitable allocated sites are not available and to establish a rural connection can be given only limited weight due to their inconsistency with the NPPF, as noted above.
35. However, it is understood that the applicant has undertaken an assessment of a number of other brownfield sites in Deopham, Watton and Dereham and a range of greenfield sites near Thickthorn, Hethersett, Attleborough, Great Ellingham, Rocklands, Cranworth, and two others in Scoulton. It is further understood that none of these sites were found to be suitable for the proposed development, principally due to the failure to meet those requirements set out in the Crematorium Act 1902 and relevant Government guidance.
36. Accordingly, it is considered that the development of a crematorium in the open countryside is capable of being acceptable in principle. It remains to be considered whether the proposal would represent sustainable development, taking into account the balance of benefits and any adverse effects. This is considered below.

Need for a crematorium

37. There are no crematoria in Breckland. Existing facilities in the wider area are located at Norwich (Earlham and Horsham St Faiths), King's Lynn and Bury St Edmunds. Permission has also recently been granted for a crematorium at Cromer. Travel distances to these facilities are such that large parts of Breckland fall outside the industry standard 30 minute drive-time to a crematorium at cortege speed. This standard is widely accepted as an appropriate guideline for assessing the adequacy of local provision, and has been referenced in a number of appeal decisions¹.
38. Taking into account death rates in Breckland, which has a higher than average number of elderly residents, and applying national average cremation rates, it is estimated that around 1,086 potential cremations per annum are likely to be

~~generated within the District.~~ The proposed crematorium would have the

¹ Appeal decision references: APP/A0665/A/12/2186911, APP/Z3525/A/14/2216102 and APP/M1005/A/12/2188880.

² It is understood that the proposed crematorium would have a capacity of around 1,200 cremations per year. The applicant states that some 800 cremations per year would be needed to secure the viability of the development.

capacity to meet this need², and due its relatively central location, would provide a convenient facility for many residents in Breckland. Whilst the proposal would be unlikely to handle all Breckland cremations, further cremations would be likely to arise from areas close by in South Norfolk.

39. Evidence has also been provided to demonstrate that existing local crematoria are operating at or over capacity, resulting in extended waiting times and short turn around times for funerals. The additional capacity secured by the proposal would provide a better and more convenient service for local residents, as well as reducing pressure on existing crematoria, thereby potentially improving the experience for mourners at those facilities.
40. Taking these matters into account, it is concluded that there is currently an unmet need for additional crematorium facilities in the area which would the proposal would help to address. This consideration weighs in favour of the proposal.

Economic effects

41. It is understood that the proposed crematorium would employ at least 6 full time staff. Indirect economic benefits would also be likely to arise due to the increases in the use of local restaurant, function facilities and hotel accommodation by funeral parties. Local funeral businesses would also derive some economic benefit due to the shorter travel distances involved for funeral corteges. These considerations weigh in favour of the proposal.

Character and appearance

42. Core Strategy Policy CP11 seeks to protect rural landscapes for their own sake and intrinsic beauty, and requires that new development be designed to be sympathetic to landscape character, informed by the Council's Landscape Character Assessment 2007 (LCA). Core Strategy Policy DC12 seeks to protect important trees and hedgerows in the landscape.
43. The application site lies within the Wayland Plateau landscape character area, as defined in the LCA. The overriding character of this area of countryside is that of a productive and managed arable landscape, with fields of varying sizes interspersed with small blocks of woodland, big skies and open views. Distant views across the countryside are a key feature due to the relatively elevated land form, although hedgerows and woodland provides a degree of visual containment. These general characteristics are apparent in the vicinity of the application site. In landscape terms the area is considered to have a moderate sensitivity to change.
44. The proposal would introduce built development into this area of largely undeveloped open countryside. The proposed buildings, together with associated access, parking and servicing areas would inevitably result in a loss of openness and increase activity, and would thus have an urbanising effect. This would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. The removal of existing roadside hedging and trees (including up to two oak trees subject to a TPO) to facilitate access improvements would also cause some harm in itself, as well as opening up views into the site and thereby increasing the visual impact of the proposed development.
45. However, the proposed development would be well screened from view when approaching from the west by adjacent dense woodland, and roadside and field boundary hedging would filter views of the development when approaching from the east. Close to the site, the development would be clearly visible from the Norwich Road, but would be set well back from the road and would in large part be seen set against a wooded backdrop.

46. Extensive planting is also proposed to help assimilate the development into its landscape setting and fully mitigate the loss of any existing trees and hedgerow. To the front of the site this planting would include replacement hedging and native tree planting, together with blocks of woodland. The proposed buildings and main car parking area would be set well back from the road, behind two native hedgerows separated by grassed paddocks, with more ornamental planting confined to the memorial gardens set to the rear of the site. This landscape treatment would be sympathetic to the character of the area, and in the medium to longer term would soften the visual impact of the development and integrate it into its surroundings.
47. The design of the crematorium buildings would be broadly traditional, with simple building forms, constructed with red brick, timber cladding and clay pantiles. The proposed crematorium building would not be unduly large, with a footprint of 1,107 square metres and measuring 3.2 metres to the eaves and 7.7 metres to the ridge line. Moreover, the form and design of the building, with its low roofline, varied profile and set backs, would help to break up its visual bulk. Consequently, it is considered that the proposal would comply with Policy DC16 which seeks, amongst other things, to that new development is built to a high standard of design.
48. For these reasons, it is considered that whilst the proposal would cause some harm to the rural character and appearance of the area and loss of protected trees in conflict with Core Strategy Policies CP11 and DC12, this effect would be localised and would be mitigated to an extent by sensitive building design and extensive planting. Nevertheless, landscape impact considerations, in part, weigh against the proposal.

