

5j **3/10/0807/FP – First floor office extension at Horse Cross, Standon Road, Standon, SG11 2PU for Howe Fencing Ltd**

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**Date of Receipt:** 06.05.2010

**Type:** Full - Minor

**Parish:** BRAUGHING

**Ward:** BRAUGHING

**RECOMMENDATION**

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

1. Three year time limit (1T12)

**Directives**

1. Other legislation (01OL)

**Summary of Reasons for Decision**

The proposal has been considered with regard to the policies of the Development Plan, Hertfordshire County Structure Plan, Minerals Local Plan, Waste Local Plan and the 'saved' policies of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007), and in particular policies GBC3, OSV6 and ENV1. The balance of the considerations having regard to those policies, and the limited harm associated with the proposed development is that permission should be granted.

\_\_\_\_\_ (080710FP.MP)

**1.0 Background**

- 1.1 The application site is located along the A120 between Puckeridge/Standon and Little Hadham. The site is significant in size and is currently used for the retail of fencing and sectional buildings. The application site is shown on the attached OS map.
- 1.2 The site can be considered in three sections, open storage to the rear (that furthest from the road), public display and parking space to the south west of the site and office/retail shop buildings to the south east. This application concerns an extension to one of the buildings in the south eastern corner of the site. There is an existing cottage building which contains an office space for the site. The proposal seeks consent for a first floor side extension over an existing ground floor projection of that cottage building. There is an existing two storey side extension to the building which was granted in 1989 and this application seeks to replicate that on the other side of the building.

## **3/10/0807/FP**

### **2.0 Site History**

2.1 The following planning history is of relevance:-

3/89/2156/FP	Reconstruction of an extension of existing cottage to provide 2 bed cottage and office	Approved with conditions
3/90/0267/FP	Revision of condition 04 of permission 3/89/2156/FP	Approved with conditions

### **3.0 Consultation Responses**

3.1 No consultation responses have been received.

### **4.0 Parish Council Representations**

4.1 Braughing Parish Council were consulted on the application, and no consultation response has been received.

### **5.0 Other Representations**

5.1 The applications have been advertised by way of site notice and neighbour notification.

5.2 No letters of representation have been received.

### **6.0 Policy**

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

GBC3	Appropriate Development in the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt
OSV6	Extensions and Alterations to Premises in Employment Use
ENV1	Design and Environmental Quality

### **7.0 Considerations**

7.1 The main planning considerations in this case relate to the principle of development and the impact of the proposed extension on the character and appearance of the building and the openness and rural character of the locality.

## **Principle of Development**

- 7.2 The site is located within the Rural Area wherein there is a presumption against inappropriate development. However, policy GBC3 c) of the Local Plan does allow an exception to this, for limited extensions to existing employment premises in line with policy OSV6. Criterion a) of policy OSV6 requires that the use provides an essential facility in the area, or is an important local employment. From the information available, Officers are of the opinion that, given the existing buildings and space at the site, the building cannot be reasonably considered as 'essential', nor can the business be considered as an important source of local employment. In this respect the proposal is considered to be contrary to the requirements of the Development Plan. Notwithstanding this, Officers are of the opinion that the harm associated with the proposed development would not be to such an extent as to warrant the refusal of the application, as will be discussed below.

## **Impact on character and appearance**

- 7.3 In assessing the provision of an extension to the cottage building it is important to recognise that the proposed extensions, together with those previously approved, would amount to a cumulative floor area increase of approximately 27%. Such an increase is, in Officers opinion, limited and would meet the overarching requirements of policy GBC3 of the Local Plan. This is to ensure that development within the Rural Area to existing employment uses remains limited, and does not disproportionately alter the scale of buildings and the associated impact on the openness and rural character of the area.
- 7.4 The proposed extension in terms of its size, scale, form and design is very similar to the existing two storey extension and is considered to be sympathetic to the character and proportions of the existing building and does not, in Officers opinion, result in significant harm to the character or appearance of the existing building.

## **Other matters**

- 7.5 With regards to the other requirements of Policy OSV6, having regard to the details outlined by the applicant in the Design and Access Statement, Officers are of the opinion that the modest extension to the building will allow the continued use of the site and building for employment purposes which is considered to be appropriate and proportionate to the scale of the existing development. Having regard to the siting of the development it is considered that there will not be a significant impact on neighbour amenity.

**Conditions**

- 7.6 The proposed plans indicate materials of construction which, in Officers opinion would appear appropriate to the context of the building and site; accordingly, no planning conditions in respect of materials of construction are required.
- 7.7 Officers note the condition imposed on the previous permission, LPA reference 3/2156-89FP which, modified in 3/0267-90FP, required that 'The extensions hereby permitted shall be used solely in connection with the existing permitted uses on the site and as additional living accommodation and for no other purpose.' Whilst mindful of the reasons behind the condition, 'to prevent the introduction of an alternative commercial use inappropriate to this rural area', Officers are of the opinion that any material change of use of the extension element which may create an alternative commercial use would, in any event, require planning permission and any such condition would not, in Officers opinion be necessary and thus fail the tests in Circular 11/95.

**8.0 Conclusion**

- 8.1 The proposed development represents a departure from the Local Plan as it represents a development which fails the requirements of criterion a) of policy OSV6. However, the harm associated with the development is not significant, in terms of the impact of the proposed extension on the character and appearance of the building and the openness and rural character of the locality. Additionally, Officers note the potential the extension has in providing for continued employment. Having regard to the considerations outlined above, Officers therefore recommend that permission be granted.