

3/09/1561/FP

3. 3/09/1561/FP - Installation of 6 additional loading doors with associated modification to car parking and landscaping at former Commatech site, John Tate Road, Hertford, SG13 7LB for Standard Life Investments

Date of Receipt: 5.10.2009

Type: Full – Major

Parish: HERTFORD

Ward: HERTFORD KINGSMEAD

RECOMMENDATION

That planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:-

1. Three year time limit (1T113)
2. Details of tree planting, indicating positions or density, species, and planting size shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority and planting shall be carried out in accordance with a timetable agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. Any such trees that are removed, die or become, in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, seriously damaged or defective within five years of planting shall be replaced with specimens of a similar size and species as originally required.

Reason: To ensure the provision of the amenity value afforded by trees in respect of the proposed development, in accordance with policy ENV2 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007.

3. Prior to any building works being commenced the colour of the shutters hereby approved shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of the appearance of the development, and in accordance with policy ENV1 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007.

Summary of Reasons for Decision

The proposal has been considered with regard to the policies of the Development Plan (East of England Plan May 2008, Hertfordshire County Structure Plan, Minerals Local Plan, Waste Local Plan and East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007), and in particular ENV1 and ENV2. The balance of the considerations having regard to those policies is that permission should be granted.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The application site is shown on the attached OS extract. It is an industrial building (Use Classes B1 & B2) with a floor area of 6,000m², with the wider site having an area of around 15,000m².
- 1.2 The site is part of the commercial park on John Tate Road. It is adjacent to the A414 with access via that road into Hertford or to the A10.
- 1.3 This application is being reported to committee due to the size of the site.

2.0 Site History

- 2.1 The commercial park dates from the 1980s. There have been no specific applications relating to this site that are relevant to the consideration of this application.

3.0 Consultation Responses

- 3.1 The Environment Agency have assessed the development as having a low environmental risk.
- 3.2 County Highways have no objections to the proposed development.

4.0 Town Council Representations

- 4.1 Hertford Town Council have no objections to the proposal

5.0 Other Representations

- 5.1 The application has been advertised by way of press notice, site notice and neighbour notification.
- 5.2 No letters of representation have been received.

6.0 Policy

- 6.1 The relevant Local Plan policies in this application include the following:-

ENV1 Design and Environmental Quality
ENV2 Landscaping

7.0 Considerations

- 7.1 The site lies within an existing Employment Area on the eastern edge of Hertford. The main consideration in this instance therefore is the appearance of the development and its impact on the area.
- 7.2 There are three main elements to the proposal:
- The addition of six loading doors to the east elevation of the building
 - The reorganisation of the car park
 - Landscape works to the northern boundary of the site
- 7.3 The addition of six loading doors to the east elevation of the building would not detrimentally alter the appearance of the property. The building is an industrial unit located within a commercial park, and the alterations would not appear out of place. As part of the development, the existing shutters would be replaced to provide a uniform appearance in line with the six new shutters. All eight shutters would be of the same width and height, and of a colour to be agreed if permission is granted.
- 7.4 The development would improve the functionality of the building, allowing faster and more efficient loading and unloading of vehicles, as well as improving general access. The development would therefore be in accordance with policy ENV1 of the Local Plan.
- 7.5 The reorganisation of the car park involves alterations to the layout of the parking spaces as the proposed development would prevent the use of existing spaces along the east elevation of the building.
- 7.6 Two stores and a storage tank would be removed from the site, along with the relocation of cycle storage and a number of parking spaces. The reorganisation of the car park would not alter the number of parking spaces available. There would be no material impact on neighbouring sites, as the car parks of the application site and the neighbouring site to the east are directly adjacent to one another. The works to the car park would therefore be in accordance with policy ENV1 of the Local Plan.
- 7.7 The proposed landscape works result from damage caused to the car park surface by the existing poplar trees along the north boundary. The roots of these trees have caused cracking to the surface, and therefore these would be removed. They would be replaced with trees of a type to be agreed in the event that permission is granted. The replacement trees would be expected to be of a comparable size and scale to the existing poplars. The replanting would therefore be in accordance with policy ENV2 of the Local Plan.

8.0 Conclusion

- 8.1 The development would improve the functionality of this industrial building without materially affecting the character of the building or the wider area.
- 8.2 For these reasons, it is recommended that planning permission be granted for the proposed development, subject to the conditions noted at the head of this report.