Transport and highway safety

49. Despite its relatively remote location, the development would enjoy some accessibility by public transport. Existing bus services³ pass the site providing links to Watton, Wymondham and Norwich. A half hourly daytime service currently operates from Monday to Saturday, but there is a reduced service on Sundays. A new bus stop is proposed as part of the development.
50. Notwithstanding the availability of some public transport, experience suggests that the majority of those attending services and visiting gardens of remembrance are likely to do so by car. Although not close to a centre of population, with direct access onto the B1108, the proposed crematorium would be readily accessible by car from nearby towns and villages. Moreover, for many residents in the District, and a number of local undertakers, the proposed crematorium would much be closer than existing facilities located outside the District. The proposal has the potential therefore to result in a reduction in travel.
51. Access to the development would be via a new entrance onto Norwich Road, which would be widened to provide a right turn lane. Visibility splays of 215 metres would be provided to each side of the access (based on the 60 mph speed limit), together with pedestrian facilities and new bus stops. The proposed access and associated highway improvements would meet the appropriate technical standards, and are considered to be acceptable by the Highway Authority.
52. Concerns have been raised locally in respect of highway safety and the increase in vehicular movements along Norwich Road. Although generally of a good standard in terms of its width and alignment, this section of the B1108 has a

³ Konectbus services 3 and 6.

history of accidents, including a fatal accident collision. However, given the nature of these accidents and the extent to which excessive speed was a contributory factor, it is not considered that the proposal would be likely to result in further accidents. Indeed, the introduction of built development and a new access junction with associated advanced warning signage on this otherwise open stretch of road is likely to reduce average vehicle speeds in the vicinity of the site. These matters have been considered by the Highways Authority in their assessment of the scheme.

53. Third party evidence has been presented in the form of local speed survey indicating that the 85th percentile speeds of passing traffic were such that increased visibility splays of 236 metres should be provided from the new access. The Highway Authority has reviewed this information, but remains of the view that the proposed entrance would provide safe access to the development. In coming to this conclusion account has been taken of the likely effect on the proposal on driver perception and average vehicle speeds. It is also noted that the most traffic movements to and from the crematorium would fall outside the busy morning and evening peaks for general traffic.
54. Visitor parking would be provided for 60 cars within the proposed main car park, with a further 20 spaces to be made available in an overflow area. Parking for staff and deliveries would be provided separately. It is understood that funerals generate 14-16 cars on average. As two funeral parties would be expected to be present at any one time, at least 32 visitor parking spaces would be required. The proposed car parking would exceed this minimum requirement by some margin and in so doing would provide additional space for larger funerals and visitors to the gardens of remembrance. On this basis the proposed parking arrangements are considered to be acceptable.
55. For these reasons, it is considered that the proposal is acceptable in transport and highway safety terms.

Effects of residential amenity

56. The nearest residential properties to the proposed crematorium would be around 250 metres away (measuring from boundary to boundary). Crematoria are not inherently noisy developments and operate principally during normal weekday working hours (though occasional services on Saturdays are also anticipated here). Whilst some noise would be generated by general activity and traffic movements, given the degree of separation to neighbours, it is considered that the operation of the crematorium would have little impact on the amenities of local residents. An hours of operation is recommended to safeguard local amenity.
57. The proposed development would require an Environmental Permit from the Council. This Permit would control emissions from the crematorium, including smoke and odour, and would allow for the cremation of human remains only. Limits for emissions to the atmosphere set out in DEFRA Statutory Guidance. As emissions are controlled with under separate legislation, it is not necessary to consider this matter further here. The Council's Air Quality Officer raises no objection to the application.
58. Consequently, it is considered that the proposal would not result in any material amenity to the amenities of local residents. The scheme would thus comply with Core Strategy Policy DC1.

