

5c 3/11/1713/FP – Raise roof of outbuilding to accommodate new incinerator installation at Holts, Marsh Lane, Stanstead Abbots, Ware, Hertfordshire, SG12 8HL for Mr D Holt

Date of Receipt: 27.09.2011

Type: Full – Minor

Parish: STANSTEAD ABBOTTS

Ward: STANSTEAD ABBOTTS

RECOMMENDATION:

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

1. Time limit (1T121)
2. Approved plans (2E102) – “317/01; 317/02; 317/03a; 317/04; 317/05a; 317/06; 317/07”.
3. Matching materials (2E133)

Directive:

1. Other legislation (01OL1)

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 the 'saved' policies of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007), and in particular policies ENV1 and GBC1 national Planning Policy Guidance 1 – Delivering Sustainable Development, Planning Policy Guidance 2 – Green Belts, and Planning Policy Statement 4 – Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth. The balance of the considerations having regard to those policies is that permission should be granted.

_____ (171311FP.MC)

1.0 Background:

- 1.1 The application site is shown on the attached OS extract. It is a long-established slaughterhouse operating on the outskirts of Stanstead Abbots, on land within the Green Belt and within the Lee Valley Regional Park. It is set in a secluded location, around 90m from the nearest house that is not a part of the site.

3/11/1713/FP

1.2 The proposal is to raise the roof of the main outbuilding on site by approximately 2m to accommodate additional incineration equipment. No new floorspace would be created by the proposal.

2.0 Site History:

2.1 The only planning history relating to the site since the early 1980's relates to two applications for freezer units, (3/84/1264/FP and 3/87/1159/FP).

3.0 Consultation Responses:

3.1 The Hertfordshire Biological Records Centre have no objections to the proposed development as the proposal will not impact on any bat roost.

4.0 Parish Council Representations:

4.1 Stanstead Abbots Parish Council have not commended on the proposal at the time of writing this report.

5.0 Other Representations:

5.1 The application has been advertised by way of site notice, press notice, and neighbour notification.

5.2 No letters of representation have been received.

6.0 Policy:

6.1 The relevant 'saved' Local Plan policies to this application include the following:

GBC1 Green Belt

ENV1 Design and Environmental Quality

6.2 In addition, the following National policy guidance is relevant:

Planning Policy Guidance 1: Delivering Sustainable Development

Planning Policy Guidance 2: Green Belts

Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth

7.0 Considerations:

7.1 The proposal involves the raising of the roof of part of one of the

buildings at the site. Policy GBC1 states that the construction of new buildings (and, by extension, the enlargement of existing buildings) will be inappropriate development unless it is for certain specified purposes, none of which include the enlargement of industrial facilities.

- 7.2 It is therefore necessary to determine whether 'very special circumstances' exist that would clearly outweigh the 'in principle' harm to the Green Belt that would be caused by the development and any other harm.
- 7.3 In terms of 'other harm', Officers consider that the development would have some, albeit limited, impact on the openness of the Green Belt. However, the site is isolated, and from the areas where the building can be seen from the south and west, the building is set against a backdrop of trees. Although the elevated section of building would become the tallest structure on the site, the overall impact on the openness Green Belt would be slight.
- 7.4 As regards 'very special circumstances' it should be noted that the use is well established on site, with Holts operating the business for several decades. National Planning guidance in PPS4 encourages local authorities to be flexible with regard to economic development in rural areas, and in this case, the proposed development would be small-scale, and would improve the facilities available to the business in a sustainable way.
- 7.5 Having regard to these factors, and the limited impact that the development would have beyond the site boundaries, it is considered that there are 'very special circumstances' present to justify granting permission for this development.

Other matters

- 7.6 The proposed extensions to the building should be constructed in materials to match the existing building. This would ensure continuity in appearance of the building, and prevent any jarring visual incongruity that might make the enlarged building more prominent in the Green Belt. As this has not been specified on the submitted drawings, a condition is recommended to require this.

8.0 Conclusion:

- 8.1 The proposal involves the enlargement of an industrial building within the Green Belt. This is inappropriate development and, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt.

3/11/1713/FP

- 8.2 However, the nature of the business means that it is not appropriate for it to be located in closer proximity to a town or village and the impact of the development in this case would be modest, with no material visual impact likely beyond the site boundaries. It is considered therefore that the openness and character of the Green Belt would not be materially harmed by the development.
- 8.3 It is considered therefore that there are 'very special circumstances' in this case which clearly outweigh any harm to the surrounding Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm. It is therefore recommended that planning permission be granted, subject to conditions.