

BRECKLAND COUNCIL

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE – 22nd SEPTEMBER 2008

REPORT OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES MANAGER

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CARBROOKE: PROPOSED NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE/ERECTION OF 4 DWELLINGS: FORMER RAF WATTON TECHNICAL SITE

Applicant: HDD RAF WATTON LTD

Reference: 3PL/2008/1171/D

Summary – This report concerns a reserved matters application for a neighbourhood centre as part of the redevelopment of the former RAF Watton Technical Site. It is recommended that the application is approved.

1. INTRODUCTION

This report concerns revised proposals for a new neighbourhood centre on land at the former RAF Watton Technical Site. The proposal neighbourhood centre would comprise a single storey building of contemporary design, and would include a 380m² convenience store and 4 smaller units design to accommodate a range of A1, A2, A3, A5 and D1 uses. The smaller retail units would range in size from 92m² to 105 m². Parking for 40 cars would be provided, together with cycle parking/storage facilities. It is also proposed to erect 2 pairs of semi-detached dwellings. The application is supported by a Design & Access Statement.

The application site forms part of the former RAF Watton Technical Site. The site is located approximately 2km to the east of Watton town centre and falls with the Parish of Carbrooke. The surrounding area has a mixed character, with both commercial and residential uses. The site is irregular in shape and extends to 0.41 hectare. The site has a frontage onto Norwich Road.

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

Carbrooke Parish Council – comments awaited.

Watton Town Council – comments awaited.

The Highway Authority has raised no objection to the application subject to minor amendments to the proposed layout of access and parking.

The Council's Assistant Tree & Countryside Officer has raised concerns about the likely impact of the proposed dwellings on adjacent trees.

5. SITE HISTORY

Outline planning permission for the use of the site as local centre was granted in September 2006 as part of the redevelopment of the former Technical Site for housing and employment.

Reserved matters approval was granted in May 2008 for a neighbourhood centre including 5 retail units and 22 flats. The current proposal differs from the previously approved scheme in that the 22 flats originally proposed above the retail units have been omitted in favour of 4 separate houses.

6. POLICY

Relevant planning policies include PPS1 *Delivering Sustainable Development*, PPS 3 *Housing* and PPS 6 *Planning for Town Centres*.

7. ASSESSMENT

The principal issues raised by the application concern: i) the likely effects of the development on the appearance of the surrounding area, and ii) the proximity of the development to existing and proposed trees.

Local character

The proposed neighbourhood centre would occupy a prominent site next to Norwich Road (B1108) and immediately adjacent to one of the two principal entrances to the Technical Site redevelopment. The proposed development adopts a contemporary architectural style, with the aim of creating a distinctive landmark building for this gateway site. It is considered that this aim is successfully achieved in the detailed design of the development. A range of materials are proposed (including stock brickwork, orange render, architectural masonry and metal roofing) to create visual interest and to define the various elements of the development. The proposed dwellings would be more conventional in appearance, being simple in form and design. Overall, it is considered that the development would have a positive impact on the appearance of the area.

Trees

The proposed development site includes part of an important tree belt which runs along much of the Norwich Road frontage of the former Technical Site. This tree belt includes a number of preserved trees. Concerns have been raised about the impact of the proposed 4 dwellings on adjacent trees. Further discussions on this matter are on-going, the results of which will be reported verbally.

The neighbourhood centre building and associated parking have been laid out to ensure that adequate space is available for new landscaping. New tree planting is also proposed on the site perimeter to replace trees removed to make way for the new roundabout and as part of the approved strategic landscaping of the local centre/employment land.

7. RECOMMENDATION

Subject to the satisfactory resolution of outstanding matters relating to trees, it is recommended that reserved matters approval is granted subject to conditions.