Effects on trees and landscaping

59. The proposal would result in the loss of some existing trees and hedging at the site frontage, including two oak trees to the east and west of the site frontage that are subject to a TPO. The proposed landscaping scheme would provide a native hedge and 18 trees, consisting of 6 beech trees, 6 oak trees and 6 field maple trees, as a replacement for the lost planting. The proposed scheme would also introduce additional planting by way of tree belts to the site's frontage and to the north eastern corner of the site. The tree belts would consist of a variety of species, including field maple, silver birch, hazel, beech, crab apple, native white cherry, English oak and small leaved lime. The rear of the site would be subject to ornamental planting of varying species. The Tree Consultant does not support the removal of the TPO trees and recommends that any new planting should be predominantly of native species to more appropriately respond to the existing landscape character of the locality.
60. As already noted, the loss of the TPO trees and the remainder of the planting to the site frontage would cause harm to the character and appearance of the landscape. However, it is considered that this particular landscape impact would be ameliorated by the substantial planting proposed by the landscaping scheme. The number and location of the trees, on balance, would be of more than commensurate value, providing an appropriate replacement and additional planting. The proposed landscaping would also mitigate to an extent against the visual impact of the built form on the wider landscape.
61. As far as the detail of new planting is concerned it is agreed that the proposed tree belts to the front of the site should consist of strictly native species, reflecting existing planting in the locality, in particular along Norwich Road. Accordingly, a planning condition requiring an amended landscaping scheme, seeking an appropriate mix of native species, is recommended. Considering the degree of separation from the highway, the ornamental planting central to the site is considered acceptable.

Effects on ecology

62. The application is supported by an Ecological Report, which finds that the site currently supports very little in the way of higher plant or faunal diversity. No indications that protected species are present have been found. Two bat surveys of the trees proposed to be removed along the site frontage have been undertaken, but no evidence of roosting bats was found. An assessment of the potential for Great Crested Newts has also been provided. This confirms that there are no records of any newts within 5 kilometres of the site, and that none of the ponds in the vicinity of the site are likely to support Great Crested Newts. Native landscaping and sensitive management of the site offer an opportunity to enhance biodiversity. On the information provided, the Council's Ecological and Biodiversity Consultant raises no objection to the proposal.
63. Scoulton Mere is situated approximately 400 metres from the proposed site. Natural England raises no objections to the proposal, stating that the development would not damage or destroy the interest or features of the Mere, and confirming that the SSSI does not represent a constraint in determining the application.

Historic environment

64. The nearest listed buildings to the site are located at Tollgate Farm, around 300 metres to the north-east on the opposite side of the Norwich Road. Given the separation distance and the screening effects of intervening vegetation, it is considered that the proposal would have no material effect on the setting of these

listed buildings. There are no designated conservation areas in the locality that would be affected by the proposal.

65. The proposed highway improvement works would require the relocation on an existing nineteenth century milestone located on the site frontage. The Historic Environment Service has raised no objection to the proposal provided that details of the relocation of the milestone are agreed. This could be secured by an appropriately worded planning condition. Given that the milestone could be relocated close by, it is considered that no material harm to the significance of this non-designated heritage asset would result.

Other matters

66. Loss of agricultural land - The NPPF states that local authorities should take into account the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, particularly in plan making when decisions are made on which land should be allocated for development. Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, local planning authorities should seek to use areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of a higher quality. However, the application site would not be significant in these terms, amounting only to some 4.4 hectares of agricultural land.
67. Drainage - The applicant has confirmed that there is an existing overflow pipe from the pond which runs to a ditch to the east which carries water away from the site. Therefore there is not a problem in taking additional water to the pond as it naturally overflows through the pipe and away from the site.
68. Ground conditions - The site currently comprises an agricultural field. No other uses have been identified in the supporting documents. The Contaminated Land Officer raises no objection to the proposal subject to the imposition of a condition relating to unexpected contamination.

Sustainability and the planning balance

69. The proposed development would provide a facility in the District for which there is a need, resulting in a wider community benefit. It would also create some rural employment and would indirectly support other associated business activities in the area. Safe access to the development could also be achieved. The economic and social roles of sustainable development, as defined in the NPPF, would thus be supported.
70. Although the proposal would not be close to any main centre of population, it would nonetheless be relatively conveniently located for many residents in mid-Norfolk who currently have to travel further afield to access cremation facilities. The proposal would be served by public transport, and whilst most visitors would be likely to arrive by car, travel distances for many local residents would be less than there are currently. Any harm arising in terms of transport sustainability would be small therefore.
71. In relation to environmental considerations, as detailed above, some harm to the character and appearance of the area would result, but the effects would be localised and would be mitigated by the layout and design of the scheme and proposed landscaping, which would also mitigate fully against the loss of protected trees. The proposal would not result in any significant adverse effects on the amenity of local residents, ecological interests or the historic environment. The proposed development is appropriate in a countryside location due to the nature of the use and the requirements of legislation and Government guidance. Other potential sites have been considered by the applicant, but have been found to be unsuitable.

72. Taking all of these matters into account, it is concluded that the balance of arguments falls in favour of the proposal. The site is suitable for the proposed use, and there are no effects which count significantly against the proposal or which outweigh the community and economic benefits of the development in meeting the need for a crematorium and supporting rural business. Accordingly, it is concluded that the proposal would represent sustainable development and, on balance, that the application should be approved.

RECOMMENDATION

73. It is recommended that planning permission is granted subject to conditions covering the following: 3 year time limit, compliance with submitted plans, external materials, landscaping and boundary treatments, hours of operation, external lighting, access construction, highway improvements, construction management, drainage and ecological mitigation and milestone relocation.