

5f 3/12/1194/FP – New greenhouse structure on existing garden centre area at Paradise Wildlife Park, White Stubbs Lane, Bayford, Broxbourne, Herts, EN10 7QA for Mr P Sampson

Date of Receipt: 16.07.2012

Type: Full – Minor

Parish: BRICKENDON LIBERTY

Ward: HERTFORD HEATH

RECOMMENDATION:

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

1. Three Year time limit (1T121)
2. Approved plans (1T102; PWP 501/003B, PWP/12/5302/01, PWP/12/5302/02, PWP/12/5302/031 and PWP/12/5302/04)
3. The building hereby permitted shall be used solely for the purposes of growing plants and trees to be used around the Paradise Wildlife Park site as shown edged blue on drawing number PWP 501/003B.

Reason: The building constitutes inappropriate development in the Green Belt but is permitted due to the specific planning considerations put forward for this use within the Park.

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, LRC10 and GBC1) and guidance provided in the National Planning Policy Framework. The balance of the considerations having regard to those policies is that permission should be granted.

_____ (119412FP.MC)

1.0 Background:

- 1.1 The application site forms part of Paradise Wildlife Park and is shown on

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the attached OS extract. It lies centrally within the Park site, to the western side of the main access road into the Park. The Wildlife Park itself of course lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt.

- 1.2 The proposal is for the erection of a greenhouse within the Park's garden centre, an area dedicated to the growth of plants for use throughout the Park.
- 1.3 The greenhouse would replace an existing polytunnel on the site but would be significantly larger with a floor area of approximately 105m² in area, and a ridged roof rising to a maximum height of approximately 5.2m. It would be finished externally with white painted timber supports and glazing bars

2.0 Site History:

- 2.1 There is a lengthy planning history for this site, of which Members may be aware. It is not intended to repeat the full history here, but the following application is considered to be relevant as it relates to land immediately to the north of the application site:

- 3/11/1943/FP – Demolition of existing stage and outdoor auditorium; Erection of new stage, changing areas and public seating area – Approved January 2012.

3.0 Consultation Responses:

- 3.1 No consultation responses have been received at the time of writing this report. Any representations received prior to the date of the committee meeting will be reported to members.

4.0 Parish Council Representations:

- 4.1 Brickendon Liberty Parish Council had not commented on the application at the time of writing this report but any representations received will be reported to members at the meeting

5.0 Other Representations:

- 5.1 The application has been advertised by way of site notice and neighbour notification.
- 5.2 No letters of representation have been received at the time of writing this but, again, any representations received prior to the date of the

committee will be reported at the meeting.

6.0 Policy:

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

GBC1 Appropriate Development in the Green Belt
ENV1 Design and Environmental Quality
LRC10 Tourism

6.2 In addition, the guidance on tourism development (Section 3) and development within the Green Belt (Section 9) provided within the National Planning Policy Framework is relevant to the consideration of this application.

7.0 Considerations:

7.1 The site lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt wherein inappropriate development will not be permitted except in very special circumstances. The proposed development is an inappropriate form of development as it is a building/structure required for a purpose which does not fall within the categories defined as appropriate in policy GBC1 of the Local Plan and in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Members will be aware that, when this is the case, for permission to be granted, the harm by way of inappropriateness and any other harm caused by the development must be clearly outweighed by other material considerations. This approach is set out in policy GBC1 of the Local Plan, and supported by the NPPF.

7.2 The greenhouse would be located well within the built-up area of the park. There is woodland directly to the rear (west) of the proposed site itself, within the Park area, which is used by the Park's small railway.

7.3 The greenhouse would be a lightweight structure. Although of a considerable size, it would be predominantly constructed of glass with minimal visual impact on the surrounding area. Given its design and location, officers are of the view that little harm would be caused by the structure in appearance or in terms of the impact on the character of the area. It is considered to be acceptable in line with the requirements of policy ENV1 of the Local Plan.

7.4 The main issue to consider in the determination of the application then is whether there are other matters to which such weight can be assigned that the harm by way of inappropriateness and the other harm, if any, is

clearly outweighed.

- 7.5 Policy LRC10 of the Local Plan states that the Council will encourage suitable tourism proposals in appropriate locations, and this is in line with guidance in Section 3 of the NPPF. Paradise Wildlife Park has previously been recognised by the Committee as a “major educational attraction that provided local employment” (Development Control Committee minutes for the meeting of 19th November 2008) and in general is considered to be a valuable and beneficial tourism facility.
- 7.6 The presence of a dedicated garden centre on the site allows the character of the Park to be enhanced with plants, shrubs and trees. This adds to the atmosphere of the Park, and prevents the site becoming a stark expanse of developed land that would be out of keeping with the surrounding rural area.
- 7.7 Given this, and the limited harm that would arise to the surrounding Green Belt, Officers consider that significant weight can be assigned to the development of facilities that enable the potential of the attraction to be enhanced.

8.0 Conclusion:

- 8.1 Given the limited visual impact of the development beyond its immediate locality and the enhancement it represents to the operation of the Park, it is considered that the limited harm caused to the Green Belt in this case is clearly outweighed by the tourism benefits of the proposal and that very special circumstances therefore exist to justify the approval of the greenhouse structure.
- 8.2 It is therefore recommended that planning permission be granted subject to conditions.